

INFRASTRUCTURE 2050

The Investment Strategy for Northern Ireland

Draft Consultation Document

EQIA Equality Impact Assessment

isni.gov.uk



**Northern Ireland
Executive**

www.northernireland.gov.uk



**Investment
Strategy**
Northern Ireland



**Investment
Strategy**
Northern Ireland

INFRASTRUCTURE 2050

DRAFT INVESTMENT STRATEGY FOR NORTHERN IRELAND

DRAFT EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSEMENT

CONSULTATION DOCUMENT

JANUARY 2022

STATUS: DRAFT FOR CONSULTATION

Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION.....	3
Section 75 Legislation	3
Purpose	3
Approach.....	3
STEP 1: DEFINING THE AIMS OF THE POLICY	5
STEP 2A: COLLECTION OF DATA.....	7
STEP 2B: CONSIDERATION OF AVAILABLE EVIDENCE AND RESEARCH.....	9
Data Evidence of Inequalities – Transport	14
Data Evidence of Inequalities – Housing.....	19
Data Evidence of Inequalities – Health and Social Care.....	27
Data Evidence of Inequalities– Education.....	31
Data Evidence of Inequalities – Communities and Places.....	46
Data Evidence of Inequalities – Justice	64
Data Evidence of Inequalities – Economy and Skills	70
Data Evidence of Inequalities – Environment	78
STEP 3: ASSESSMENT OF IMPACTS	83
STEP 4: MITIGATIONS AND ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS.....	87
STEP 5: CONSULTATION.....	90
Appendix 1: Qualitative Evidence of Inequalities - Input from CFE responses	92

INTRODUCTION

Section 75 Legislation

Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 requires public authorities, in carrying out their functions relating to Northern Ireland, to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between specific identified individuals and groups, namely:

- between persons of different religious belief;
- between persons of different political opinion;
- between persons of different racial groups;
- between persons of different age;
- between persons of different marital status;
- between persons of different sexual orientation;
- between men and women generally;
- between persons with a disability and persons without; and
- between persons with dependants and persons without.

In addition, and without prejudice to these obligations, The Executive Office (TEO) is also committed to having due regard to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.

The legislation requires public authorities to conduct an equality impact assessment (EQIA) where proposed legislation or policy is likely to have a significant impact on equality of opportunity and/or good relations. An EQIA is a thorough and systematic analysis of a policy to determine the extent of differential impact upon the relevant groups and in turn whether that impact is adverse.

Purpose

The purpose of this EQIA to detail how the Investment Strategy for Northern Ireland (ISNI) will provide a basis to address the inequalities experienced by Section 75 groups in respect of investment in infrastructure. SIB has developed this EQIA to provide an opportunity to comment on the impact of the draft ISNI on equality of opportunity and good relations for key target groups.

Approach

The development of the EQIA was aligned to the Equality Commission's Practical Guidance on Equality Impact Assessment¹ and associated short guide material². It was also informed through attendance of the team at the launch event for the *Section 75 Using Evidence in Policy Making – A Sign-Posting Guide*, in order to ensure that the valuable information on sources of data / information / advice conveyed in this could help support the delivery of the EQIA.

1 <https://www.equalityni.org/ECNI/media/ECNI/Publications/Employers%20and%20Service%20Providers/Public%20Authorities/S75Advice-ScreeningEQIA.pdf>

2 <https://www.equalityni.org/ECNI/media/ECNI/Publications/Employers%20and%20Service%20Providers/Public%20Authorities/S75Advice-ScreeningEQIA.pdf>

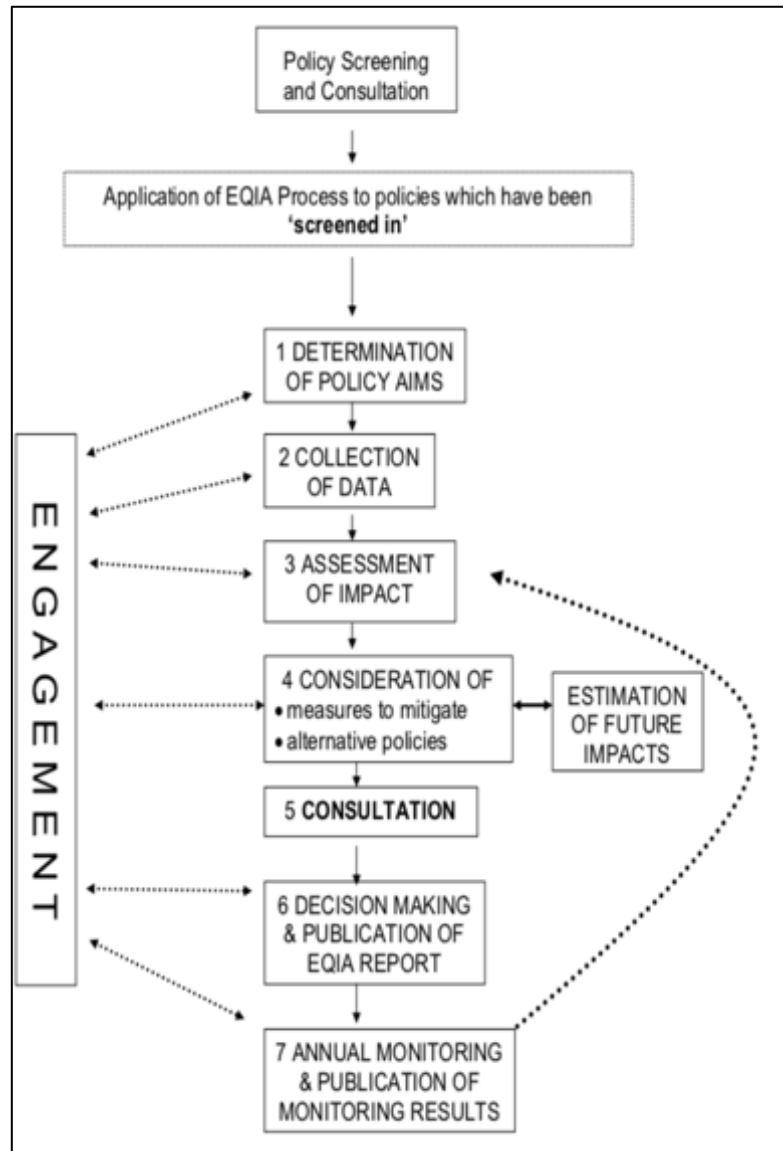
The EQIA Process Flow Chart from the Equality Commission’s Practical Guidance on Equality Impact Assessment replicated in the adjacent schematic was the reference point for the implementation of this EQIA.

Figure 1: EQIA Process Flow Chart

In effect the process entails seven steps to the process from start to finish. This document integrates the findings from the first four steps which have been consolidated into this draft EQIA Report to be used within the formal consultation phase in Step 5.

We will report on the results of the consultation in the Final EQIA Report, which will include suggested amendments and/or recommendations arising as a result of the consultation process.

On completion of the Final EQIA report we will establish a system to monitor the Section 75 impact of the policy on an ongoing basis. The process stipulates that the results of this ongoing monitoring must be reviewed on an annual basis.



Per the schematic, the link between monitoring and assessment of impact is positioned as an ongoing and dynamic relationship. As such this EQIA is not a ‘point in time’ analysis but the first stage in an ongoing and evolving focus on the inequalities that may be experienced by Section 75 groups in respect of infrastructure investment in Northern Ireland.

STEP 1: DEFINING THE AIMS OF THE POLICY

The policy being reviewed is the *'Infrastructure 2050 - the Investment Strategy for Northern Ireland'*. The strategy outlines the importance of investing in the maintenance, upgrading and expansion of our infrastructure here to support sustainable economic growth and enhance Northern Ireland's attractiveness as a place to live, work, visit and invest for the years ahead.

It outlines that providing a high quality physical and digital infrastructure puts in place the vital foundation for a modern high-performing competitive economy and a fair and just society. It highlights how infrastructure investment underpins quality of life, promotes economic and social prosperity and helps to protect our environment for the future. Transport networks, healthcare facilities, schools and colleges, homes and community facilities, water and utilities, communications networks, justice and community safety facilities and environmental and heritage assets are some of the essential components of Northern Ireland's essential infrastructure that touches all lives.

Although the draft Investment Strategy primarily relates to the infrastructure that is owned and operated by the public sector, it recognises there is often considerable synergy and integration between public and private infrastructure. For example, key assets such as airports, ports and the electricity and communications networks are privately owned or operated, or partly funded by charges levied on users. This Investment Strategy recognises that the Executive has a significant role in encouraging and facilitating investment into these sectors from a wide range of sources.

The draft Strategy aims to set out a long-term vision for high quality infrastructure across the region; the Executive's investment priorities. It also sets out how the significant challenges of transitioning the economy and society to a future based on clean energy will be addressed, as well as taking advantage of the opportunities arising from rapid technological advancement.

The vision for the draft Strategy is

'We have the infrastructure that enables everyone to lead a healthy, productive and fulfilling life; supports sustainable economic growth and protects our environment.'

The Strategy has five objectives as reflected in the graphic overleaf:

- To decarbonise our economy and society;
- To strengthen our essential services;
- To build a strong, connected and competitive region;
- To enhance our communities and places and
- To maximise the benefits from new technology and innovation

Figure 2: Infrastructure 2050's - Five Objectives



The Investment Strategy is one of the Executive's key strategies that support the delivery of the Programme for Government (PfG) and the 2020 New Decade, New Approach Agreement (NDNA).

The proposed draft Strategy has been informed by a wide range of research, including consultation and engagement with organisations and individuals.

STEP 2A: COLLECTION OF DATA

Data has been collected across a wide range of different sources to inform the objectives within the Investment Strategy. This has included data at a population level with a targeted examination of data across all Section 75 groups, drawing on official sources including:

- The population-level sources cited in the recently published *Section 75 Using Evidence in Policy Making – A Sign-Posting Guide*³;
- Organisational-level sources, across Government relevant to the areas of focus within the Investment Strategy;
- Published data, information and research on key inequalities in Northern Ireland, relevant to accessing infrastructure and related services under each of the 5 objectives areas in the draft strategy;
- Liaison with departments and organisations as profiled in the Figure 3 below who have been key contacts/ sources to develop evidence with respect to future infrastructure investment;
- Review of the findings of the pre-consultation engagement responses to the Investment Strategy as they relate to considerations of equality and human rights. This consultation and engagement was undertaken in the autumn of 2020 and summer of 2021, much of which was online due to the Covid-19 restrictions and involved extensive engagement with: community organisations, including the Youth Forum and Age NI; business and industry organisations and representative bodies; government departments and agencies, their arm’s length bodies and public corporations; and Local Authorities and their representative organisations.

Figure 3: Those engaged in pre-consultation exercise for ISNI



³ <https://www.equalityni.org/Footer-Links/News/Employers-Service-Providers/Section-75-data-using-evidence-in-policy-making>

Throughout this process there was close liaison with NISRA and with the statistician teams within all relevant departments.

For ease of data gathering it was decided to use the following eight thematic areas for which discrete data is more available as the basis for identifying key inequalities across the 9 Section 75 groups as they relate to infrastructure investment. These themes are:

- Transport
- Housing
- Health and Social Care
- Education
- Communities and Places
- Justice
- Economy and Skills
- Environment

STEP 2B: CONSIDERATION OF AVAILABLE EVIDENCE AND RESEARCH

This section sets out an up-to-date evidence base on key inequalities based on published reports, alongside links to official data sources used by central government departments and agencies, and referenced as such with a headline narrative update that draws on the data included in this section where appropriate.

Finally, this section also draws on qualitative evidence and input from the responses to the Call for Evidence (CfE) as they relate to equality, good relations and human rights issues in Appendix 1.

This section is informed by Section 75 summary data for Northern Ireland (NI) (the population level indicators) which are included below.

Gender

The 2011 Census data showed that 49% of all usual residents in NI are male, with 51% of the population female. In addition, a small number identify as neither male or female or both. A similar picture is evident from the mid-year population estimates data for 2020, per the table below. Indeed, the picture has remained the same in recent years. In addition, a small number identify as neither male or female or both.⁴ Presently, there are no official statistics relating to gender identity in the UK. That said, NISRA has been considering how to provide better official statistics on gender identity. A ⁵research paper published by the agency in February 2021 notes that the Northern Ireland Life and Times Survey (NILT) indicated that the number of people living in NI who would self-identify as transgender is small. It highlights that over the last three years of the NILT (2016-18) fewer than five persons in a total sample of 3,600 survey respondents had identified as transgender (or around 0.1%).

Further information on this S75 group is available here:

<https://www.equalityni.org/ECNI/media/ECNI/Publications/Delivering%20Equality/GenderPolicyPriorities-Full.pdf>

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Male	49	49	49	49	49	49	49	49	49
Female	51	51	51	51	51	51	51	51	51
Population	1,823,634	1,829,725	1,840,498	1,851,621	1,862,137	1,870,834	1,881,641	1,893,667	1,895,510

Percentage of population

Source: [NISRA Mid-Year Population Estimates](#)

Age

The 2020 Mid-year Population Estimates for Northern Ireland report⁶, notes that the NI population continues to age. It highlights that the proportion of the population aged 65 or more has increased from 13.0% in mid-1995 to 16.9% in mid-2020. In contrast, it highlights that the proportion of the population aged 0 to 15 years has decreased from 25.3% in mid-1995 to 20.9% in mid-2020.

⁴ Source: ONS, Exploring existing data on gender identity and sexual orientation.

⁵ <https://www.nisra.gov.uk/sites/nisra.gov.uk/files/publications/Research%20on%20Measuring%20Gender%20Identity%20-%20Feb%202021.pdf>

⁶ <https://www.nisra.gov.uk/sites/nisra.gov.uk/files/publications/MYE20-Bulletin.pdf>

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
0-15	21	21	21	21	21	21	21	21	21
16-39	33	32	32	32	31	31	31	31	30
40-64	32	32	32	32	32	32	32	32	32
65+	15	15	15	16	16	16	16	16	17
Population	1,823,634	1,829,725	1,840,498	1,851,621	1,862,137	1,870,834	1,881,641	1,893,667	1,895,510

Percentage of population

Source: [NISRA Mid-Year Population Estimates](#)

The report also notes that over the three decades from year ending mid-1990 to year ending mid-2020 the median age (i.e., the age at which half the population is older and half is younger) of the Northern Ireland population has increased from 31.0 to 39.2 years. It is projected that from mid-2028 onwards the older population (people aged 65 and over) will be larger than the number of children (i.e., people aged 0 to 15 years).

Further information on this S75 group is available here:

<https://www.equalityni.org/ECNI/media/ECNI/Publications/Delivering%20Equality/AgePolicyPriorities-Full.pdf>

Religious Belief:

Based on the table below the figures for the main religions in 2019/20 were: Catholic (42%), Protestant (44%) and other/ no religion (13%).

	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
Catholic	42	42	42	44	44	43	43	42
Protestant	50	49	47	46	44	44	45	44
Other or no religion	7	8	9	10	11	13	11	13
Unwilling to answer / Can't be determined	1	0	1	0	1	1	1	1
Sample	6,732	6,649	6,216	6,094	6,059	10,743	10,902	10,892

Percentage of population (weighted) (age: 16+)

Source: [Continuous Household Survey](#)

Political Opinion:

There is limited data available on political opinion, however the Northern Ireland Life and Times Survey does ask some questions relating to political opinion. In this survey in 2020, 35% of respondents consider themselves to be Unionist, 19% consider themselves to be Nationalist, and 42% considered themselves to be neither.

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Unionist	28	29	32	33	29	32	26	33	35
Nationalist	23	25	25	25	24	21	21	23	19
Neither	47	43	40	40	46	45	50	39	42
Other	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	2	1
Don't Know	2	2	1	1	1	2	2	3	3

Percentage of respondents (age: 18+)

Source: [NI Life & Times Survey](#)

Further information on the above two S75 groups is available here:

<https://www.equalityni.org/Religion-Politics>

Racial Group:

At the time of the 2011 Census around 98% of the Northern Ireland population were from White Ethnic Groups, while 1.8% were from Other Ethnic Groups (1.1% Asian, 0.3% Mixed Ethnic Group, 0.2% Black and 0.1% Other Ethnic Groups).

2011	
White	98%
Other	2%

Percentage of population (census)

Source: [NI in Profile: 2011 Census \(NISRA\)](#)

A similar picture is evident in the 2020 data from the Northern Ireland Life and Times Survey, per the table below.

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
White	97	98	98	98	98	97	95	95	98
Other	1	1	1	1	1	2	4	5	2

Percentage of respondents (age: 18+)

Source: [NI Life & Times Survey](#)

Further information on this S75 group is available here:

https://www.equalityni.org/ECNI/media/ECNI/Publications/Delivering%20Equality/RacialEquality_PolicyPosition2014.pdf

Marital Status:

The 2011 Census data indicated that almost half (48%) of people aged 16 and over were married, and over a third (36%) were single. Just over 1,200 people (0.1%) were in registered same-sex civil partnerships in March 2011. A further 9.4% were either separated, divorced or formerly in a same-sex civil partnership, while the remaining 6.8% were either widowed or a surviving partner.

2011	
Married (including civil partnerships)	48%
Single	36%
Separated/ Divorced/ Widowed	16%

Percentage of population (census)

Source: [NI in Profile: 2011 Census \(NISRA\)](#)

The table below provides a more recent picture based on data from the Northern Ireland Life and Times Survey, per the table below. This indicates a higher proportion of people who are married in 2020 (59%), which is a generally increasing trend over recent years.

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Single (never married)	31	29	29	31	33	28	32	33	28
Married and living with husband/wife	47	55	52	51	50	53	51	49	59
A civil partner in legally-registered civil partnership	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Married and separated from husband/wife	4	3	3	4	3	3	3	3	3
Divorced	8	6	7	5	6	6	6	6	6
Widowed	10	8	8	9	8	8	7	8	4

Percentage of respondents (age: 18+)

Source: [NI Life & Times Survey](#)

Persons with a Disability

In 2011, the Census data showed that just over one in five of the usually resident population (21%) had a long-term health problem or disability which limited their day-to-day activities. The most common long-term conditions among the usually resident population were: a mobility or dexterity problem (11%); long-term pain or discomfort (10%); shortness of breath or difficulty breathing (8.7%); chronic illness (6.5%); and an emotional, psychological or mental health condition (5.8%).

Statistics published by the Department for Communities for August 2020 show that 78,360 people were claiming Disability Living Allowance. 33% of claimants were under the age of 16, 2% were aged between 16 and 64, and 66% were aged 65 or over. 81% of claimants were receiving the care and mobility components, and 19% of claimants were claiming the highest rate of award.

Personal Independence Payment (PIP) replaced Disability Living Allowance (DLA) for claimants of working age on 20th June 2016. By August 2020, there were 149,360 PIP claims in payment. The overall award rate for PIP claims was 65%. 42% (62,360) of claims in payment had psychiatric disorders as the main disabling condition. 21% of claims were receiving the daily living component only, 3% were receiving the mobility component only and 76% were receiving both the daily living and mobility components.

Further information on this S75 group is available here:

[https://www.equalityni.org/ECNI/media/ECNI/Publications/Delivering%20Equality/IMNI_CR_PD_ParallelJurisdictionalReport_WorkingPaper\(Aug17\).pdf](https://www.equalityni.org/ECNI/media/ECNI/Publications/Delivering%20Equality/IMNI_CR_PD_ParallelJurisdictionalReport_WorkingPaper(Aug17).pdf)

Sexual Orientation

There are no official statistics in relation to the size of the LGBT+ community in Northern Ireland. That said the Continuous Household Survey, does capture information on sexual orientation. In the 2019/20 survey data, 97.1% of respondents identified themselves as Heterosexual/Straight, 0.9% per cent as Gay/Lesbian, 0.6% identified themselves as bi-sexual, 0.6% identified themselves as other, and 0.6% provided No answer/Refusal.

	2012/13	2013/14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
Heterosexual/Straight	95.0	94.7	95.9	97.9	97.7	97.8	97.6	97.1
Gay/Lesbian	0.7	0.7	0.4	0.9	0.7	0.6	0.6	0.9
Bisexual	0.9	0.9	0.5	0.5	0.3	0.5	0.6	0.6
Other	0.6	0.6	0.7	0.3	0.4	0.3	0.6	0.7
Don't Know/Refusal	2.9	3.1	2.4	0.4	0.9	0.7	0.5	0.6
Sample	3,625	3,753	3,349	3,286	3,262	5,678	5,736	5,918

Percentage of population (weighted) (age: 16+)

Source: [Continuous Household Survey](#)

Further information on this S75 group is available here:

<https://www.equalityni.org/SexualOrientation>

Persons with Dependants

In the 2011 Census, around 34% of households had dependant children.

2011	
Yes	34%
No	66%

Percentage of households with dependent children

Source: [NI in Profile: 2011 Census \(NISRA\)](#)

More recent data from the Continuous Household Survey shows that a similar percentage (33%) care for child in 2018/19. In addition, 10% cared for a person with a disability and 9% cared for an elderly person.

	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
Care of child	-	-	-	-	33	33	33
Care of person with a disability	9	9	10	9	11	11	10
Care of elderly person	7	8	8	8	10	9	9

Percentage of population (weighted) (age: 16+)

Source: [Continuous Household Survey \(DAERA\)](#)

Data Evidence of Inequalities – Transport

Introduction

Transport infrastructure – including infrastructure for public and private transport and for active travel modes such as walking and cycling – is an essential enabler for economic, social and environmental development and sustainability. Effective transport infrastructure enables access to social, community and economic opportunities and deficient transport infrastructure places barriers to accessing such opportunities.

Data Sources

The main sources of data/information reviewed in respect of transport inequalities included the following:

- (1) The Travel Survey for Northern Ireland 2017 – 2019 (Department for Infrastructure, July 2021)

<https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/system/files/publications/infrastructure/tsni-in-depth-report-2017-2019.pdf>

- (2) Delivering Social Change – What Matters Most? (NISRA, March 2016; updated, August 2019)

<https://www.executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/ofmdfm/dsc-our-population-what-matters-most.pdf>

- (3) Various publications, findings, comments and assessments provided by the Inclusive Mobility and Transport Advisory Committee (IMTAC)

<https://www.imtac.org.uk/publications>

- (4) Northern Ireland Transport Statistics 2020 – 2021 (Department for Infrastructure, September 2021)

<https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/system/files/publications/infrastructure/ni-transport-statistics-2020-2021.pdf>

- (5) Statement on Key Inequalities in Employment in Northern Ireland (Equality Commission for Northern Ireland, May 2018)

<https://www.equalityni.org/ECNI/media/ECNI/Publications/Delivering%20Equality/Employment-KeyInequalitiesStatement.pdf>

- (6) Report of Commission Investigation of Department for Regional Development Cessation of Funding for Easibus Services in Bangor and Londonderry (Equality Commission for Northern Ireland, May 2012)

[https://www.equalityni.org/ECNI/media/ECNI/Publications/Employers%20and%20Service%20Providers/S75%20P%2011%20investigation%20reports/DRD\(Easibus\)para11investigationreport2013.pdf?ext=.pdf](https://www.equalityni.org/ECNI/media/ECNI/Publications/Employers%20and%20Service%20Providers/S75%20P%2011%20investigation%20reports/DRD(Easibus)para11investigationreport2013.pdf?ext=.pdf)

- (7) Response to consultation on an Accessible Transport Strategy for Northern Ireland (Equality Commission for Northern Ireland, May 2012)

https://www.equalityni.org/ECNI/media/ECNI/Consultation%20Responses/2012/Accessible_Transport_Strategy-Draft_Action_Plan2012-15.pdf

- (8) Ending Age Discrimination in the provision of goods and services (Equality Commission for Northern Ireland, April 2012)

[https://www.equalityni.org/Delivering-Equality/Addressing-inequality/Law-reform/Policy-responses/strengthening-protection-for-all-ages-\(1\)](https://www.equalityni.org/Delivering-Equality/Addressing-inequality/Law-reform/Policy-responses/strengthening-protection-for-all-ages-(1))

(9) Response to the Executive’s Consultation on a Programme for Government Draft Outcomes Framework (Equality Commission for Northern Ireland, March 2021)

<https://www.equalityni.org/ECNI/media/ECNI/Consultation%20Responses/2021/NIO-PfGOutcomesFramework.pdf>

(10) Priorities for Action in Disability Equality (Equality Commission for Northern Ireland, undated)

<https://www.equalityni.org/Disability>

(11) Press Release ‘Report to UN Calls on UK to Improve Disability Rights’ (Equality Commission for Northern Ireland, August 2017)

<https://www.equalityni.org/ECNI/media/ECNI/News%20and%20Press/Press%20Releases/2017/UNCRPD-UKDisabilityRecord.pdf>

(12) Inequalities in Health and Social Care (Equality Commission for Northern Ireland, undated)

<https://www.equalityni.org/ECNI/media/ECNI/Publications/Delivering%20Equality/KI2007Health.pdf>

Data Gaps

In general, the data sources listed above provide generalised information and broad statements of impacts in relation to age and disability (which are of course related), but little in the way of firm evidence in relation to these categories or the wider Section 75 categories.

Inevitably in the case of transport, the issue of equity is related to convenience of access to the services - and this overlays an urban/rural split which will have implications for the equity of access to those in the various Section 75 categories who are resident and receive services in more remote rural areas.

Both the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland (ECNI) and the Inclusive Mobility and Transport Advisory Committee (IMTAC) stress the importance of embedding equality and good relations in strategic documents, such as the Programme for Government – and by implication ISNI. IMTAC also emphasises the importance of carrying the concern with equality and inclusivity in the detailed design of facilities and transport equipment (see Source 3 above).

The evidence which is available is summarised briefly in the following table. In each case the source of the evidence is shown by reference to the numbered data sources listed in the previous Section.

Summary of Evidence of Inequalities

Section 75 Category	Summary of Evidence
Gender	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Very limited information is available.• Females were less likely than males to include transport and travel in their choice of the 3 issues which concerned them most (4.3% of females, 5.0% of males). (2)

Section 75 Category	Summary of Evidence
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Females over 70 were more likely than males over 70 to have difficulty with travel due to disability (49% of females, 35% of males). (1)
Age	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social isolation of older people is caused by a number of factors including differential access to and availability of health and social care alongside lack of affordable public transport. (12) The ECNI has called for the extension of age protection beyond employment to include <i>inter alia</i> transport provision. (8)
Religious Belief	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Very limited information is available Protestants were less likely than Roman Catholics to include transport and travel in their choice of the three issues which concerned them most (3.4% of Protestants, 5.2% of Roman Catholics). (2)
Political Opinion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No information is available.
Ethnicity and Race	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No information is available.
Disability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A number of general statements are made with some limited statistical information. Households which contain a person with limiting long term illness are less likely than other households to have a car (68% compared to 82%). (12) 35% of disabled people reported it difficult to get to their local hospital and 20% to get to their GP. (12) 30% of disabled people stated that difficulties getting on or off vehicles prevented them from using public transport. (11) The ECNI's Priorities for Action included removing access barriers, including in transport, and improving data analysis by addressing gaps in disability data collection to better inform public decision making and evaluation. (10) An affordable accessible transport system in Northern Ireland will facilitate disabled people to overcome barriers to the fulfilment of their rights, including access to services and information, education and employment. (7) Disabled people in Northern Ireland have less protection in relation to transport than in relation to employment and education. (7) Because they catered for the needs of disabled persons, [the former] Easibus services provided a level of social engagement and interaction for users and allowed them to play a more active role in their local community. (6)

Section 75 Category	Summary of Evidence
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People with disabilities face wider barriers, such as access to transport, which can impact on their ability to participate in employment. (5) • People with disabilities were less likely than people without a disability to include transport and travel in their choice of the three issues which concerned them most (4.2% of people with disabilities, 4.8% of people without disabilities). (2) • Those with a mobility difficulty made an average of 423 (42%) fewer journeys than those without a mobility difficulty. (4)
Marital Status	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very limited information is available. • Divorced persons were less likely than widowed persons or married persons or single persons to include transport and travel in their choice of the 3 issues which concerned them most (3.8% of divorced persons, 5.5% of widowed persons, 4.5% of married persons and 4.8% of single persons). (2)
Sexual Orientation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No information is available.
Dependants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very limited information is available. • Persons with dependants were less likely than persons without dependants to include transport and travel in their choice of the three issues which concerned them most (3.0% of persons with dependants, 5.6% of persons with no dependants). (2)

Conclusion

No information on transport-related inequalities was found in relation to the Section 75 categories of:

- Political opinion,
- Ethnicity and race, and
- Sexual orientation.

Very limited information on transport-related inequalities was found in relation to the Section 75 categories of:

- Gender
- Religious belief
- Marital status, and
- Persons with or without dependants.

In relation to these categories the only information retrieved is the percentage of respondents in each category prioritising transport and travel as one of their three major concerns in the 'What Matters Most?' survey. This information is now rather dated and a number of the results reported are counter-intuitive. It may be unwise to rely on this data to reach a conclusion that transport-related inequalities do not exist for these categories.

Better information is available for the inter-related categories of age and disability, although much of this information is also rather dated.

It would appear appropriate for the Department for Infrastructure (as the responsible and sponsoring Department), Translink (as the major public transport provider), IMTAC (as a significant representative body in relation to inclusive transport) and the ECNI to consider commissioning research on transport-related inequalities and how they relate to their proposed transport developments - and to inform the reporting and monitoring framework for ISNI's transport-related components.

Data Evidence of Inequalities – Housing

Data Sources

This section draws on previous work carried out by members of the team from the Strategic Investment Board (SIB) to develop a draft EQIA consultation report for the Housing Supply Strategy (HSS) – this was completed in November 2021 and is now out for public consultation. This EQIA and related sources of research, data and information reviewed to inform the development of the same are detailed in the links below:-

(1) Housing Supply Strategy Draft Equality Impact Assessment (DfC, November, 2021)

<https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/consultations/communities/dfc-draft-eqia.pdf>

(2) Housing Supply Strategy: Call for Evidence Summary Report (DfC, 2021)

https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/consultations/communities/dfc-housing-supply-strategy_0.pdf

(3) Statement on Key Inequalities in Housing and Communities in Northern Ireland (ECNI, 2017)

<https://www.equalityni.org/KeyInequalities-Housing/>
<https://www.equalityni.org/ECNI/media/ECNI/Publications/Delivering%20Equality/HousingCommunities-KeyInequalitiesStatement.pdf>

(4) Housing and Communities' Inequalities in Northern Ireland, Alison Wallace (ECNI, 2015)

<https://www.equalityni.org/ECNI/media/ECNI/Publications/Delivering%20Equality/HousingInequalities-FullReport.pdf>

In the data gathering activity to develop the HSS EQIA consultation report it was decided to use the framework of the Wallace Report (source 4 above) and ECNI report (source 3 above) and the data/ information therein as the basis for updating the evidence base pertaining to key inequalities. The Wallace Report (2015) provides a thorough and detailed assessment of the housing experiences of Section 75 groups framed around the three constructs of access, adequacy and sustainability. The Call for Evidence process for the HSS (2) indicated broad support for the use of these three constructs to provide an updated / current picture of the housing experiences of Section 75 groups. The main sources of primary data and information used to provide this more updated picture in the HSS EQIA (Source 1 above are as follows):

- Family Resources Survey 2018/19

<https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/publications/family-resources-survey-report-2018-2019>

- Co-ownership Scheme data (by s75 group)

Provided directly by NI Co-ownership scheme

- Domestic abuse statistics (sourced via PSNI).

<https://www.psnipolice.uk/globalassets/inside-the-psni/our-statistics/domestic-abuse-statistics/2021-22/q1/domestic-abuse-bulletin-jun-21.pdf>

- Northern Ireland Housing Bulletin January - March 2021

<https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/publications/northern-ireland-housing-bulletin-january-march-2021>

- Homelessness presentations and acceptances data NIHE/ NI Homelessness Bulletin
<https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/system/files/publications/communities/ni-homelessness-bulletin-oct-mar-2019.PDF>

- Social housing applications and allocations (by s75 group)
Provided directly by NIHE

- Housing Condition Survey (2016)
<https://www.nihe.gov.uk/Working-With-Us/Research/House-Condition-Survey>

- (HBAI) households below average income report (2019/20)
<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/the-households-below-average-income-northern-ireland-report-2019-to-2020>

- Anti-Poverty Expert Panel Report (2020)
<https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/system/files/publications/communities/dfc-social-inclusion-strategy-anti-poverty-expert-advisory-panel-recommendations.pdf>

- Equality Commission Equality Awareness Survey 2016
<https://www.equalityni.org/ECNI/media/ECNI/Publications/Delivering%20Equality/EqualityAwarenessSurvey-Attitudes.pdf>

- Recorded racist incidents and racist crimes in NI
PSNI, Hate Motivational Statistics, Quarterly update, period ending 30 June 2021 (published 26 August 2021)
<https://www.psni.police.uk/inside-psni/Statistics/hate-motivation-statistics/>

- Working paper drafted jointly by the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland and the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission (UNCPRD)
[https://www.equalityni.org/ECNI/media/ECNI/Publications/Delivering%20Equality/IMNI-CRPD-ParallelJurisdictionalReport-WorkingPaper\(Aug17\).pdf](https://www.equalityni.org/ECNI/media/ECNI/Publications/Delivering%20Equality/IMNI-CRPD-ParallelJurisdictionalReport-WorkingPaper(Aug17).pdf)

- Social Inclusion Strategy Disability Expert Advisory Panel Report (2020)
<https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/system/files/publications/communities/dfc-social-inclusion-strategy-disability-expert-advisory-panel-report.pdf>

- Study into Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGB&T) homelessness in Northern Ireland.
[Through Our Eyes \(nihe.gov.uk\)](https://www.nihe.gov.uk) (NIHE commissioned; prepared by The Rainbow Project & Council for the Homeless Northern Ireland [CHNI], 2015)

- 2020 NISRA What Matters Most? Study
<https://www.executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk/publications/what-matters-most-qualitative-analysis>

- NI Life and Times Survey
<https://www.ark.ac.uk/nilt/>

- Recorded homophobic hate incidents, crimes and outcomes in NI (2007-2020)
<https://www.psni.police.uk/inside-psni/Statistics/hate-motivation-statistics/>

Data Gaps

The data / information updates as presented in the HSS EQIA indicates that there remains a need to improve equality data collection and analysis within the key official statistics in order to inform the access, adequacy and sustainability of housing across all the Section 75 groups. At present (2021), the data gaps appear to be most substantive in respect of political opinion, sexual orientation, disability and to a lesser extent ethnicity/race and gender (in this latter case the evidence gap is in respect of transgender people only).

Also, when assessing the data sources for the experiences of one particular Section 75 group, the data are not controlled for other variables that may also have a bearing on housing outcomes. In effect there can be intersections between different equality categories. A case in point is the complexity of the relationship between gender and housing. The updated data in the HSS EQIA shows that while more women than men experience poverty both before and after their housing costs are accounted for, behind this statistic there are likely to be intersectional issues at play, with for example dependants/caring responsibilities and marital status influencing these trends. The majority of lone parents for instance are female. This example underlines the importance of not looking at any one Section 75 category in isolation.

Further data disaggregation and related research is required to gain a better understanding of the causality of many of the key inequalities that appear to exist (when looking at housing experiences through the lens of a single equality category). This issue has been noted in the draft HSS Strategic Framework which commits to progressing work to better understand the housing experiences of Section 75 groups, with reference to multiple identities and intersections between different equality categories.

Summary of Evidence of Inequalities

Notwithstanding the data gaps and need for greater understanding of intersectional issues at play, the available data and research does indicate that currently there are key inequalities persisting in some areas. These are summarised in the table below under the three constructs of access, adequacy and sustainability. Many of these were evident in the Wallace Report (2015) and ECNI Statement (2017) referenced above and as such are longstanding and hard to eradicate, while others are more recent, perhaps emerging as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. The table also includes examples of intersections between the Section 75 categories that require further understanding and research to disaggregate.

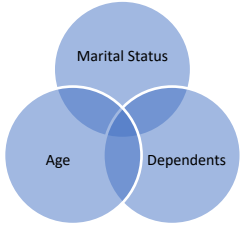
On a positive note, several aspects of the updated data analysis relevant to the access, adequacy and sustainability of housing outcomes do not show any material difference across the Section 75 categories. There is also evidence of increasingly positive attitudes towards some equality groups through the ECNI's Equality Awareness Surveys⁷, in particular towards travellers, lesbian, gay and bisexual (LGB) people and trans people in society in NI. An important element of the adequacy of housing is the ability to live peacefully and safely at and around the home, where the positive movement in these attitudes will play a role in extending equality of opportunity and good relations in this respect.

⁷ <https://www.equalityni.org/ECNI/media/ECNI/Publications/Delivering%20Equality/EqualityAwarenessSurvey-Attitudes.pdf>

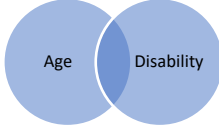
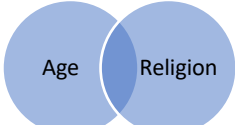
Section 75 Category	Summary of Evidence
Gender	<p><u>Access</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homelessness acceptances due to domestic violence which appear to dis-proportionately affect females. • More generally the number of single males presenting as homeless and being accepted as such is almost twice that of single females every year for the last five years to 2020/21. • Research suggests that trans repeat homelessness is associated with sporadic housing and regular moves in response to regular and sustained transphobic abuse. • In the social housing sector, there is a higher proportion of females who are in housing stress within the applicant pool, relative to males. <p><u>Sustainability</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More women than men experience poverty after their housing costs are accounted for.
Age	<p><u>Access</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proportion of social housing allocations to applicants under 40 is considerably higher than this age band in the population overall. The 65+ allocations appear to be slightly under-represented, despite the increasing importance of social renting among older age groups - evident from the tenancy data. There are clearly many variables that could be at play here, including the likelihood of the under 40 age groups having young children influencing their prioritisation in the allocation process. <p><u>Adequacy</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On a range of indicators older people are far more likely than other age groups to live in poor housing conditions
Religious Belief	<p><u>Access</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protestant applicants are underrepresented in the Co-ownership Scheme to enter homeownership. • In terms of social housing there are more lead applicants that are Catholic, more of whom are in housing stress than their counterparts from the Protestant community or other/no religious beliefs. • Social housing allocations between the two main religious traditions in NI over the last five years are broadly similar in proportional terms. However, applicants from a Catholic community background waited somewhat longer to be allocated a home (median of 18 months) relative to applicants from a Protestant community background (median of 11 months). <p><u>Adequacy</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In terms of fuel poverty reported within the HCS 2016, under the Low-Income High Costs (LIHC) methodology, there was some variation in the rate of fuel poverty by the two main religious groups;

Section 75 Category	Summary of Evidence
	<p>6% of households designated as Protestant and 10% of households designated as Catholic were in fuel poverty. Differences were less apparent using the 10% definition methodology to assess fuel poverty.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The HCS 2016 indicates that Protestant households lived in dwellings with an average basic repair cost of £939 (£10 per m²) while Catholic households lived in dwellings with an average basic repair cost of £637 (£7 per m²). • People from other religions, mixed religions or no religions are the most likely to live in non-decent homes, relative to the two main religious traditions in NI. <p><u>Sustainability</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The trend of social housing being associated with a higher rate of poverty is more apparent in Catholic households than the other categories.
Political Opinion	It has not been possible to provide any updated data analysis in respect of this Section 75 category.
Ethnicity and Race	<p><u>Access</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minority ethnic and migrant communities are less likely to be owner-occupiers or live in social housing and more likely to be in the private rented sector. • The proportion of Irish Travellers in housing stress appears to be higher than the likely numbers of this group in the overall population of NI. <p><u>Adequacy</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Negative attitudes continue to prevail towards racial groups in NI, which impacts on the ability of minority ethnic and migrant communities to live peacefully and safely at and around their homes. These attitudes contribute to the levels of racially motivated incidents and crimes in NI.
Disability	<p><u>Access</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Households that include someone with a disability or life limiting illness (under pension age) are more likely to live in social housing than households without someone with a disability. These households are less likely to be in outright home ownership, which is likely to be influenced by their potential for reduced incomes. • Individuals with a disability appear to be underrepresented within the applicant pool for the Co-ownership Scheme. • The availability of accessible and affordable housing for people with a range of disabilities continues to be a significant issue (ranging from suitable supported living accommodation to making adaptations to the home).

Section 75 Category	Summary of Evidence
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many d/Deaf and disabled people in NI (especially people with learning disabilities and people with experience of the mental health services) are still living in residential care homes and other institutional settings, without opportunities for (supported) independent living in the community. <p><u>Adequacy</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many disabled people live in homes that do not meet their requirements. The second highest reason for people presenting as homeless is that their ‘accommodation is not reasonable’. Of the accommodation not reasonable cases, ‘physical health/disability’ had the largest proportion of presenters at 57% in recent data sets. • Constraints exist with respect to the availability of housing adaptations that are essential to the adequacy of a home for many people living with a disability. <p><u>Sustainability</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individuals living with a disability and households that include an individual with a disability, can face additional affordability challenges in sustaining their home.
Sexual Orientation	<p><u>Access</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are specific and complex issues that contribute to the homelessness issues associated with the LGBTQI+ community. Some of the main issues include family rejection or relationship breakdown. • A route into social housing for LGBTQI+ people is homelessness related to domestic violence. Domestic violence for those from the LGBTQI+ community can be less visible. • Older lesbian, gay and bisexual (LGB) and transgender people can have different family support networks to the wider population and thus potentially differing needs for domiciliary, residential or nursing care support when compared to heterosexuals. <p><u>Adequacy</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An important element of the adequacy of housing is the ability to live peacefully and safely at and around the home. Public attitudes towards the LGBTQI+ community have been improving steadily in recent years. Despite this, some prejudice still prevails which contributes to homophobic crimes. There is also a view that these homophobic crimes are underreported.
Marital Status	<p><u>Access</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Single people on the social housing waiting list are more likely to be in housing stress than any other marital status groups (albeit that the data set has a large proportion of ‘unknown’ marital status). <p><u>Adequacy</u></p>

Section 75 Category	Summary of Evidence	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Single people are more likely to live in a non-decent home relative to other marital status categories (based on HCS 2016 data). • The HCS 2016 also indicates that households where the HRP is widowed are far more likely to be in fuel poverty (under the 10% definition method), than other marital status categories. <p><u>Sustainability</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More single people (with or without children) are in relative income poverty once housing costs are considered, compared to couples. 	
Dependency	<p><u>Access</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Households with children were more likely to be in the private rented sector, particularly lone parent households with children (45%). This is perhaps aligned to the finding in the APS Expert Panel Report that more low-income families with children are now living in the private rented sector with higher rents and poorer conditions than if they were accommodated in the public sector. • In terms of social housing there appears to be an under-representation of people with dependants in both the NIHE application and allocation data sets (relative to the overall population). <p><u>Sustainability</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a slight increase in the proportion of relative poverty amongst single people with children once housing costs are considered. This mirrors the findings of a recent ⁸UK report (Poverty in the UK/ Statistics) which notes that 22% of children in lone parent families were in persistent low income Before Housing Costs and 35% After Housing Costs, indicating the material impact of housing costs in moving many of these households into poverty. This suggests some intersection between the S75 categories of marital status and dependency. 	
Examples of intersections	 <p>The diagram consists of three overlapping circles. The top circle is labeled 'Marital Status', the bottom-left circle is labeled 'Age', and the bottom-right circle is labeled 'Dependents'. All three circles overlap in a central region.</p>	<p>The updated data analysis, indicates that there is likely to be intersection between gender, dependency and marital status. For instance, females are more likely to be carers, and lone parents are overwhelmingly female. This interplay will influence their housing outcomes (in respect of access, adequacy and sustainability).</p>

⁸ <https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/SN07096/SN07096.pdf>

Section 75 Category	Summary of Evidence
	<p>The updated data analysis, indicates that there is likely to be an intersection between disability and age. For instance, different types of impairment predominate among working age people (mainly psychiatric disorders) relative to the population of individuals with a disability overall, where mobility impairments appear to predominate (because this population includes a high proportion of older individuals (over the state pension age). This interplay will influence housing outcomes (in respect of access, adequacy and sustainability).</p>  <p>A final example of an intersection that is likely to exist (based on the updated analysis) is between religion and age. Broadly speaking the data analysis shows that Protestant households have a higher proportion of older age groups and that historically they have featured highly within the single pensioner, pensioner, and the 'couple with no children' household categories. This interplay will influence their housing outcomes (in respect of access, adequacy and sustainability).</p> 

In addition to the evidence from updated data analysis, the qualitative responses to the HSS Call for Evidence highlighted a number of more specifically defined groups experiencing inequalities. These included by way of examples, women and men who are victims and survivors of domestic abuse (giving rise to risk of homelessness); young people who work with youth justice system; young people (under 21) leaving care; the absence of data in respect of transgendered people and their housing needs; and the difficulties faced by asylum seekers in temporary accommodation.

Conclusion

Notwithstanding the data gaps and need for greater understanding of intersectional issues at play, the available data and research does indicate that currently there are key inequalities persisting in several areas – particularly with respect to the Section 75 groups of gender, age, religion, disability, and ethnicity / race. Many of the issues in this regard were evident in the Wallace Report (2015) and ECNI Statement (2017) referenced above and as such have been longstanding and hard to eradicate, while others are more recent, perhaps emerging as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

On a more positive note, several aspects of the updated data analysis relevant to the access, adequacy and sustainability of housing outcomes do not show any material difference across the Section 75 groups. There is also evidence of increasingly positive attitudes towards some equality groups through the ECNI's Equality Awareness Surveys, in particular towards travellers, lesbian, gay and bisexual (LGB) people and trans people in society in NI. An important element of the adequacy of housing is the ability to live peacefully and safely at and around the home, where the positive movement in these attitudes will play a role in extending equality of opportunity and good relations in this respect.

Data Evidence of Inequalities – Health and Social Care

Data Sources

The main sources of data/information reviewed in respect of health and social care inequalities included the following:-

(1) The ECNI Statement on Key Inequalities in NI (2007):

<https://www.equalityni.org/ECNI/media/ECNI/Publications/Employers%20and%20Service%20Providers/S75%20P10%20investigation%20reports/KeyinequalitiesinNI2007.pdf?ext=.pdf>

(2) The ECNI response to the priorities for the Programme for Government (PfG) Draft *Outcome Framework 2021*, including the recommendations in respect of access to health and social care and the specific needs of equality groups, in this respect.

<https://www.equalityni.org/pfg>

(3) ‘*A Picture of Caring*’ – a joint publication developed by ECNI in partnership with Carers Northern Ireland that tells the stories of eight inspiring individuals in a caring role and which specifically highlights the significant issues and challenges that often have to be overcome.

<https://www.equalityni.org/ECNI/media/ECNI/Publications/Delivering%20Equality/ApiictureofCaring2010.pdf?ext=.pdf>

(4) The most recent ECNI Public Opinion Survey, which was undertaken between November 2020 and January 2021 included an explicit focus on ‘*Equality Status and COVID-19*’.

<https://www.equalityni.org/Delivering-Equality/Addressing-inequality/Social-attitudes-good-relations/Research-investigations/Public-opinion-survey>

(5) The Health Inequalities Report (April 2021) - produced as part of the NI Health & Social Care Inequalities Monitoring System (HSCIMS). It presents a comprehensive analysis of health inequality gaps between the most and least deprived areas of NI, and within Health & Social Care (HSC) Trust and Local Government District (LGD) areas across a range of indicators, with comparisons to previous reporting periods. The report highlights that the majority of results included in this release are based on figures prior to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic and therefore do not reflect the impact of the pandemic.

<https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/publications/health-inequalities-annual-report-2021>

(6) The Department of Health report on Coronavirus / COVID-19 related health inequalities (December, 2020 - which included all data up to 27th October 2020). The report presents an analysis of coronavirus (Covid-19) related health inequalities by assessing differences in positive COVID-19 test cases, COVID-19 admissions and deaths between the most and least deprived areas of Northern Ireland. It also assesses variations by age, sex and between urban and rural areas.

<https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/health/coronavirus-related-health-inequalities.pdf>

(7) The ‘*2020 What Matters Most? Study*’, which aims to explore day-to-day issues that are prevalent in Northern Ireland, and to provide in-depth information on why these issues matter and how the public would like the government to respond. Healthcare was a dominant theme across all groups included in the study.

Data Gaps

From a review of the above sources of data/information there would be appear to be limited information / data gaps in respect of the equality grounds of political opinion, religious belief and marital status. The evidence in respect of the other six equality groups is summarised below.

Summary of Evidence of Inequalities

Section 75 category	Summary of Evidence
Gender	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Health Inequalities Report (2021; 5) noted that between 2012-14 and 2016-18, while there was no change in female healthy life expectancy for NI, there was a negative change in the most deprived areas. It further noted that disability-free life expectancy has changed negatively for both genders since 2012-14 with the inequality gaps widening. • The Department of Health (DoH) report on Coronavirus / COVID-19 related health inequalities (6) highlights that the infection rate among females was 8% higher than the rate for males. However, the hospital admission rate for COVID-19 (presented as the standardised admission rate) was 55% higher among males than the rate of their female counterparts. Finally, the report highlights that the COVID-19 death rate among males was 53% higher than the rate for females.
Age	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ECNI Statement on Key Inequalities in NI (2007) noted that the main groups experiencing inequalities - in terms of access to effective health or social care - included older people. The recent response by ECNI to the PfG Draft Outcome Framework (2) evidences that older people still experience barriers to health, social care and well-being, today. • The most recent Public Opinion Survey, implemented by ECNI, which was undertaken between November 2020 and January 2021 (4) included an explicit focus on '<i>Equality Status and COVID-19</i>'. The group identified most frequently as having been more negatively affected by the broader impacts of COVID-19 were those over the age of 75 (63%). • Aligned to the above, the Department of Health (DoH) report on Coronavirus / COVID-19 related health inequalities (6) highlights that the infection rate in the 10% most deprived areas in NI was more than double the NI rate among the 65+ population in these areas. In respect of the hospital

Section 75 category	Summary of Evidence
	<p>admission rate for COVID-19 (presented as the standardised admission rate) the report highlights that the rate for the population aged 75 and over was around 9 times that for the under 75 population. Furthermore, the report notes that the standardised COVID-19 death rate for the population aged 75 and over was nine times that for all ages. This 75+ rate was highest in the 10% most deprived areas, where it was one and a half times the NI average.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Health Inequalities Report (2021) (5), noted that for indicators of premature mortality, rates generally decreased over the period in NI, in its most and least deprived areas. The inequality gaps narrowed or remained broadly similar except for death rates among under 75s due to respiratory diseases, where the deprivation gap widened due to increased mortality in the most deprived areas where the rate is now three and a half times the rate in the least deprived areas.
Ethnicity and Race	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ECNI Statement on Key Inequalities in NI (2007) noted that the main groups experiencing inequalities - in terms of access to effective health or social care - included migrant workers and new residents (to NI). • The recent response by ECNI to the PfG Draft Outcomes Framework (2) evidences that that this Section 75 group still experience barriers to health, social care and well-being, today. • This response also specifically mentions Irish Travellers in this context.
Disability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ECNI Statement on Key Inequalities in NI (2007) noted that the main groups experiencing inequalities - in terms of access to effective health or social care - included individuals with a disability (whose needs were not being met). The recent response by ECNI to the PfG Draft Outcome Framework (2) evidences that individuals with a disability still experience barriers to health, social care and well-being, today. The response goes further to reinforce the need to <i>'ensure investment in health care to address the specific needs of equality groups, including the health care needs of people with disabilities and young people's mental health needs'</i>. • The most recent Public Opinion Survey (4) included an explicit focus on <i>'Equality Status and COVID-19'</i>. Those living with a disability or underlying health conditions (31%) and those suffering from physical or mental ill-health (26%) were cited as being negatively affected by the broader impacts of COVID-19.

Section 75 category	Summary of Evidence
Sexual Orientation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The recent response by ECNI to the PfG Draft Outcome Framework (2) highlights the need to identify and remove barriers to health, social care and well-being experienced by Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual (LGB) people and trans people. • Similarly, participants from the LGBT community in the <i>2020 What Matters Most?</i> Study (7) also expressed their concerns around the lack of comprehensive trans healthcare across Northern Ireland.
Dependency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>'A Picture of Caring'</i> (6) highlights the significant issues that affect the life experiences of carers which are over and above their own day-to-day responsibilities. It notes that carers give so much to society yet they risk poor health, social exclusion and poverty because of their caring role. • The report notes that the value of carers' unpaid work in Northern Ireland is estimated to be £3.12 billion, and notes that it is carers who are paying the cost. It highlights that they should be able to care for others without damaging their own health and wellbeing. • Aligned to this ECNI is committed to supporting all carers, through their work with policy makers (to reinforce statutory duties) and in the development of increased protections as part of legal reform work.

Conclusion

The main information/ data gaps in this investment theme are with respect of the equality grounds of political opinion, religious belief and marital status. The key inequalities appear to be most evident in respect of the Section 75 grounds of gender, age, disability and dependency (i.e., carers). Also, to a lesser extent with respect to ethnicity and race and sexual orientation. It is evident that Covid-19 has had a differential impact across the population of NI, with some signs that the long-term effects of the pandemic may serve to widen existing inequalities in health and wellbeing.

Data Evidence of Inequalities– Education

Data Sources

The main sources of data/information reviewed in respect of health and social care inequalities included the following:-

- (1) The ECNI Statement on Key Inequalities in NI (2007):
<https://www.equalityni.org/ECNI/media/ECNI/Publications/Employers%20and%20Service%20Providers/S75%20P10%20investigation%20reports/KeyinequalitiesinNI2007.pdf?ext=.pdf>
- (2) The ECNI's *'Every Child an Equal Child'* (2008) sets out a number of overarching objectives regarding equality in education. This represented a statement on key inequalities in education and a strategy for intervention, setting out three overarching goals: ACCESS - every child has equality of access to a quality educational experience; ATTAINMENT - every child is given the opportunity to reach his or her full potential; and ETHOS - the ethos of every school promotes the inclusion and participation of all children
<https://www.equalityni.org/ECNI/media/ECNI/Publications/Delivering%20Equality/Keyinequalitiesineducation2008.pdf>
- (3) The ECNI's *'Inequalities in Education: Facts and Trends 1998-2008'* (2008) provides an update on key trends and patterns over a ten year period
<https://www.equalityni.org/ECNI/media/ECNI/Publications/Delivering%20Equality/InequalitiesinEducationfactsandtrends1998-2008.pdf>
- (4) Indicators Of Equality of Opportunity and Good Relations In Education, Final Report, including Recommended Indicator Framework, July 2011. The Equality Company
https://www.equalityni.org/ECNI/media/ECNI/Publications/Delivering%20Equality/Indicators-Educ_FinalMainReport250412.pdf
- (5) ECNI – Recommendations: Programme for government (PfG) and Budget (May, 2016)
https://www.equalityni.org/ECNI/media/ECNI/Consultation%20Responses/2016/OFMD_FM_PfG_Budget_Recommendations29012016-final.pdf
- (6) ECNI – Key Inequalities in Education Statement (October, 2017)
<https://www.equalityni.org/ECNI/media/ECNI/Publications/Delivering%20Equality/EducationKeyInequalities-FinalStatement.pdf>
- (7) ECNI: Equality in Education – Policy Recommendations (2018) This policy position paper sets out the Commission/s views and specific recommendations for changes in law, policy and practice will both support and challenge government and partners to address key inequalities in education through the development and delivery of legislation, policy and services over the coming period
<https://www.equalityni.org/ECNI/media/ECNI/Publications/Delivering%20Equality/Education-FullPolicyPosition.pdf>

- (8) ECNI: Response to the priorities for the Programme for Government (PfG) Draft *Outcome Framework 2021*, (2021) including the recommendations in respect of education and the specific needs of equality groups.
<https://www.equalityni.org/ECNI/media/ECNI/Consultation%20Responses/2021/NIO-PfGOutcomesFramework.pdf>
- (9) Institute for Conflict Research; Grasping the Nettle: The Experiences of Gender Variant Children and Transgender Youth Living in Northern Ireland, Belfast. (McBride, 2013)
https://www.executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/ofmdfm_dev/grasping-the-nettle-transgender-youth-living-in-ni.pdf
- (10) Department for the Economy- Audit of Inequalities and Action Plan 2016-2021
<https://niopa.qub.ac.uk/bitstream/NIOPA/10635/1/Draft-2016-2021-Audit-of-Inequalities.pdf>
- (11) NIACE. Access and Inclusion: Young Adult Carers and Education and Training. (2013)
- (12) Education Inequalities in Northern Ireland Final report to the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland (March, 2015). Prepared by: Dr Stephanie Burns Prof Ruth Leitch Prof Joanne Hughes, School of Education, Queen's University Belfast. Research based on their persistence or new emergence across the years examined, as well as where several equality grounds have been observed to be particularly disadvantaged in one or more of the four areas of concern: educational access, attainment, progression and destination.
<https://www.equalityni.org/ECNI/media/ECNI/Publications/Delivering%20Equality/EducationInequality-FullReportQUB.pdf>
- (13) Department Of Education, Equality and Human Rights Policy Screening for the Establishment of an Expert Panel to Examine and Propose an Action Plan to Address Links Between Persistent Educational Underachievement and Socio Economic Background (2020)
<https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/education/completed-s75-screening-appointment-of-an-expert-panel-to-identify-act...pdf>
- (13b) Expert Panel On Educational Underachievement In Northern Ireland - A Fair Start (May, 2021)
<https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/publications/fair-start-final-report-action-plan>
- (14) National LGBT Survey Summary Report – Government Equalities Office (July, 2018)
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/722314/GEO-LGBT-Survey-Report.pdf
- (15) NISRA and Department of Education - Qualifications and Destinations of Northern Ireland School Leavers 2019-20 (May, 2021)
<https://dera.ioe.ac.uk/38345/1/Qualifications%20and%20Destinations%20of%20Northern%20Ireland%20School%20Leavers%202019-20%20%28redacted%29.pdf>
- (16) Disabled woman wins £1,000 compensation over college's lift problems
<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-northern-ireland-35368796>

- (17) Section 75 Annual Progress Report 2020-21 (August, 2021)
https://www.ulster.ac.uk/data/assets/pdf_file/0009/951858/Appendix-2-Section-75-Annual-Progress-Report-2020-21-31.08.21.pdf
- (18) Women in STEM Matrix Position Paper (May, 2018)
<https://matrixni.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/Women-in-STEM-Report-final-20-may.pdf>
- (19) Adult Literacy Statistics – National Literacy Trust
<https://literacytrust.org.uk/parents-and-families/adult-literacy/>
- (20) Literacy and numeracy skills are improving in Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Branch DEL
https://dera.ioe.ac.uk/25315/2/Literacy%20&%20Numeracy_Redacted.pdf
- (21) Essential Skills Standards and Curriculum for Literacy and Numeracy in Northern Ireland (2016)
<https://www.economy-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/economy/Essential%20Skills%20Interactive%20PDF%20%28revised%29.pdf>

Data Gaps

The ECNI Key Inequalities in Education Statement, October 2017 noted that there remains significant and specific data gaps:

- These are across a number of themes in relation to a number of equality grounds, specifically: gender identity; religion; political opinion; and sexual orientation. There is also a lack of data disaggregation in relation to: ethnicity; disability status; marital status; and dependency status.
- Data currently collected on minority ethnic groups is not disaggregated beyond the classification of ‘minority ethnic’. There is also little data concerning the experiences of asylum seeking and refugee children in Northern Ireland.
- Monitoring of ethnicity within education does not allow for the disaggregation of the ‘white’ category by nationality which would enable the educational experiences of non-Newcomer Eastern European migrants and other minority ethnic groups, such as Travellers, to be determined.
- Additionally, there is currently no official monitoring of carers in school – particularly young mothers. Therefore, school age parents/those with dependants are often hidden in official statistics, making it difficult to measure their needs and provide the necessary support.
- Many young adults do not realise they are carers or do not want to be identified as carers so the limited data that is collected is very likely to be an underestimation of the real number of young adult carers.
- Although quantitative data is collected on the marital status of students participating in education beyond post-primary school, there has been little research in this area to explain the trends that are observed.
- Further research is needed to explore the transition of students with a disability (from gaining a qualification, to participating in the workforce) in order to uncover the reasons

why students with a disability are less likely to gain employment than those without a disability, even when the level of qualification is the same.

There is a need for a further disaggregation of the 'Other' religious group category in official statistics, in order to understand more about the student experience of those of different religions, to accommodate their needs and to ensure their equal participation (12).

The ECNI Equality in Education Policy Recommendations Report 2018 (7) stated that there was a need to improve equality data and analysis - addressing current gaps including on grounds of gender identity, religious belief / political opinion, belonging to a minority ethnic group, disability, sexual orientation and people with dependants.

There also seems to be a gap in data in regard of Section 75 scrutiny related to significant capital spending projects. By way of example, Ulster University's Section 75 Annual Progress Report (17) references the considerable EDI work carried out by the University but makes no reference as to how Section 75 may have been integrated into the design and delivery of the new Belfast campus.

Summary of Evidence of Inequalities

Section 75 Category	Summary of Evidence
Gender	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is clear evidence of differential educational attainment by gender which services to enhance the cycle of deprivation. (1) • A key inequality identified in the 2017 ECNI Key Inequalities in Education Statement 2017 noted that males have lower levels of attainment than females, beginning in primary school and continuing throughout schooling to GCSE and A Level. Fewer male school leavers enter higher education than do females. By way of example, in 2014/15, just over a third of male school leavers went on to higher education, compared to just over a half of female. (6) • A key inequality identified in the 2017 ECNI Key Inequalities in Education Statement 2017 noted that females in higher education have a lower share of enrolees in the STEM subject area of 'Maths, IT, Engineering and Technology' than their share of the population. (6) • An attainment gap between males and females was found to begin very early in education, to the detriment of males. It was clearly evident by Key Stage 2 (ages 8-11 years), and it increased after the transition to post-primary school to Key Stage 3 and beyond. The attainment gap only widened through the following steps in the education journey. (12) • In 1999, 11,943 boys and 11,104 girls were born in Northern Ireland. In 2014/15, 87.6% of the girls (9,647) took STEM GCSEs, compared to 91%* (10,873) of the boys. But when it came to Core STEM A levels or FE vocational exams in 2016/17, only 30.7% (3,376) of girls took one. That compares starkly to the 85% (10,221) of boys who did so. So the decline in girls participating in Core STEM between GCSE & A Level/FE is anticipated to be 65%, compared to a 6% drop off for boys. (18) • Only 7.8% girls currently pursue STEM to the point of employment in a STEM role. <i>'That's the same % as in 2008 and in the modern vibrant economy that Northern Ireland aspires to be, that's a shocking supply chain failure'</i>. (18) <i>'The</i>

Section 75 Category	Summary of Evidence
	<p><i>ONLY way Northern Ireland can hope to increase its productivity to the UK average is through its education system producing enough skilled graduates to take up high value jobs in Northern Ireland businesses. Encouraging more girls into STEM careers is a highly achievable way for government to help increase NI productivity'. (18)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Barriers regarding STEM for girls were noted in the report (18) <p>At Primary School level (18):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A shortage of science expertise within primary schools across NI means just 12% of NI pupils in year 5 (age 9) are taught by teachers who have a science specialism and 18% by teachers who have a maths specialism (international averages, 38% and 41% respectively). ○ A 2017 NI assembly research paper identified broader STEM issues in NI's primary schools:- The science and technology elements were underdeveloped in 54% of schools inspected; While 91% of teachers surveyed felt very prepared to teach maths (above international average), only 54% felt as ready to teach science (below international average). <p>At Secondary School level (18):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Gender dynamics in the classroom and school environment are critical. Teachers must be equipped to be proactive in STEM classes, to be aware that boys can easily take over in mixed classes, and to encourage girls to engage in the full breadth of STEM learning. ○ Girls' learning outcomes in STEM can also be compromised by psychological factors such as maths or test anxiety and stereotype threat about their ability in STEM; ○ Education providers are not adequately equipped with up-to-date knowledge of the various pathways to further study, STEM roles and careers. (18) <p>At Tertiary level (18):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Only 14.8% of women pursue further study of core STEM to tertiary level, compared to 35.6% of men with women particularly underrepresented in engineering (14%) and computer science (16%). ○ Both male and female staff in tertiary institutes have been found to present behaviours which subtly favour male students (staff more likely to respond to emails from male students, spend more time mentoring and more likely to seek participation from males in class). The presence of a female lecturer has a positive impact on women's participation. ○ Careful consideration of course titles may contribute to more women enrolling on core STEM (traditionally male-dominated) courses e.g. greater cognisance of girls' career ambitions to bring solutions to the world for greater societal benefit. (18) <p>In employment (18):</p>

Section 75 Category	Summary of Evidence
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Despite women comprising almost half (48%) of the entire workforce in NI their representation in non-traditional, STEM occupations remains low. ○ Women in STEM leadership roles, i.e. management, directorships and as senior officials remain underrepresented across all STEM fields (17% average). ○ A critical point in the STEM women’s career path arises during their mid-late 40s: representation at higher levels drop by 6% from 22% ; and continues to shrink until by retirement only 6% of science, research, engineering and technology professionals in NI are women. ○ A recent Royal Academy of Engineering (RAE) report highlighted: “The perception that there is no ‘crisis of inclusion’ or burning platform, to drive action (rather a consistent pattern of low levels of inclusion with regard to women engineers)”, as a potential barrier in addressing the fact that only 11% of UK engineering professionals being female. (18) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Males fall further behind females in their progression from Key Stage 2 to Key Stage 3. (12) ● Upon leaving school, females were less likely than males to enter employment and job training programmes and the subject area of ‘Maths, IT, Engineering and Technology’ in higher education; males were underrepresented in accredited and non-accredited further education courses and in all subject areas in higher education (except ‘Maths, IT, Engineering and Technology’). These trends are persistent inequalities. (12). ● A whole-community approach to education must address a wide range of inequalities and promote equality of opportunity across and between all of the Section 75 equality categories. (13b) ● The 2013 Institute for Conflict Research “Grasping the Nettle” report highlighted that, ‘the exclusion of trans issues from the school curriculum reduces trans equality and inhibits good relations from developing.’ (9) ● This remains an issue. A key inequality identified in the 2017 ECNI Key Inequalities in Education Statement 2017 noted there is transphobic bullying and self-exclusion from school of gender variant or trans young people. (6).

Section 75 Category	Summary of Evidence
Age	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ECNI's 2008 publication 'Every Child an Equal Child' sets out a number of overarching objectives regarding equality in education. These were: every child has equality of access to a quality education experience; every child is given the opportunity to reach his or her potential; the ethos of every school promotes the inclusion and participation of all children (2) • A key inequality identified in the 2017 ECNI Key Inequalities in Education Statement (6) noted that older groups face more difficulties finding and sustaining employment after the job training programme, 'Steps to Work', compared to the younger age groups. This inequality was identified from an analysis of DEL data (2007/08-2011/12) by Burns et al. (2015) (6) • Participation in further and higher education declines with age. The data on accredited courses shows just how steep the decline is after the age of 25 years in further education. This is a persistent inequality. (12) • The ECNI Equality in Education Policy Recommendations Report 2018 (7) considers, following engagement with stakeholders and wider consideration, that it is important to seek to ensure progress on a number of the recommendations 'of benefit to all children' which have the potential to deliver benefits to children and young people from across the equality categories, including those also entitled to free school meals (and specific groups therein - for example, boys, including those from Protestant backgrounds). In particular, it calls for prompt action to advance childcare and early-years provision to meet the diverse needs of all children; to drive attainment via collaborative approaches involving family and the wider community; and to put in place a system for learning from successful interventions. (7) • Education plays a key role in determining a person's life chances and opportunities in terms of social and economic mobility. Those with fewer qualifications and skills are disadvantaged in civic/community life and when competing for available employment opportunities. In this context, poor educational attainment can be seen as a clear barrier to labour market entry and progression. (1) • There is some evidence of particular issues regarding educational attainment for children from poorer households which serves to enhance the cycle of deprivation (1) • Research by Parsons and Bynner (2007) notes the impact that poor educational outcomes can have on a person's life trajectory. 'The problem does not recede with time but can continue to limit opportunities and diminish life chances and the quality of life in all the main domains of adult functioning: education, family, workplace and community'. (3) • From the qualitative element of the research, current barriers to educational equality for 'Looked After Children' included: the impact of multiple placements; delays in the system; and transitions to adulthood. Potential enablers to educational equality included: the SEN statementing of Looked After Children who need it to attract more resources to support a child; a child-centred approach to placements; more joined-up policy and practice; and support for vulnerable parents (12) • There was a persistent underrepresentation of older people in most Further and Higher Education courses and job training programmes. (12)

Section 75 Category	Summary of Evidence
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Those aged 25 years and older were less likely than younger age groups to receive job training while in employment. (12) • One in five (17.9% / 256,000 people) adults in Northern Ireland have very poor literacy skills. (2012 data) compared with 1 in 6 in England; 1 in 4 in Scotland and 1 in 8 in Wales (19); (20); (21) • Students aged 25 years and older, students from marital status groups other than 'single', and students with dependants in higher education were persistently less likely to enrol in the STEM subject area of 'Maths, IT, Engineering and Technology'. Students with a disability represented the smallest share of enrollees 'Medicine, Dentistry, and Subjects Allied to Medicine'. (12) • Students aged 20 years and under, and single students were much less likely to enter full-time paid work upon leaving higher education than other groups. (12) • Older leavers (aged 50 years and older), were persistently less likely to gain employment and sustain employment after completion of job training programmes. (12)
Religious Belief	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When the different groups are compared, community background is the area where fewest differences existed in 2007/08. Within the population, the economically active from both communities hold very similar levels of highest education attainment. Among school leavers, there has been considerable improvement in the highest level of educational attainment of both communities, although this rate of improvement has been slightly greater for Roman Catholics than for Protestants. Thus, the gap between highest educational attainment of Protestant and Roman Catholic school leavers has widened. (3) • In January 2016 ECNI's Recommendations for the Programme for Government (PfG) and Budget in addressing education inequalities, included those experienced by Irish Travellers; those entitled to free school meals particularly boys, notably Protestant boys; disabled children/young people (5) • A key inequality identified in the 2017 ECNI Key Inequalities in Education Statement 2017 noted that Protestants continue to have lower levels of attainment than Catholics at GCSE and A Level. Fewer Protestant school leavers enter higher education than do Catholics. (6). This inequality was identified from an analysis of DE data (2007/08-2011/12) by Burns et al. (2015), and by ECNI examination of DE school leaver statistical bulletins for 2013/14 and 2014/15. • There is persistent lower achievement and lack of progression to further and higher education of school leavers entitled to free school meals, particularly Protestants, notably Protestant males. (6). This trend was highlighted as a persistent inequality (1, 3, 12). • The 'Audit of Inequalities and Action Plan 2011-2016' released by DEL also highlighted the persistently higher proportion of Protestant working class boys failing at education than any other group. (10)

Section 75 Category	Summary of Evidence																																														
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In 2017/18, the data for religious belief illustrates that at an overall level, the percentage breakdown for Protestant is 32.3%, Catholic, 50.6% and Other 17.2%. (13) 																																														
	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th rowspan="2"></th> <th rowspan="2">Total enrolment</th> <th colspan="3">Religion</th> </tr> <tr> <th>Protestant</th> <th>Catholic</th> <th>Other</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Vol. and Pri. Preschool</td> <td>8,080</td> <td>2,129</td> <td>3,759</td> <td>2,192</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Nursery Schools</td> <td>5,824</td> <td>1,899</td> <td>2,604</td> <td>1,321</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Primary</td> <td>183,711</td> <td>55,708</td> <td>92,905</td> <td>35,098</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Post-primary</td> <td>145,085</td> <td>50,785</td> <td>74,433</td> <td>19,867</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Special</td> <td>6,174</td> <td>2,105</td> <td>2,671</td> <td>1,398</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td>348,874</td> <td>112,626</td> <td>176,372</td> <td>59,876</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td>32.3%</td> <td>50.6%</td> <td>17.2%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>					Total enrolment	Religion			Protestant	Catholic	Other	Vol. and Pri. Preschool	8,080	2,129	3,759	2,192	Nursery Schools	5,824	1,899	2,604	1,321	Primary	183,711	55,708	92,905	35,098	Post-primary	145,085	50,785	74,433	19,867	Special	6,174	2,105	2,671	1,398	Total	348,874	112,626	176,372	59,876			32.3%	50.6%	17.2%
	Total enrolment	Religion																																													
		Protestant	Catholic	Other																																											
Vol. and Pri. Preschool	8,080	2,129	3,759	2,192																																											
Nursery Schools	5,824	1,899	2,604	1,321																																											
Primary	183,711	55,708	92,905	35,098																																											
Post-primary	145,085	50,785	74,433	19,867																																											
Special	6,174	2,105	2,671	1,398																																											
Total	348,874	112,626	176,372	59,876																																											
		32.3%	50.6%	17.2%																																											
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In terms of educational underachievement, a recent Department of Education screening document (13) noted that when considering Catholic and Protestant children attending all school types, there is a slight difference in attainment rates. In 2017/18, Catholic children (71.4%) had a slightly higher attainment rate (1.7 percentage points higher than Protestant children [69.7%]). However, where multiple identities are involved, the differences can be significant. For example, the percentage of school leaver Protestant FSME boys achieving 5+ GCSEs (including equivalents including English and Maths) was 37.2% in 2017/18. By contrast the percentage of school leaver Protestant non-FSME boys was 71.6%, a 34.4 percentage point difference. The percentage of FSME boys who achieve 5+ GCSES (A*-C) including equivalents including English and Maths in 2017/18 was: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Protestant FSME Boys: 37.2% (334) / Protestant non-FSME Boys: 71.6% (2,338) = 34.4% point difference Catholic FSME Boys: 46.7% (805) / Catholic non-FSME Boys: 76.4% (3,109) = 29.7% point difference Other FSME Boys: 46.2% (123) / Other non-FSME Boys: 70.2% (672) = 24% point difference Protestant FSME Girls: 49.1% (397) / Protestant non-FSME Girls: 82.1% (2,631) = 33% point difference Catholic FSME Girls: 57.0% (884) / Catholic non-FSME Girls: 83.3% (3,125) = 26.3% point difference Other FSME Girls: 51.8% (127) / Other non-FSME Girls: 82.9% (682) = 31.1% point difference There was a widening of the gap in undergraduate and postgraduate enrolment in higher education between Protestants and Catholics, to the detriment of Protestants. (12) 																																														

Section 75 Category	Summary of Evidence
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Of great concern is the lower educational attainment of males, particularly Protestant males and all pupils who are entitled to free school meals. These attainment gaps are persistent inequalities and have yet to be addressed. (12) • Catholics consistently had higher achievement proportions than Protestants at post-primary level and this gap widened over the time period. (12) • Catholics and those from 'Other' religions, minority ethnic groups, and separated/divorced people were more likely to leave accredited professional and technical further education courses early than other groups. (12)
Political Opinion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A key inequality identified in the 2017 ECNI Key Inequalities in Education Statement 2017 noted that Unionists are doing less well than Nationalists and those of neither political opinion in terms of highest qualification. (6) This inequality was identified from an analysis of NILT data by Burns et al. (2015) for 2012 and by the Commission for 2015. In 2015, a larger proportion of nationalists than unionists had 'Degree level or higher' or 'Higher education – diploma or equivalent' as their highest qualification (26.6% and 21.7% respectively). (6) • Young people of various political opinions may self-exclude themselves from particular courses and campuses of higher education. This related to perceptions that people had of certain institutions depending on their political beliefs. (6). • Two key issues were identified regarding educational equality between people of different political opinions: one is a lack of data or inconsistent data, and the other is fear and a lack of openness about political opinion. (12) • Students with overt political affiliations, particularly those studying subject areas such as politics or history, do not feel able to debate or interrogate their political opinions while in their courses. (12)
Ethnicity and Race	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is some evidence of particular issues regarding educational attainment for Travellers which serves to enhance the cycle of deprivation (1) • ECNI 2018 policy recommendations identified that there were immediate opportunities and/or a particular pressing need to secure change in relation to: tackling prejudice-based bullying; and addressing inequalities in attainment and access experienced by Traveller, Roma and Newcomer children. (5) • A key inequality identified in the 2017 ECNI Key Inequalities in Education Statement 2017 noted that minority ethnic students suffer racist bullying in school. It also noted that children from the Traveller community and

Section 75 Category	Summary of Evidence
	<p>Roma children have some of the lowest levels of attainment of all equality groups. (6). This inequality was highlighted in the Commission’s 2007 Statement on Key Inequalities. (1)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Newcomer pupils are much less likely to attend grammar schools than minority ethnic and white, non-newcomer pupils. (6) • After leaving school, further or higher education, available data suggests that minority ethnic students are less likely to gain employment than white students. (6) • There may be particular issues for asylum seeking and refugee children, but analysis is impacted by a lack of data (6). Further research is needed on the educational experiences of asylum seeking and refugee children in Northern Ireland to better understand any associated issues and inequalities. • The ECNI Equality in Education Policy Recommendations Report 2018 (7) considers, following engagement with stakeholders and wider consideration, that there are immediate opportunities and/or a particular pressing need to secure change in relation to: tackling prejudice-based bullying; addressing inequalities in attainment and access experienced by Traveller, Roma and Newcomer children. (7) • There was a persistent underrepresentation of pupils who are Newcomer or from minority ethnic backgrounds, pupils who are entitled to FSM, and pupils who are from a care background in grammar schools. (12) • Since 2007/08, there has been a reversal of patterns in the proportion of minority ethnic and white school leavers achieving attainment targets at GCSE and A Level between 2007/08 and 2011/12. In particular, the attainment proportions of female minority ethnic pupils in general decreased since 2007/08, while Irish Traveller school leavers had persistently low attainment throughout the time period examined. (12) • The proportion of minority ethnic school leavers going onto higher education has decreased (dramatically so for minority ethnic females), while the proportion of white school leavers entering higher education has increased slightly over the five-year period – the ethnicity gap has therefore narrowed to the detriment of minority ethnic students. (12) • Minority ethnic students, were much less likely to enter full-time paid work upon leaving higher education than other groups. (12)
Disability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is some evidence of particular issues regarding educational attainment for disabled students which serves to enhance the cycle of deprivation (1) • A key inequality identified in the 2017 ECNI Key Inequalities in Education Statement 2017 noted that students with any SEN or a disability are more vulnerable to bullying. (6). Students with any SEN or a disability

Section 75 Category	Summary of Evidence
	<p>have lower attainment levels than students without any SEN or disability and are less likely to go on to higher education. (6)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The same report also found that leavers from further education and higher education who self-report a disability are less likely to move into employment. (6) • A recent case demonstrates how important it is for access audits to be undertaken in new build or adaption projects. A disabled County Antrim student who needed to be rescued after becoming stuck in a lift in her wheelchair has been awarded £1,000 in compensation. ‘The most common cause of complaint regarding access to education is the failure of institutions to make a reasonable adjustment so that a disabled person is not placed at a disadvantage in comparison with other students’ (Statement from ECNI; 16) • People with disabilities were underrepresented in enrolments in postgraduate and ‘part-time/other’ courses in higher education. (12) • There were persistently lower levels of educational attainment for pupils with disabilities, pupils who have special educational needs, and pupils from a care background. Despite increases in their attainment proportions since 2007/08, the attainment gaps have widened. (12) • Students with a disability were much less likely to enter full-time paid work upon leaving higher education than other groups. (12) • Leavers who had a self-reported disability were persistently less likely to gain employment and sustain employment after completion of job training programmes. (12)
Sexual Orientation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A key inequality identified in the 2017 ECNI Key Inequalities in Education Statement 2017 noted there is transphobic bullying and self-exclusion from school of gender variant or trans young people. (6). It also noted that young people with same sex attraction are more likely to be bullied in school than their peers with opposite sex attraction. (6). This inequality was identified from an analysis of Young Life and Times data by Burns et al. (2015) (12) and was highlighted in the Commission’s 2007 Statement on Key Inequalities. (1) • Young people who are gay, lesbian or bisexual often self-exclude from school. (6). This inequality was identified from qualitative data collected and analysed by Burns et al. (2015).(6) • There is self-exclusion or forced exclusion from school of gender variant or transgender young people, and young people who are gay, lesbian or bisexual. Young people of different political opinions may also self-exclude themselves from particular courses and campuses of higher education. (12) • The ECNI Equality in Education Policy Recommendations Report 2018 (7) considers it important to tackle prejudice-based bullying and challenge stereotypes – including against identified groups such as trans pupils;

Section 75 Category	Summary of Evidence
	<p>minority ethnic students; those with same sex attraction; and those with SEN / disabilities; and challenge gender stereotypes. Address inequalities in attainment and access – including those experienced by Irish Travellers, Roma and Newcomer children; those entitled to free school meals, particularly boys, notably Protestant boys; looked after children, young carers; and disabled children and young people. (7)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The NIESR report noted that there was a lack of robust evidence on the experiences of LGBT people in education, but that existing research does suggest that homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying persists in schools (14)
Marital Status	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a lack of research and literature in relation to the educational experience of different marital status groups. (6) • There was a persistent underrepresentation of people who were previously or are currently married/in a civil partnership/co-habiting, in most further and higher education courses and job training programmes. (12) • Widowed people had the lowest achievement rate of all marital status groups in accredited courses in further education. (12) • Separated / divorced leavers were persistently less likely to gain employment and sustain employment after completion of job training programmes. (12)
Dependency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a lack of quantitative data in relation to the educational experience of young carers. (6). Some qualitative data demonstrates that young carers suffer significant disadvantages in education. For example, a 2013 study by the National Institute of Adult Continuing Education (NIACE) highlighted that young adult carers often have to miss or be late for classes and are tired and therefore struggle to complete work on time. (11) It also found that young carers often live in poverty, miss large chunks of learning, are isolated, have restricted social networks, and their own health and wellbeing can be compromised. This can make engaging in education a challenge. (11) • There is a growing recognition and acceptance that young adult carers aged 16-25 years have particular needs that are distinct from those of young carers (under 18 years) and adults who are carers. (6) • Those who have dependants are persistently less likely to gain employment and sustain employment after completion of job training programmes. (6). This inequality was identified from an analysis of DEL data (2007/08-2011/12) by Burns et al. (2015) • There was a persistent underrepresentation of people who have dependants in most Further and Higher Education courses and job training programmes. (12)

Section 75 Category	Summary of Evidence
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On accredited courses, non-accredited courses in further education, and in Training for Success, the shares of enrolees with dependants decreased over the time period examined. This is an emergent inequality. (12) • Those with dependants were more likely to successfully complete accredited further education courses than those who did not have dependants. In the general population, those who are carers were much less likely than others to have higher education as their highest qualification level. (12) • Leavers who had dependants, were persistently less likely to gain employment and sustain employment after completion of job training programmes. (12)

Conclusion

The main information/ data gaps in this investment theme are with respect of the equality grounds of gender identity; religion; political opinion; and sexual orientation. There is also a lack of data disaggregation in relation to: ethnicity; disability status; marital status; and dependancy status. There also seems to be a gap in data in regard of Section 75 scrutiny related to significant capital spend projects.

Compared to other groups within the nine equality grounds, there were persistently lower proportions of school leavers entering higher education from the following groups: Protestants, ‘Others’; school leavers who have a disability or any special educational needs; school leavers who are Traveller; young people from a care background; and young people who receive free school meals. (12)

A whole-community approach to education must address a wide range of inequalities and promote equality of opportunity across and between all of the Section 75 equality categories. (13b)

Appendix to Data Evidence of Inequalities - Education

Qualifications and Destinations of Northern Ireland School Leavers 2019-20 (15)

School leavers *not entitled* to free school meals achieving at least 5 GCSEs⁽²⁾ A*-C incl. GCSE English and GCSE maths by gender and religion of pupil 2019/2020⁽¹⁾

	Boys Numbers	Boys %	Girls Numbers	Girls %	Total Numbers	Total %
PROTESTANT	2274	78.3	2540	86.1	4814	82.2
Total	2903		2951		5854	
CATHOLIC	3090	81.3	3336	89.6	6426	85.4
Total	3803		3724		7527	
OTHER⁽³⁾	793	76.4	713	82.7	1506	79.3
Total	1038		862		1900	
ALL RELIGIONS	6157	79.5	6589	87.4	12746	83.4
Total	7744		7537		15281	

Table 8

School leavers *entitled* to free school meals achieving at least 5 GCSEs⁽²⁾ A*-C incl. GCSE English and GCSE maths by gender and religion of pupil 2019/2020⁽¹⁾

	Boys Numbers	Boys %	Girls Numbers	Girls %	Total Numbers	Total %
PROTESTANT	411	46.7	457	53.6	868	50.1
Total	881		852		1733	
CATHOLIC	818	53.0	1010	65.3	1828	59.2
Total	1542		1547		3089	
OTHER⁽³⁾	161	49.2	153	59.1	314	53.6
Total	327		259		586	
ALL RELIGIONS	1390	50.5	1620	60.9	3010	55.7
Total	2750		2658		5408	

Table 9

School leavers achieving at least 5 GCSEs⁽²⁾ A*-C incl. GCSE English and GCSE maths by gender and religion of pupil 2019/2020⁽¹⁾

	Boys Numbers	Boys %	Girls Numbers	Girls %	Total Numbers	Total %
PROTESTANT	2685	71.0	2997	78.8	5682	74.9
Total	3784		3803		7587	
CATHOLIC	3908	73.1	4346	82.5	8254	77.8
Total	5345		5271		10616	
OTHER⁽³⁾	954	69.9	866	77.3	1820	73.2
Total	1365		1121		2486	
ALL RELIGIONS	7547	71.9	8209	80.5	15756	76.2
Total	10494		10195		20689	

NOTES

1. Excludes special and independent schools.
2. Includes equivalent qualifications.
3. Other includes Other Christian, No religion and Non-Christian.

Data Evidence of Inequalities – Communities and Places

Data Sources

Community is a wide-ranging subject matter and covers areas including high streets, regeneration, public realm, historic environment, open spaces and sports, recreation and leisure, arts and culture, through to benefits and pensions and social inclusion. (NB Housing is covered elsewhere).

The main sources of data/information reviewed in respect of community and wellbeing inequalities included the following:

- (1) The ECNI Statement on Key Inequalities in NI (2007):
<https://www.equalityni.org/ECNI/media/ECNI/Publications/Employers%20and%20Service%20Providers/S75%20P10%20investigation%20reports/KeyinequalitiesinNI2007.pdf?ext=.pdf>
- (2) ECNI Public Opinion Survey on Equality in Northern Ireland – Summary Report Winter 2020 undertaken between November 2020 and January 2021 included an explicit focus on ‘Equality Status and COVID-19 (2021)
<https://www.equalityni.org/Delivering-Equality/Addressing-inequality/Social-attitudes-good-relations/Research-investigations/Public-opinion-survey>
- (3) DfI - Cycling in Northern Ireland 2019/2020- Findings from the Continuous Household Survey 2019/2020 (2020)
<https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/system/files/publications/infrastructure/cycling-in-Northern-Ireland-201920-report.pdf>
- (4) DfI - Walking and cycling to and/or from work in Northern Ireland 2018/2019 - Findings from the Northern Ireland Continuous Household Survey 2018/2019 - *Incorporating more walking and cycling into everyday routines could significantly increase levels of physical activity across the population with substantial benefits to physical and mental health and wellbeing at both the individual and societal levels. Hence, the draft Programme for Government reference to increasing the percentage of journeys that are made by walking, cycling and public transport is part of delivering on a range of the outcomes – including health, infrastructure and the environment. By increasing activity and reducing reliance on the private car, walking and cycling will contribute to sustainability, cultivate better active travel habits, improve air quality and contribute to longer healthier lives*
<https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/system/files/publications/infrastructure/walking-and-cycling-to-and-from-work-in-northern-ireland-2018-2019-report.pdf>
- (5) Cycle path screening form
<https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/infrastructure/cycle-path-design-guidance-screening-form.pdf>
- (6) Delivering Social Change – What Matters Most? Published by NISRA (March 2016 and updated in August 2019)
<https://www.executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/ofmdfm/dsc-our-population-what-matters-most.pdf>
- (7) Department for Communities - Audit of Inequalities

<https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/system/files/publications/communities/DfC-Audit-of-Inequalities-Annex-A.pdf>

(8) DfC – Engagement in culture, arts and sports by adults in Northern Ireland - Findings from the Continuous Household Survey 2020/21 (2021)

<https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/system/files/publications/communities/engagement-culture-arts-and-sport-by-adults-in-northern-ireland-202021.pdf>

(9) Experience of volunteering by adults in Northern Ireland – Findings from the Continuous Household Survey 2019/20 (2021)

<https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/system/files/publications/communities/experience-volunteering-by-adults-northern-ireland-201920.pdf>

(10) Supporting People, Building Communities and Shaping Places, Department for Communities Strategy, 2020 - 2025 - EQIA Screening Document (2021)

<https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/communities/dfc-strategy-2020-25-screening.pdf>

(11) The Commissioner for Public Appointments Northern Ireland - 'Guardian of the Public Appointment Process' - Under-representation and lack of diversity in Public Appointments in Northern Ireland (January, 2014)

<https://www.publicappointmentsni.org/sites/cpani/files/media-files/Under-representation%20and%20lack%20of%20diversity%20in%20Public%20Appointments%20in%20Northern%20Ireland%20-%20January%202014.pdf>

(12) ECNI - Equality in Participation in Public Life – Priorities for Action (May, 2019)

<https://www.equalityni.org/ECNI/media/ECNI/Publications/Delivering%20Equality/ParticipationPublicLife-PolicyPriorities.pdf>

(13) LGBTQI+ Strategy Expert Advisory Panel – Themes and Recommendations (December, 2020)

<https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/system/files/publications/communities/dfc-social-inclusion-strategy-lgbtqi-expert-advisory-panel-recommendations.pdf>

(14) DfC – Active Ageing Strategy 2016-2021 – Refreshed – Extended to 2022 – Equality Screening Form (2021)

<https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/communities/dfc-active-ageing-strategy-2016-2021-refreshed-extended-to-2022-screening.pdf>

(15) ECNI: Racial Equality – Policy Priorities and Recommendations (Key Point Briefing) (May, 2014)

https://www.equalityni.org/ECNI/media/ECNI/Publications/Delivering%20Equality/KeyPointBriefing_ECNI_PolicyPriorities_RacialEquality2014_v1a-May2014.pdf

(16) ECNI: Racial Equality – Key Point Briefing: Programme for Government (PfG) and Budget Recommendations (May, 2016)

https://www.equalityni.org/ECNI/media/ECNI/Consultation%20Responses/2016/OFMDFM_PfG_Budget_Recommendations-Summary.pdf

(17) Disability Strategy Expert Advisory Panel - Report & Recommendations (December, 2020)

<https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/system/files/publications/communities/dfc-social-inclusion-strategy-disability-expert-advisory-panel-report.pdf>

(18) Gender Equality Strategy - Expert Advisory Panel Report Research Thematic Areas, Key Findings and Recommendations (December 2020)

<https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/system/files/publications/communities/dfc-social-inclusion-strategy-gender-expert-advisory-panel-report.pdf>

(19) EQIA - Response to the Department of Education Consultation Document – Every School A Good School – A Policy For School Improvement (March 2008, p.18)

https://www.equalityni.org/ECNI/media/ECNI/Consultation%20Responses/2008/DE-Every_School_A_Good_School.pdf?ext=.pdf

(20) Recommendations for an Anti-Poverty Strategy-Report of the Expert Advisory Panel – (December, 2020)

<https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/system/files/publications/communities/dfc-social-inclusion-strategy-anti-poverty-expert-advisory-panel-recommendations.pdf>

(21) DfC – Draft Budget 2021-22 – Final Equality Impact Assessment – March 2021 - Preliminary, high-level screenings have been undertaken of the draft Capital Budget in 2021-22, in accordance with Section 75 (1) and (2) of the Northern Ireland Act 1998. The screenings have identified that the overall effect of the Department’s proposals should result in no or a minor impact on any Section 75 category. (2021, p.18 on)

<https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/consultations/communities/dfc-draft-budget-final%20-equality-impact-assessment.pdf>

(22) DfC – Business Plan – 2020-2022 – Screening Form (2020)

<https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/communities/S75%20-%20DFC%20Business%20Plan%202020%2022%20-%20Approved.pdf14:18>

(23) NICVA response to Department for Communities – Equality Impact Assessment 27th Jan 2021 (February, 2021)

https://www.nicva.org/sites/default/files/d7content/attachments-articles/department_for_communities_-_eqia_response_final.pdf

(24) EQIA – A Question of Attitude – Equality Awareness Survey (2016)

https://www.equalityni.org/ECNI/media/ECNI/Publications/Delivering%20Equality/Equality_AwarenessSurvey-Attitudes.pdf

(25) EQIA – Summary of policy positions relating to poverty and socio-economic disadvantage (November, 2020)

<https://www.equalityni.org/ECNI/media/ECNI/Publications/Delivering%20Equality/PovertyPolicyPositions.pdf>

(26) NISRA - Poverty Bulletin – Northern Ireland 2019-20 (Data from the Family Resources Survey -2019-20) (2020)

<https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/system/files/publications/communities/ni-poverty-bulletin-201920.pdf>

(27) NISRA - Households Below Average Income: Northern Ireland 2019/20 (Data from the Family Resources Survey 2019-20) (2020)

<https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/system/files/publications/communities/hbai-2019-20.pdf>

(28) Accessible Sports Stadia Design Guidelines, 2016 Edition, Disability Sport NI (2016)
https://www.dsni.co.uk/files/Guide_3_Accessible_Sports_Stadia_Design_Guidelines_2016.pdf

(29) Accessible Sports Stadia Management Guidelines, 2016 Edition, Disability Sport NI (2016)
https://www.dsni.co.uk/files/Guidance_4_Accessible_Sports_Stadia_Management_Guidelines_d12.pdf

(30) Experience of sports by adults in Northern Ireland – Continuous Household Survey 2019-20 (2020)
<https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/system/files/publications/communities/experience-sport-by-adults-northern-ireland-201920.pdf>

(31) NISRA Multiple Deprivation Measures 2017 by LGD/ parliamentary constituency (2017)
<https://www.nisra.gov.uk/sites/nisra.gov.uk/files/publications/NIMDM17-%20with%20ns.pdf>

(32) Barriers to Participation – A Review of why specific communities in Northern Ireland do not use the countryside for recreation (March, 2008)
<http://www.sportni.net/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/Barriers-to-Participation.pdf>

(33) Wellbeing In Sport Action Plan 2019-2025; A Commitment To Improve Mental Health And Wellbeing For People Involved In Sport In Northern Ireland – PHA and Sport NI – Dr Paul Donnelly and Dr Gavin Breslin (2019)
http://www.sportni.net/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/NI-Wellbeing-in-Sport-Action-Plan-2019-2025_Final.pdf

(34) See Me as a Human Being: How attitudes within the social care system impact on the independent living choices of disabled people. Disability Action NI (December, 2020)
<https://www.disabilityaction.org/Handlers/Download.ashx?IDMF=e0acbb68-b1b4-4c29-b80e-f5b3bf9d70aa>

(35) Northern Ireland Executive: Active Ageing Strategy 2016-2021 (2016)
<https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/communities/dfc-active-ageing-strategy-2016-22.pdf>

(36) Section 75 and developing a public realm scheme in Lisburn (2018)
<https://www.equalityni.org/Employers-Service-Providers/Public-Authorities/Section75/Case-Law/Legal-Case-6>

Data Gaps

The identification of priority areas for intervention is impacted by substantive data gaps across a number of areas of public and political life.

Section 75 equality screening data could be used to help shape Government plans, allowing the targeting of specific interventions and outcomes. Attention should be given to the potential for additional data collection across the Section 75 equality grounds. (25)

The LGBTQI+ Strategy Expert Advisory Panel – Themes and Recommendations Report, (December 2020, 13) (part of the development and publication process of a suite of social inclusion strategies for DfC) demonstrated that being LGBTQI+ can impact on experiences and needs in healthcare, increased likelihood of being a victim of crime, negative experiences in education and many other aspects of daily life. To design effective public services to meet the needs of all communities, data is key. However, since services and data gathering exercises do not regularly monitor for sexual orientation or gender identity, it is not possible to measure the impact, positive or negative, services have or are likely to have on people who are LGBTQI+. Monitoring for sexual orientation and gender identity will help public service providers to better understand the needs and experiences of LGBTQI+ people, and to address any potential barriers to accessing services. LGBTQI+ people, their families and their needs have been invisible to public service providers where monitoring for sexual orientation and gender identity is not common practice and therefore services may not be fit to meet the needs of this client group. The report recommended:

- The Northern Ireland Civil Service sets the standard as an exemplar employer for collecting data on sexual orientation and gender identity;
- Sexual orientation and gender identity are monitored alongside other Section 75 monitoring i.e. community background, sex, race, religion, ability etc. and S75 obligations are met;
- Gender identity questions are included in the Census;
- Guidance is in place to protect private data concerning the characteristics and history of transgender people;
- Departmental systems are updated to ensure monitoring of sexual orientation and gender identity in all cases, unless a business case has been developed to justify its exclusion.

When planning public services, 43% of participants agree that the needs of different groups of people are taken into account, while 28% disagree. (2)

The Equality Commission noted in its key point Briefing on the PfG and Budget Recommendations (16) the following recommendations in relation to gaps in equality data:

- Collect comprehensive equality data to identify equality impacts and shape targeted actions to advance equality;
- Address key gaps in equality data, including on the grounds of gender identity, sexual orientation, and race
- Rectify the lack of data disaggregation in relation to ethnicity, disability and gender

In addition, it called on the Executive to ensure that:

- There is a clear commitment in the PfG, underpinned by the inclusion of robust, outcome focused action measures, to identifying, addressing and monitoring the key inequalities experienced by the Section 75 equality groups, as well as to promoting good relations;
- A focus on addressing key inequalities includes identifying and mitigating any negative equality impacts, now and in the future, arising from the COVID-19 pandemic;

- The PfG makes it explicit that promoting equality of opportunity and good relations are cross-cutting themes across all Government strategies, policy development and actions;
- All relevant PfG measures are not only tracked in aggregate but also for the impact on individuals from each of the Section 75 grounds;
- There is a clear commitment in the PfG, and in associated action plans, to stakeholder involvement - not only in co-design but in the rolling monitoring and review of impacts, particularly across the Section 75 equality categories.

It also recommended actions to:

- Address key shortfalls in Northern Ireland so as to ensure compliance with obligations in international human rights conventions, including the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) as well as obligations in other International Conventions, such as the UN Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Racial Discrimination (UNCERD), the UN Convention for the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (FCNM).

The Disability Strategy Expert Advisory Panel Report & Recommendations - December 2020 (17) (as part of the development and publication process of a suite of social inclusion strategies for DfC), expressed its concern at the lack of ongoing and robust disaggregated quantitative and qualitative data on: (i) the lived experiences of d/Deaf and disabled people; and (ii) on the implementation and evaluation of laws, policies and practices relating to d/Deaf and disabled people across the life course. Key actions suggested included:

- Ensure collection, and increase availability, of high-quality, timely and reliable disaggregated quantitative and qualitative data, including in all general population surveys and censuses and that recognises the diversity and intersectionality of disability;
- Adopt OHCHR CRPD human rights indicators and ensure these are used across Government departments and agencies to monitor d/Deaf and disabled people's experiences of their rights;
- Ensure that data collected on disability is inclusive, adopts a rights-based definition of disability and enables d/Deaf and disabled people to self-identify;
- Deaf and disabled people, including d/Deaf and disabled children, and their representative organisations, should be involved in deciding what data should be collected.

The degree to which other factors including, (but not limited to) ethnicity intersect with disability and affect poverty, social mobility and inclusion is unclear. There is a need to establish the degree to which d/Deaf and disabled people who belong to ethnic minority communities within Northern Ireland are facing challenges/barriers and discrimination in respect of realising their rights as citizens. (17)

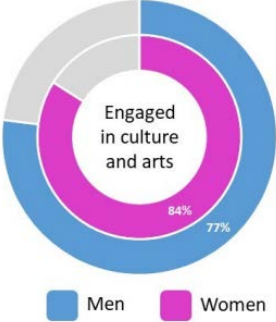
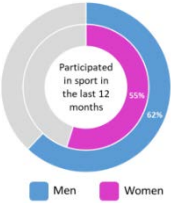
There is a marked absence of any publicly available data in respect of disabled asylum seekers, refugees and migrants in Northern Ireland. As immigration is not a devolved matter, whatever

data is recorded and retained is held by the UK Government. The data that is released is not disaggregated by region⁹ (17, p. 124).

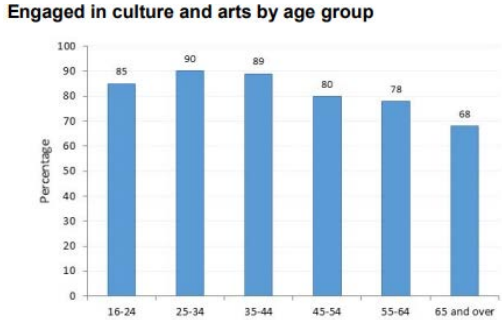
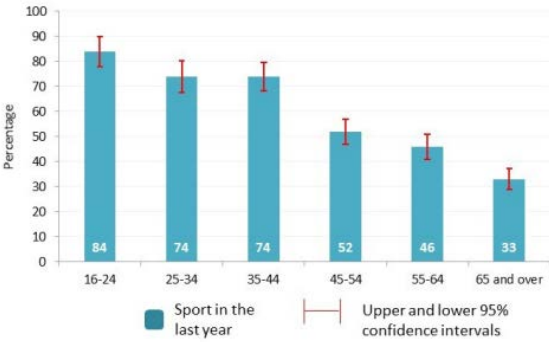
Summary of Evidence of Inequalities

Section 75 category	Summary of Evidence
Gender	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The persistent under-representation of women in public and political life, including political representation at both national and local level, government public appointments and judicial appointments, is significant. The equal participation of women and men in decision making processes is a key element in achieving equality in a democratic society. (1) • A higher proportion of male respondents said they were ‘strong and fearless’ (5%) and ‘enthused and confident’ (20%) when it comes to cycling, compared with female respondents (1% and 7%, respectively). Conversely, a higher proportion of female respondents (73%) said ‘no way, no how’ compared with 62% of male respondents. (3) • Overall, male respondents (37%) were more likely to have access to a bicycle compared with female respondents (27%). (3) • Males (4%) were more likely to cycle to and/or from work than females (1%). (4) • The three most important issues faced by people in their day-to-day life were similarly ranked among males and females but to varying degrees namely – Health (M 22.8%; F 25.1%), Finances/ Cost of Living (M 21.9%; F 20.1%), and Employment (M 9.4%; F 8.9%) (6) • In 2020/21, almost nine out of every ten adults (87%) had engaged in some way with culture, arts and sport (up from 855 in 2015 (8), (7) • DfC Audit of Inequalities shows that women may experience barriers to employment and economic participation. Women are underrepresented in public appointments, community development and leadership roles in public decision-making. Men may be subject to particular health problems leading to higher rates of morbidity and mortality associated with poverty. (7)

⁹ Refugees and Asylum Seekers in Northern Ireland, Northern Ireland Assembly Available at: <http://www.niassembly.gov.uk/globalassets/documents/raise/publications/2014/ofmdfm/6314.pdf>

Section 75 category	Summary of Evidence
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 2020/21, over four-fifths of adults in Northern Ireland (81%) had engaged with culture and the arts at least once within the previous year. Women were more likely to have engaged with culture and arts activities within the last year than men (84% and 77% respectively). (8)  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women were more likely to have used the public library service than men (33% and 22% respectively). (8) • In 2020/21, 37% of adults had visited a museum or science centre within the last 12 months. A quarter of adults (25%) had visited a National Museum. Women were found to be more likely to have visited a museum or science centre than men (40% and 34% respectively). (8) • National Museums Northern Ireland (NMNI) has four museums across Northern Ireland. A quarter of all adults (25%) had been to a NMNI museum within the last year. Females (26%) were more likely to have visited a national museum than males (23%). (8) • One in every ten adults (10%) had visited a science centre at least once within the last year. Women were more likely to have visited a science centre than men (12% and 8% respectively) (8) • Almost a fifth of all adults (19%) in Northern Ireland had visited a local museum at least once within the last year. Women were more likely to have visited a local museum in the last year compared to men (21% and 17% respectively). (8) • Almost three out of five adults (59%) had participated in sport at least once within the last year (excluding walking) in 2020/21. Females were less likely to have taken part in sport at least once within the last year (55%) than males (62%). (8)  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Almost three-quarters of adults (74%) had walked for recreation within the previous year. In contrast to the demographic pattern seen with the overall sport participation rates, a higher proportion of females (79%) than males (69%) had walked for recreation. Over a quarter of adults (28%) had not participated in sport but had walked for recreation within the previous year. As with the previous results a higher proportion of non-sport participating females (32%) had walked for recreation than non-sport participating males (24%). (8) • Volunteering in 2019/20 - In regard of the types of organisations with which people volunteered, analysis by gender indicated that a

Section 75 category	Summary of Evidence
	<p>higher proportion of females volunteered with a ‘church/faith based’ organisation (43%), organisations that involved ‘children’s education/schools’ (20%), ‘youth/children’s activities (outside school)’ (19%) and ‘people with a disability’ (11%) than males (35%, 9%, 11% and 6% respectively). In contrast, a higher proportion of males indicated that they had volunteered at sports organisations (39%) and organisations that involved ‘conservation, the environment and heritage’ (7%) than females (20% and 3% respectively). (9)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Based on current data, there is under representation of women in public appointments (11). • The Equality Commission calls upon public authorities to ensure comprehensive monitoring, analysis and reporting of equality characteristics relating to public and political life. (12) • ECNI identified the need to protect the most vulnerable from the adverse impact of welfare reform, particularly mindful of the impact on women, (16) (25) • Service providers to older men often report they are harder to reach than women (10) • Females aged 16 and over were less likely to have taken part in sport at least once within the last year (51%) than males (61%). Similarly when looking at participation rates over the previous four weeks, just under a fifth of females (39%) stated that they had taken part in sport compared to over half of all males (53%). (30) • Males were also more likely to be a member of a sports club (33%) than females (19%). (30) • One third of all adults (33%) had attended a live organised sporting event as a spectator within the last year. Males (42%) were more likely to have attended a live organised sporting event than females (26%). (30)
Age	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nine in ten participants agree that pre-school should meet the needs of all children, including those with disabilities or those whose first language is not English (90%). (2) • In terms of where government funding should go, 62% agree that the focus should be on those groups which do less well at school. (2) • Bicycle access was highest among those aged 35-49 (43%) and 16-24 (40%) when compared to all other age groups. Access to a bicycle was lowest among those aged 65 and over (13%). (3) • There has been an increase in the proportion of respondents aged 16-24 (4%) who cycled to and/or from work since 2016/17 (0%). (4) • The three most important issues faced by people of different ages in their day-to-day life were different. For those of working age (16-64) the main issues were - Finances/ Cost of Living (22.5%), Health

Section 75 category	Summary of Evidence
	<p>(21.7%), and Employment (11.4%) and for those 65 and over the main issues were Health (30.5%), Finances/ Cost of Living (16.5%), and Crime, Justice and Safety (8.6%) (6)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proportions of adults who engaged with culture and the arts generally decreased as age increased, particularly beyond the 35-44 years age group. (8)  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Those aged 45 and over (25%) were less likely to have used the public library service than those aged less than 45 (33%). (8) • Those aged 45 and over (32%) were less likely to have visited a museum or science centre than those aged less than 45 (46%). (8) • National Museums Northern Ireland (NMNI) has four museums across Northern Ireland. A quarter of all adults (25%) had been to a NMNI museum within the last year. Those aged 45 and over (19%) were less likely to have visited a national museum than those aged less than 45 (33%). (8) • There were no differences in visiting local museums between those aged 45 and over and those aged less than 45 (both 19%). (8) • Sport participation declines with age among adults. Those aged 45 and over were less likely to have participated in any sport within the last year (42%) compared to younger adults aged 16-44 years (76%). More detailed analysis of sport participation in the last year by age group shows that there is a difference in the sport participation rate for 16–24-year-olds and those aged 25-34 years. There is no difference between 25–34-year-olds and 35–44-year-olds. From those aged 45 and over the participation rate in sport decreases with each subsequent age group to 33% of those aged 65 and over. (8)  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Continuous Household Survey statistical output on the 'Experience of Sport' 2018-19 shows that in the previous 4 year period participation in sport increases for people aged 50+ from 30% to 35%. Quality programme opportunities and facilities are provided

Section 75 category	Summary of Evidence
	<p>through EveryBody Active 2020; Active Living: No Limits (ALNL), Live to Move Dementia Programme and Active, Fit & Sporty. (DfC) (35)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disability and age are closely related. On balance, the older we become the more likely we are to have a disability. Results have also shown that age and sport participation are negatively correlated, as we get older, the less likely we are to participate in sport. (30) • In 2019/20 a lower proportion of those aged 25-34 years (24%) volunteered compared with those aged 45-54 (30%) years. (9) • 18–24-year-olds have the highest rates of unemployment and economic activity. (10) • Based on current data, there is under representation of young people in public appointments. (11) • DfC Audit of Inequalities shows: - Children are more likely to be living in poverty than the population as a whole. (7) • Around 370,000 people are living below the poverty line in NI – that is one in every five persons. Nearly one in every three of these 370,000 people living in poverty is a child. (19) • Fewer than one in ten of all those in poverty are pensioners. This is a significant change from ten years ago when pensioners made up one in six of those in poverty. Almost one in every three pensioners in poverty (just under 10,000 of the 31,000) lives alone. Single pensioners make up about a quarter of all pensioners. They are therefore over-represented in the poverty figures compared to all pensioners. (19) • The group identified most frequently as having been more negatively affected by the broader impacts of COVID-19 were those over the age of 75 (63%). (2) • There is a lack of evidence on the lived experiences of older d/Deaf and disabled people in Northern Ireland. (17) • Some thought should be given towards how school improvement sits with other aspects of education policy. ECNI recommends that there are more strategic links within the policy for school improvement in relation to the wider policy context, and in particular: the £300 million investment in the schools’ estate as part of the Investment Strategy; A Shared Future and the Bain Review; Extended Schools; and the Revised Curriculum. (19) • The COVID-19 pandemic has demonstrated the fundamental importance of childcare and early-years support - in facilitating the economic participation of parents / carers, and ensuring the development and progression of children from a range of equality categories and backgrounds. High quality childcare and early-years provision can have significant beneficial impacts for children from particular equality groups and backgrounds. Childcare provision is also important in promoting equality between men and women. (25)

Section 75 category	Summary of Evidence
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ECNI has highlighted the need to protect the most vulnerable from the adverse impact of welfare reform including younger people and mixed aged households. (25) • In 2019/20, 22% of children were in relative poverty, approximately 100,000 children. This is lower than the 2018/19 estimate of 24%. (26) • In 2019/20, 17% of children were in absolute poverty, representing approximately 75,000 children. This is a decrease on the 2018/19 estimate of 21%. (26) • In 2019/20, it is estimated that 10% (44,000) of children lived in households that were food insecure. (27) • In 2019/20, 18% of pensioners were in relative poverty, approximately 52,000 pensioners. This is higher than the 2018/19 estimate of 15%. (26) • In 2019/20, 14% of pensioners were in absolute poverty, representing approximately 40,000 pensioners. This is a rise from the 2018/19 estimate of 12%. (26) • In 2019/20, 28% of pensioners who were not in receipt of an occupational/personal pension were classed as being in relative poverty (AHC), compared to only 3% of those who were in receipt of some occupational/personal pension. (27) • Analysis by age shows that as age increases the proportion of adults who spectate at a live sporting event generally decreases particularly from age 55 onwards. (30)
Religious Belief	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The three most important issues faced by people of different community backgrounds in their day-to-day life were different. For Catholics the main issues were - Finances/ Cost of Living (22.8%), Health (22.8%), and Employment (10.6%); for Protestants the main issues were Health (25.7%), Finances/ Cost of Living (20.4%), and employment (8.1%) and for Other/ Non-Determined, the main issues were Health (21.5%), Finances/ Cost of Living (17.3%), and employment (8.5%). (6) • Adults from the Protestant community were more likely to volunteer (32%) than both those from the Catholic community (24%) and those of 'Other/No' religion (25%). (9) • In regard of the types of organisations with which people volunteered, analysis by religion revealed that 59% of Protestants had volunteered in the past year at a 'church/faith based' organisation compared with 21% of Catholics. A higher proportion of Protestants had also volunteered in an organisation involving 'animal care' (6%) than Catholics (0%). In contrast, a greater proportion of Catholics indicated that they had volunteered with sports organisations (40%) and organisations involving 'local

Section 75 category	Summary of Evidence
	<p>community, neighbourhood or citizens groups' (23%) than Protestants (23% and 12% respectively). (9)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Those whose religion is other/non-determined have a high locus of control and high self-efficacy but relatively low life satisfaction (10) • One of the desired outcomes for the Active Ageing Strategy is that older people participate in physical activity. (35)
Political opinion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Workplace Employee Survey showed that 20% of workers who experienced unwanted behaviours in the workplace in the last twelve months said it was because of their political identity. (10)
Ethnicity and Race	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Racial Group - access to appropriate accommodation for Irish Travellers is limited. The homes of minority ethnic people and migrant groups may be vulnerable to racial attacks. Migrant workers are vulnerable to becoming subject to tied accommodation with poor conditions and overcrowding. (10) • Travellers have a lower life expectancy. ECNI points to health inequalities for Travellers, Roma and some Black and Minority Ethnic people. Some people from ethnic minorities may have language or cultural difficulties in accessing public services. Some newcomers may be ineligible for certain forms of public support because of their immigration status. Literacy difficulties which may particularly affect the Irish Traveller community and newcomers can cause barriers to accessing services. (10) • Based on current data, there is under representation of ethnic minorities in public appointments. (11) • The Equality Commission notes a series of inequalities faced by minority ethnic groups including the Irish Traveller community who suffer from lower life expectancy and poor educational outcomes. (15) • Some older people from ethnic minorities may have language or cultural difficulties in accessing public services. Poor educational outcomes in earlier life correlate to dementia risk while literacy difficulties which may particularly affect the Irish Traveller community can cause barriers to accessing services. (14) • ECNI identified the need to protect the most vulnerable from the adverse impact of welfare reform, particularly mindful of the impact on minority ethnic communities (including asylum seekers and refugees). (16) • The most significant barriers, for the BAME community in accessing the countryside for recreation were lack of time; the language barrier, restricting access to information and integrating into local society; transport, including choice of destinations, regularity and cost; less significant barriers were the Northern Irish weather and lack of company. (32)

Section 75 category	Summary of Evidence
Disability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When asked what services, facilities or settings that people with disabilities find it hardest to access, the most commonly cited response was shops, buildings and offices (42%), followed by transport and travel (28%) and streets and public spaces (20%). (2) • The three most important issues faced by people with or without a disability in their day-to-day life were different. For those with a disability the main issues were - Health (34.1%), Finances/ Cost of Living (20.2%), and Crime, Justice and Safety (6.2%). For Non-disabled respondents, the main issues were Finances/ Cost of Living (21.2%), Health (20.4%) and Employment (11.2%). (6) • Based on current data, there is under representation of people with a disability in public appointments. (11) • ECNI identified the need to protect the most vulnerable from the adverse impact of welfare reform, particularly mindful of the impact on people with disabilities. (16) • Deaf and disabled people have been disproportionately affected by the welfare reforms to the social security system in Northern Ireland. (17) • The European Expert Group on the Transition from Institutional to • Community-based Care (EEG)¹⁰ defines institutionalisation in residential settings as where: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ residents are isolated from the broader community and/or compelled to live together ▪ residents do not have enough control over their lives and over decisions which affect them ▪ requirements of the organisation itself tend to take precedence over the residents' individual needs. (17) • Institutionalisation is occurring in a widespread manner beyond the confines of hospital settings. Insufficient data is available on a broad range of contributing factors to deinstitutionalisation. The panel recommends placing those d/Deaf and disabled people currently institutionalised at the heart of all planning and decision making about their future; planning and resourcing community-based person- centred care to replace closed institutions; and replicating existing models of good practice and avoiding pitfalls of merely transferring 'institutional culture and practice'. (17) • Deaf and disabled people in Northern Ireland are at higher risk of experiencing violence, exploitation and abuse compared to their non-disabled counterparts. (17)

¹⁰ Jan Šiška, and Julie Beadle-Brown, Report on the Transition from Institutional Care to Community-Based Services in 27 EU Member States (European Expert Group on Transition from Institutional to community-based Care, 2020) <https://deinstitutionalisationdotcom.files.wordpress.com/2020/05/eeg-di-report-2020-1.pdf> (10 December 2020)

Section 75 category	Summary of Evidence
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weak, ineffective and piecemeal disability equality legislation is leaving d/Deaf¹¹ and disabled people in Northern Ireland vulnerable to discrimination in virtually every aspect of their lives. (17) • Deaf and disabled people in Northern Ireland are underrepresented in political and public life. There is an under-representation of d/Deaf and disabled people in applications and appointments to public roles (including government public appointments). (17) • The intersectionality of childhood and age means that children with disabilities and their families experience specific and multiple disadvantages. (17) • There is a significant lack of data on the lived experiences of d/Deaf and disabled children. This makes appropriate planning of services, supports and provisions incredibly challenging. (17) • Those aged 16 and over who have a disability were less likely to have taken part in sport at least once within the last year (38%) compared with those who do not have a disability (64%). (30) • Disabled people in Northern Ireland are half as likely to attend a live sports event in Northern Ireland as non-disabled people, with only 17% attending an event compared to 33% of non-disabled people (DCAL Continuous Household Survey 2014/15). This is partly due to limited or poor accessibility at most of Northern Ireland’s stadia, but it is also because of a lack of proactivity in managing accessible use of stadia by people with disabilities. (28, 29) • In 2019/20, analysis by disability shows lower levels of attendance among adults with a disability (22%) than those without a disability (38%) at live events (30) • Some people with disabilities are dependent on others to accompany them to outdoor facilities; this restricts their opportunities to take part in activities. Well maintained paths are essential, particularly for people with visual impairment and wheelchair users. (32) • Disabled people are consistently not having their human rights or needs met in adult social care. Negative attitudes are fundamental to why disabled people are not living as independently as they could be (34) • Disabled people are often not given enough information about independent living choices. Gatekeepers in the system focus on telling them “what they are not entitled to”. Disabled people experience negative attitudes and stereotyping within the social care system, which has several negative effects. (34)

¹¹ The term D/deaf is used throughout higher education and research to describe students who are Deaf (sign language users) and deaf (who are hard of hearing but who have English as their first language and may lipread and/or use hearing aids).

Section 75 category	Summary of Evidence
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acknowledging lived experience as expertise is crucial. Disabled people need to be listened to. They should be part of decision making about their care. Many disabled people talk about how little choice and control they have over their independent living choices (34) • There is a need to ensure that all processes involved in putting social care work out to tender are robust. Social value should be built into all contracts as part of the assessment criteria, rather than just the financial cost. Human rights obligations must apply to all work put out to tender for social care by the Health and Social Care Department. (34) • Data should be collected on all Section 75 groups (not just disability) and be able to disaggregate these data against people’s multiple identities. This is crucial to ensure needs are identified and rights are addressed. (34) • In 2017, there were 305 registered deaths due to suicide (intentional self-harm and events of undetermined intent), a 3% increase on the previous year (298). Males accounted for over three quarters of all suicides (77%) - NISRA, 96th Annual Report of Registrar General 2017 (33). A barrier to mental health help-seeking in sport is stigma. (33) • Public realm schemes must be brought forward mindful of the diverse needs and requirements of the community and potential users of the scheme. As one example, Joanne Toner brought a judicial review against Lisburn City Council regarding kerb heights in a Public Realm Scheme in its city centre. Ms Toner is blind and is accompanied by a guide dog. Her legal challenge concerned the Council’s duty to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between persons with a disability and persons without. The main allegation was that kerb heights of less than 60mm impeded the ability of visually impaired people to navigate safely around the city centre. The High Court found that Lisburn City Council had unlawfully breached its Section 75 duty when it developed its Public Realm Scheme. (36)
Marital status	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The three most important issues faced by people of differing marital status were not the same. For Single people the main issues were - Finances/ Cost of Living (22.8%), Health (19%), employment (12.4%); For Married people, the main issues were Health (25.8%); Finances/ Cost of Living (19.4%), and Employment (8.8%); For Divorced people, the main issues were Health (25.7%), Finances/ Cost of Living (24.9%), and Employment (7.5%); and for Widowed respondents, the main issues were Health (29.1%) Finances/ Cost of Living (16.9%), and Crime, Justice and Safety (9.2%). (6)

Section 75 category	Summary of Evidence
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proportion of the adult population who volunteered in 2019/20 was 28%, a similar figure to both 2018/19 and 2017/18. A lower proportion of adults who were separated or divorced volunteered in 2019/20 (18%) compared to 2018/19 (25%) (9) • Adults who were married were more likely to volunteer (30%) than those who were widowed (21%) or who were separated/divorced (18%). Those who were single (27%) were also more likely to volunteer than those who were separated/divorced (18%). (9)
Sexual Orientation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a lack of data in relation to sexual orientation. • Homophobia, biphobia and transphobia can lead to anti-LGBTQI+ harassment and violence that puts gender and sexual minorities at heightened risk of physical and psychological harm. Abuse and violence can begin during childhood. Those who do not conform to gender stereotypes face bullying and violence in schools, in the home leading to homelessness, and in sporting arenas. They can also experience relentless abuse in social media environments. These experiences have a serious effect on their well-being and prevents openness about their personal identity. (13) • Where a person lives, works and socialises can become hostile and threatening environments. Hate crimes against LGBTQI+ people are on the rise, as is homelessness, and research more broadly indicates several arenas of life wherein LGBTQI+ people continue to experience insecurity despite progress in legal protections. (13) • Comparatively, NI has been slower to enact international standards in terms of LGBTQI+ rights, even though the 1998 peace agreement remains one of only 5 international peace agreements to include LGBTQI+ rights. (13) • Though improving, there is still a significant underrepresentation of LGBTQI+ people in public life who can be a positive role model or can directly challenge discrimination and negative stereotypes. There needs to be increased visibility of LGBTQI+ people in all areas of life, particularly visible political, civic and community leadership in order to promote positive change and tackle negative stereotypes. (13) • 33% of LGBT people, including 62% of trans people, feel isolated where they live because they are LGBT. (13) • Deaf and disabled people in the LGBTQI+ community in Northern Ireland are often invisible. (17)
Dependency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specific issues exist for Carers of people with a disability and people who care for young children or older relatives. These include, in particular, the complexity of the benefits system, the interaction of this with paid work, and the earnings and hours limits set to qualify for social security. (1)

Section 75 category	Summary of Evidence
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The three most important issues faced by people with or without dependants in their day-to-day life differed. For those With dependants the main issues were - Finances/ Cost of Living (22.7%), Health (22.4%), and Employment (10.8%). For those Without Dependants, the main issues were Health (25%) Finances/ Cost of Living (19.9%), and Employment (8.2%). (6) • Adults with dependants (33%) were more likely to have used the public library service compared to those who do not (23%). (8) • Those with dependants were more likely to have engaged with culture and the arts within the previous year, with 83% having engaged, compared to 78% of those with no dependants. (8) • In 2020/21, 37% of adults had visited a museum or science centre within the last 12 months. A quarter of adults (25%) had visited a National Museum. Those adults with dependants were more likely to have visited a museum or science centre in the past 12 months (42% and 32% respectively). (8) • Those adults with dependants were more likely to have visited a national museum in the past 12 months (30% and 20% respectively). (8) • Adults with dependants were more likely to have visited a science centre (15%) compared to those without dependants (6%). (8) • Those adults with dependants were more likely to have visited a local museum in the past 12 months (21% and 17% respectively). (8) • DfC Audit of Inequalities shows that Households with children are more likely to be in absolute poverty than those without. - Those with dependants or caring responsibilities may be more likely to be economically inactive and unable to access the labour market. - Those with dependants are more likely to experience higher levels of poverty. (7)

Conclusion

The main information/ data gaps in this investment theme are with respect of the equality grounds of gender identity; religion; political opinion; and sexual orientation. There is also a lack of data disaggregation in relation to: ethnicity; disability status; marital status; and dependency status. There also seems to be a gap in data in regard of Section 75 scrutiny related to significant capital spend projects.

The available data confirms the diverse profile and circumstances of those within the community, and the need to ensure that all capital investment projects proceed mindful of this diversity, and any barriers to access and genuine engagement.

Data Evidence of Inequalities – Justice

Data Sources

The main sources of data/information reviewed in respect of the NI Justice System inequalities included the following:

- (1) Criminal Justice Inspection NI: Equality and Diversity within the Criminal Justice System: An Inspection of the Implementation of Section 75 (1) of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 (Sept, 2018).
<https://www.cjini.org/getattachment/f2f58a1f-a9f3-449f-a684-567b6db4c667/Equality-and-Diversity-within-the-Criminal-Justice-System.aspx>
- (2) ECNI: Response to the priorities for the Programme for Government (PfG) Draft *Outcome Framework 2021*, including the recommendations in respect of justice and the specific needs of equality groups. (March, 2021)
<https://www.equalityni.org/ECNI/media/ECNI/Consultation%20Responses/2021/NIO-PfGOutcomesFramework.pdf>
- (3) Department of Justice (DoJ): Northern Ireland Prison Service Quarterly Population Statistics. (September, 2021)
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1018418/Northern-Ireland-Prison-Population-2020-21.pdf
- (4) DoJ: The Northern Ireland Prison Population 2020/21. (September, 2021)
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1018418/Northern-Ireland-Prison-Population-2020-21.pdf
- (5) NI Prison Service: The Inside View: A Review of Equality of Opportunity of Prisoners on the Basis of Religion, in Relation to our S75 Statutory Duties. (July, 2021)
<http://data.parliament.uk/DepositedPapers/Files/DEP2009-1623/DEP2009-1623.pdf>
- (6) Committee on the Administration of Justice (CAJ): Prisons and Prisoners in Northern Ireland: Putting human rights at the heart of prison reform (December, 2010).
<https://caj.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/No.-60-Prisons-and-Prisoners-in-Northern-Ireland-%E2%80%93-Putting-human-rights-at-the-heart-of-prison-reform.pdf>
- (7) Police Service of NI (PSNI): Stop and Search Statistics. (November, 2021)
<https://www.psni.police.uk/inside-psni/Statistics/stop-and-search-statistics/>
- (8) Police Service of NI (PSNI): Hate Motivation Statistics. (November, 2021)
<https://www.psni.police.uk/inside-psni/Statistics/hate-motivation-statistics/>
- (9) PSNI/NISRA: Outcomes of Crimes Recorded by the Police in Northern Ireland 2015/16 to 2020/21
<https://www.psni.police.uk/inside-psni/Statistics/police-recorded-crime-statistics/>
- (10) PSNI: Workforce Composition Statistics 2021. (November, 2021)

<https://www.psnipolice.uk/inside-psni/Statistics/workforce-composition-statistics/>

(11) Public Prosecution Service (PPS): Equality Action Plan 2019/20. (August, 2019)
<https://www.ppsni.gov.uk/publications/pps-disability-action-plan-and-equality-action-plan-2019-20>

(12) DoJ: Report of the Access to Justice Review: Part One (August, 2011)
<https://www.justice-ni.gov.uk/publications/report-access-justice-2011>

(13) DoJ: Report of the Access to Justice Review: Part Two (September, 2015)
<https://www.justice-ni.gov.uk/publications/access-justice-review-part-2-final-report>

(14) Review of Civil and Family Justice in Northern Ireland: Review Group's Report on Family Justice (September, 2017)
<https://www.judiciaryni.uk/publications/review-groups-report-civil-justice>

(15) Gillen Review: Report into the Law and Procedures in Serious Sexual Offences in Northern Ireland (May, 2019)
<https://www.justice-ni.gov.uk/publications/gillen-review-recommendations>

(16) Independent Reporting Commission (IRC): 4th Annual Report re the Executive's Action Plan for Tackling Paramilitary Activity, Criminality and Organised Crime. (December 2021)
https://www.ircommission.org/sites/irc/files/media-files/IRC%20Fourth%20Report%20web%20accessible_1.pdf

(17) The ECNI Statement on Key Inequalities in NI (2007):
<https://www.equalityni.org/ECNI/media/ECNI/Publications/Employers%20and%20Service%20Providers/S75%20P10%20investigation%20reports/KeyinequalitiesinNI2007.pdf?ext=.pdf>

A number of the data sources cited above make reference to structural inequalities within the NI justice system but on occasions these relate to matters that lie outside the scope of the investment strategy *per se* (e.g., strengthen equality and human rights issues post Brexit and reform of equality legislation [2], funding of public law children cases [11]).

Accordingly, this review will focus on summarising those inequalities within the justice system that are of relevance to infrastructure spending attached to the current investment strategy and its five objectives.

Data Gaps

- A common theme running through various sources of data/information as listed above (1; 2; 3; 5; 6; 10) was a need for more systematic and comprehensive monitoring through each stage of the judicial process.
- Routine s75 scrutiny of policies by way of screening was still not common across a number of justice agencies (1).
- In the words of the report on s75 implementation in the NI justice system, 'Equality monitoring within most agencies contained gaps and an approach to measure different s.75 groups' treatment through the system was not apparent. Better detection of, and explanations for, difference was desired by agencies and stakeholders alike.' 'This meant

there was limited understanding about the through-system journey for different equality groups. Disparities at ‘the end’ of the system, such as the over-representation of Catholic children in custody, highlighted this necessity.’

- Hate motivation crime is a recurring topic across a number of sources (1; 2; 8; 11; 16). Table 1 below highlights the most recent data concerning both hate crimes and reported incidents (8, p.4).

Table: Overall summary of hate motivated incidents and crimes

	INCIDENTS			CRIMES		
	10/19 – 9/20	20/10- 9/21	CHANGE	10/19 – 9/20	20/10- 9/21	CHANGE
Racist	878	1,231	+353	588	864	+276
Homophobic	344	401	+57	246	265	+19
Sectarian	869	1,102	+233	628	802	+174
Disability	83	119	+36	55	78	+23
Faith/Religion	34	66	+32	12	53	+41
Transphobic	68	63	-5	34	37	+3

Summary of Evidence of Inequalities

Section 75 category	Summary of Evidence
Gender	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Criminal Justice Inspection’s Report (1) includes failings in the justice system in NI with regard to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Equality and diversity generally; - Human trafficking and modern slavery; - Sexual violence and abuse; and - Domestic violence and abuse. • Women continue to be underrepresented among PSNI Officers and NIPS custodial staff, and also among judicial appointments. (1; 9) • Sexual offences, especially rape offences, show the highest proportion of crimes for which an outcome has yet to be assigned. (8) • Victims of sexual offences require special measures to ensure that they are heard and protected in the justice system, including those for marginalised communities and those with special needs. (15) • Transphobic hate motivation crime/aggravated by hostility remains of concern. (8; 10) • The NI prison estate falls short in terms of dealing with women prisoners, and especially in the absence of a separate women’s facility. (5; 6) • An SIB internal review of the state of the NI court estate (2021) has highlighted the inadequacy of existing courts for protecting the

Section 75 category	Summary of Evidence
	safety of vulnerable witnesses as well as victims of sexual/domestic violence. (15)
Age	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Criminal Justice Inspection’s Report (1) includes failings in the justice system with regard to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Equality and diversity generally; ○ Child sexual exploitation; • The review of family and civil law highlights a number of ways in which the current judicial system is not welcoming to children and young people, and including their treatment in courts. (13; 15) • Catholic children appear to be over-represented among those in custody • PSNI stop and search procedures in relation to young people generally require closer scrutiny. (1) • For both children and members of the Travelling Community, current PSNI stop and search activity warrants further explanation (1; 7) • The NI prison estate falls short in terms of dealing with juveniles, and in particular those with learning difficulties (5; 6). • The NI justice system needs to become more accessible and welcoming in general, and including to both young people and older people. (13; 15)
Religious Belief	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Persistently high levels of sectarian hate motivation crime remain of concern. (8; 10) • Catholic young people appear to be over-represented among those in custody generally. (1) • Catholics continue to be under-represented in both the NIPS (6) and across the PSNI (both staff and officers). (1; 9). • Ongoing risks posed to NI society by the continuing existence of paramilitary structures which can be harnessed for the purposes of violence or the threat of violence. (16)
Political Opinion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Persistently high levels of sectarian hate motivation crime remain of concern. (8; 10) • Ongoing concern as to a paucity of monitoring data across the NI justice system with regard to political opinion (1) • Ongoing risks posed to NI society by the continuing existence of paramilitary structures which can be harnessed for the purposes of violence or the threat of violence. (16)
Ethnicity and Race	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Criminal Justice Inspection’s Report (1) include general failings in the justice system with regard to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Equality and diversity generally; ○ Human trafficking and modern slavery.

Section 75 category	Summary of Evidence
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For both children and members of the Travelling Community, current PSNI stop and search activity warrants further explanation (1; 7) • Persistently high levels of race hate motivation crime remain of concern. (8; 10) • The NI justice system needs to become more accessible and welcoming generally and including to those from marginalised communities. (13; 15)
Disability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disability-related hate motivation crime remains of concern. (8; 10) • The current NI prison estate falls short in terms of dealing with prisoners with mental health concerns, learning difficulties and learning disabilities. (5; 6) • An SIB internal review of the state of the NI court estate (2021) has highlighted the age and inadequacy of existing courts with regard to access for those with a disability (e.g. toilets, steps) • The NI justice system needs to become more accessible and welcoming generally and including to those with a disability or those with literacy concerns. (13)
Marital Status	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing concern as to a paucity of monitoring data across the NI judicial system with regard to marital status. (1)
Sexual Orientation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Persistently high levels of homophobic hate motivation crime remain of concern (8; 10) • Ongoing concern as to a paucity of monitoring data across the NI justice system with regard to sexual orientation (1)
Dependency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Criminal Justice Inspection’s Report (1) include general failings in the justice system with regard to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Equality and diversity generally; ○ Child sexual exploitation; ○ Domestic violence and abuse. • An SIB internal review of the state of the NI court estate (2021) has highlighted the age and inadequacy of existing courts with regard to access and facilities for those with dependants. • The current NI prison estate falls short in terms of dealing with those with dependants (5; 6).

Conclusion

Recent reviews of the justice system in NI have highlighted the need for more systematic and comprehensive monitoring at each stage of the journey through the judicial process, and including meaningful breakdowns by all Section 75 categories (with the absence of data on political opinion, marital status and sexual orientation of particular note). In the absence of these data then the identification of inequalities within the system remains problematic, although it is noteworthy that there are still no dedicated facilities for women prisoners in NI, and facilities for young offenders continue to be seen as problematic. The prison and police

services remain characterised by imbalances by gender and community background, with appointments to the judiciary also still showing a gender imbalance. Safety of vulnerable witnesses, and the treatment of those with special needs generally within the justice system, are also matters of concern, with a recognition that parts of the system in NI, from courts to prisons, may no longer be fit for purpose.

Data Evidence of Inequalities – Economy and Skills

Data Sources

The ISNI Priority to build a strong, competitive and connected region includes actions to improve connectivity of strategic corridors, to strengthen public transport networks, to maintain strong utility and digital connectivity and to develop key strategic sites. However, not only this Priority but all of the ISNI Priorities will contribute to this objective by providing a more sustainable, decarbonised, basis for our utilities, homes and transport network, by investing in education and learning, by developing our communities, towns and cities and by maximising the benefits from emerging technologies. The impact of ISNI on Northern Ireland's economy, skills structure and labour market is, therefore, very much a cross-cutting feature of the strategy and one with wide implications for the equity of outcomes experienced by both the Section 75 groups and the wider population of Northern Ireland. For this reason, the analysis of the likely impact of ISNI on inequalities relating to the economy and skills has to be a high-level analysis.

The value of considering the wider social, economic and environmental impacts of capital investment is already shown in a range of Northern Ireland policies, such as the recent Procurement Policy Notices 06/20 pm taking account of social value in the award of central government contracts and PPN 01/20 on scoring social value in contracts and also in the wider and well-established Buy Social Policies of the Northern Ireland Executive.

(1) Equality Commission for Northern Ireland, Programme for Government and Budget Recommendation (March, 2021)

<https://www.equalityni.org/ECNI/media/ECNI/Publications/Delivering%20Equality/PfG-Recommendations/PfG-Recommendations-KeyPointBriefing.pdf?ext=.pdf>

(2) Equality Commission for Northern Ireland, Key Inequalities in Employment: Statement (May, 2018)

<https://www.equalityni.org/ECNI/media/ECNI/Publications/Delivering%20Equality/Employment-KeyInequalitiesStatement.pdf>

(3) Equality Commission for Northern Ireland, Consultation Response – Draft Skills Strategy for Northern Ireland: Skills for a 10x Economy (August, 2021)

<https://www.equalityni.org/ECNI/media/ECNI/Consultation%20Responses/2021/DfE-DraftSkillsStrategyNI.pdf?ext=.pdf>

(4) Equality Commission for Northern Ireland, Fair Employment Monitoring Report No.30 Annual summary of monitoring returns (2019)

<https://www.equalityni.org/ECNI/media/ECNI/Publications/Delivering%20Equality/FETO%20Monitoring%20Reports/No30/MonReport30.pdf?ext=.pdf>

(5) Labour Force Survey, Latest Results (December, 2021)

<https://www.nisra.gov.uk/statistics/labour-market-and-social-welfare/labour-force-survey>

(6) Statistics Bulletin, Census 2011 Key Statistics for Northern Ireland, Theme population, NISRA (December, 2012)

<https://www.nisra.gov.uk/sites/nisra.gov.uk/files/publications/2011-census-results-key-statistics-statistics-bulletin-11-december-2012.pdf>

(7) Delivering Social Change - Our Population: What Matters Most? Analysis of responses to Northern Ireland Omnibus Survey questions (OFM/DFM), January 2015 (March, 2016)

<https://www.executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/ofmdfm/dsc-our-population-what-matters-most.pdf>

(8) Addressing Gender Balance - Reaping the Gender Dividend in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM), Department of Employment and Learning (Undated)

<http://www.equalityni.org/ECNI/media/ECNI/Publications/Employers%20and%20Service%20Providers/STEM-Report-Addressing-gender-balance-in-STEM.pdf>

(9) Northern Ireland Skills Barometer, 2019 update, Department for the Economy (July, 2019)

<https://www.economy-ni.gov.uk/publications/northern-ireland-skills-barometer-2019-update>

(10) Gender Equality Strategy: Expert Advisory Panel Report, Department for Communities (December, 2020)

<https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/system/files/publications/communities/dfc-social-inclusion-strategy-gender-expert-advisory-panel-report.pdf>

(11) Disability Strategy: Expert Advisory Panel Report, Department for Communities (December, 2020)

<https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/system/files/publications/communities/dfc-social-inclusion-strategy-disability-expert-advisory-panel-report.pdf>

(12) LGBTQI+ Strategy Expert Advisory Panel – Themes and Recommendations, Department for Communities (December, 2020)

<https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/system/files/publications/communities/dfc-social-inclusion-strategy-lgbtqi-expert-advisory-panel-recommendations.pdf>

Data Gaps

The field of analysis in relation to inequalities in employment and skills is one of the better documented areas, with a variety of data sources providing information about employment, self-employment, economic activity, industrial sectors and occupations. In particular, the Labour Force Survey provides detailed sample data on a regular basis and this data has been analysed in some detail by academic and other commentators. The annual Fair Employment Monitoring Reports provide regular updates about key trends relating to equality in employment (by community background and gender) and the series now extends over 30 years. The Census also provides valuable data, although the most recent data currently available is now dated and it will be important to update the analysis of the Census data based on the results of the 2021 Census. Although it does not deal explicitly with inequalities, the Northern Ireland Skills Barometer provides valuable analysis and projections of skills demand and supply by sector, occupation and qualifications.

Despite the relative richness of the data in relation to employment and skills, data gaps still exist. The Equality Commission has noted these gaps, *inter alia*, in its recommendations in relation to the Programme for Government and Budget (1), in its Statement on Key Inequalities in Employment (2) and in its recommendations in relation the draft Skills Strategy (3) it has called for these gaps to be addressed by comprehensive and disaggregated data being collected across all of the Section 75 categories in order to identify equality gaps and to shape targeted actions to address those gaps and advance equality.

The gaps identified by the Equality Commission include:

- An absence of data in relation to the grounds of gender identity, sexual orientation, and race, and
- A lack of disaggregated data in relation to ethnicity, disability and gender.

Summary of Evidence of Inequalities

Section 75 Category	Summary of Evidence
Gender	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This Section 75 category is the most fully analysed • In its Statement of Key Inequalities (2), ECNI identifies that <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Women experience a lower employment rate and a higher economic activity rate when they have dependants; ○ Women are more likely to be in part-time employment; ○ Women experience industrial segregation in employment; ○ Women experience occupational segregation in employment; ○ Women experience prejudicial attitudes within and outside the workplace. • Women are underrepresented in industries associated with STEM and young women are less likely to study STEM subjects in further and higher education¹². (2) • 53% of females were employed in the Public Administration, Education and Health sectors and a further 18% in Distribution, Hotels and Restaurants, women were significantly under-represented in Energy and Water,(0.4%), Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing (0.7%), Construction (1.2%) and Transport and Communications (3.9%). (5) • Women are under-represented in the highest paid and highest status occupations and over-represented in lower status and lower paid occupations. (2) • Women are more likely than men to report under-employment (2). • Because of their caring roles, women have to balance enhanced pay and career progression with flexibility in employment arrangements (2)

¹² This is of particular importance because both the 10X Economic Strategy and the 10X Skills Strategy emphasise STEM sectors, STEM qualifications and STEM skills.

Section 75 Category	Summary of Evidence
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There has been an increase in employment rates for men and women in Northern Ireland over the past decade. However, the employment rate for women in Northern Ireland has remained consistently lower than for men over the past 10 years⁸⁵ (Appendix 1, Figure 1). Out of all women in the working population (aged 16-64), just 68% are employed; compared to a 75.8% employment rate for men (10) • Men are more likely to work in full-time employment than women; 89% of men are in full-time employment compared to 62% of women in full time employment. As a result, 79% of all parttime employees are women. (10) • Men are also much more likely to be self-employed than women, as they make up 74% of all self-employed people in Northern Ireland (10) • 76% of women with dependent children are considered 'economically active', compared to 92% of men with dependant children. (10) • In 2019, the female share (65.8%) of employees in the public sector remained unchanged from the previous year. (4) • In 2019, the female share of private sector employment was 45.7%. (4) • A lower proportion of women than men (8.9% compared to 9.4%) quoted employment as one of the three most important issues they face in day to day life. (7)
Age	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In its Statement of Key Inequalities (2), ECNI identifies that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Those aged 18 – 24 years have higher unemployment rates than those aged 25 or older; ○ Those aged 50 – 64 are less likely to be in employment and more likely to be economically inactive than those aged 25 – 49. • Youth unemployment is associated with lifelong problems such as worklessness, poverty, lower life satisfaction and ill-health. (2) • For young people, NEET status intersects with other factors such as disability, low educational attainment and poor physical and mental health. (2) • For older workers increases in economic inactivity may be linked to long term sickness, rising retirement age and increased levels of informal caring. (2) • A much lower proportion of those over 65 quoted employment as one of the 3 most important issues they face in day to day life (2.9% compared to 9.1% of all respondents). (7) • In the 2011 Census 15% of the population was 65 or older and 21% were children under the age of 16. (6)

Section 75 Category	Summary of Evidence
Religious Belief	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Fair Employment Monitoring Report 30 (4) shows that in 2019 50.5% of the monitored workforce consisted of Protestant Employees and 49.5% of Catholic Employees. In contrast the equivalent figures in 1990 were 65.1% and 34.9%. • In 2019 Roman Catholics accounted for 53.3% of all appointments and Protestants 46.7%, The Roman Catholic percentage of appointments has exceeded that of Protestants since 2006. (4) • In 2019, members of the Protestant community (50.6%) represented a greater share of the private sector workforce. The Roman Catholic community share of the private sector workforce was 49.4% (4) • In 2019, the Protestant community share of the public sector workforce was 50.2%. During the period 2001-2019, the Protestant community held a larger share of the public sector workforce, although this has been gradually decreasing since 2001 when it stood at 59.8%. • On Census Day in 2011 17% of the Northern Ireland population either had No Religion or Religion Not Stated. (6) • A higher proportion of Roman Catholics than Protestants (10.6% compared to 8.1%) quoted employment as one of the three most important issues they faced in day to day life.
Political Opinion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No separate information is available in relation to Political Opinion. However, in the traditional Northern Ireland communities there is a degree of correlation between Religious Belief and Political Opinion.
Ethnicity and Race	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In its Statement of Key Inequalities (2), ECNI identifies that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Irish Travellers are less likely to be in employment than all other ethnic groups ○ Migrant workers, particularly those from Eastern Europe, are subject to industrial and occupational segregation; ○ Migrant workers and refugees face multiple barriers to employment; ○ Migrant workers are vulnerable to exploitation; ○ Migrant workers are among the groups facing prejudicial attitudes within the workplace. • On Census Day in 2011 1.8% of the population of Northern Ireland belonged to minority ethnic groups, compared to 0.85 in the 2001 Census. (6) • Dungannon LGD had the highest proportion of persons born in EU Accession Countries on Census Day 2011 at 6.8% of its population. (6) • Polish was the second most common language, after English, on Census Day 2011, spoken by 1% of the population. (6)

Section 75 Category	Summary of Evidence
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As a consequence of low, or unknown, numbers little data is available on minority ethnic groups in relation to employment in Northern Ireland. (2) • Irish Travellers are less likely to be in employment than all other ethnic groups and are more likely to be economically inactive. (2)
Disability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In its Statement of Key Inequalities (2), ECNI identifies that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ There is a persistent employment gap between people with and without disabilities; ○ People with disabilities are among the groups facing prejudicial attitudes within the workplace. • People with disabilities are much less likely to be in employment than people without disabilities. This employment gap is persistent having shown little change between 2006 and 2016. (2) • For people with disabilities gaps in educational attainment partially explain the employment gap, but participation in employment is still lower for people with disabilities than non-disable people with equivalent qualifications. (2) • People with disabilities face wider barriers to employment, such as access to transport, the physical environment and limited employment support which can impact on their ability to participate in employment. (2) • Among people with a disability, people with mental health issues and/or a learning disability are less likely to be employed than other people with a disability. (2) • Deaf and disabled people in Northern Ireland are at a substantial disadvantage to their non-disabled peers in gaining, retaining and progressing in employment. (11) • The economic benefits derived from meaningful employment are intrinsically linked to the full and effective realisation of other rights and freedoms. Employment is a major contributing factor in the fundamentals of independence, health and participation. (11) • A much lower proportion of those with disabilities quoted employment as one of the three most important issues they face in day-to-day life (3.6% compared to 11.2% of non-disable respondents). (7)
Marital Status	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Those who are single are more likely to be economically inactive than those who are married, co-habiting or in a civil partnership. (2) • Those who are separated, divorced or widowed are more likely to be economically inactive than those who are married, co-habiting or in a civil partnership and those who are single. (2) • Those who were single were more likely than those who were married, divorced or widowed to quote employment as one of the

Section 75 Category	Summary of Evidence
	<p>three most important issues than face in day to day life (12.4%, compared to 8.8%, 7.5% and 4.6%). (7)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Although only indirectly related to marital status, lone parents with dependants experience particular barriers to employment, including the cost and availability of childcare. (2)
Sexual Orientation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Little background or contextual data is available on lesbian, gay and bisexual people in Northern Ireland. (2) • Lesbian, gay and bisexual people are subject to prejudicial attitudes in the workplace which may impact on their ability to participate in or sustain employment. (2) • There are data gaps in relation to lesbian, gay and bisexual people's experience of the Northern Ireland labour market, these data gaps mean that it is difficult to monitor inequalities in relation to their participation in and experience of employment. (2) • LGBTQI+ people have a range of experiences, worries, barriers and hopes when discussing their participation in public life. There is minimal localised research carried out in the area regarding LGBTQI+ representation and public life to date, and addressing this specifically to Northern Ireland would help demonstrate the institutional changes needed to support both existing and future individuals in public life. (12) • 40% of gay men, 32% of lesbians and 12% of bisexual people would not consider pursuing certain careers because of their sexual orientation. Employment in key public services such as the police, armed forces and teaching were among the most cited careers respondents would avoid. (12)
Dependants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lone parents with dependants experience particular barriers to employment, including the cost and availability of childcare. (2) • Those with dependants were more likely than those with no dependants to quote employment as one of the 3 main issues they face in their day to day life (10.8% compared to 8.2%). (7)

Conclusion

Access to, and participation in, employment is fundamental to economic and social development. Increased employment is generated through a government's economic and skills policies. The Equality Commission expresses the importance of employment in the following terms (2)

'It is generally accepted that improving access to, and progression within, employment is seen in public policy as a key driver of economic and social wellbeing and presents a key route to improved social mobility and inclusion as well as a route out of poverty.'

For this reason, inequalities in employment are among the most fully documented inequalities in Northern Ireland.

Despite that, however, there are data gaps. Limited information is available in relation to:

- Political opinion
- Ethnicity, and
- Sexual orientation.

Fuller information is available in relation to

- Gender
- Age
- Disability, and
- Marital status.

The information that is available (both the structured data and individual studies) suggest that there are significant employment inequalities in most of the Section 75 categories, that these are persistent and that they are often related to deep-seated social and cultural attitudes.

ISNI's investments both in the economic field and in the other infrastructure priorities will need to be sensitive to these inequalities and will need to address them where possible. An example might be to seek to provide employment opportunities which are structured to widen the economic opportunities available to women and others with caring responsibilities who need to work with flexibility. However, action through ISNI is not likely to be sufficient on its own. As another example, action in the education sector will be needed to overcome the reported reluctance of young women to study STEM subjects in higher and further education when STEM sectors, qualifications and skills are prioritised in the economic and skills strategies for Northern Ireland.

As across the other priorities, ISNI investments in the economic and skills sectors will be important contributors to Northern Ireland's future growth and development. ISNI alone will not be able to guarantee equitable outcomes from this investment without supporting actions in other areas of public policy and delivery. However, it is important that ISNI's processes and procedure gather appropriately disaggregated data about the categories of participants in employment and training who benefit from ISNI investments across all its priorities, possibly in a development of the approaches already implemented to some degree under the Northern Ireland Executive's Buy Social policies.

Data Evidence of Inequalities – Environment

Data Sources

The main sources of data/information reviewed in respect of the NI Environment inequalities included the following:

(1) DAERA: Consultation on the draft Green Growth Strategy, Section 75 Screening (October, 2021):

<https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/consultations/daera/EQIA%20Screening%20-%20Draft%20Green%20Growth%20Strategy%20%282021%29%20Combined.pdf>

(2) DAERA: Consultation on the draft Green Growth Strategy, Section 75 EQIA (October, 2021):

<https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/consultations/daera/Draft%20Equality%20Impact%20Assessment%20for%20the%20Draft%20Green%20Growth%20Strategy.pdf>

(3) DE: Energy Strategy for NI: Consultation on Policy Options (March, 2021):

<https://www.economy-ni.gov.uk/consultations/consultation-policy-options-new-energy-strategy-northern-ireland>

(4) DE: Future Energy Decarbonisation Scenarios Report for NI (March, 2021):

<https://www.economy-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/consultations/economy/NI-Future-Energy-Decarbonisation-Scenarios-report.pdf>

(5) DE: Energy Strategy: The Path to Net Zero Energy Screening Report (November, 2021):

<https://www.economy-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/economy/equality-screening-energy-strategy-path-to-net-zero-energy.pdf>

(6) SEUPB: Citizens' Summary: INTERREG V Structural Funds Programme 2014 – 2020 (2020)¹³:

https://www.seupb.eu/sites/default/files/styles/file_entity_browser_thumbnail/public/INTERREG%20Content%20Type/IVA_CitizensSummary_English_Amended_Version2.pdf

(7) The NI Affairs Committee's Inquiry to Examine the Experiences of Minority Ethnic and Migrant People in Northern Ireland (2021):

<https://committees.parliament.uk/committee/120/northern-ireland-affairs-committee/news/153907/experience-of-minority-ethnic-and-migrant-people-in-northern-ireland-inquiry-launched/>

(8) NI Executive Office: Programme for Government Draft Outcomes Framework Equality Impact Assessment Consultation Document (November, 2021):

<https://www.northernireland.gov.uk/publications/programme-government-2021-draft-outcomes-framework-equality-impact-assessment-documents>

(9) SEUPB: PEACE PLUS Section 75 Screening Document (October, 2020)¹⁴:

http://www.seupb.eu/sites/default/files/styles/PEACE%20PLUS%20Public%20Consultation/S75_PEACE_PLUS_Screening_Final.pdf

¹³ Priority 2 of the INTERREG V Structural Funds Programme relates to the environment.

¹⁴ PEACE PLUS, with the support of the European Regional Development Fund, will be a new cross-border EU funding programme for the 2021-2027 period, and succeeds both of the current 2014-2020 PEACE IV and INTERREG VA Programmes.

In many respects, a significant number of the inequality issues associated with the environment (specifically as related to the outcomes of ISNI) have already been addressed recently and comprehensively by DAERA, as part of its ongoing consultation on the new Green Growth Strategy (see 1 & 2). Both the screening and EQIA rely on a multitude of data sources, and the key findings of these reviews form the majority of the comments included below.

DE recently undertook a screening of its new energy strategy but identified no adverse impacts and the strategy was subsequently screened out and without mitigation measures or the adoption of an alternative policy (5). However, as the strategy included several policy options, and was at an early stage of development, it did include a commitment to subject emerging policies to individual Section 75 screenings and impact assessments as necessary. (see 5., p.21)

SEUPB has carried out Section 75 screenings of its programme under INTERREG VA and the subsequent programme PEACE PLUS, that also references various environmental issues. With regard to INTERREG V, the Board concluded that there were minor, positive impacts in relation to race/ethnic origin; age; disability and dependency, with neutral impacts on sexual orientation, marital status, men and women generally, political opinion and religious belief. (see 6; p.17)

Data Gaps

- In contrast with the inequality evidence readily available from DAERA and SEUPB, the absence of any Section 75 considerations with regard to recently announced energy strategy options, including decarbonisation, is noteworthy (3; 4).
- More generally, despite evidence available in other domains (e.g. housing, health), the energy sector appears to afford a lower priority to inequality considerations. With this in mind, the absence of any questions in the recent consultation on energy options is noteworthy (3).
- As a consequence, there is little empirical evidence available as to how decarbonisation and a switch from traditional carbon energy sources may impact adversely on marginalised and vulnerable communities in NI, including older people, those with a disability and families living in poverty.
- The Northern Ireland Affairs Committee’s inquiry to examine the experiences of minority ethnic and migrant people in NI will help to inform future race related impacts and mitigations in this domain. (7)
- The Executive’s Programme for Government EQIA (8) openly acknowledges existing data gaps or issues, specifically with regard to gender identity, sexual orientation, ethnicity; and dependency status. (p.26)

Summary of Evidence of Inequalities

Section 75 category	Summary of Evidence
Gender	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Innovation and technology are key enablers of climate policies. It is estimated that 30% of existing jobs in the UK could be impacted by automation by the early 2030s. Research has shown that female

Section 75 category	Summary of Evidence
	<p>will be impacted more, as jobs with higher rates of female employment are at highest risk of automation. (1; 2)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traditionally, women have been under-represented in those industrial sectors linked to energy and environmental services (e.g. engineering, computer science) (6) • In terms of harnessing the entrepreneurial opportunities that climate change can bring, it is likely that males will be impacted more positively as there are twice as many male entrepreneurs in NI than female. The prevalence of male entrepreneurs tends to be highest in rural areas. (1; 2) • Climate change gender impacts can be very varied. For example the EU reports that there are more women than men experiencing energy poverty. (1; 2)
Age	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transitioning to a net zero economy may impact the elderly in numerous ways from their ability and willingness to understand and accept change to the practicalities and affordability of changing. (1; 2) • The move to a low carbon environment will increasingly involve using technology, and electronic communication which can adversely impact on those who are not familiar or comfortable with this technology, particularly older people. (1; 2) • Measures such as increasing the energy efficiency of homes would be expected to have positive health and social impacts. (1; 2; 5; 8) • Consideration should be given to how best to engage with older people and organisations which represent their interest to capture and utilise the views of older people. (1; 2) • Children are more susceptible to the effects of climate change than adults. ((1; 2; 5)
Religious Belief	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The complex relationships between farm, size, intensity, enterprise type, location and the farmer’s religious belief will need to be taken into account when developing future agricultural policies and financial support measures to address climate change as these measures also differ depending on farm, size, intensity, enterprise type and location. (1; 2) • The impact of a net zero economy on urban and rural dwellers will have differ impacts on transport, energy and lifestyle options. In NI differences in religious belief in terms of location are often very evident in rural areas and within our cities for example East and West Belfast. (1; 2) • Decarbonisation impacts are expected to differ markedly across industrial sectors in NI. (1; 2; 8) • Evidence shows the religious belief of employees can differ significantly in each industrial sectors. For example in 2017 the

Section 75 category	Summary of Evidence
	<p>agriculture, forestry and fishing industry had, 65% Protestant and 35% Catholic employees. (1; 2)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is potential for measures taken to address climate change on beef and hill farms to have a great impact on Catholic farmers, while lowland dairy related climate change measures will have a greater impact on Protestant farmers. (1; 2)
Political opinion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many differences attaching to religious belief also read across to political opinion. (1; 2; 7) • For example, some industries/employment sectors and geographical areas, may be over/underrepresented by particular religious beliefs which are in general associated with political opinion. (1; 2) • Geographical area and national identity may be linked to political opinion, farmers with an Irish only identity were almost twice as likely to farm in Severely Disadvantaged Areas (SDA) (55%) than farmers with a British only identity (28%). (1; 2) • The impact of Green Growth initiatives would be expected to differ in SDAs compared to Less Disadvantaged Areas. (1; 2)
Ethnicity and Race	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low grade, low paid employment appears commonplace for those from minority ethnic groups, despite many having high qualifications and skills. (1; 2) • A potential impact of the draft Strategy could be to harness the skills and diversity across all races. (1; 2) • The application process for support must accommodate those whose first language may not be English, or who may have literacy problems generally. (6)
Disability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People with disabilities experience climate change impacts differently and often more severely than others, hence they must be included in climate action. (1; 2; 6) • Poor air quality can contribute to reduced lung function, aggravated asthma, and increased risk of heart attacks and stroke. (1; 2; 6) • Moving to a net zero economy includes actions that reduce the use of fossil fuels like coal, oil and natural gas, which can substantially improve air quality and provide positive impacts to health, including in particular children's and older people's health. (1; 2)
Marital status	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No relevant data currently available.
Sexual Orientation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No relevant data currently available.
Dependency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No relevant data currently available.

Conclusion

The absence of Section 75 data with regard to emerging energy strategies, and including decarbonisation, is disconcerting and regrettable. As a consequence, there is little empirical evidence available as to how decarbonisation and a switch from traditional carbon energy sources may impact adversely on marginalised and vulnerable communities in NI, including older people, those with a disability and families living in poverty. More generally it is recognised that there are significant data gaps with regard to gender identity, sexual orientation, ethnicity and dependancy status. While a move from carbon energy sources may bring health benefits to certain groups, including the young, the old and those with a disability, marginalised and disadvantaged communities (including those experiencing energy poverty) may require special consideration in order to help them access, or gain advantage from, new energy sources.

STEP 3: ASSESSMENT OF IMPACTS

The next stage of the EQIA process is to assess whether the proposed investment strategy may have a differential impact on people in one or more of the Section 75 groups, and then to determine the extent of differential impact and whether that impact is adverse. This section sets out conclusions based on a review of the data included above.

The evidence set out in Step 2B establishes a comprehensive and inclusive foundation for reflecting on the broad spectrum of key inequalities that may be of potential relevance to ISNI, thereby determining whether there are particular Section 75 groups that may be differentially impacted by the proposed Strategy.¹⁵

It must be borne in mind that a number of the inequalities cited in Step 2B are longstanding and may lie beyond the scope of ISNI itself - but at the same time their continued significance in the wider context of NI society and its infrastructure should not be disregarded.

At this stage of implementation there is little evidence to suggest that the proposals for action as contained within the draft investment strategy *per se* are likely to have a significant adverse impact on people of different religious belief, political opinion, ethnic origin, age, marital status, sexual orientation or sex/gender/sexual identity or on people with a disability or people without, or finally, people with dependants or people without.

This is primarily because the proposals attached to the five key objectives and 22 associated priority areas that make up ISNI (see below) can broadly be cast as positive action measures that are designed to enhance the infrastructure of Northern Ireland and thereby improve the quality of the lives of people in Northern Ireland, irrespective of their identity.

However, it would be naïve in the extreme simply to adopt a stance of ‘for the greater good’ without recognising the ways in which issues attached to recognised inequalities may or may not be adversely affected or ameliorated by the outworking of the strategy.

Equally, the benefits accruing from the strategy are not likely to be distributed evenly across the NI population, and where the strategy has the potential to widen, narrow or leave unaffected existing inequalities should be acknowledged and addressed within the EQIA.

With this in mind, it is argued that the issues outlined below are worthy of particular consideration during the forthcoming consultation, with an explicit understanding that the subsequent roll-out of the strategy will proceed mindful of these considerations.

For the sake of brevity, Section 75 grounds are identified by letter, i.e.:

- Religious belief (R),
- Political opinion (P),
- Race/ethnic origin (E),
- Age (A),
- Marital status (MS),
- Sexual orientation (SO)
- Sex/gender/sexual identity (G)
- People with a disability or people without (D)

¹⁵ The focus of this assessment are the inequalities linked to Section 75 groups. A separate Rural Needs Impact Assessment has been completed.

- People with dependants or people without (DE)

The relevant ISNI objective and associated priority areas are referenced by number, i.e.

- 1. To decarbonise our economy and society:**
 - 1.1 Decarbonise our utilities
 - 1.2 Develop a circular economy
 - 1.3 Transition to sustainable homes
 - 1.4 Decarbonise the transport sector
 - 1.5 Improve our resilience to climate change
 - 2. To strengthen our essential services:**
 - 2.1 Strengthen secondary, primary and mental health care
 - 2.2 Increase the efficiency and responsiveness of our health service
 - 2.3 Invest in sustainable facilities for learning and education
 - 2.4 Increase our wastewater treatment capacity
 - 2.5 Invest in the transformation of our justice system
 - 3. To build a strong, connected and competitive region:**
 - 3.1 Redefine the purpose of our high streets/urban centres
 - 3.2 Promote active travel, prioritising walking, cycling and wheeling for leisure and mobility
 - 3.3 Expand social and intermediate housing
 - 3.4 Develop our sports, culture, arts and leisure facilities and enhance our natural environment
 - 4. To enhance our communities and places:**
 - 4.1 Improve connectivity on strategic corridors
 - 4.2 Strengthen our public transport networks
 - 4.3 Maintain strong utility and digital connectivity
 - 4.4 Leverage key strategic development sites
 - 5. To maximise the benefits from new technology and innovation:**
 - 5.1 Digitise public service access points
 - 5.2 Upgrade the public service digital infrastructure
 - 5.3 Take advantage of data analytics and data science
 - 5.4 Improve information security and network resilience
- **Digital Divide & Automation** – A great many of the projects attached to ISNI, to a greater or lesser extent, are predicated on engagement with ‘new technology’ (e.g., 2.1; 2.2; 2.3; 2.5; 4.3; 5.1; 5.2; 5.3; 5.4), along with a significant shift towards automation in its various forms (e.g., 2.1; 2.2; 2.3; 2.4; 2.5; 4.3; 5.1; 5.2). While sections of the population already embrace new technology with enthusiasm, there is a danger that marginalised groups and communities, including older people and those with lower levels of educational attainment (e.g., R; P; E; A G; D; DE), may become yet further distanced as a consequence of this trend. In addition, there is already evidence that automation continues to have a differential impact on sectors of the labour market traditionally characterised by greater numbers of women and those from minority communities (MS; G; E). To avoid ‘widening

the gap', and in particular in relation to the actions attached to Objective 5, it will be important to consider mitigations that can be introduced.

- **Communication, Numeracy & Literacy** – To engage with (and benefit from) a number of these initiatives (e.g., 1.2; 1.3; 1.5), may require a level of literacy and numeracy that cannot be taken for granted among either younger or older people^{16,17}. For example, it has been estimated that around 20% of the adult population in NI experiences significant literacy problems, and often these problems are correlated with membership of Section 75 groups (e.g., A; E; D). Such issues may inhibit engagement with a number of projects unless mitigating measures are put in place to remedy these concerns.
- **Structural Inequalities** – NI is not exceptional in being characterised by widespread and persistent inequalities, for example in education and the labour market. Protestant boys, women, returnees, Irish Travellers, members of new communities and those with a disability or caring responsibilities are often cited in this regard (P; E; G; D; DE). By their nature, many of the investments linked with ISNI are likely to involve the use of new technology, construction or engineering works, and as a consequence inevitably will draw heavily on 'STEM' subjects in education (i.e., maths, IT, engineering and technology), and will then involve equivalent sectors of the labour market and economy (i.e., mechanical/civil/electrical engineering, computer science, data management). These sectors traditionally have been more popular with men, for example, and it may be important to continue to bear this consideration in mind as ISNI is rolled out over coming years.
- **Access** – A number of projects will involve investment in new builds or facilities that have the potential to enhance quality of life for all sections of the community (e.g., 1.3; 2.1; 2.2; 2.3; 2.4; 2.5; 3.1; 3.3; 3.4; 4.2; 4.4), but which in the past may have been less accessible to those with, for example, limited mobility or sensory impairment (i.e., D). In addition, enhancement of opportunities for active travel and physical activity generally (e.g., 3.2; 2.4) must acknowledge that certain groups and communities have been less inclined to take up these activities in the past, often in response to perceived barriers to access (e.g., E; A; G; D; DE).
- **Hard to Reach Communities** – Historically a number of groups and communities have been seen as isolated or marginalised in relation to mainstream economic and social activity (e.g., carers; lone parents; older people), or have experienced continuous cycles of deprivation that have been difficult to slow or curtail (e.g., Irish Travellers; members of new communities). Once more, it will be important to see how such groups can be effectively engaged in the range of projects attached to the Strategy (e.g., 1.3; 1.5; 2.3; 2.5; 3.1; 3.2; 3.3; 3.4; 4.1; 4.2; 4.3; 5.1; 5.2; 5.3; 5.4).
- **Data Gaps** – Unfortunately, with regard to a number of Section 75 grounds (i.e., P; E; MS; SO; D) there remain significant gaps in our knowledge regarding individual circumstances

¹⁶ http://www.nicva.org/sites/default/files/d7content/attachments-articles/save_the_children.pdf

¹⁷ <https://www.oecd.org/skills/piaac/Country%20note%20-%20United%20Kingdom.pdf>

and needs. In relation to ISNI in particular, the consultation may present an opportunity to address some of these deficits.

STEP 4: MITIGATIONS AND ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

The EQIA process requires that, if it is decided that the policy may have an adverse impact on people in one or more of the Section 75 groups, then the authority must consider alternative policies and measures which might mitigate the adverse impact.¹⁸ This section of the report therefore looks at whether additional measures need to be put in place to minimise the negative impact of any proposals included within the Strategy.

As the previous sections make plain, the ISNI must be set in the context of the broad spectrum of inequalities presented under each of the eight investment themes in the previous sections. This stage of the EQIA considers positive ways in which the ISNI will aspire to ameliorate these inequalities, thereby 'lessening the severity of the adverse impact' on relevant equality category/categories. Or which better promote equality of opportunity for the relevant equality category/ categories.

In this regard it should be noted that the ISNI is a long-term framework for guiding the transformational change needed to tackle significant deficiencies in existing infrastructure, both physical and digital in NI. As noted at the outset of the strategy, that high-quality physical and digital infrastructure is the foundation of all modern economies and is required for a fair and just society. The ambition for infrastructure investment in ISNI is also required to tackle some of the challenges that lie ahead for NI. Including responding to the climate emergency, the changing requirements of an ageing population, evolving trade relationships in the post Brexit era, and the pace of technical innovation and change. Furthermore, ISNI will deliver on the recognised need to invest in the increased capacity and skills required to deliver such an ambitious investment strategy.

Aligned to the above, ISNI provides the longer-term framework (over a 30-year period) needed to prioritise investment to address these deficiencies and challenges and make the most of opportunities. As a framework it sets out clear funding mechanisms and the strong governance and monitoring arrangements needed to manage delivery and assess the impact of infrastructure investment over the coming 30 years.

The implementation of ISNI will be subdivided into enabling 10-year Executive Infrastructure Investment Plans. This first of these will be supported by a new Medium-Term Infrastructure Financial Plan, which in turn will enable the development of detailed departmental Investment Plans. These plans will result in the publication of a visible pipeline of projects for the construction industry and other sectors and create transparency in the delivery of infrastructure against plans. Each of these investment projects will be subject to equality screening by the sponsoring department and where appropriate and/or relevant, an equality impact assessment. Within this broad framework SIBs role will include a strategic oversight of the equality of opportunity and good relations impacts of the 10-year plans.

Once finalised (post consultation) ISNI will set the strategic reference framework for investment priorities in physical and digital infrastructure. It is important therefore to ensure that the framework provides a solid basis, not just to tackle key inequalities, but also to promote equality of opportunity and good relations, throughout the forward delivery period.

¹⁸ Practical Guidance on Equality Impact Assessment, Equality Commission for NI, 2004 (pp.30-31)

In the development of ISNI the critical importance of considering infrastructure development through the lens of equality of opportunity and good relations has been recognised. The draft strategy recognises that good quality infrastructure helps us to promote equality of opportunity and good relations. It also recognises that investment in infrastructure thus far has not benefited all groups equally in society - with significant inequalities in outcomes persisting in many of the investment themes of the strategy (e.g., health and social care, housing, education, justice, etc).

The recognition that the ISNI provides a significant opportunity to maximise equality of opportunity and good relations has been reflected in the mainstreaming of various relevant constructs within the vision statement – as below.

**‘We have the infrastructure that
enables everyone to lead a healthy, productive and fulfilling life;
that supports sustainable economic development and
protects our environment.’**

For instance, this mainstreaming approach is reflected in the focus within the vision statement on **‘everyone’** and ensuring that a breadth of infrastructure investment will facilitate healthy, productive and **fulfilling** lives on an inclusive and sustainable basis. The vision statement is not aligned to the ‘bricks and mortar’ of infrastructure investment as a measure of success. Rather it is ‘people orientated’ in terms of the impact of infrastructure investment on improved quality of life that should be extended on an inclusive basis to all the citizens of NI to enable them to lead **fulfilling** lives.

Furthermore, the emphasis within the ISNI on working across Government and on ongoing engagement and co-design with stakeholders, in respect of forward investment planning, also offers a significant opportunity to maximise equality and good relations. The commitment to transform infrastructure investment will, by necessity, require not just collaboration across government departments, but effective partnerships across local government and with the private and third sectors. The approach to ongoing investment planning as described above will seek to take full advantage of collaborative working across all of the above interests. In turn ensuring that strategic, regional and local investments maximise the opportunity for value creation and inclusion through co-ordination of resources and investment.

Aligned to all of the above, the draft ISNI as a strategic framework provides a sound basis for the development of subsequent investment plans that can be targeted towards addressing inequalities. It is the important first step in the process, and ensuring that it is right, is critical to everything that will follow on from it over the 30-year delivery timeline. In essence the identification of a visible pipeline of projects (within individual investment plans) and associated performance metrics, suitably targeted to the key inequalities, will unlock the framework’s full potential to reduce inequalities and improve wellbeing for all.

To make this happen will require careful consideration as to how the Section 75 principles of equality of opportunity and good relations can be enshrined in the practice of project delivery. This responsibility cannot rest with any single agency or department but must characterise the actions of all partners in these enterprises, whether public, private or third sector.

The previous section has identified potential adverse impacts attaching to ISNI but how these matters are afforded due regard in practical terms is a concern that must continue to rest

with all delivery agents, through appropriate engagement with key stakeholders. As one example, processes such as co-design, can be effective in ensuring inclusivity from project design through to delivery. Other examples can include an explicit contractual commitment to meet Section 75 duties for the duration of the project (for both public and private sector partners); a recognition of the need for diverse means of communication to access the hard to reach; an acknowledgement of varying levels of literacy and numeracy among the population at large and service users (and including the adoption of universal signage); a need to have concern for access and mobility considerations in all projects; and, at the very least, a recognition that longstanding structural inequalities may serve to make particular initiatives or enterprises more or less accessible to particular Section 75 groups and communities.

This list is not intended to be exhaustive but instead should be regarded as indicative of how investments to be made through ISNI can be encouraged to take on board, and as a consequence mainstream, Section 75 principles into day-to-day project management.

In addition to these considerations, any investment (via ISNI) must include mechanisms for considering the impact on equality and good relations. Specifically, monitoring systems will give consideration as to how any adverse impact of investment can be considered and conversely identify where there may be specific benefit to Section 75 groups. This will be mindful of the various areas across the Section 75 groups where there are existing gaps in data /information. As noted on Page 60 there will be ongoing tracking of impact across a range of policy areas that include equality of opportunity and good relations, social value, social impact and rural needs, over and above economic and environmental impacts. The arrangements also provide for the publication of an Annual Monitoring Report that will include a specific Investment Delivery Report, which will showcase the impact of investment in all of the above areas.

Via the delivery tracking / monitoring system for ISNI there will continue to be monitoring of the impact of social value clauses, on those who are marginalised and distant from the labour market. The monitoring data captured in relation to beneficiaries of Buy Social already covers some of the Section 75 groups in this context. Many public bodies already have been highly innovative in their use of public procurement to promote social value, including the scoring of social value criteria – building on and developing the Buy Social model, which the Procurement Board approved in 2015. The recent mandate brought via the development of the Procurement Policy Note¹⁹ on Scoring Social Value had brought additional momentum in this area.

¹⁹ https://www.finance-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/dfp/PPN%2001%2021%20Scoring%20Social%20Value_4.pdf

STEP 5: CONSULTATION

The next stage of the EQIA process involves formal consultation with interested parties to obtain:

- views on the assessment of impacts (Step 4 above);
- any further information which could be useful in assessing the impacts;
- comments and suggestions on the mitigating measures (Step 5 above)
- comments and suggestions with regard to the consultation process.

The scoping work to develop the draft ISNI has involved an extensive process of engagement that built on detailed research and analysis across all of the investment themes in the strategy. This engagement encompassed community organisations; business and industry organisations and representative bodies; Government departments and agencies, their arm's length bodies and public corporations; and Local Authorities and their representative organisations.

The strategy itself, this EQIA and the Rural Needs Impact Assessment (RNIA) will now be subject to a further engagement and public consultation process, commencing on 26th January 2022. The purpose of which is to gauge public opinion as to whether the assessment of infrastructure needs and priorities going forward in the draft ISNI is sound.

The results of the consultation will be used to inform a final ISNI/ strategic framework for infrastructure investment, that will be prepared for Executive consideration which in turn will provide the basis for the development of the various investment plans, as outlined in Step 5 – all of which will be geared to the attainment of the vision, that:-

**'We have the infrastructure that
enables everyone to lead a healthy, productive and fulfilling life;
that supports sustainable economic development and
protects our environment.'**

As set out in preceding sections, the draft ISNI fully recognises that not all groups experience the same outcomes across the thematic areas of infrastructure investment within the strategy. Therefore, a key imperative will be to ensure that investment priorities are balanced and have given due regard to equality of opportunity and good relations. Step 5 has set out observations for consideration on how the draft ISNI has been designed to provide a sound basis and first step in the process of prioritising resources towards addressing inequalities and promoting both equality of opportunity and good relations. In addition, as noted in Step 5, monitoring will continue as the ISNI evolves and as specific investment plans and projects are brought forward they will be subject to Section 75 screening/equality impact assessment based on the respective responsibilities outlined earlier.

The consultation questions in relation to the draft EQIA and RNIA (included within the main ISNI consultation document) are as follows:-

- Q15 - Do you agree with either the process or the findings of the draft EQIA and Rural Needs Impact Assessment (RNIA)? If no, then please explain why.

- Q16 - Are there any other issues or inequalities that have not been highlighted in the draft EQIA or RNIA that you believe needs to be noted? If yes, then please explain what they are.

You can respond to this consultation online through our survey on Citizen Space, (<https://consultations2.nidirect.gov.uk/dof/infrastructure-2050-consultation-document>).

An easy read version of the consultation document will be available online and if you need documents to be provided in an alternative format, please let us know. Responses to this consultation are invited until 11.59pm on 20th April 2022.

Written responses can be sent to us by e-mail at: consult.isni@sibni.org or by post at: Investment Strategy for Northern Ireland, Strategic Investment Board, 5th Floor, 9 Lanyon Place, Belfast, BT1 3LP.

Appendix 1: Qualitative Evidence of Inequalities - Input from CFE responses

The following additional “Lived Experience” data was collected through the Call for Evidence Process and highlights some of the potential differential impact issues on some of the Section 75 groups who responded to the CFE that need to be considered in the ISNI as it relates to equality and good relations. Some of the content was collected through focus groups while other data is based on written submissions.

Section 75 Group	Qualitative Data from CFE
Age - Youth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The importance of the Common Framework of Reference on Child Rights Impact Assessment (Nov 20) https://www.niccy.org/media/3763/enoc-common-framework-of-reference-fv.pdf • The need for fair and equal opportunities for young people in housing • Everyone should feel safe in their community (in regard to housing is laid out, safe spaces, illuminated), with green spaces • Homes near and supported by public transport • Integrated education as well as integrated communities • End Project Fear (paramilitarism) • Equality for all • Better connected transport • More railways in rural areas • Better signage including braille • Free travel • More accessible transport – disabled accessibility on buses • More cycle lanes, more accessible with more bikes outside of Belfast / bike clubs • Easy transport information – easier to access for the user
Age – Older people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are living longer than ever before and the age profile of our society is changing rapidly. The number of people aged 65 and over will increase by more than 25% between 2016-26, and the number of households where the oldest person is 85 and over is increasing faster than any other age group. These changes have profound implications for each of us, as well as for government, business and civil society. • The projections between mid-2016 and mid-2026: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ageing of the Northern Ireland population is set to continue, ○ Aged 65 and over projected to increase by 25.0 per cent (i.e., 74,500 people) ○ Growth of over 40 per cent is projected among those aged 85 and over • Age NI - Ageing Society Grand Challenge: To ensure people can enjoy at least five extra healthy, independent years of life by 2035, while narrowing the gap between the experiences of the richest and poorest <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Social impact – achieving better outcomes for individuals, families and communities

Section 75 Group	Qualitative Data from CFE
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Economic impact – development of new products and markets ○ Fiscal impact – reducing the rise in costs of public services (especially health, care and welfare) ○ Prevention and delay of the factors leading to poor health ○ Maintaining functional ability through adapting environments, products and services ○ Inclusion and affordability to address health inequalities and limited incomes with mass-market appeal ○ The future, for those approaching later life today and tomorrow ○ Shift in attitudes towards age stereotyping and the association of ‘ageing’ with decline and frailty ○ Repurposing existing technology and products e.g., smart homes, fintech and mobility ○ More aspirational, inclusive design ○ New systems and service models - no single product or service can provide the answer alone <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Health and Care Priorities include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A focus on health inequalities / modifiable risk factors is fundamental. ○ Policies and interventions that focus on prevention and healthy ageing need to target those whose health is most at risk. ○ Supporting family and other unpaid carers ○ Capitalising on the opportunities from new technologies ● Age Friendly Priorities include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Local government, businesses and partners in the voluntary and community sector need to create communities that make it easier to stay active and connected. Successfully designing the built environment ○ Support for community activities that are inclusive and accessible to us regardless of age or disability. ○ Transport and the design of our towns and cities can enable us to get out and about, or it can create barriers, especially for those with health conditions and disabilities. ● Housing Priorities include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Investment to upgrade and ensuring there is appropriate housing stock. ○ Timely advice and access to funding to adapt and repair homes. ○ Support for local authorities, planners and developers to deliver future homes suitable for adaptive technologies as places of work and care. ○ Thinking ‘beyond the building’ to include the neighbourhood and community. ○ Preparing for the impact of variable home ownership rates ● Age at Work Priorities include:

Section 75 Group	Qualitative Data from CFE
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Supporting OP to lead fuller and longer working lives. ○ Adaptations to the workplace. ○ Offering e-skilling opportunities are available throughout people’s careers. ○ Ensuring Planning is being done earlier (e.g., Mid Careers review & Financial Resilience) ● Lifelong Priorities include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Addressing barriers to later life learning (cost, attitudes, time, work and family commitments). ○ Specific focus on technological and financial skills through life. ○ Addressing falling participation in lifelong education and training ● Connectivity Priorities include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Responding to the transport needs of different age groups ○ Successfully designing the built environment ○ Addressing barriers to technology use
Women	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Increased availability of public transport, particularly in rural areas, and increased measures to ensure that women feel comfortable taking public transport home at night. ● Often, lack of proper public transportation can act as a barrier to women’s ability to access basic services, education/training, work (both full-time and part-time) and childcare. ● The availability of public transportation becomes more infrequent in rural areas, where there is room for investment not only for increased public transport times, but for increased interconnectedness between areas outside of Belfast. ● Investment in increased safety measures put in place that would make women feel more comfortable taking public transportation at night should be a priority. ● 50% of women in Northern Ireland have reported being sexually harassed in a public space including on public transport. This number could be higher due to under-reporting, a common issue for offenses of a sexual nature. Investment in infrastructure that would make it safer for women to travel on public transportation at night could help prevent these offenses but could also increase women’s willingness to use public transport at night. https://www.unwomenuk.org/site/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/APPG-UN-Women-Sexual-Harassment-Report_Updated.pdf <p>Project ideas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The first would support the development of public transport in rural areas, with a specific focus on developing public transport between rural areas that does not require one to travel to Belfast first.

Section 75 Group	Qualitative Data from CFE
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The second project that should be considered a priority for investment is one that aims to make women and gender minorities feel more comfortable taking public transportation at night. While this should be informed by engagement with women and gender minorities across Northern Ireland, it could include implementing better lighting on buses and bus stops, removing dark access ways to stops, allowing women to get off between designated stops to ensure that they are getting off alone and eliminating the time it takes to walk from the bus stop to their destination, to name a few examples of what has been implemented elsewhere. • City VITALity and Sustainability (CIVITAS), a network of cities supported by the European Union to create more sustainable and better transport, produced the policy note, “Gender equality and mobility: mind the gap!” to show that gender mainstreaming must be incorporated into transport and mobility planning and decision-making. This will make public transport a safer and more efficient for women, as well as make it a more desirable travel option for men. https://civitas.eu/sites/default/files/civ_pol-an2_m_web.pdf <p>Childcare</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women disproportionately work in the care sector and/or deliver unpaid care in the home. Childcare is a gap that needs to be addressed in the Investment Strategy as the lack of accessible and affordable childcare acts a barrier to women’s participation in the workforce. • According to the Northern Ireland Childcare Survey (2019), 50% of families who responded to the survey noted that they spent over 20% of their income on childcare costs - 63% of lone parents responded the same of childcare services, it is not economically viable for women in part-time jobs to work or continue working. Essentially, the lack of childcare provisions forces (mainly part-time working) women out of work due to the high prices https://www.employersforchildcare.org/app/uploads/2019/06/Northern-Ireland-Childcare-Survey-2019-FINAL.pdf <p>Project ideas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The first should focus on investing in the paid and unpaid care sector, particularly in ensuring that paid care sector is well-paid, attracts and participation in education and training and is viewed as a valued career option for all. It should also improve financial and mental support for those who act as unpaid carers both at home and in their paid workplaces and/or educational settings. • The second project should focus on investing in a comprehensive, affordable and accessible childcare strategy that takes into account the different needs of women living in urban and rural areas. However, the working conditions for paid carers and the support received by unpaid carers is not sustainable.

Section 75 Group	Qualitative Data from CFE
	<p>The suggested investments in the care sector must be made not only to improve the working and living conditions of carers, but to ensure that the healthcare system and economy can continue to function. De Henau and Himmelweit’s research on the importance of investing in care outlines why it is not only the preferable option male-dominated, physical infrastructure sectors, but why it is the most important option to stimulate the economy post-Covid.</p> <p>https://www.open.ac.uk/ikd/sites/www.open.ac.uk.ikd/files/files/working-papers/COVID%20care-led%20recovery_IKD_WP85_2020_06_12%20%28003%29.pdf</p>
General	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impact of Poverty • Impact of Covid 19 • Social value Clauses – added value through procurement, but also social value of the investment itself • Improving public housing

INFRASTRUCTURE 2050

The Investment Strategy for Northern Ireland

Draft Consultation Document

isni.gov.uk



**Northern Ireland
Executive**

www.northernireland.gov.uk



**Investment
Strategy**
Northern Ireland