

SUMMARY OF CONSULTATION RESPONSES

The PPS's Consultation on the Draft PPS Equality Action Plan for 2017-18 issued on 13 April 2017 for a period of 12 weeks, and closed on 7 July 2017. The aim of the consultation was to seek a wide range of views to inform the Equality Action Plan.

Responses were received from:

The Equality Commission;
Committee on the Administration of Justice; and
FDA.

All comments raised were taken fully into consideration.

We have provided feedback to each consultee and a summary of the main points raised are set out below.

The Equality Commission		
	Comment	PPS Response
	<i>Some other inequalities in our wider society where PPS may have some scope to effect change include:</i>	
1.	Inequalities in employment – e.g. equal pay, under-representation of females in higher grades, under-representation of males and females in specific occupations, under-representation of disabled people, greater flexibility for carers / people with dependents, participation in Government employability initiatives targeted at under-represented groups such as disabled people, long-term unemployed, young people in care, or young people not in employment, education or training (NEETS).	Comment noted. From 3 rd April 2017, NICS HR have assumed central NICS responsibility for all aspects of personnel management, including recruitment and conditions of service.

2.	Inequalities in participation in civic and public life: under-representation of women, disabled people, ethnic minorities in public and civic life positions.	Comment noted.
3.	Prejudice in NI: High levels of prejudice in our society manifesting as racism, homophobia, ageism, sectarianism, etc.	Comment noted.

Committee on the Administration of Justice

	Comment	PPS Response
	<i>To consider adding summary actions to:</i>	
1.	Review and ensure compliance with human rights standards of the application of the Public Interest element of the test for prosecution in relation to 'procuring abortion' offences under the 1861 Offences Against the Person Act.	<p>Comments noted.</p> <p>The PPS in exercising its functions will ensure that it complies with the binding obligations of international law ratified by the UK, (so long as these do not conflict with domestic law). It will comply also with the Convention rights incorporated into domestic law by the Human Rights Act 1998, the UN Declaration of Basic Principles of Justice for Victims of Crime (and Abuse of Power), relevant EU Directives and Conventions and relevant case law. These commitments apply to the rights of victims, witnesses and accused persons.</p> <p>Prosecutors will also have regard to any legal guidance provided by the Director of</p>

		Public Prosecutions for Northern Ireland and the Attorney General for Northern Ireland, including Human Rights Guidance issued under Section 8 of the Justice (Northern Ireland) Act 2004.
2.	Develop guidance, compliant with human rights standards, on interpreting 'incitement to hatred' offences under PIII of the Public Order (NI) Order 1987.	It is anticipated that in light of the recommendations arising from Criminal Justice Inspection's follow-up review of how the Criminal Justice system manages hate crime, the Department of Justice will begin the process of reviewing the existing legislation in Northern Ireland. PPS will review its Hate Crime Policy and associated internal guidance in response to any legislative changes.
3.	Ensure any changes to workforce composition, terms and grading are not regressive in relation to Section 75 groups.	Comment noted. From 3 rd April 2017, NICS HR have assumed central NICS responsibility for all aspects of personnel management, including recruitment and conditions of service.
FDA		
	Comment	PPS Response
1.	The FDA would suggest that PPS commits to producing and publishing a report in respect of equalities in employment, to provide an annual overview of equality within employment data through analysis of workforce representation, employment policies and practices,	Comment noted. From 3 rd April 2017, NICS HR have assumed central NICS responsibility for all aspects of personnel management, including recruitment, workforce analytics and

	recruitment, retention and staff engagement.	conditions of service.
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The PPS would like to thank all those who responded for their comments.

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