



PUBLIC PROSECUTION SERVICE

Section 75

EQUALITY SCREENING FORM

**Title of Policy: Public Prosecution Service Policy for Prosecuting Cases  
of Human Trafficking**

*Revised April 2012*

## FORM CONTENTS

	<b>Page No</b>
The Legal Background.....	3
Introduction .....	3
Screening decisions.....	5
Screening and good relations duty.....	5
<b>Part 1</b>	
Definition of a Policy .....	6
Overview of Policy Proposals .....	6
Policy Scoping .....	6
Information about the Policy .....	7
Implementation Factors .....	7
Main stakeholders affected .....	8
Other policies with a bearing on this policy .....	8
Available evidence .....	9
Needs, experiences and priorities.....	10
<b>Part 2(a)</b>	
Human Rights Impact Assessment .....	11
<b>Part 2(b)</b>	
Obligations under the Disability Discrimination Order.....	15
<b>Part 3</b>	
Screening Questions.....	16
Introduction .....	16
In favour of a 'major' impact.....	16
In favour of a 'minor' impact.....	17
In favour of 'none' .....	18
Screening questions .....	19
Additional considerations .....	21
Multiple identity .....	21
<b>Part 4</b>	
Screening decision.....	22
Mitigation .....	23
Timetabling and prioritising .....	24
<b>Part 5</b>	
Monitoring .....	25
<b>Part 6</b>	
Final Approval and Endorsement.....	26
<b>Annex</b>	
A - Main Groups identified as relevant to the Section 75 categories.....	27

## PPS POLICY EQUALITY SCREENING FORM

### The Legal Background

Under section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, the PPS is required to **have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity:**

- between person of different religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status or sexual orientation;
- between men and women generally;
- between persons with a disability and persons without; and,
- between persons with dependants and persons without<sup>1</sup>.

Without prejudice to the obligations set out above, the PPS is also required to:

- **have regard to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group; and**
- **meet legislative obligations under the Disability Discrimination Order and the Human Rights Act.**

### **Introduction**

1. This form should be read in conjunction with the Equality Commission's revised Section 75, "A Guide for Public Authorities" April 2010 and available via the following link [S75 Guide for Public Authorities April 2010](#). **Staff should complete a form for each new or revised policy for which they are responsible (see page 6 for a definition of policy in respect of section 75).**
2. The purpose of screening is to identify those policies that are likely to have an impact on equality of opportunity and/or good relations, and will help improve the organisation's service provision through a systematic review of all services, policies, procedures, practices and/or decisions. It will also help determine whether an Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) is necessary.

<sup>1</sup>A list of the main groups identified as being relevant to each of the section 75 categories is at Annex A of the document.

Screening should be introduced at an early stage when developing or reviewing a policy.

3. The lead role in the screening of a policy should be taken by the policy decision-maker who has the authority to make changes to that policy and should involve, in the screening process:
  - other relevant team members;
  - those who implement the policy;
  - staff members from other relevant work areas; and
  - key stakeholders.
4. The first step in the screening exercise, is to gather evidence and relevant data to inform the screening decisions. Relevant data may be either quantitative or qualitative or both (this helps to indicate whether or not there are likely equality of opportunity and/or good relations impacts associated with a policy). Relevant information will help to clearly demonstrate the reasons for a policy being either 'screened in' for an equality impact assessment or 'screened out' from an equality impact assessment.
5. Screening provides an assessment of the likely impact, whether 'minor' or 'major', of its policy on equality of opportunity and/or good relations for the relevant categories. In some instances, screening may identify the likely impact is none.
6. The absence of evidence does not indicate that there is no likely impact but if none is available, it may be appropriate to consider subjecting the policy to an EQIA.

7. The Equality Commission has developed a series of four questions, included in Part 3 of this screening form with supporting sub-questions, which should be applied to all policies as part of the screening process. The questions should assist in identifying those policies that are likely to have an impact on equality of opportunity and/or good relations.

### **Screening decisions**

8. Completion of screening should lead to one of the following three outcomes. The policy has been:
  - i. 'screened in' for equality impact assessment;
  - ii. 'screened out' with mitigation or an alternative policy proposed to be adopted; or
  - iii. 'screened out' without mitigation or an alternative policy proposed to be adopted.

### **Screening and good relations duty**

9. The Equality Commission recommends that a policy is 'screened in' for equality impact assessment if the likely impact on **good relations** is 'major'. While there is no legislative requirement to engage in an equality impact assessment in respect of good relations, this does not necessarily mean that equality impact assessments are inappropriate in this context.

**Staff should complete a form for each of new or revised policy for which they are responsible (see page 6 for a definition of policy in respect of section 75).**

If you have any questions regarding the screening exercise or S75 in general please contact the Equality Officer in Central Management Unit at the address given below.

## Part 1

### **Definition of Policy**

There have been some difficulties in defining what constitutes a policy in the context of section 75. To be on the safe side it is recommended that you consider any new initiatives, proposals, schemes or programmes as policies or changes to those already in existence. It is important to remember that even if a full EQIA has been carried out in an “overarching” policy or strategy, it will still be necessary for the policy maker to consider if further screening or an EQIA needs to be carried out in respect of those policies cascading from the overarching strategy.

### **Overview of Policy Proposals**

The aims and objectives of the policy must be clear and terms of reference well defined. You must take into account any available data that will enable you to come to a decision on whether or not a policy may or may not have a differential impact on any of the s75 categories.

### **Policy Scoping**

10. 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.
11. 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 Public Prosecution Service Policy for Prosecuting Cases of Human Trafficking
Is this an existing, revised or a new policy? This is a new Policy
What is it trying to achieve? (intended aims/outcomes)  The Policy aims to explain how the Public Prosecution Service (PPS) will deal with cases involving human trafficking, how prosecutorial decisions are taken, how prosecutions are conducted at court. It explains how the PPS works with other investigative agencies and explains the PPS role in supporting and protecting victims and witnesses. The Policy is also intended to provide guidance to prosecutors on issues relating to human trafficking and on prosecuting cases of human trafficking.
Are there any Section 75 categories which might be expected to benefit from the intended policy? If so, explain how.  All Section 75 categories are expected to benefit from this Policy, in particular individuals under the following categories: racial group, women. This is because a proportionately high percentage of victims of human trafficking are foreign nationals and females. It is expected that the Policy will therefore benefit victims of human trafficking in ensuring that there is consistency in prosecutorial decision making and in the services and information provided.
Who initiated or wrote the policy? Public Prosecution Service Policy & Information Section
Who owns and who implements the policy?  The Public Prosecution Service owns the Policy. It will be implemented by Public Prosecutors, PPS Administrative Support Staff and barristers who are instructed to act on behalf of the Public Prosecution Service.

## Implementation factors

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

If yes, are they

- financial
- legislative
- other, please specify \_\_\_\_\_



## **Main stakeholders affected**

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

- staff
- service users
- other public sector organisations
- voluntary/community/trade unions
- other, please specify \_\_\_\_\_

## **Other policies with a bearing on this policy**

- what are they?

Public Prosecution Service Code for Prosecutors and Code of Ethics

Victims and Witness Policy

Policy for Prosecuting Cases of Rape

- who owns them?

Public Prosecution Service

## Available evidence

14. Evidence to help inform the screening process may take many forms. Public authorities should ensure that their screening decision is informed by relevant data.
15. What evidence/information (both qualitative and quantitative) have you gathered to inform this policy? Specify details for each of the Section 75 categories.

Section 75 Category	Details of evidence/information
Religious belief	
Political opinion	
Racial group	It may be difficult for certain groups for whom English is not their first language to understand the Policy and therefore alternative formats of the Policy will be made available on request.
Age	It is recognised that age appropriate information may be required and therefore alternative formats of the Policy will be made available on request.
Marital status	
Sexual orientation	
Men and Women generally	
Disability	People with a disability e.g. those with sensory disabilities may have had difficulty in accessing the Policy and therefore alternative formats of the Policy will be made available on request.
Dependants	

The PPS is a member of the Organised Crime Task Force Human Trafficking Sub-Group along with representative from other criminal justice agencies and

relevant authorities. A pre-consultation exercise has been conducted with members of the Sub-Group and feed back received has been incorporated into the Policy.

## Needs, experiences and priorities

16. 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 for each of the Section 75 categories.

Section 75 Category	Details of evidence/information
Religious belief	
Political opinion	
Racial group	Improved ease of access should improve the process for those who do not have English as their first language. This is evidenced by access to alternative formats.
Age	It is recognised that age appropriate information may be required and therefore alternative formats of the Policy will be made available on request.
Marital status	
Sexual orientation	
Men and Women generally	
Disability	Improved ease of access for people with a disability e.g. those with sensory disabilities. This is evidenced by access to alternative formats.
Dependants	

**Part 2(a)**

**17. HUMAN RIGHTS IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

**Articles as identified by European Convention of Human Rights.**

- Article 2 - Right to life
- Article 3 - Prohibition of torture, inhuman or degrading treatment
- Article 4 - Prohibition of slavery and forced labour
- Article 5 - Right to liberty and security
- Article 6 - Right to fair and public trial
- Article 7 - Right to no punishment with law
- Article 8 - Right to respect for private and family life, home and correspondence
- Article 9 - Right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion
- Article 10 - Right to freedom of expression
- Article 11 - Rights to freedom of assembly and association
- Article 12 – Right to marry and to found a family
- Article 14 – The prohibition of discrimination
- Protocol 1 Article 1 – Protection of Property
- Protocol 1 Article 2 - Right to education

**Definitions of degree of risk of infringement of each article:**

**High risk** – It is foreseeable that this policy is very likely to breach this Article.

**Medium risk** – This policy is likely, in certain circumstances, to breach this Article.

**Low risk** – It is possible, though very unlikely, that this policy will breach this Article.

**18. Indicate any potential Human Rights implications associated with this policy, the perceived degree of risk (see above) and who the victim may be.**

	Has this policy the potential to infringe the rights (Please Tick)		If yes indicate here the degree of risk – High, Medium or Low (See definitions above)	If yes indicate here who the potential victim(s) would be
	Yes	No		
Article 2		<b>X</b>		
Article 3		<b>X</b>		
Article 5		<b>X</b>		
Article 6		<b>X</b>		
Article 8		<b>X</b>		
Article 9		<b>X</b>		

Article 10		X		
Article 11		X		
Article 12		X		
Article 14*		X		
Article 1 of Protocol 1		X		
Article 2 of Protocol 1		X		

**19. Outline any justification for any infringements identified:**

**20. Are any alternatives available which may not infringe Human Rights?**

**N/A**

Yes

No

**If yes, and the decision has been taken NOT to pursue the alternatives, please give a rationale for this decision.**

**21. Outline any action which could be taken to reduce the level of infringement.**

**22. Are there actions that can be taken that would promote human rights?**

Yes

No

**Please specify:**

## Part 2(b)

### OBLIGATIONS UNDER THE DISABILITY DISCRIMINATION ORDER

Under section 49A of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, public authorities, when carrying out their functions must have due regard to the need to:

- **promote positive attitudes towards disabled people; and**
- **encourage participation by disabled people in public life.**

Questions 5 and 6 below relate to these two areas.

#### **Consideration of Disability Duties**

23. Does this proposed policy / decision provide an opportunity for PPS to better promote positive attitudes towards disabled people?

#### **Explain your assessment in full**

The Policy illustrates the services that are available to ensure that people with a disability can participate fully in the criminal process and give their best evidence, for example the Policy explains the special measures that are available for vulnerable witnesses and the provision of sign language interpreters.

24. Does this proposed policy / decision provide an opportunity for PPS to actively increase the participation by disabled people in public life?

#### **Explain your assessment in full**

The Policy illustrates the services that are available to ensure that people with a disability can participate fully in the criminal process and give their best evidence, for example the Policy explains the special measures that are available for vulnerable witnesses and the provision of sign language interpreters.



## Part 3

### SCREENING QUESTIONS

#### Introduction

25. In making a decision as to whether or not there is a need to carry out an equality impact assessment, consider questions 1-4 listed below.
26. If the conclusion is **none** in respect of all of the Section 75 equality of opportunity and/or good relations categories, then the decision maybe to screen the policy out. If a policy is 'screened out' as having no relevance to equality of opportunity or good relations, give details of the reasons for the decision taken.
27. If the conclusion is **major** in respect of one or more of the Section 75 equality of opportunity and/or good relations categories, then consideration should be given to subjecting the policy to the equality impact assessment procedure.
28. If the conclusion is **minor** in respect of one or more of the Section 75 equality categories and/or good relations categories, then consideration should still be given to proceeding with an equality impact assessment, or to:
- introduce measures to mitigate the adverse impact; or
  - the introduction of an alternative policy to better promote equality of opportunity and/or good relations.

#### Factors that would indicate a conclusion in favour of a 'major' impact

29. (a) The policy is significant in terms of its strategic importance;

- (b) Potential equality impacts are unknown, because, for example, there is insufficient data upon which to make an assessment or because they are complex, and it would be appropriate to conduct an equality impact assessment in order to better assess them;
- (c) Potential equality and/or good relations impacts are likely to be adverse or are likely to be experienced disproportionately by groups of people including those who are marginalised or disadvantaged;
- (d) Further assessment offers a valuable way to examine the evidence and develop recommendations in respect of a policy about which there are concerns amongst affected individuals and representative groups, for example in respect of multiple identities;
- (e) The policy is likely to be challenged by way of judicial review;
- (f) The policy is significant in terms of expenditure.

**Factors that would indicate a conclusion in favour of ‘minor’ impact**

30. (a) The policy is not unlawfully discriminatory and any residual potential impacts on people are judged to be negligible;
- (b) The policy, or certain proposals within it, are potentially unlawfully discriminatory, but this possibility can readily and easily be eliminated by making appropriate changes to the policy or by adopting appropriate mitigating measures;
- (c) Any asymmetrical equality impacts caused by the policy are intentional because they are specifically designed to promote equality of opportunity for particular groups of disadvantaged people;
- (d) By amending the policy there are better opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity and/or good relations.

## **Factors that would indicate a conclusion in favour of none**

31. (a) The policy has no relevance to equality of opportunity or good relations.
- (b) The policy is purely technical in nature and will have no bearing in terms of its likely impact on equality of opportunity or good relations for people within the equality and good relations categories.
32. Taking into account the evidence presented above, consider and comment on the likely impact on equality of opportunity and good relations for those affected by this policy, in any way, for each of the equality and good relations categories, by applying the screening questions given overleaf and indicate the level of impact on the group i.e. minor, major or none.

## Screening questions

<p>1. What is the likely impact on equality of opportunity for those affected by this policy, for each of the Section 75 equality categories? Minor/Major/None</p>		
Section 75 category	Details of policy impact	Level of impact? Minor/Major/None
Religious belief	None	None
Political opinion	None	None
Racial group	None	None
Age	None	None
Marital status	None	None
Sexual orientation	None	None
Men and Women generally	None	None
Disability	None	None
Dependants	None	None

2. Are there opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity for people within the Section 75 equalities categories?

<b>Section 75 category</b>	<b>If Yes, provide details</b>	<b>If No, provide reasons</b>
Religious belief		
Political opinion		
Racial group	Access to alternative formats will improve the information provided to those who do not have English as their first language.	
Age	It is recognised that age appropriate information may be required and therefore alternative formats of the Policy will be made available on request.	
Marital status		
Sexual orientation		
Men and Women generally		
Disability	Access to alternative formats will improve the information provided to people with a disability e.g. those with sensory disabilities.	
Dependants		



<p><b>3.</b> To what extent is the policy likely to impact on good relations between people of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group? Minor/Major/None</p>		
<b>Good relations category</b>	<b>Details of policy impact</b>	<b>Level of impact Minor/Major/None</b>
Religious belief		<b>None</b>
Political opinion		<b>None</b>
Racial group		<b>None</b>

<p><b>4.</b> Are there opportunities to better promote good relations between people of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group?</p>		
<b>Good relations category</b>	<b>If Yes, provide details</b>	<b>If No, provide reasons</b>
Religious belief		
Political opinion		
Racial group	A high percentage of victims of human trafficking are foreign nationals. The policy should promote good relations in informing all persons of the approach of the PPS to the prosecution of such offences and the services, support and assistance available to victims and witnesses	

## **Additional considerations**

### **Multiple Identity**

33. 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?

### **Minority Ethnic Women**

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



### Screening decision

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

The policy will apply equally to all individuals and does not have any adverse effects on any of the section 75 groups.

36. If the decision is not to conduct an equality impact assessment, consider if the policy should be mitigated or an alternative policy be introduced.

No

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

N/A

38. Further advice on equality impact assessment may be found in a separate Commission publication: Practical Guidance on Equality Impact Assessment.

## Mitigation

39. 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.
40. Can the policy/decision be amended or changed or an alternative policy introduced to better promote equality of opportunity and/or good relations?
41. If so, give the **reasons** to support your decision, together with the proposed changes/amendments or alternative policy.

**N/A**

## Timetabling and prioritising

42. Factors to be considered in timetabling and prioritising policies for equality impact assessment.
43. 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.
44. 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.

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

45. 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.
46. Is the policy affected by timetables established by other relevant public authorities?
47. If yes, please provide details.

## Part 5

### Monitoring

48. Public authorities should consider the guidance contained in the Commission's Monitoring Guidance for Use by Public Authorities (July 2007).
49. 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).
50. 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 6


### Approval and authorisation

<b>Screened by:</b>	<b>Position/Job Title</b>	<b>Date</b>
Mairead Lavery	Senior Public Prosecutor	16/5/12
<b>Approved by:</b> (Branch Grade 7)	N/A	
I am satisfied that this policy has been properly screened for both equality impact and human rights infringement, and I agree with the screening decision made. <b>Authorised by:</b> (Head of Division)	Marianne O’Kane Assistant Director Policy & Information	16/5/12

**Note:** A copy of the Screening Template should be made easily accessible on the public authority’s website as soon as possible following completion. This will be undertaken by the Equality Officer on receipt as per below. Hard copies should also be made available on request.

#### **The screening exercise is now complete.**

When you have completed the form please retain a record in your branch and send a signed copy for information to:

Equality and Corporate Governance Officer  
Central Management Unit  
11<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Linum Chambers  
2 Bedford Square  
Bedford Street  
BT2 7BS  
 44882

and e-mail an electronic version to [anna.scott@ppsni.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:anna.scott@ppsni.gsi.gov.uk)

If any EQIA **is** required, the Equality Officer should be contacted for further advice if necessary.

Further information on equality, including a copy of the PPS Equality Scheme, yearly progress reports on equality to the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland, information on data sources and other useful links may be found on the PPS Intranet under the Equality Scheme section.

**MAIN GROUPS IDENTIFIED AS RELEVANT TO THE SECTION 75  
CATEGORIES**

Category	Main Groups
Religious belief	Protestants; Catholics; people of other religious belief; people of no religious belief
Political opinion	Unionists generally; Nationalists generally; members/supporters of any political party
Racial group	White people; Chinese; Irish Travellers; Indians; Pakistanis; Bangladeshis; Black Africans; Afro Caribbean people; people of mixed ethnic group, other groups
Men and Women generally	Men (including boys); women (including girls); trans-gender and trans-sexual people
Marital/Civil Partnership status	Married people; unmarried people; divorced or separated people; widowed people; civil partnerships
Age	For most purposes, the main categories are: children under 18; people aged between 18 and 65. However the definition of age groups will need to be sensitive to the policy under consideration. For example, for some employment policies, children under 16 could be distinguished from people of working age
Persons with a disability and persons without	Persons with a physical, sensory or learning disability as defined in Schedules 1 and 2 of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995.
Persons with dependants and persons without	Persons with primary responsibility for the care of a child; persons with personal responsibility for the care of a person with a disability; persons with primary responsibility for a dependent elderly person.
Sexual orientation	Heterosexuals; bisexual people; gay men; lesbians