

**Section 75 and Schedule 9
The Northern Ireland Act 1998**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Corporate Plan 2011 - 2015

**Equality Impact Assessment
Invest Northern Ireland
2012**

INTRODUCTION

This Executive Summary has been made available as part of the formal consultation stage of the EQIA relating to Invest NI's Corporate Plan 2011 – 2015. We would welcome any comments that you may have in terms of this EQIA, including our preliminary recommendations with regard to measures to mitigate adverse impact. Further copies of this EQIA report are available on Invest NI's website at www.investni.com/equality. If you have any queries about this document, and its availability in alternative formats (including Braille, disk, large print and audio cassette, and in minority languages to meet the needs of those whose first language is not English) then please contact:

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Deadline for comments will be: Friday 23rd November.

Following consultation the Final Report will be made available.

INVEST NORTHER IRELAND CORPORATE PLAN 2011 - 2015

Invest Northern Ireland (Invest NI) was established as a corporate body under the Industrial Development Act Northern Ireland 2002, to work in partnership with the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment (DETI) in order to stimulate and encourage economic development in Northern Ireland¹.

Our Corporate Plan 2011 – 2015 aspires to build on the successful delivery of the earlier Plan (2008-2011) by continually improving the Northern Ireland economy through business development. Our Vision is to be a world leading business development agency which builds a local economy that has the capability to compete internationally.

Over the period of this new Corporate Plan, business development will be promoted through the key drivers of economic growth, as recognised in the Northern Ireland Executive's Programme for Government, to support the rebuilding and rebalancing of our economy. Employment opportunities will be promoted across a wide range of sectors and will support both local businesses and inward investors to create these jobs.

Through its new Corporate Plan, Invest NI is keen to continue to mainstream Section 75 through its core business. This is reflected in various documents and strategies that define our corporate business and governance over coming years. With regard to Section 75, through our new Corporate Plan we will continue to integrate Section 75 obligations within our corporate planning process. Indeed, the Corporate Plan 2011 – 2015 includes specific reference to Equality Considerations (p.5), thereby highlighting the significance that is attached to this aspect of our work

CONSIDERATION OF AVAILABLE DATA AND RESEARCH

Alongside various sources of in-house data (inward and outward focused) relating to the Corporate Plan, the EQIA has also been informed by statistics

¹ Further details of founding legislation, roles, powers and responsibilities can be found in Invest NI's Management Statement and Financial Memorandum, issued by DETI (April, 2002, currently under review) and available on request from the Equality Unit.

relating to the Northern Ireland economy as derived from numerous sources and including:

- Monitoring Report No. 21: A Profile of the Northern Ireland Workforce. Equality Commission for Northern Ireland 2010.
- Labour Market Bulletins. Department of Employment and Learning. <http://www.delni.gov.uk/index/publications/pubs-stats/labour-market-bulletin.htm>
- National Statistics Local Area Labour Force Surveys. <http://www.statistics.gov.uk/lfs/>

CONSIDERATION OF ADVERSE IMPACT

The labour market continues to be segregated in many ways, and including those associated with Section 75 grounds. While many of these economic inequalities may lie outside the scope of Invest NI's work. in line with the Equality Commission's own 'Key Inequalities' (2007) document, and the EQIAs we have conducted to date, we acknowledge the relative inequalities experienced by the following groups within the Northern Ireland labour market:

- Ethnic Minorities
- Women
- People with Disabilities
- People with Dependants

Reflecting on the available data relating to Invest NI's activities to date, and projecting from these figures forwards to the period 2011 - 2015, there are no data to suggest significant adverse impacts attached to any of the targets, strategies and principles that are enshrined in the new Corporate Plan. Instead, when considered in conjunction with Invest NI's existing measures to promote equality of opportunity and good relations, and working in partnership with our clients and other government agencies and departments, the Corporate Plan has considerable potential to further promote equality of opportunity and good relations across all Section 75 grounds.

MEASURES TO MITIGATE / ALTERNATIVE POLICIES (Preliminary Recommendations)

In line with previous commitments, Invest NI will continue to remain fully committed to making a contribution to stimulate economic growth in all parts of Northern Ireland, and including areas of relative deprivation, so as to help narrow the gap on key indicators including economic inactivity. This work will continue

with due acknowledgment that there are many deep-rooted social and economic issues that continue to conspire to create and sustain inequalities. To remedy these inequalities will require co-ordinated efforts from all parts of government with support from the private sector, and Invest NI is committed to playing a key role in this partnership.

As part of our role and working with DETI, Invest NI will continue to monitor labour market and employment trends closely. This commitment is reflected in the considerable investment that Invest NI continues to make in Section 75 monitoring, and the EQIA's conducted by Invest NI, most recently the Business Development Solutions EQIA, Corporate Plan 2008 – 2011 EQIA, and Communications and Access EQIA. Each of these EQIA's is available to view on our website page at <http://www.investni.com/equality>.

It is clear that a number of initiatives are already in place to address longstanding inequalities but at the same time, having considered all available data and research, it is proposed that Invest NI will build on our existing EQIAs and Section 75 Action Plan by taking the following specific actions in respect of our Corporate Plan 2011 - 2015:

1. Invest NI will continue to work in partnership with other government agencies and departments, including DETI and DEL, and the private sector in a responsive manner to contribute towards addressing existing and emerging inequalities in the Northern Ireland labour market.
2. Working in conjunction with the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland, Invest NI will put in place its Section 75 Action Plan 2011 - 2016 (see Appendix), and including the action measures contained therein.
3. Having established an appropriate methodology for monitoring its clients and support services, Invest will continue to monitor its services by appropriate Section 75 grounds and will keep its methodology under review.
4. Invest NI will remain responsive to emerging equality of opportunity issues associated with the labour market and in particular among its private sector clients.
5. Invest NI will implement its Good Relations Plan in full.

6. Ongoing training of all staff in relation to equality of opportunity and Section 75 responsibilities will remain a corporate priority. Where external agents or consultants work alongside Invest NI then their contractual responsibilities to meet our obligations under Section 75 will also be made clear.
7. The selection criteria that will continue to apply to any support, scheme or programme operated by Invest NI will continue to encourage equality of opportunity. Where additional criteria are introduced, for example to target an industrial sector or geographical area, then these will be clearly defined and set out, and any potential adverse impacts associated with these criteria will be considered.
8. Each programme will make explicit, in all documentation, that materials can be made available in alternative formats where necessary and on request for those who are not able to access written English.
9. Building on our 2007 Disability Action Plan and subsequent consultations / feedback, we will continue to take forward the Plan through informed interventions.

FORMAL CONSULTATION

Invest NI wishes to consult as widely as possible on the findings included in this EQIA, together with the preliminary recommendations offered above, The following actions are proposed:

- This report will be issued to all consultees listed in our Equality Scheme and to any members of the public on request.
- Prominent advertisement will be placed in local and regional newspapers inviting the public to comment on this matter in accordance with normal practice.
- A copy of the EQIA will be posted on Invest NI's website and on the intranet.
- Individual consultation meetings will be arranged with staff on request and with representatives of particular interest groups if requested.
- Publicity material will be made available at all Invest NI's operational locations.
- The report will be made available on request in alternative formats.

The arrangements for consultation are being co-ordinated by the Equality Unit to whom all enquiries should be made.

The closing date for responses is Friday 23rd November 2012.

DECISION BY THE PUBLIC AUTHORITY

Following the formal consultation period and consideration of the findings from the consultation, Invest NI will reach a decision in terms of the EQIA process and will ensure that such decisions are implemented through the new Corporate Plan.

PUBLICATION OF RESULTS

The outcomes of this EQIA will be published in the press and will also be posted on Invest NI's website. It will be made available in different formats on request where appropriate.

MONITORING FOR ADVERSE IMPACT

Invest NI will establish a system to annually monitor the impact of the policy in the future. This will be reviewed on an annual basis. The results of the monitoring will be widely and openly reviewed. If this monitoring shows greater adverse impact than predicted, or if opportunities arise which would allow for greater equality of opportunity to be promoted, Invest NI will ensure the policy is revised accordingly.