



The
Executive Office

TEO Section 75

EQUALITY SCREENING FORM

Title of Policy:
The Executive Office (TEO) Budget 2024-25

TEO Section 75 Equality Screening Form

This screening form is divided into 5 parts which must all be completed.

Part 1. Policy scoping – asks public authorities to provide details about the policy, procedure, practice and/or decision being screened and what available evidence you have gathered to help make an assessment of the likely impact on equality of opportunity and good relations.

Part 2. Screening questions – asks about the extent of the likely impact of the policy on groups of people within each of the Section 75 categories. Details of the groups consulted and the level of assessment of the likely impact. This includes consideration of multiple identity and good relations issues.

Part 3. Screening decision – guides the public authority to reach a screening decision as to whether or not there is a need to carry out an equality impact assessment (EQIA), or to introduce measures to mitigate the likely impact, or the introduction of an alternative policy to better promote equality of opportunity and/or good relations.

Part 4. Monitoring – provides guidance to public authorities on monitoring for adverse impact and broader monitoring.

Part 5. Approval and authorisation – verifies the public authority's approval of a screening decision by a senior manager responsible for the policy.

Part 1. Policy scoping

The first stage of the screening process involves scoping the policy under consideration. The purpose of policy scoping is to help prepare the background and context and set out the aims and objectives for the policy, being screened. At this stage, scoping the policy will help identify potential constraints as well as opportunities and will help the policy maker work through the screening process on a step by step basis.

Public authorities should remember that the Section 75 statutory duties apply to internal policies (relating to people who work for the authority), as well as external policies (relating to those who are, or could be, served by the authority).

Information about the policy

Name of the policy

TEO Draft Budget 2024-25

Is this an existing, revised or a new policy?

The TEO Budget 2024-25 represents a new de facto policy.

Please note that given the breadth of TEO programmes and operations across NI society, the effect of TEO operating within the draft budget allocation would be expected to impact on all section 75 categories. The draft budget will therefore have major equality implications and require a full consultation.

Freezing the 2024-25 TEO Budget at the flat cash baseline for 2023-24 will impact the T:BUC Programme, District Council Good Relations Programme, and other equality related programmes and funding streams, as funding will be reduced in real terms due to impact of inflation. Some objectives are unlikely be fully achievable funding proposed in the draft Budget for 2024-25.

What is it trying to achieve? (intended aims/outcomes)

The Executive Office is committed to ensuring that it fulfils its duties under Section 75 (1) and (2) of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 in relation to having due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity and to have regard to desirability of promoting good relations. Tackling disadvantage and promoting equality of opportunity is a core priority for the Department. In particular:

1. The Ending Violence Against Women and Girls (EVAWG) Programme has been identified as an Executive priority. The Executive has determined that there was a need for a new strategic, whole of government approach to tackle violence against women and girls meaningfully; this included crimes and unwanted behaviour in the physical and online world.
2. TEO funds the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland, an independent public body which oversees equality and discrimination in Northern Ireland providing advice and promoting equality of opportunity on grounds of gender, age, disability, sexual orientation, race, religious belief and political opinion.
3. TEO is responsible for funding and leading the delivery of the Executive's Good Relations strategy: Together: Building a United Community (T:BUC); and
4. TEO funds the Minority Ethnic Development Fund which provides support for minority ethnic people and groups.
5. The Victims' Payment Scheme for Permanent Disablement, Historical Institutional Abuse redress and the Truth Recovery Programme (for the Mother and Baby Institutions, Magdalene Laundries and Workhouses) will be funded from the earmarked resource allocation in the DoF draft budget. The Finance Minister has highlighted that funds will be made available to the Department to meet any demands arising during the year. These areas have significant equality implications.

The Executive Office will make sure the budget is deployed in support of these initiatives to ensure best value for money, sound financial management and accountability in line with public sector financial processes. Much of TEO's work has implications for s75 groups, including those related to: religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, 'men and women generally', disability and 'persons with dependents'.

Freezing the 2024-25 TEO Budget at the flat cash baseline for 2023-24 will impact the T:BUC Programme, District Council Good Relations Programme, and other equality related programmes and funding streams, as funding will be reduced in real terms due to impact of inflation.

Note however that the opportunity often arises to reallocate any underspends internally within TEO and also through the Monitoring Round Process to address areas of need.

Are there any Section 75 categories which might be expected to benefit from the intended policy?

If so, explain how.

Yes. Equality underpins all TEO policy. Any funding reductions will have an adverse impact on society as a whole across all age groups, genders, ethnicity, sexual orientations, marital status, disability or not, with children or not.

It is anticipated that all of the implications outlined in this screening would have significant equality implications and require consultation.

Who initiated or wrote the policy?

The Minister of Finance initiated the policy and the Draft Budget. The Draft Budget 2024-25 for TEO has been developed and agreed by the First and Deputy First Minister.

Who owns and who implements the policy?

First Minister, Deputy First Minister, the TEO Interim Accounting Officer and TEO Finance Division.

Implementation factors

Are there any factors which could contribute to/detract from the intended aim/outcome of the policy/decision?

Yes

If yes, which factors?

- Financial
- Legislative
- Shared Future funding. TEO oversees the allocation and monitoring of funding for delivery of the T:BUC strategy. This funding facilitates delivery of the T:BUC Headline actions, Central Good Relations fund and an element of the District Council Good Relations programme.
- This funding was reduced in 2023-24 and has been restored to the previous 2023-24 baseline in 2024-25. Independent evaluations and the analysis of feedback from participants indicates that the programmes currently supported through TEO funding are having a significant positive impact on those who take part. Therefore additional funding is being made available focused on providing resources for more projects on the ground, to enable greater numbers of people from all backgrounds to benefit from these interventions. It will also provide support for the ongoing review of the T:BUC Strategy. Having considered the impacts, Ministers have approved that the additional £750k found within spending plans in 2024-25 be allocated equally between Central and District Good Relations. In addition, the Executive has, through June Monitoring, allocated a further £0.5m to Central Good Relations on an earmarked basis. This means that, having taken account of the feedback to the 2023-24 EQIA consultation, it has been possible to restore £1.25m, providing an additional 36% to the Good Relations programme. Both programmes seek to contribute to the key aims of the current T:BUC Strategy and improve relations between and within communities here.
- Any reduction in funding would put at risk the delivery of initiatives by Department for Education (shared education, T:BUC Camps), Department for Communities (shared neighbourhoods, United Communities) and Department for Justice (removal of interface

barriers). These have been specific ministerial priorities. It will also impact council good relations funding and programmes.

Main stakeholders affected

Who are the internal and external stakeholders (actual or potential) that the policy will impact upon?

- Staff
- the public and people who use our services: the vulnerable
- other public sector organisations incl councils and ALBs
- voluntary/community/trade unions

Other policies with a bearing on this policy

- what are they?

Freezing the 2024-25 TEO Budget at the flat cash baseline for 2023-24 will impact the T:BUC Programme, District Council Good Relations Programme, and other equality related programmes and funding streams.

- who owns them?

TEO and its ALBs (both inside and outside the accounting boundary) including:

- NI Community Relations Council;
- Commission for Victims and Survivors for NI;
- Equality Commission for NI;
- Maze/Long Kesh Development Corporation;
- Northern Ireland Judicial Appointments Commission;
- Strategic Investment Board Limited;
- The Commissioner for Survivors of Institutional Childhood Abuse
- Victims and Survivors Service
- North South Ministerial Council Joint Secretariat (North);

Available evidence

Evidence to help inform the screening process may take many forms. Public authorities should ensure that their screening decision is informed by relevant data. The Commission has produced this guide to [signpost to S75 data](#).

What evidence/information (both qualitative and quantitative) have you gathered to inform this policy? Specify details for each of the Section 75 categories.

Religious belief:

Engagement with DoF, Core Department, TEO Business Areas, ALBs and project sponsors.

An analysis of the information held by TEO indicates that any reduction in budget is likely to have a negative impact on good relations between people of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group as building relations between these groups is the key purpose of the funding programmes, T:BUC Strategy and District Councils Good Relations Programme.

Figures indicate that a greater percentage of people who are Catholic benefit from participation in CGRF (45.2%/10,353 participants CNR, 42.5% 9,736 PUL) and Planned Interventions Programme (over 80% CNR) projects than might be expected based on the NI population. For the DCGRP, it is estimated that just under 40%/~40,000 of participants are from a PUL background with a further 40%~40,000 from a CNR background.

Political Opinion:

Engagement with DoF, Core Department, TEO Business Areas, ALBs and project sponsors.

Community background can be used as a proxy indicator for political opinion. See 'Religious Belief' above.

Racial Group:

Engagement with DoF, Core Department, TEO Business Areas, ALBs and project sponsors.

Equality Statistics for the NICS as at 01 January 2024 (March 2024) - •

The proportion of staff who were from minority ethnic groups (0.6%; economically active population, 3.0%) continues to be lower than in the economically active population.

An analysis of the information held by TEO indicates that any reduction in budget is likely to have a negative impact on good relations between people of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group, as building relations between these groups is the key purpose of the funding programmes / T:BUC Strategy.

The Central Good Relations Fund attracts a much larger percentage of participants from a minority ethnic background than would be reasonable to anticipate based on NI's demographic profile. In 2022-23 it was estimated around 2,825 participants came from an ethnic minority background.

In 2021-22, data for the DCGRP suggests that 88% of participants were from a white background, indicating that a significant number of participants are from a minority ethnic background.

The Minority Ethnic Development Fund (circa £1.2m per annum) provides support for voluntary and community organisations working with and representing minority ethnic people and groups. The Crisis Fund (circa £200k per annum) provides small sums of money at key moments for minority ethnic people and migrant workers, such as after losing work, reduced hours, or family breakdown to provide support for those at risk of destitution. Together they are the only direct funding schemes to support implementation of the Racial Equality Strategy for Northern Ireland. Evidence shows that this section 75 category is growing rapidly. On Census Day 2021, 3.4% of the population, or 65,600 people, belonged to minority ethnic groups. This is around double the 2011 figure (1.8% – 32,400 people) and four times the 2001 figure (0.8% – 14,300 people). Note that it is widely recognised that census figures undercount the minority ethnic group population.

We are aware of specific risks to refugee and migrant women in relation to EAWG.

Age:

Engagement with DoF, Core Department, TEO Business Areas, ALBs and project sponsors.

The age profile of **Central Good Relations Fund** (CGRF) participants indicates that approx. 44.7% are under 18. Across all areas of the programme, approx. 10,000 children and young people participated in 2022-23. Given the high proportion of CGRF funding that is allocated to projects that directly support children and young people, any cut to the CGRF would have a more significant and adverse impact on this S75 group than on others.

The Planned Intervention Programme is for children and young people from 10 up to the age of 25 (circa 1,300 people), however the outcomes delivered by the programme impact on people of all ages by addressing anti-social behaviour and community tensions.

A third of participants in the District Council Good Relations Programme are 18 or under (circa 35,000 people).

Since the T:BUC Camps programme began in 2015-16, over 750 Camps have been delivered to over 26,000 young people between the ages of 11-19. Not funding the T:BUC Camps Programme would have an adverse impact on Children and Young People. The latest outcomes data shows that having taken part in a Camp:

- 97% had made new friends with someone from a different religious/community background.
- 87% felt more favourable towards people from a different religious/community background.
- 86% felt more favourable towards people from a different ethnic background.

In addition, 98% felt a personal benefit from taking part in the Camp e.g. increased confidence, new skills, participation which improves the wellbeing of the young people.

There are currently 37 T:BUC Camps Good Relations Ambassadors who are midway through their Ambassadors Programme. Withdrawing funding would prevent them from completing their programme. They would be unable to complete the OCN qualification they are working towards.

The EVAWG Strategy will consider risks identified as more prevalent among older and younger people from VAWG, including financial abuse of the elderly and online abuse of young people.

Individuals accessing services through VSS are predominantly older, with victims and survivors over the age of 56 making up:

- 75% of clients receiving Persistent Pain Framework support;
- 66% of those accessing support through the Victims Support Programme or PEACE IV, and
- 59% of those receiving support through the VSS Individual Needs Programme.

Marital Status:

At this time there is no evidence to indicate that the budget allocation would negatively impact this Section 75 category.

Sexual Orientation:

At this time there is no evidence to indicate that the budget allocation would negatively impact this Section 75 category.

Men & Women generally:

Engagement with DoF, Core Department, TEO Business Areas, ALBs and project sponsors.

[Equality Statistics for the NICS for 2024](#) found that females made up 50.2% of the NICS workforce in 2024, down from 50.5% in 2014 and similar to last year's figure (50.1%). It also closely matches the economically active population (49.5%). Within the most senior grades, female representation has increased since 2014 (34.9%) to 43.8% in 2024. This is up from 42.8% in 2023. Males outnumber females at the most senior grades while the opposite tends to be true in the majority of junior grades.

The age profile of Central Good Relations Fund (CGRF) participants indicates that approx. 44.7% are under 18. Across all areas of the programme, approx. 10,000 children and young people participated in 2022-23. Given the high proportion of CGRF funding that is allocated to projects that directly support children and young people, any cut to the CGRF would have a more significant and adverse impact on this S75 group than on others.

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- 59% of those receiving support through the VSS Individual Needs Programme.

Disability:

Engagement with DoF, Core Department, TEO Business Areas, ALBs and project sponsors.

People with a disability face significant challenges and are often within the most disadvantaged and excluded sections of society. Cuts to funding are likely to have a particularly adverse impact on this group who may benefit from participation in CGRF projects that provide opportunities for inclusion and to build relations with different others while promoting respect, tolerance, and inclusion. In 2022-23, 13% - 516 (hard copy questionnaires) and 16% - 439 (online questionnaires) between 6,000-7,000 of CGRF participants had a disability or illness.

The latest outcomes show 14% of participants in DCGRP have a disability. This is a substantial percentage when compared to other programmes and removal of the programme would have a negative effect on the general population, the impact on the disabled community could be disproportionately negative.

The EVAWG Call for Views responses quoted rates of 1:2 D/deaf and disabled women suffering gender violence, including specific risks from carers.

Dependants:

Engagement with DoF, Core Department, TEO Business Areas, ALBs and project sponsors.

The presence of children or other dependents can make it more difficult for women to leave a violent home.

Transgenerational trauma has been highlighted for victims and survivors, but the Department's supports for this are excluded from reductions by virtue of protection of the VSS budget and the ring-fenced nature of support for HIA and Truth Recovery Programme victims-survivors.

Needs, experiences and priorities

Taking into account the information referred to above, what are the different needs, experiences and priorities of each of the following categories, in relation to the particular policy/decision?

Specify details of the needs, experiences and priorities for each of the Section 75 categories below:

Religious belief

The draft budget for 2024-25 is not a “policy” in the strictest sense. It looks at allocating resources within a constrained financial environment. It is a strategic process to allocate resources across a range of competing stakeholder needs.

TEO provides funding for a range of good relations programmes which support and improve the lives of people from both of the main traditional communities in NI.

The non-earmarked area of Shared Future/ Good Relations Funding replaced the previous funding stream, which ended in March 2021. Good Relations funding has historically been (and remains) a Ministerial priority.

It will be the duty of the ALBs and TEO Business Areas to carry out detailed impact assessments on the final budget, where these are deemed appropriate. Given the flat cash baseline being proposed, consultation may also need to be carried out by TEO’s ALBs, although it is recognised that timescales will present an obstacle to this.

Political Opinion

As above

Racial Group

TEO provides funding for a range of good relations programmes which support and improve the lives of people from both of the main traditional communities. It will be the duty of the ALBs and TEO Business Areas to carry out detailed impact assessments where these are deemed appropriate.

The non-earmarked Area of Shared Future/ Good Relations Funding replaced the previous funding stream which ended in March 2021. Good Relations funding traditionally been (and remain) a Ministerial priority, and any decision to remove it would require Ministerial approval.

TEO provides assistance to support minority ethnic groups via the Minority Ethnic Development Fund.

Age

TEO Good Relations Programmes such as the Urban Villages Initiative, as well as funding awarded to councils, provides funding to sustain projects that benefit this group. Any decision to remove it would have an adverse impact.

Marital status

No impacts identified.

Sexual orientation

No impacts identified

Men and Women Generally

No impacts identified

Disability

There is no evidence to indicate that Draft Budget for 2024-25 will have a differential impact on persons with a disability at this stage of the budgeting process.

The non-earmarked area of Shared Future/ Good Relations Funding replaces the previous funding stream which ended in March 2021.

The Victims' Payment Scheme for Permanent Disablement is framed within the Stormont House Agreement as a key mechanism for progressing reconciliation and addressing the legacy of the past in NI. Potential impacts of this on other S75 groups are, in theory, minor.

[Victims' Redress Payments](#) and [Historical Institutional Abuse \(HIA\) redress payments](#), are required to be funded under statutory obligation, as Truth Recovery Programme payments will be in the future.

[Recommendation 5D of the Truth Recovery Design Panel's Report](#) states that: "A financial redress scheme should be prioritised, comprising an automatic standardised payment and the entitlement to a further individually assessed payment. The scheme should include all women who spent time or gave birth in a Mother and Baby Institution, Magdalene Laundry, Workhouse or other related institutions such as private nursing homes, and all those born to girls and women while institutionalised."

The budget combines the three earmarked areas of HIA; Victims' Payment Scheme for Permanent Disablement and the Truth Recovery Programme within one 'pot'. DoF is leading on the engagement with Treasury in the context of the Secretary of State's funding responsibilities for the Victims' Payments.

Some of these victims are physically disabled, suffer from mental health issues due to the severe trauma that they experienced. These conditions have often worsened as they have become aged.

Any reduction in funding for any of the above categories may not impact on equality of opportunity for any particular S75 group, but would mean that victims and survivors impacted across a number of schemes, were not able to receive the full redress to which they are entitled. There is a statutory responsibility to pay amounts awarded by independent panels and amounts have therefore been earmarked in draft budget meet these liabilities.

Dependants

There is no evidence to indicate that the Draft Budget for 2024-25 will have a differential impact on persons with dependants at this stage of the budgeting process.

The Victims' Payment Scheme for Permanent Disablement is framed within the Stormont House Agreement as a key mechanism for progressing reconciliation and addressing the legacy of the past in Northern Ireland. Potential impacts of this on other S75 groups are none to minor.

Victims' Payments and HIA payments are required to be funded under statutory obligation. The budget combines the three funding areas of HIA; Victims Payments Scheme and the Truth Recovery Programme within one 'pot', which has to date been protected. DoF is leading on the engagement with Treasury in the context of the Secretary of State's funding responsibilities for the Victims' Payments.

The budget combines the three earmarked areas of HIA; Victims' Payment Scheme for Permanent Disablement and the Truth Recovery Programme within one 'pot'. DoF is leading on the engagement with Treasury in the context of the Secretary of State's funding responsibilities for the Victims' Payments.

Any reduction in funding for any of the above categories may not impact on equality of opportunity for any particular S75 group, but would mean that victims and survivors impacted across a number of schemes, were not able to receive the full redress to which they are entitled. There is a statutory responsibility to pay amounts awarded by independent panels and amounts have therefore been earmarked in draft budget meet these liabilities.

The non-earmarked area of Shared Future/ Good Relations Funding replaces the previous funding stream, which ended in March 2021.

Screening questions

1. **What is the likely impact on equality of opportunity for those affected by this policy, for each of the Section 75 equality categories?**

Please provide details of the likely policy impacts and determine the level of impact for each S75 categories below i.e. either minor, major or none.

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Religious belief**:

The non-earmarked area of Shared Future/ Good Relations Funding replaces the previous funding stream, which ended in March 2021. This non earmarked area has historically been a Ministerial priority and has been protected. This was subject to reductions of £3M in the 2023-24 budgetary process.

In 2023-24, Good Relations faced budget reductions of £3m (after adjusting for profiling), split across the District Council Good Relations Programme (DCGRP) (£3m down to £1.6m) and the Central Good Relations Fund (CGRF) (£3m down to £1.4m). The impact of any reversal to these reductions for 2024-25 is considered by programme below, with a focus on increased community delivery and maintaining leaner administrative structures.

The 2023-24 funding reductions were subsumed into the baseline opening budget for 2024-25, however additional funding of £0.5m for T:BUC and £0.5m for Ending Violence Against Women and Girls has been allocated since the opening budget. However, maintaining funding at 2023-24 levels would have ensured TEO Good Relations Programmes would continue to improve opportunities for people from all communities, including **religious belief**, political opinion or racial group.

What is the level of impact? Minor / **Major** / None

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Political Opinion**:

As above.

What is the level of impact? Minor / **Major** / None

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Racial Group**:

As above.

The on-going work of TEO Race Equality Division and in particular the Minority Ethnic Development Fund (MEDF) will continue to improve the lives of people from all ethnic backgrounds, contingent on funding being secured.

What is the level of impact? Minor / **Major** / None

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Age**:

There is no evidence to indicate that the draft Budget for 2024-25 will have a differential impact on persons with a different age at this stage of the budgeting process, although TEO Good Relations Programmes such as the Urban Villages Initiative (as well as funding awarded to councils) provide funding to sustain projects that benefit this group. Any decision to remove it is likely to have an adverse impact on this group.

The Victims' Payment Scheme for Permanent Disablement (VPSPD) is framed within the Stormont House Agreement as a key mechanism for progressing reconciliation and addressing the legacy of the past in Northern Ireland.

Victims' Payments and HIA payments are required to be funded under statutory obligation. The budget combines the three funding areas of HIA; Victims Payments Scheme and the Truth Recovery Programme within one 'pot'. DoF is leading on the engagement with Treasury in the context of the Secretary of State's funding responsibilities for the Victims' Payments.

An Equality Impact Assessment for the VPSPD was completed by NIO, in the initial stages of the Scheme. Many potential claimants are now aged. Potential impacts of this on other S75 groups are none to minor. Funding reduction to the ALB, Victims and Survivors Service, will also affect the same cohort of citizens.

The non-earmarked area of Shared Future/ Good Relations Funding replaces the previous funding stream which ended in March 2021.

Some of these victims are physically disabled, suffer from mental health issues due to the severe trauma that they experienced. These conditions have often worsened as they have aged.

Any reduction in funding for any of the above categories would not impact on equality of opportunity for any particular S75 group, but would mean that victims, as well as survivors of historical institutional abuse were not able to receive the full redress to which they are entitled. There is a statutory responsibility to pay amounts awarded by the Redress Board.

An equality impact assessment was carried out when the enabling legislation for the HIA Redress Board and the Commissioner for Survivors of Institutional Childhood Abuse (COSICA) was drafted and consulted on.

Any reduction in funding for the Historical Institutional Abuse Redress Board would not impact on equality of opportunity for any particular S75 group, but would mean that victims and survivors of historical institutional abuse were not able to receive the full redress to which they are entitled. There is a statutory responsibility to pay amounts awarded by the Redress Board. Many potential claimants are now aged.

What is the level of impact? Minor / **Major** / None

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Marital Status**:

No evidence to indicate that the draft Budget 2024-25 will have a differential impact on persons of a different marital status.

What is the level of impact? Minor / Major / **None**

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Sexual Orientation**:

No evidence to indicate that the draft Budget 2024-25 will have a differential impact on persons of a different sexual orientation.

What is the level of impact? Minor / Major / **None**

Men and Women generally - If Yes, provide details:

If No, provide reasons:

Yes. The work on Ending Violence Against Women and Girls, the Mother and Baby Institutions and Magdalene Laundries, will be unable to progress if funding is not secured for this category.

Details of the likely policy impacts on Disability:

There is no evidence to indicate that Draft Budget for 2024-25 will have a differential impact on persons with a disability at this stage of the budgeting process.

The Victims' Payment Scheme for Permanent Disablement is framed within the Stormont House Agreement as a key mechanism for progressing reconciliation and addressing the legacy of the past in NI. Potential impacts of this on other S75 groups are, in theory, minor.

[Victims' Redress Payments](#) and [Historical Institutional Abuse \(HIA\) redress payments](#), are required to be funded under statutory obligation, as Truth Recovery Programme payments will be in the future.

[Recommendation 5D of the Truth Recovery Design Panel's Report](#) states that: "A financial redress scheme should be prioritised, comprising an automatic standardised payment and the entitlement to a further individually assessed payment. The scheme should include all women who spent time or gave birth in a Mother and Baby Institution, Magdalene Laundry, Workhouse or other related institutions such as private nursing homes, and all those born to girls and women while institutionalised."

The budget combines the three earmarked areas of HIA; Victims Payments Scheme and the Truth Recovery Programme within one 'pot'. DoF is leading on the engagement with Treasury in the context of the Secretary of State's funding responsibilities for the Victims' Payments.

Some of these victims are physically disabled, suffer from mental health issues due to the severe trauma that they experienced. These conditions have often worsened as they have aged.

Any reduction in funding for any of the above categories would not impact on equality of opportunity for any particular S75 group, but would mean that victims, as well as survivors of historical institutional abuse were not able to receive the full redress to which they are entitled. There is a statutory responsibility to pay amounts awarded by the Redress Board.

What is the level of impact? Minor / Major / None

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Dependants**:

The Victims' Payment Scheme for Permanent Disablement (VPSPD) is framed within the Stormont House Agreement as a key mechanism for progressing reconciliation and addressing the legacy of the past in Northern Ireland. Many victims will have dependants.

Victims' Payments and HIA payments are required to be funded under statutory obligation. The budget combines the three earmarked areas of HIA; Victims Payments Scheme and the Truth Recovery Programme within one 'pot'. DoF is leading on the engagement with Treasury in the context of the Secretary of State's funding responsibilities for the Victims' Payments.

An Equality Impact Assessment for the VPSPD was completed by NIO, in the initial stages of the Scheme. Many potential claimants are now aged. Potential impacts of this on other S75 groups are none to minor.

An equality impact assessment was carried out when the enabling legislation for the HIA Redress Board and COSICA was drafted and consulted on.

The budget combines the three earmarked areas of HIA; Victims' Payment Scheme for Permanent Disablement and the Truth Recovery Programme within one 'pot'. DoF is leading on the engagement with Treasury in the context of the Secretary of State's funding responsibilities for the Victims' Payments.

Any reduction in funding for any of the above categories may not impact on equality of opportunity for any particular S75 group, but would mean that victims and survivors impacted across a number of schemes, nor their dependants, were not able to receive the full redress to which they are entitled. There is a statutory responsibility to pay amounts awarded by independent panels and amounts have therefore been earmarked in draft budget meet these liabilities.

What is the level of impact? Minor / **Major** / None

2. Are there opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity for people within the Section 75 equalities categories? Yes/No

Yes. The continued provision of TEO programmes and funding provides opportunities for the inclusion of all S75 categories, including Religious Belief, Political Opinion and Racial Group in particular.

Detail opportunities of how this policy could promote equality of opportunity for people within each of the Section 75 Categories below:

Religious Belief - If Yes, provide details:

If No, provide reasons:

Yes. The continued provision of TEO programmes and funding provides opportunities for the inclusion of all S75 categories, including **Religious Belief**.

Political Opinion - If Yes, provide details:

If No, provide reasons

Yes. The continued provision of TEO programmes and funding provides opportunities for the inclusion of all S75 categories, including **Political Opinion**.

Racial Group - If Yes, provide details:

If No, provide reasons

Yes. The continued provision of TEO programmes and funding provides opportunities for the inclusion of all S75 categories, including **Racial Group**.

Age - If Yes, provide details:

If No, provide reasons:

Yes. The continued provision of TEO programmes and funding provides opportunities for the inclusion of all S75 categories, including **Age**.

Marital Status - If Yes, provide details:

If No, provide reasons

No opportunities identified.

Sexual Orientation - If Yes, provide details:

If No, provide reasons:

No opportunities identified.

Men and Women generally - If Yes, provide details:

If No, provide reasons:

Yes. Ending Violence Against Women and Girls, the Truth Recovery Programme and Historical Institutional Abuse Redress all provide opportunities across multiple s75 groups through reconciliation and mutual understanding.

Disability - If Yes, provide details:

If No, provide reasons:

No opportunities identified.

Dependants - If Yes, provide details:

If No, provide reasons:

No opportunities identified

3. **To what extent is the policy likely to impact on good relations between people of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group?**

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Religious belief**:

What is the level of impact? **Minor** / Major / None

All TEO Good Relations programmes (including funding allocated to District councils) will continue to improve opportunities for people from all communities, provided sufficient funding is secured. Funding streams provided to ALBs such as the Equality Commission have a positive impact on equality for individuals and s75 groups.

Securing funding for a source for future Good Relations Funding is likely to have a significant impact on certain Section 75 (2) groups i.e., between persons of different **religious belief**, political opinion or racial group.

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Political Opinion**:

What is the level of impact? **Minor** / Major / None

All TEO Good Relations programmes (including funding allocated to District councils) will continue to improve opportunities for people from all communities. Funding streams provided to ALBs such as the Equality Commission have a positive impact on equality for individuals and s75 groups.

Securing the funding for a source for future Good Relations Funding is likely to have a significant impact on certain Section 75 (2) groups i.e., between persons of different religious belief, **political opinion** or racial group.

The policy impact of not securing an ongoing replacement to Shared Future Funding on S75 (2) groups may potentially impact both the capacity and the number of community and voluntary sector groups.

The Non earmarked area of Shared Future/ Good Relations Funding included in the Draft Budget 2024-25 replaces the previous funding stream which ended in March 2021.

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Racial Group**:

What is the level of impact? **Minor** / Major / None

All TEO Good Relations programmes (including funding allocated to District Councils) will continue to improve opportunities for people from all communities. Funding streams provided to ALBs such as the Equality Commission have a positive impact on equality for individuals and s75 groups.

Securing the bid for a future funding source for future Good Relations Funding is likely to have a significant impact on certain Section 75 (2) groups i.e., between persons of different religious belief, political opinion or **racial group**.

The policy impact of not securing an ongoing replacement to Shared Future Funding on S75 (2) groups may potentially impact both the capacity and the number of community and voluntary sector groups.

The Shared Future/ Good Relations Funding area included in the Draft Budget 2024-25 replaces the previous funding stream which ended in March 2021.

4. Are there opportunities to better promote good relations between people of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group?

Yes. TEO Good Relations programmes will continue to improve opportunities for people from all communities, although the uncertainty of a future funding source for Shared Future Funding is likely to have a significant impact on certain Section 75 (2) groups i.e., between persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.

The policy impact of no further Shared Future Funding on S75 (2) groups may potentially impact both the capacity, sustainability and ultimately the number of community and voluntary sector groups.

The Non earmarked area of Shared Future/ Good Relations Funding included in the draft Budget 2024-25 replaces the previous funding stream which ended in March 2021.

Religious Belief - If Yes, provide details:
If No, provide reasons:

Yes. As above.

Political Opinion - If Yes, provide details:

If No, provide reasons

Yes. As above.

Racial Group - If Yes, provide details:

If No, provide reasons

Yes. TEO Good Relations programmes will continue to improve opportunities for people from all communities, although the uncertainty of a future funding source for Shared Future Funding is likely to have a significant impact on certain Section 75 (2) groups i.e., between persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.

The policy impact of not securing an ongoing replacement to Shared Future Funding on S75 (2) groups may potentially impact both the capacity, sustainability and the number of community and voluntary sector groups.

The Non earmarked area of Shared Future/ Good Relations Funding included in the Budget 2024-25 replaces the previous funding stream which ended in March 2021.

The on-going work of TEO Race Equality Division and in particular the MEDF will continue to improve the lives of people from all ethnic backgrounds.

Additional considerations

Multiple identity

Generally speaking, people can fall into more than one Section 75 category. Taking this into consideration, are there any potential impacts of the policy/decision on people with multiple identities?

(For example; disabled minority ethnic people; disabled women; young Protestant men; and young lesbians, gay and bisexual people).

None identified. It is not anticipated that the budget will have a negative impact on people with multiple identities.

Provide details of data on the impact of the policy on people with multiple identities. Specify relevant Section 75 categories concerned.

None identified.

Part 3. Screening decision

If the decision is not to conduct an equality impact assessment, please provide details of the reasons.

Freezing the 2024-25 TEO Budget at the flat cash baseline for 2023-24 will impact the T:BUC Programme, District Council Good Relations Programme, as well as other equality related programmes and funding streams, as funding will be reduced in real terms due to impact of inflation. Some objectives are unlikely be fully achievable funding proposed in the draft Budget for 2024-25.

Most of TEO's work relates to politically sensitive areas and is in response to political requirements. Accordingly, most decisions to cut the budget in these areas will require a Ministerial decision and / or potentially be subject to legal challenge.

Any potential impact can be reduced by adopting appropriate mitigating funding measures.

All policy leads within TEO and ALBs will consider their final budget allocation and will screen individual policies as necessary.

Where necessary, further Section 75 screening for the key business areas impacted by the budget will be undertaken by the relevant business areas within the Department once final decisions on their budget allocations are taken.

Further mitigating actions, as necessary, can be considered at that stage.

If the decision is not to conduct an equality impact assessment the public authority should consider if the policy should be mitigated or an alternative policy be introduced - please provide details.

As above – Section 75 screening for the key business areas impacted by the budget will be undertaken by the relevant business areas within the Department once final decisions on their budget allocations are taken.

Further mitigating actions, as necessary, can be considered at that stage.

Note that in the absence of sufficient funding, mitigating actions are unlikely to enable TEO to meet its objectives and may be subject to challenge.

If the decision is to subject the policy to an equality impact assessment, please provide details of the reasons.

An EQIA and public consultation on TEO's Draft Budget for 2024-25 is considered necessary. Freezing the 2024-25 TEO Budget at the flat cash baseline for 2023-24 will impact the T:BUC Programme, District Council Good Relations Programme, and other equality related programmes and funding streams, as funding will be reduced in real terms due to impact of inflation.

The screening document draws attention to the particular Section 75 groups where general funding reductions are likely to have an equality impact and attempts to identify mitigating actions where possible.

TEO's equality focussed ALBs are also likely to receive significant adverse reaction to ongoing baseline budget reductions of this scale.

All public authorities' equality schemes must state the authority's arrangements for assessing and consulting on the likely impact of policies adopted or proposed to be adopted by the authority on the promotion of equality of opportunity. The Commission recommends screening and equality impact assessment as the tools to be utilised for such assessments. Further advice on equality impact assessment may be found in a separate Commission publication: Practical Guidance on Equality Impact Assessment.

Mitigation

When the public authority concludes that the likely impact is 'minor' and an equality impact assessment is not to be conducted, the public authority may consider mitigation to lessen the severity of any equality impact, or the introduction of an alternative policy to better promote equality of opportunity or good relations.

Can the policy/decision be amended or changed or an alternative policy introduced to better promote equality of opportunity and/or good relations?

If so, **give the reasons** to support your decision, together with the proposed changes/amendments or alternative policy.

TEO will seek to ensure that it continues to meet the statutory and contractual obligations and take forward key priorities in the updated PfG and NDNA.

Any potential impacts may be eliminated by adopting appropriate mitigating funding measures. These include transferring underspends internally within TEO (where allowable, because within the same budget line). It also includes additional bids through the monitoring round process.

Note that in the absence of sufficient funding, mitigating actions are unlikely to enable TEO to meet its objectives and may be subject to legal challenge.

Timetabling and prioritising

Factors to be considered in timetabling and prioritising policies for equality impact assessment.

If the policy has been '**screened in**' for equality impact assessment, then please answer the following questions to determine its priority for timetabling the equality impact assessment.

On a scale of 1-3, with 1 being the lowest priority and 3 being the highest, assess the policy in terms of its priority for equality impact assessment.

Priority criterion	Rating (1-3)
Effect on equality of opportunity and good relations	2
Social need	1
Effect on people's daily lives	
Relevance to a public authority's functions	3

Note: The Total Rating Score should be used to prioritise the policy in rank order with other policies screened in for equality impact assessment. This list of priorities will assist the public authority in timetabling. Details of the Public Authority's Equality Impact Assessment Timetable should be included in the quarterly Screening Report.

Is the policy affected by timetables established by other relevant public authorities?

Yes. Impacted by the DoF budgeting cycle timetable.

If yes, please provide details.

N/A

Part 4. Monitoring

Public authorities should consider the guidance contained in the Commission's Monitoring Guidance for Use by Public Authorities (July 2007).

The Commission recommends that where the policy has been amended or an alternative policy introduced, the public authority should monitor more broadly than for adverse impact (See Benefits, P.9-10, paras 2.13 – 2.20 of the Monitoring Guidance).

Effective monitoring will help the public authority identify any future adverse impact arising from the policy which may lead the public authority to conduct an equality impact assessment, as well as help with future planning and policy development.

Part 5 - Approval and authorisation

Screened by: Andy McCaw
Position/Job Title: G7 Accountant
Date: 27/06/24

Approved by: Ronan Murtagh
Position/Job Title: Finance Director
Date: 27/06/24

Note: A copy of the Screening Template, for each policy screened should be 'signed off' and approved by a senior manager responsible for the policy, made easily accessible on the public authority's website as soon as possible following completion and made available on request.