



Department of
Finance
An Roinn
Airgeadais
www.finance-ni.gov.uk

Easy Read: **Consultation on Audit of Inequalities and Action Plans**

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Introduction

The Department of Finance wants to use money and services wisely for everyone in Northern Ireland. They aim to provide good public services that don't cost too much.

Background

The Department has important responsibilities under the Northern Ireland Act 1998:

- Make sure everyone has equal opportunities
- Encourage good relationships among different groups

They have a plan called the Equality Scheme to show how they do this. You can find this plan on their website.

Past Action Plan

From 2018 to 2023, the Department had a plan to reduce inequalities in areas like:

- Managing staff
- Providing services to the public

They reported their progress to the Equality Commission each year.



2024 Audit of Inequalities

The Department looked at their work to find ways to improve equality and good relations. They also reviewed the Civil Service workforce and got feedback from staff and other groups.



Findings

The audit showed progress in making the workforce more diverse and inclusive. Here are some actions they took:

- Programs to reach out to different communities
- Job ads aimed at under-represented groups
- Guaranteed interviews for disabled applicants
- New policies, like support for menopause, dealing with domestic and sexual abuse, and special leave for miscarriage
- Events to raise awareness about diversity and inclusion



Areas for Improvement



**Better support
for disabled job
applicants**



**More equal
representation of men
and women in different
job levels**



**Improving the age
and disability mix
in the Civil Service
workforce**

Section 75 Action Plan 2025-30

This is a summary of the actions we intend to take:

- The Department will encourage people from different religious backgrounds and different racial backgrounds to apply for jobs within the Civil Service.
- The Department will encourage men or women to apply for particular jobs.
- The Department will encourage young people to apply for jobs within the Civil Service.
- The Department will encourage people with disabilities to apply for jobs within the Civil Service.
- The Department will gather more information from staff in relation to disabilities, racial backgrounds, dependents and sexuality.
- The Department will improve online access to services for older people and people with disabilities.
- The Department will support good mental health in the workplace.
- The Department will work in partnership to deliver training for older people and people with disabilities.
- The Department will ensure appropriate legislation is in place to address any discrimination in relation to pensions.

Disability Action Plan 2025-30

This is a summary of the actions we intend to take:

- The Department will work with Employers for Disability NI on disability awareness training.
- The Department will promote training in the JAM (Just a Minute) initiative.
- The Department will deliver a calendar of diversity days to increase understanding and awareness of disabilities and diversity issues.
- The Department will provide new learning resources for staff on reasonable adjustments, Dignity at Work, and Bullying and Harassment, and ensure completion of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion e-learning modules.
- Front-line staff will be trained to provide the best customer experience for those with disabilities.
- The Department will develop a Mental Health Strategy, and staff will be provided with advice and support on health related matters, including promoting positive mental health.
- The Department will deliver a programme of outreach initiatives, strengthen existing links with the disability sector, and will promote and develop the work experience programme for people with disabilities.
- There will be a review of the Reasonable Adjustments process.
- The Department will include a section on diversity in the plan for each new public appointment and encourage applications from people with disabilities.
- The Department will develop activities targeted at people with disabilities and their carers to make more use of online services.
- The Department will check its website is accessible.



Next Steps

The Department wants your thoughts on their new action plans. They want to know if the plans show their commitment to equality and what else they could do better.



Questions

Think about these questions when giving your feedback:

- **Do the plans show the Department's commitment to equality?**
- **Are the suggested actions appropriate?**
- **What other actions should they take?**

How to Respond



Send your comments to equality@finance-ni.gov.uk by 25 August 2025.

Be careful not to include any offensive material, as responses may be published. Your opinions are valued, and the Department thanks you for your time.



Next Steps in Consultation

The responses will be reviewed and summarized for the Minister. The consultation response document will be published on the Department's website and shared with the Northern Ireland Assembly's Finance Committee and equality consultees.



Confidentiality and Data Management

If you want your response to be confidential, explain why. The Department will try to keep it confidential but can't guarantee it in all cases. Personal data will be handled according to data protection laws.

Thank you for reading this document and providing your feedback.



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