# **Screening flowchart and template (taken from Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 – A Guide for public authorities April 2010 *(Appendix 1)).***

**Introduction**

**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 tointroducemeasures 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.

A screening flowchart is provided overleaf.

Policy Scoping

* + Policy
  + Available data

Screening Questions

* Apply screening questions
* Consider multiple identities

Screening Decision None/Minor/Major

Mitigate

Publish Template

Re-consider screening

Publish Template

for information

Publish Template

EQIA

Monitor

**‘None’**

Screened out

**‘Major’**

Screened in for EQIA

**‘Minor’**

Screened out with mitigation

Concerns raised with evidence

Concerns raised with evidence re: screening decision

**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

**The delivery of sporting activities for people with learning disabilities across Northern Ireland through exchequer investment into Special Olympics Ireland for the period 2024-25.**

Is this an existing, revised or a new policy?

**Revised for 2024-2025 (previous investment 2020-24).**

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

**The purpose of this specific project is to provide investment into Special Olympics Ireland to deliver sporting activities to people with learning disabilities across Northern Ireland, with a particular focus on participation in sport, thereby improving physical and mental health, improving educational attainment, supporting volunteers, and helping to address social exclusion.**

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

**If so, explain how**.

**The Section 75 category that will primarily benefit from this policy is disabled people, and more specifically, disabled people with learning and intellectual disabilities. This also includes other Section 75 categories, where there is intersectionality.**

**This policy forms part of the portfolio delivery of the Sport NI Corporate Plan, the Power of Sport (available for reference: <https://www.sportni.net/about-us/corporate-plans/> including the delivery of outcome one and two. Outcome one is concerned with increasing “People adopting and sustaining participation in sport and physical activity” and outcome two is concerned with “Our athletes amongst the best in the world”. These outcomes are underpinned by Sport NI’s four cornerstones, which promote equality and inclusion.**

**Who initiated or wrote the policy?**

**The Inter-Departmental Oversight Group (IDOG) including three Government Departments (Department for Communities, Department for Education Department of Health) and Sport NI developed the policy to invest in Special Olympics for the purpose outlined above.**

**Who owns and who implements the policy?**

**The current model of investment into Special Olympics Ireland through the IDOG was established 18 years ago, when Belfast hosted the Special Olympics Ireland Games in 2006. Since then, the IDOG has continued to fund Special Olympics Ireland on an annual basis.**

**Sport NI is responsible for implementing the policy.**

**Implementation factors**

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

**Yes**

**Financial:**

**Special Olympics Ireland receive core funding from the Department of Communities, Health and Education, and Sport Northern Ireland collectively known as the IDOG. This is annual funding at present and Special Olympics is aware that they can potentially operate at risk when funding is awaiting budgetary approval.**

Other, please specify:

* **The ability of Special Olympics Ireland to fundraise the budget shortfall.**
* **The availability of staff and volunteers to deliver the Special Olympics programme.**
* **The ability to attract disabled people into the programme.**
* **Cost of living increases and pandemics such has Covid 19.**

**Main stakeholders affected**

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

* **Staff: Internal staff at Sport NI, external staff at Special Olympics, external staff/volunteers at Special Olympics clubs.**
* **Service users: People with a learning and intellectual disability.**
* **Other public sector organisations: Representatives of the IDOG, outlined above.**
* **Voluntary/community/trade unions: Special Olympics Ireland, Special Olympic Clubs.**
* **Other, please specify: Parents and carers of participants.**

Other policies with a bearing on this policy

* **Sport NI Corporate Plan 2021-2026 (Sport Northern Ireland):** [**Power of Sport – Sport NI’s New Five-Year Plan | Sport NI**](https://www.sportni.net/about-us/power-of-sport-sport-nis-new-five-year-corporate-plan/) **and EQIA:** [**Equality-Impact-Assessment-Sport-NI-Corporate-Plan.pdf**](https://www.sportni.net/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Equality-Impact-Assessment-Sport-NI-Corporate-Plan.pdf)
* **Sport and Physical Activity Strategy for Northern Ireland – Active Living (Department for Communities):** [**Active Living**](https://www.sportni.net/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/dfc-active-living-sport-physical-strategy-northern-ireland.pdf)
* **Draft Programme for Government 2024-2027 ‘Our Plan: Doing What Matters Most’:**  [**Draft Programme for Government 2024-2027 ‘Our Plan: Doing What Matters Most’ | The Northern Ireland Executive**](https://www.northernireland.gov.uk/articles/draft-programme-government-2024-2027-our-plan-doing-what-matters-most)
* **Active Living: No Limits’ Action Plan (multi department and agencies):**[**Active Living | About Us**](https://activelivingnolimits.co.uk/about-us/#:~:text=Active%20Living%3A%20No%20Limits%20is%20an%20Action%20Plan,Ireland%20through%20participation%20in%20sport%20and%20active%20recreation.)
* **Sport NI Equality Scheme:** [**Equality scheme**](https://www.sportni.net/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/Sport-NI-Equality-Scheme-2021-261.pdf)

**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 **Sport NI Equality Scheme:** [**Equality scheme**](https://www.sportni.net/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/Sport-NI-Equality-Scheme-2021-261.pdf)

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

**Sport NI engaged extensively (through a conference, thematic engagement workshops, a series of public engagement and sectoral surveys and one to one meetings) and through a co-design approach, to develop the Corporate Plan.**

**An Equality Impact Assessment was carried out, which reviewed Section 75 group specific data, research and insights to inform equality consideration.**

**Further consultation took place over the summer of 2022 when all Governing Bodies, Local Authorities, local sports clubs and other key stakeholders were involved in face-to face focus groups, one-to one meetings and online consultation meetings to understand the key priorities they had for investment into their sporting systems.  Consultation was undertaken with Section 75 and under-represented groups. Through this consultation, the priority investment areas and enablers were developed.**

**Sport NI adopted a co-design and sporting system concept model approach to ultimately realise the societal benefits of sport for all people. This was analysed through a problem-solving approach with partners and stakeholders; to improve sustained participation, and, in particular for under-represented and Section 75 groups. This approach of intense engagement and co-design has resulted in a focus on the cornerstones of culture, inclusivity and equality as key enablers to support the improvements in the sporting system and ensure all areas of the system are accessible for all and benefit all. This drive to develop an inclusive sporting system that integrates fully a mainstream approach to equality has been informed by engagement and the following data, research and insights.**

**Other areas of longitudinal research provided specific evidence and information to inform specific Section 75 categories, most notably the 2023/4 Continuous Household survey which provided a cross section of society and not only those involved in the sporting sector.  This is detailed below along with other specific research studies relevant to the various groupings. Sport NI summarised the extent of this evidence in the** [**Equality-Impact-Assessment-Sport-NI-Corporate-Plan.pdf (sportni.net)**](http://www.sportni.net/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Equality-Impact-Assessment-Sport-NI-Corporate-Plan.pdf)**. Further Sport NI funded research has also been considered such as: The Children’s Sport Participation and Physical Activity Study 2022; The Children’s Report Card; The Kids Life and Time and Young People Life and Times Study, UK Coaching Survey. Finally, the Disability Sport NI research library was considered.**

**Religious belief** evidence / information:

**The Continuous Household Survey 2023/24 – Religious belief identification**

**Source:** [**https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/publications/experience-sport-by-adults-northern-ireland-202324**](https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/publications/experience-sport-by-adults-northern-ireland-202324)

**The EQIA for Sport Northern Ireland Corporate plan – Religious support for the support bases of sports to become more mixed.**

**Source: Equality-Impact-Assessment-Sport-NI-Corporate-Plan.pdf**

**Political Opinion** evidence / information:

**The EQIA for Sport Northern Ireland Corporate plan references the (2016) symbol of religious, cultural and, often, political allegiances in the province’s divided society. This research project in 2016, suggested that some of the politicisation of sport in the region may be weakening.**

**Source: Equality-Impact-Assessment-Sport-NI-Corporate-Plan.pdf**

**Racial Group** evidence / information:

**An extensive quantitative and qualitative research project was undertaken with the Home Country Sports Councils, including Sport NI to gain understanding of racism in sport.**

**The findings are available:**

[**https://www.uksport.gov.uk/-/media/tell-your-story\_-digital-final.ashx**](https://www.uksport.gov.uk/-/media/tell-your-story_-digital-final.ashx)

[**https://www.uksport.gov.uk/-/media/sirc-trariis-final-2021.ashx**](https://www.uksport.gov.uk/-/media/sirc-trariis-final-2021.ashx)

**Five common themes were identified for action:** [**https://www.uksport.gov.uk/-/media/5-common-themes.ashx**](https://www.uksport.gov.uk/-/media/5-common-themes.ashx)

**Age** evidence / information:

**The 2023/24 Continuous Household Survey (CHS) included questions on participation in sport. The tables at** [**https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/publications/experience-sport-by-adults-northern-ireland-202324**](https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/publications/experience-sport-by-adults-northern-ireland-202324)**present the findings from these questions.**

**The Kids Life and Times and Young People Life and Times Survey in 2023 records the attitudes and opinions of P7’s in Northern Ireland.  When asked how many times during a normal week would you spend at least 60 minutes during a day playing sports or doing some physical activity.**  **Young People Life and Times records the attitudes and opinions of 16-year-olds in Northern Ireland.  When asked how many times during a normal week would you spend at least 60 minutes during a day playing sports or doing some physical activity. These findings suggest that there is a decline in participation in sport and physical activity with age from primary to post-primary.**

**CSPPA – the Children’s Sport Participation and Physical Activity study – is an all-island research study that forms the most comprehensive analysis of youth participation in physical activity, physical education and sport on the island of Ireland. CSPPA has been running in Ireland for more than a decade, with our first study taking place in 2010. Over this time, they have collected data on levels of participation in physical education, physical activity, youth sport, active travel and sedentary behaviour from over 11,000 children and young people.** (<https://csppa.ie/csppa-2022/>)

**The Ireland North and South Report Card on Physical Activity for Children and Adolescents**

**was produced as part of the Active Healthy Kids Global Alliance, established in 2014 to create a world of active healthy kids. Close to 70 countries have signed up and taken part in the global alliance to date. Under this global initiative all Report Cards are generated using a standardised grading system, with grades from A for succeeding with a large majority of children to F for succeeding with few children. The 2022 Report Card is the third report of its kind for Ireland and Northern Ireland and provides a grade across eleven indicators for physical activity among children and teenagers.** [PA-Report-card-full-report-final.pdf](https://research.hscni.net/sites/default/files/PA-Report-card-full-report-final.pdf)

**Marital Status** evidence / information:

**The 2022/23 Continuous Household Survey (CHS) included questions on participation in sport. The tables at** [**engagement-culture-arts-heritage-sport-by-adults-in-northern-ireland-202223.xlsx (live.com)**](https://view.officeapps.live.com/op/view.aspx?src=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.communities-ni.gov.uk%2Fsystem%2Ffiles%2Fpublications%2Fcommunities%2Fengagement-culture-arts-heritage-sport-by-adults-in-northern-ireland-202223.xlsx&wdOrigin=BROWSELINK) **present the findings from these questions. The associated tables present participation levels relating to Marital Status.**

**Sexual Orientation** evidence / information:

**There is a lack of research and data to provide a breakdown of the sexual orientation of those participating in sport.**

**In our Corporate Plan consultation report we heard about: “ The invisibility of narrative on Trans inclusion and sexuality, the lack of athletes who are comfortable to come out, and the cultural normalisation of homophobic micro aggressions and unreported/reported Hate Crime presents serious barriers to accessibility into the sporting system. We have some examples of single identity teams, which struggle to sustain themselves”. Various representative agencies were consulted with to better understand the barriers to participation for groups.**

**In the Equality Impact Assessment of the Corporate Plan, we reviewed academic and other sources pertaining to the LGBTQIA+ in NI and beyond on their experiences of sport.**

**Men & Women generally** evidence / information:

**The 2022/23 Continuous Household Survey (CHS) included questions on participation in sport. The report at** [**https://datavis.nisra.gov.uk/communities/engagement-culture-arts-heritage-sport-by-adults-in-northern-ireland-202223.html#Sport**](https://datavis.nisra.gov.uk/communities/engagement-culture-arts-heritage-sport-by-adults-in-northern-ireland-202223.html#Sport) **and 2023/24 <https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/publications/experience-sport-by-adults-northern-ireland-202324> presents the findings from gender related questions.  The report states that participation levels relating to gender.**

**Disability** evidence / information: ￼

**The 2022/23 Continuous Household Survey (CHS) included questions on participation in sport.  Report** [**https://datavis.nisra.gov.uk/communities/engagement-culture-arts-heritage-sport-by-adults-in-northern-ireland-202223.html#Sport**](https://datavis.nisra.gov.uk/communities/engagement-culture-arts-heritage-sport-by-adults-in-northern-ireland-202223.html#Sport)

**The 2023/24 CHS (**[**https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/publications/experience-sport-by-adults-northern-ireland-202324**](https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/publications/experience-sport-by-adults-northern-ireland-202324)**)**

**Dependants’** evidence / information:

**The 2022/23 Continuous Household Survey (CHS) included questions on participation in sport. The tables at present the findings from these questions. The associated tables found at** [**engagement-culture-arts-heritage-sport-by-adults-in-northern-ireland-202223.xlsx (live.com)**](https://view.officeapps.live.com/op/view.aspx?src=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.communities-ni.gov.uk%2Fsystem%2Ffiles%2Fpublications%2Fcommunities%2Fengagement-culture-arts-heritage-sport-by-adults-in-northern-ireland-202223.xlsx&wdOrigin=BROWSELINK)

**The 2023/24 CHS (**[**https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/publications/experience-sport-by-adults-northern-ireland-202324**](https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/publications/experience-sport-by-adults-northern-ireland-202324)**)**

**Needs, experiences and priorities**

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

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**Religious belief**

**The Continuous Household Survey 2023/24 indicates that 46% of people, who identify as Catholic, participate in sport at least once in the last seven days, whilst 47% of people who identify as Protestant participate in sport at least once in the last seven days. 56% who don’t identify as either participate in sport at least once in the last seven days.**

**Source:** [**https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/publications/experience-sport-by-adults-northern-ireland-202324**](https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/publications/experience-sport-by-adults-northern-ireland-202324)

**The EQIA for Sport Northern Ireland Corporate plan references work carried out (2016) David Mitchell, Ian Somerville and Owen Hargie, Sport and Social Exclusion. A survey carried out in this research (n = 1210) found that, broadly, work of the governing bodies is recognised by the public. Moreover, both Protestants and Catholics would like the support bases of sports to become more mixed. One of the headline findings was the overwhelming public support for the principle of sport as a peacebuilding vehicle. A total of 86 per cent agreed that ‘sport is a good way to break down barriers between Protestants and Catholics’, surely a remarkable finding in a society in which sport has been so implicated in division**

**Equality-Impact-Assessment-Sport-NI-Corporate-Plan.pdf**

**The needs, experiences and priorities for people with different religious beliefs have been determined through consultation on Sport NI’s 2020-2025 Corporate plan ‘The Power of Sport’ and the Department for Communities screening assessment on their Active Living Strategy. ￼**

**The Sport NI Corporate Plan public consultation with culturally diverse groups heard the following messages:**

* **Projects should consider religious and cultural practices e.g., females from some faiths or beliefs could not t take part in gym classes or swimming in the presence of men and females are not permitted to use communal changing rooms. There is a need for organised female/ children only times and sessions to accommodate this and specific development officers to help support progression and motivate participants to stay engaged.**
* **Sport NI acknowledges that community background is often reflected in sporting activities and interests. The different needs of communities should continue to be recognised and reflected in the distribution of resources. In terms of representation, Sport NI will continue to recognise the element of personal choice in relation to individuals representing Northern Ireland, Ireland or UK in international sport.**

**The Department for Communities screening assessment on their Active Living Strategy highlights needs and experiences of this group:**

* **Access to facilities on day/times to accommodate religious practices;**
* **Being mindful of participation rates in activities that may be impacted as a result of cultural and religious practices e.g., females from some faiths or beliefs cannot take part in gym classes or swimming in the presence of men. The need for organised female only sessions to accommodate this’.**

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**Political Opinion**

**The EQIA for Sport Northern Ireland Corporate plan references the (2016) David Mitchell, Ian Somerville and Owen Hargie, Sport and Social Exclusion piece of work which suggests that while sport in Northern Ireland has long been more than just a physical activity, but a symbol of religious, cultural and, often, political allegiances in the province’s divided society. This research project in 2016, suggested that some of the politicisation of sport in the region may be weakening.**

**Equality-Impact-Assessment-Sport-NI-Corporate-Plan.pdf**

**The needs, experiences and priorities for people with different political opinions have been determined through consultation on Sport NI’s 2020-2025 Corporate plan ‘The Power of Sport’ and the Department for Communities screening assessment on their Active Living Strategy.**

**Sport NI acknowledges that community background is often reflected in sporting activities and interests. The different needs of communities will continue to be recognised and reflected in the distribution of resources. In terms of representation, Sport NI will continue to recognise the element of personal choice in relation to individuals representing Northern Ireland, Ireland or UK in international sport.**

**We note the Department for Communities screening assessment on their Active Living Strategy highlights needs and experiences of this group:**

* **Facilities that are neutral territory or locally accessible.**
* **Making sure people feel safe and secure when using any facility or venue or recreation space –**
* **Free from any type of territorial markings etc. that might discourage people from using facilities.**

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**Racial Group**

**An extensive quantitative and qualitative research project was undertaken with the Home Country Sports Councils, including Sport NI to gain understanding of racism in sport. Two major initial pieces of work were commissioned. The first piece of work involved bringing together existing data on race and ethnicity in sport, identifying the gaps and making recommendations while the second involves creating an opportunity to hear lived experiences of racial inequalities and racism in sport, offering people a safe space to tell their stories. Both projects are a result of the recognition that while individually each Sports Council has sought to tackle the issues, it has not gone far enough nor been done collectively.**

**The findings are available:**

[**https://www.uksport.gov.uk/-/media/tell-your-story\_-digital-final.ashx**](https://www.uksport.gov.uk/-/media/tell-your-story_-digital-final.ashx)

[**https://www.uksport.gov.uk/-/media/sirc-trariis-final-2021.ashx**](https://www.uksport.gov.uk/-/media/sirc-trariis-final-2021.ashx)

**Five common themes were identified for action:** [**https://www.uksport.gov.uk/-/media/5-common-themes.ashx**](https://www.uksport.gov.uk/-/media/5-common-themes.ashx)

**In summary the research found that**

* **The headline findings point to systematic inequalities in the data relating to participation in sport and physical activity between different ethnic groups. There is some evidence of the inequalities being apparent in adults and children as well as being present in wider cultural pursuits. These inequalities among adults are apparent in physical activity, and specific sports as well as in elite sport.**
* **People having a limiting disability are 19% less likely to be active compared with those without. Among the various types of disability, people with mobility problems are 41% less likely to be active than those without.**
* **Data on participation in sport and physical activity consistently demonstrate that people from ethnically diverse communities tend to have lower participation rates than White British people.**

**The needs, experiences and priorities for different racial groups have been determined through consultation on Sport NI’s 2020-2025 Corporate Plan ‘The Power of Sport’ and the EQIA carried out on the Corporate Plan.**

**Feedback from Sport NI’s Corporate Plan 2020-2025 public consultation meetings included :**

* **Marginalised and under-represented groups consulted, reaffirmed the need for an open, accessible, warm, welcoming, inclusive, sporting culture that promoted wellness and wellbeing. This was not the present general experience by many S75 groups as reported. This was explored in detail with each group and practical, tangible solutions were proposed and analysis is included later. This will be continued with the work of the Celebrating Diversity Panel, Young Persons Panel and Women’s Panel.**
* **The community empowerment model and community-based transitions to signpost to the welcoming empathetic flexible club model, with social and competitive offerings that were participant needs based, was consistently discussed by health, councils, S75 groups, thematic focus groups.**

**Feedback from some specific themes included:**

* **The need for creative and collaborative discussions with culturally diverse groups around solving the significant barrier to signposting, information and language produced the idea of a translated app that could triage to preferred language, sport, level of confidence and link that app user to an inclusive club (and a welcome video from a relatable participant that challenged off putting perceptions of competitively elite).**
* **We heard from culturally diverse groups about the perceived and structural barriers into the sporting system, and most importantly some pragmatic solutions to overcome these barriers, from a signposting resource to introductory vouchers, to single interest sporting social groups, to outreach and welcoming clubs, to increased development opportunities, to influencing role models, to diverse leadership and representation, to awareness raising and training, to better social media engagement. More concerning, we heard of some of the lived experiences expressed also to the Race and Racial Inequality In Sport study and reported conscious bias and micro aggressions in sporting environments.**
* **Mainstreaming equality, diversity and inclusion was supported but asked to be address more explicitly and pragmatically).**
* **Culturally diverse groups considered barriers to pathways, which has been outlined in the Race and Racial Inequality in Sport research (focus groups).**
* **Inclusivity of clubs was important, including affordability and accessibility.**
* **Culturally diverse groups, LGBTQ+ and other groups reported the lack of signposting to people development opportunities as NI as a ‘who you know’ culture. Access to CPD opportunities were an important ask and outreach through non-traditional channels.**
* **Most concerning, was the lived experience of people from culturally diverse groups who reported racist blatant aggressions and micro aggressions of conscious bias from experiences in sport, and the instances of homophobic Hate Crimes were noted by Stonewall and Rainbow project, the public ‘outing’ of young people/athletes transitioning, and instances of wheelchair athletes, being deemed a health a safety risk in schools were carefully listened to.**

**The Sport NI EQIA on the Corporate Plan 2020-2025 references the 2020 Sport England Sport For All Study: Why ethnicity and culture matters in sport and physical activity and the Active Lives Adult and Children Surveys. The analysis shows that to address long term inequalities within sport and physical activity, we need solutions built out of an understanding of: The diversity within and between different Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic adults and children in England and their preferences; The compound effect of multiple demographic characteristics; and the impact of the whole system on behaviour.**

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**Age**

**The 2023/24 Continuous Household Survey (CHS) included questions on participation in sport. The tables at** [**https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/publications/experience-sport-by-adults-northern-ireland-202324**](https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/publications/experience-sport-by-adults-northern-ireland-202324)**present the findings from these questions.**

**In the Equality Impact Assessment of the Sport NI Corporate Plan, we reviewed academic and other sources pertaining to age in NI and beyond on their experiences of sport.**

**The Children’s Sport Participation and Physical Activity Study (CSPPA) 2022 by the Ulster University, University College Dublin, University College Cork, University of Limerick and part funded by Sport NI has collected data on levels of participation in physical education, physical activity, youth sport, active travel and sedentary behaviour from over 11,000 children and young people.  They also collected information on physical health, fitness, muscular strength and endurance, and asked children what they think of the opportunities provided to them to be more active. CSPPA has informed government policy, practice by physical education teachers, youth sport coaches, and researchers interested in how to promote physical activity in this cohort. CSPPA provides a detailed picture of children and young peoples’ (10-18 years) participation in sport and physical activity in across seven domains including extracurricular sport, sport outside of school and sedentary behaviour. The determinants of participation in these activities were also explored. The report found that 17% of students in Northern Ireland reported 60 minutes of daily moderate-to-vigorous physical activity in 2022, an increase from 13% in both jurisdictions in 2018. However, boys are more likely to meet the guidelines than girls and children with disabilities or from ethnicity other than White Irish are less likely to meet also.  It also found that Community sport participation has increased in primary and post primary students from 2028 to 2022 with 73% of primary students participating at least once a week.  The percentage of students participating in sport at school outside of PE has also increased at both primary and post primary with 92% of primary and 76% of post-primary school students reported participating in school sport at least once a week.**

**Kids Life and Times (KLT) records the attitudes and opinions of P7’s in Northern Ireland. When asked how many times during a normal week would you spend at least 60 minutes during a day playing sports or doing some physical activity? The results were as follows:**

* **Never 6%**
* **Up to 4 times a week 36%**
* **4 – 6 times a week 27%**
* **7 times a week 18%**
* **More often 13%**

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**Young Life and Times records the attitudes and opinions of 16-year-olds in Northern Ireland. When asked how many times during a normal week would you spend at least 60 minutes during a day playing sports or doing some physical activity? The results were as follows:**

* **Never 8%**
* **Once a week 19%**
* **2-3 times a week 36%**
* **4-6 times a week 29%**
* **7 times a week 6%**
* **More often 2%**

**These findings suggest that there is a decline in participation in sport and physical activity with age from primary to post-primary.**

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**The needs, experiences and priorities for people of different ages have been determined through consultation on Sport NI’s 2020-2025 Corporate plan ‘The Power of Sport’, the EQIA carried out on the Corporate Plan and Department for Communities screening assessment on their Active Living Strategy highlights needs and experiences of this group.**

**Feedback from some specific themes within the consultation of the Corporate Plan included:**

**Sporting System**

* **The older people focus group, and other consultee comments concerning older people, considered the range of adapted sports that could be offered for older people from clubs, such as dander football, walking netball, Nordic walking, table tennis, yachting, bowls, fishing etc. Lack of information and communication were key issues for this generation. The clear rationale was provided from evidenced research that fitness in older people staved off illness such as dementia and early intervention was a cost saving for the health service.**

**Children and Young People**

* **Comments were clear, cohesive and strong on this theme, calling for initial teacher training and CPD/support for teachers to be increased delivery hours and quality of PE (and embedding physical literacy). The Inspectorate Report recommends only two hours of core curriculum PE which is not met. There is a need to reduce the early stage focus from competition and ball sports to skill development across the PE curriculum range of sports, and to increase links to clubs. This came from a broad spectrum of consultees and from within education. There was also a call to regulate the external provision of PE in schools.**
* **The importance of PE in the curriculum in schools to raise standards of physical literacy in young people is a core enabler for outcome one and less directly outcome two. Consultation comments (and cited evidence) generally reflected on the declining levels of physical literacy in young people (Education consultees and general comments 50+).**
* **The reduction of optional PE to 16 hours within initial teacher training effects teachers’ confidence and competence to deliver (Education consultees).**
* **The provision of highly competitive sports provision in schools by governing bodies and clubs, for some pupils may intimidate further teacher’s competence to deliver, e.g. PE curriculum gymnastics should be aimed at Fundamental Movement Skills than highly skilled bar work that coaches deliver.**
* **CPD provision for teachers with supporting resources should be developed by training universities and supported when appropriate by GBs (Curriculum Advisors for PE previously supported this) (Education consultees).**
* **The Inspectorate Report recommendation of two hours now includes physical activity, and optional after school activities. Other requirements take precedent. (General sectoral reflections).**
* **The replacement of low skill physical activity may give children active opportunities but does not develop physical literacy in the same way the PE curriculum delivery should do, or the competencies required (Education consultees).**
* **Charges for after school PE or external providers excludes low-income families from PE provision (S75 consultees and Education consultees).**
* **A focus on early selective ball games competition, renders other children to feel excluded from sport, often with an interest in other minority sports or skill development and this continues into post primary school with a competitive agenda (Education and S75 consultees and general comments).**
* **There needs to be better transition management between schools, after school clubs and sporting clubs for young people and families.**

**The Department for Communities screening assessment on their Active Living Strategy highlighted a number of key issues for different ages groups. Key points included**

**Older people:**

* + **Accessibility issues including transport and lack of facilities in rural areas.**
  + **Financial reasons - High Cost of public transport to and the cost of Sports and Physical Activity services e.g., would like to try golf but too expensive.**
  + **Lack of promotion and advertising of available service and incentives - many service users are not aware of what is available in the sector.**
  + **Having no-one to go to classes with and feeling self-conscious about attending alone - it’s easier in a group of people who know each other.**
  + **Current lack of changing/showering facilities. Have to arrive in sports gear.**
  + **Health issues can impact people engaging in activity- fear.**
  + **More fun/non-competitive classes should be available.**
  + **Need for older generation to obtain a digital knowledge to access online classes.**
  + **Provision of a volunteer led activity programme in care homes.**
  + **Ensuring that the needs of all older people are met at key stages to maintain, participation in sport and physical activity to support wellbeing and independence.**
  + **Compliance with the DDA and UNCRPD mindful of the needs of people of all ages.**
  + **Linking with Age Friendly initiatives in local councils and the Active Ageing Strategy at the DfC**

**Young people:**

* + **Lack of facilities large enough and nearby their homes.**
  + **Lack of choice of classes to participate in physical activity for their age group (17/18), or in their local area (in particular rural areas).**
  + **Cultural barriers: ‘’Catholics play hurling, Gaelic, Protestants play rugby, so this limit trying new things and we would like these opportunities.”**
  + **Too much focus on one particular sport in their area, and if you are not interested in that one sport, there is no support to try something else.**
  + **Sport is not inclusive and has stereotypes – not all sport is targeted towards both girls and boys.**
  + **Having a disability, lack of accessibility and lack of availability are obstacles to participation.**
  + **Access to parks was also highlighted as a problem**
  + **More opportunities for water-based activities.**
  + **More adventure activities e.g., low/high ropes courses, obstacle courses in forest parks etc**
  + **Need for greater availability of a mix of activities for those with a range of abilities, especially those that may be less physically demanding. These should be inclusive or adapted for all. For example, badminton.**
  + **The transition between 14 and 16 into adulthood results in a lot of young people drooping out of sport and physical activity**
  + **Lack of outdoor spaces in many urban Primary schools**
  + **Important that school facilities / pitches are open to the community in non-term time and out of school hours**
  + **Barriers included transport, confidence, self-esteem; lack of equality and stereotypes n some sports; cots; time commitment parasports- not enough awareness or opportunities; make school sport more exciting and fun; lack of awareness of the health benefits**

**Children:**

**Early years seen as the most important stage in building a lifestyle of being physically active – building fundamental movement skills, physical literacy and movement from birth is really important to develop good habits in later life. Play is physical movement. A lack of education for parents on the importance of this stage and on what they need to be doing with their children at an early age e.g. throw, catch skip. Sport for fun at early ages not competitive. “Value the journey rather than the podium”. Focus on children's own personal bests. Kids are burnt out too soon and asked for too much too early with competitive sport. Currently lack of Continuous Professional Development programmes.**

**From an Early years and Sure start perspective childcare is an issue if parents want to get active with their children. If children are overweight, it is likely to run in families and the challenge is to change that culture through play and introducing sport and physical activity to parents (and grandparents who are often carers). Obesity issues. Teaching healthy eating and sustaining and following up with parents is important. Many parents lack knowledge and/or confidence. Some rural areas don’t have as much support. Lack of male role models from early years sometimes right through to post primary. Helping parents to realise that getting outside and being active does not have to cost money - using the natural environment. Transport and costs are also issues. Building trusting relationships with families is fundamental to addressing the issue. Messaging is key.**

**Getting children off their devices, screen time. More focus on outdoor activities. Covid leading to speech and language problems. Need better teacher to child ratios in nurseries and a more holistic approach across all levels of education. Ability for families to afford to engage in sports and physical activity in terms of club and group fees, purchase of appropriate clothes, equipment and travel. Poverty that creates stigma, insecurity and embarrassment. Listen and engage with children.**

**Build partnerships with local sporting organisations to offer low cost/no cost access to children and families**

**Physical activity should not be weather dependent. Dress for the weather and encourage outdoor activity as the new norm. Physical exercise has strong link to emotional health and well-being Consistent messaging and interdepartmental communication is key.**

**Greater accessibility of access particularly for those that disabled, additional needs, newcomer families.**

**The EQIA on the Sport NI Corporate Plan references the study ‘Older people's perspectives on participation in physical activity: a systematic review and thematic synthesis of qualitative literature’.’ 6 major themes were identified from 132 studies involving 5987 participants: social influences (valuing interaction with peers, social awkwardness, encouragement from others, dependence on professional instruction); physical limitations (pain or discomfort, concerns about falling, comorbidities); competing priorities; access difficulties (environmental barriers, affordability); personal benefits of physical activity (strength, balance and flexibility, self-confidence, independence, improved health and mental well-being); and motivation and beliefs (apathy, irrelevance and inefficacy, maintaining habits). Some older people still believe that physical activity is unnecessary or even potentially harmful. Others recognise the benefits of physical activity but report a range of barriers to physical activity participation. Strategies to enhance physical activity participation among older people should include (1) raising awareness of the benefits and minimise the perceived risks of physical activity and (2) improving the environmental and financial access to physical activity opportunities**

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**Marital status**

**The 2022/23 Continuous Household Survey (CHS) included questions on participation in sport. The tables at** [**engagement-culture-arts-heritage-sport-by-adults-in-northern-ireland-202223.xlsx (live.com)**](https://view.officeapps.live.com/op/view.aspx?src=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.communities-ni.gov.uk%2Fsystem%2Ffiles%2Fpublications%2Fcommunities%2Fengagement-culture-arts-heritage-sport-by-adults-in-northern-ireland-202223.xlsx&wdOrigin=BROWSELINK) **present the findings from these questions. The associated tables present participation levels relating to Marital Status as below:**

* **Married/ Cohabiting** **50%**
* **Single** **52%**
* **Widowed** **21%**
* **Separated/ Divorced** **36**

**A more recent Continuous Household Survey (CHS) 23/24, indicates that people who are married and participated in sport in the previous 7 days was 51%. In comparison, 54% of people who are single participated in sport in the last 7 days.**

**The needs, experiences and priorities for people of different ages have been determined through the Department for Communities screening assessment on their Active Living Strategy**

**• Access to facilities on day/times that suit.**

**• Working with parents to get them more engaged in working with the children in sports and physical activity**

**• Childcare issues for many parents both of whom work to get out and get active. Cost if on low incomes.**

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**Sexual orientation**

**There is a lack of research and data to provide a breakdown of the sexual orientation of those participating in sport.**

**In our Corporate Plan consultation report we heard about: “**

**The invisibility of narrative on Trans inclusion and sexuality, the lack of athletes who are comfortable to come out, and the cultural normalisation of homophobic micro aggressions and unreported/reported Hate Crime presents serious barriers to accessibility into the sporting system. We have some examples of single identity teams, which struggle to sustain themselves”. Various representative agencies were consulted with to better understand the barriers to participation for groups.**

**In the Equality Impact Assessment of the Corporate Plan, we reviewed academic and other sources pertaining to the LGBTQIA+ in NI and beyond on their experiences of sport.  These were as follows**

* **(2016) OUTstanding in your field: Exploring the needs of LGB&T people in rural Northern Ireland, Rainbow Project.**
* **(2015) Through Our Eyes: The housing and homeless experiences of lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans people in Northern Ireland, by The Rainbow Project and Council for the Homeless NI.**
* **(2013) Through Our Minds: Exploring the emotional health and wellbeing of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people in Northern Ireland, by Malachai O’Hara.**
* **(2012) Multiple Identity; Multiple Exclusions and Human Rights: The experiences of people with disabilities who identify as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender people living in Northern Ireland, by Disability Action and The Rainbow Project.**
* **(2012) All Partied Out: Substance use in Northern Irelands Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Community, by Eoin Rooney.**
* **(2011) Making this Home my Home: Making nursing and residential care more inclusive for older lesbian, gay, bisexual and/or transgender people, by AgeNI and The Rainbow Project.**
* **(2011) Left Out Of The Equation: A report on the experiences of lesbian, gay and bisexual young people at school, by Gavin Boyd.**
* **(2011) Through Our Eyes: Experiences of Lesbian, Gay & Bisexual People in the Workplace, by Matthew McDermott.**
* **(2009) Through Our Eyes: Perceptions and Experiences of Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual People towards Homophobic Hate Crime and Policing in Northern Ireland, by John O’Doherty.**

**We also noted the Department for Communities screening assessment on their Active living strategy. The pre-consultation focus group meetings provided some anecdotal evidence and insight. These included:**

* **Access to facilities that offer exclusive access for certain groupings e.g. LGBT. Suitable changing facilities/regime.**
* **Lack of understanding and knowledge of the needs of LGBTQ+ community.**
* **People need to belong to belong to be motivated to participate in a group – many don’t and feel isolated because of their sexual orientation.**
* **LGBTQ+ sometimes feel you are being judged if for example the go to a gym.**
* **Transphobic abuse when walking. More comfortable walking in a different area.**
* **Transgender issue is an issue across all sports.**
* **Individual sessions with separate changing facilities for those from the trans community needed.**

**The needs, experiences and priorities for people with different sexual orientation have been determined through consultation on Sport NI’s 2020-2025 Corporate plan ‘The Power of Sport’, the EQIA carried out on the Corporate Plan and Department for Communities screening assessment on their Active Living Strategy highlights needs and experiences of this group**

**Sporting System**

**Stonewall, Rainbow Project and Sporting Mermaids recognised the benefit in clubs indicating their inclusive approach to LGBTQ+ community through such an app.**

* **The invisibility of narrative on Trans inclusion and sexuality, the lack of athletes who are comfortable to come out, and the cultural normalisation of homophobic micro aggressions and unreported/reported Hate Crime presents serious barriers to accessibility into the sporting system. We have some examples of single identity teams, which struggle to sustain themselves.**

**People Development**

* **Culturally diverse groups, LGBTQ+ and other groups reported the lack of signposting to people development opportunities as NI as a ‘who you know’ culture. Access to CPD opportunities were an important ask and outreach through non-traditional channels.**

**Connected Communities**

**- Concerning, was the lived experience of people from culturally diverse groups reported racist blatant aggressions and micro aggressions of conscious bias from experiences in sport, and the instances of homophobic Hate Crimes were noted by Stonewall and Rainbow project, the public ‘outing’ of young people/athletes transitioning, and instances of wheelchair athletes, being deemed a health a safety risk in schools were carefully listened to.**

**We note the Department for Communities screening assessment on their Active Living Strategy.**

**The pre-consultation focus group meetings provided some anecdotal evidence and insight. These included:**

**• Access to facilities that offer exclusive access for certain groupings e.g. LGBT. Suitable changing facilities/regime**

**• Lack of understanding and knowledge of the needs of LGBTQ+ community**

**• People need to belong to belong to be motivated to participate in a group – many don’t and feel isolated because of their sexual orientation**

**• LGBTQ+ sometimes feel you are being judged if for example the go to a gym**

**• Transphobic abuse when walking. More comfortable walking in a different area**

**• Transgender issue is an issue across all sports**

**• Individual sessions with separate changing facilities for those from the trans community needed**

**The Sport NI EQIA on the Corporate Plan 2020-2025 provides context around the sexual orientation and participation in sport and highlights that the invisibility of the LGBTQ+ community in sport is very apparent, linked to the impact of homophobia in society. It is clear that the LGBTQ+ community are at risk of dropping out of sport at key transition points or through negative experiences or do not feel comfortable to come out safely and advocate.**

**Men and Women Generally**

**The needs, experiences and priorities for men and woman have been determined through consultation on Sport NI’s 2020-2025 Corporate Plan ‘The Power of Sport’ and the Department for Communities screening assessment on their Active Living Strategy**

Men and Women

**The 2022/23 Continuous Household Survey (CHS) included questions on participation in sport. The report at** [**https://datavis.nisra.gov.uk/communities/engagement-culture-arts-heritage-sport-by-adults-in-northern-ireland-202223.html#Sport**](https://datavis.nisra.gov.uk/communities/engagement-culture-arts-heritage-sport-by-adults-in-northern-ireland-202223.html#Sport) **and 2023/24** [**https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/publications/experience-sport-by-adults-northern-ireland-202324**](https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/publications/experience-sport-by-adults-northern-ireland-202324) **presents the findings from gender related questions.  The report states that participation levels relating to gender outlining that females were less likely to have taken part in sport at least once within the previous year than males (40% and 55% respectively 2022/23).**

**There were differences in the types of sports males and females participated in within the previous year. A higher proportion of males participated in the sports featured in the survey, however women were more likely than men to have participated in keep-fit, aerobics, dance exercise, yoga, weight training (26% compared to 22%, 2022/23).**

**A more recent Continuous Household Survey 23/24 indicates that the percentage of people who participated in sport in the last 7 days was 55% Male and 42% female.**

**The Sport NI Club Survey (2019) provided evidence of the split as 65% male, 35% female with club membership. Female representation was particularly low in the 19 to 49 age brackets where the split is 71% male, 29% female. The survey returns show there are 10,559 coaches, an average of 13 coaches per club, with a split of 69% male and 31% female. Nearly a third (32%) of all coaches were men in the 31-49 age bracket, whilst women in this age bracket accounted for only 11% of all coaches. A similar picture was found in the over 50s age bracket. Overall, the gender ratio for coaches was 2.2 males for every 1 female.**

**Sport NI provided a summary of key findings from research and insights on Women and Girls in Sport in November 2022, gathered to inform discussion on the priorities of the Women in Sport Panel.  Key findings included:**

* **Women’s participation is lower and declines with age and reduces according to social class, education attainment level and disability.**
* **Females are choosing recreational and less traditional sporting options.**
* **Women were taking less visits to the outdoors on 2020/21.**
* **Women are under-represented in sports club participation which declines as age increases.**
* **There is a lack of representation of women in the coaching workforce;**
* **The female club coach and volunteer population declines with age.**
* **There is an under-representation in performance roles and leadership positions.**
* **Girls’ enjoyment of sport lowers at post primary school.**
* **Girls’ enjoyment of sport lowers at post primary school; and**
* **Girls’ participation declines with age and pathway progression.**

**Sporting System**

* **The women’s focus group noted that targeting inactive girls required a different approach to boys, and mindful of influences of friends and social media, entry activities and interventions needed to be integrated into their existing social habits. Their lack of confidence and competence needed to be then addressed, primarily through physical literacy. This related to issues with PE and physical literacy in schools. However initial engagement and coaching approaches also needed to mindful of the young girl’s learning style and fears.**
* **The historical/traditional club offering needed to change. The group further reflected on the rigid competition focus that often puts women off competitive only clubs, and this is borne how by the higher dropout rate in women from sport. A more flexible and family lifestyle suitable option from clubs needs to be developed. The noted growth of interest in skills-based sports by women supported this assertion and the drive to develop skills.**
* **The lack of visible and accessible female role models on social media platforms was noted and the need for advocacy, influencing and engagement tools; to encourage others into sport, volunteering, officiating and leadership positions was requested.**
* **The ineffectiveness of short-term funding activations was noted, along with the very different motivations of women for physical activity compared to sport.**

**High Performance**

* **The women’s focus groups considered the high-performance pathway expectation on women and the enablers required to reach the pathway, the representation of role models (athletes and performance practitioners), empathetic coaching, life skills training, higher media profile, and post athlete career considerations etc.**

**People Development**

* **The women’s focus groups recognised the need to develop coach education, to be cognisant of different learning styles of women, and to dial up empathetic led coaching approaches, supported by safeguarding and wellbeing issues that have arisen in female sport.**
* **The barriers to female volunteering and representation in the sporting workforce were considered in terms of the need for more flexible entry level coaching qualifications, the removal of rigid competition structures with high demands on time, the need for more role models and the need for the right mentoring support, continuous professional development and lifestyle flexible options.**

**The Department for Communities screening assessment on their Active Living Strategy highlights needs and experiences of this group: some of the need identified includes**

**For both**

**• Safe, affordable, quality, welcoming facilities**

**• Range of sports available**

**• Range of opening hours**

**• Coaching and pathways to achievement**

**• Use of new technology**

**For females:**

**• Need role models**

**• A lot of work in clubs is about a change in unconscious bias, understanding value, a change in mind-sets and ensuring that a young girl entering a rugby club with her brother has the same opportunities as her brother. We need to influence the influencers to empower and communicate to allow organic changes.**

**• Need more female coaches**

**• Accessibility issues including transport and lack of facilities in rural areas**

**• Lack of promotion and advertising of available services.**

**• Low motivation, body confidence and self-esteem, being afraid of going to gym and into changing areas and being judged negatively by others.**

**• A lot of women need encouragement to get involved initially and would prefer to have someone to attend with.**

**• Child/family/work/time commitments.**

**• Attitudes people have towards women in sport.**

**• Women only swimming/exercise classes.**

**• Local classes in community halls rather than in a leisure centre gym.**

**• Having some kind of exercise classes to run alongside children’s activity clubs - the parents usually wait in the car-**

**• GPs should prescribe exercise as a medicine.**

**• Need for casual exercise opportunities. More fun/non-competitive classes.**

**• Women need to be encouraged to put themselves first some of the time and not feel guilty about it.**

**• Needs to be emphasis on lifelong participation in exercise for all school’s pupils rather than just the success of the sports teams – especially girls aged 10 to 11.**

**• Make more use of the local environment and great outdoors to exercise.**

**• School facilities should be used more by the local community.**

**• Couch to 5K and park run schemes should be expanded.**

**• Gentler exercise classes for people with limited mobility.**

**For males:**

**• Recognise that not all men are physically active.**

**• Need to link to health issues.**

**• Men moving into retirement - little to do if not active in advance of retirement because of busy jobs.**

**• Social isolation.**

**• Lack of confidence and lack of motivation.**

**• Getting people out of the house.**

**• Sport tied to classes etc puts people off, better to describe as an activity.**

**• Health issues take people out of physical activities and contact with others.**

**• Men don’t like to talk about their issues and problems but may do so in Men’s shed with friends- great opportunity to use these as ways of getting more older men more active.**

**• Currently activities and courses only run over a short 6-week period, the feeling was that this was too short a period to get people interested long term.**

**• Men are more likely to open up in a social group about their issues than with a medical professional.**

**• More collaboration between Men’s Sheds and sports clubs/ Governing Bodies**

**• Need longer term programmes - short programmes are well used but it is difficult to encourage those who are unemployed or from a disadvantaged area into any type of physical activity and out of a sedentary lifestyle**

**• No basic facilities in rural areas and lack of adequate walking paths and streetlights.**

**• Leisure centres are always fully booked and are not readily available to the local community and are regularly ‘last on the list’.**

**• Problems with facilities being on an interface. Fear of passing into an area on the other side of the interface.**

**• Need more focus on GP referral to local council operated gym, at a reduced cost, for people with weight/health issues.**

**• Stadia could be used for community programmes and not just the elite athletes**

**• Mental health is an important factor and should be an integral factor of physical activity programmes.**

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**Disability**

**The 2022/23 Continuous Household Survey (CHS) included questions on participation in sport.  The report at** [**https://datavis.nisra.gov.uk/communities/engagement-culture-arts-heritage-sport-by-adults-in-northern-ireland-202223.html#Sport**](https://datavis.nisra.gov.uk/communities/engagement-culture-arts-heritage-sport-by-adults-in-northern-ireland-202223.html#Sport) **present the findings from disability related questions. The report states that adults with a disability were less likely to participate in sport in the previous year (26%) compared to adults without a disability (56%). Similarly, when looking at participation rates over the previous four weeks, just over one in five (21%) of those with a disability had taken part in sport compared to almost half of all adults without a disability (48%).**

**In 2023/24 the CHS (**[**https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/publications/experience-sport-by-adults-northern-ireland-202324**](https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/publications/experience-sport-by-adults-northern-ireland-202324)**) report states that adults with a disability were less likely to participate in sport in the previous year (30%) compared to adults without a disability (59%).**

**However DSNI has focused on:  “The reduction in the sport and physical activity participation levels of disabled people is as a result of a complex range of issues, including the lasting negative impact of COVID-19 on sports participation habits, the provision of fewer sports opportunities for disabled people by many District Councils, the disruption of Governing Body of Sport programmes by COVID-19 resulting in fewer sports opportunities for disabled people as well as the negative impact of the cost of living crisis on disabled people’s ability to pay for and travel to sports and activities.”**

**They note they are “particularly concerned at the current situation as it comes after many years of progress, when the sports participation levels of disabled people steadily increased, peaking in 2019/20, thanks to the development of a range of targeted sports programme by Sport NI, District Councils and Governing Bodies of Sport across Northern Ireland.”**

**In the Equality Impact Assessment of the Corporate Plan, we reviewed academic and other sources pertaining to disabled people in NI and their experiences of sport.**

**In 2015, the Northern Ireland Assembly, Research and Information Service, considered the provision of sport for those with a disability It found that disabled people in Northern Ireland exercise significantly less than those without a disability. Indeed, 19% of disabled people participated regularly in physical activity, compared with 37% of non-disabled adults. Disability Sports NI has indicated that around 20% (or 360,000) of the population of Northern Ireland are considered to have a long-term limiting illness (currently used as a working definition of ‘disability’).**

**The needs, experiences and priorities for people with a disability have been determined through consultation on Sport NI’s 2020-2025 Corporate plan ‘The Power of Sport’ and the Department for Communities screening assessment on their Active Living Strategy.**

**Feedback from the consultation of the Corporate Plan included some key findings from underrepresented groups and specific to the cornerstones within the plan, namely, that marginalised and under-represented groups consulted, reaffirmed the need for an open, accessible, warm, welcoming, inclusive, sporting culture that promoted wellness and wellbeing. This was not the present general experience by many S75 groups as reported. This was explored in detail with each group and practical, tangible solutions were proposed and considered. We learned that there was an underreporting of disabilities, and the targeting of inactive people was a more effective strategy for engagement. It was noted that Council’s geographical support for accessibility was not consistent and was reported to have waned in recent years, with a focus on capital asset management a key priority. Sports NI managed strategic regional posts were supported to ensure meaningful change. The cognitive bias of Boards was seen as a barrier for change, with like attracting like, and inhibiting awareness raising for people with disabilities. A more diverse board/committee and associated culture were identified as key enablers. The limitations of the quality and granularity of existing longitudinal data on participation, as an informative evidence base for policy, strategy and decision making, was also noted. The importance of advocacy and awareness raising by storytelling, training, funding criteria and sanctions were all important tools to be employed.**

**The Department for Communities screening assessment on their Active Living Strategy highlights needs and experiences of this group;**

* **There needs to be a focus on all types of disability as the needs vary and therefore solutions need also to be tailored to different needs– physical, mental, sensory**
* **Accessibility issues including transport and lack of facilities in rural areas.**
* **Financial reasons - High Cost of public transport to and the cost of Sports and Physical Activity services – Activities in community centres would be helpful**
* **Lack of promotion and advertising of available service and incentives - many service users are not aware of what is available in the sector. Not knowing where to find information**
* **Low motivation, confidence and self-esteem, being afraid of going to gym and being judged negatively by others and lack of self-belief could prevent participants from partaking in physical activities,**
* **Having no-one to go to classes with and feeling self-conscious about attending alone - it’s easier in a group of people who know each other**
* **The need for an advocate to help with personal motivation to exercise.**

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**Dependants**

**The 2022/23 Continuous Household Survey (CHS) included questions on participation in sport. The tables at present the findings from these questions. The associated tables found at** [**engagement-culture-arts-heritage-sport-by-adults-in-northern-ireland-202223.xlsx (live.com)**](https://view.officeapps.live.com/op/view.aspx?src=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.communities-ni.gov.uk%2Fsystem%2Ffiles%2Fpublications%2Fcommunities%2Fengagement-culture-arts-heritage-sport-by-adults-in-northern-ireland-202223.xlsx&wdOrigin=BROWSELINK) **present information on participation levels relating to sporting participation within the previous year for Dependants. It reports that of those participating, 50 % have dependants and 46% do not have dependants.**

**In 2023/24 the CHS (**[**https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/publications/experience-sport-by-adults-northern-ireland-202324**](https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/publications/experience-sport-by-adults-northern-ireland-202324)**) notes 54% have dependants and 49% do not have dependants.**

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**Part 2. Screening questions**

**Introduction**

In making a decision as to whether or not there is a need to carry out an equality impact assessment, the public authority should consider its answers to the questions 1-4 which are given on pages 66-68 of this Guide.

If the public authority’s conclusion is **none** in respect of all of the Section 75 equality of opportunity and/or good relations categories, then the public authority may decide to screen the policy out. If a policy is ‘screened out’ as having no relevance to equality of opportunity or good relations, a public authority should give details of the reasons for the decision taken.

If the public authority’s 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.

If the public authority’s 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:

* measures to mitigate the adverse impact; or
* the introduction of an alternative policy to better promote equality of opportunity and/or good relations.

**In favour of a ‘major’ impact**

1. The policy is significant in terms of its strategic importance;
2. 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 to better assess them;
3. 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;
4. 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;
5. The policy is likely to be challenged by way of judicial review;
6. The policy is significant in terms of expenditure.

**In favour of ‘minor’ impact**

1. The policy is not unlawfully discriminatory and any residual potential impacts on people are judged to be negligible;
2. 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;
3. 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;
4. By amending the policy there are better opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity and/or good relations.

**In favour of none**

1. The policy has no relevance to equality of opportunity or good relations.
2. 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. ￼

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**

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**: (insert text here)

What is the level of impact? Minor / Major / None (circle as appropriate)

We do not expect there to be any adverse impact on people of different religious belief. Any impacts of this investment should be positive.

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Political Opinion**: (insert text here)

What is the level of impact? Minor / Major / None (circle as appropriate)

We do not expect there to be any adverse impact on people of different political opinion. Any impacts of this policy should be positive.

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Racial Group**: (insert text here)

What is the level of impact? Minor / Major / None (circle as appropriate)

We do not expect there to be any adverse impact on people of different racial group. Any impacts of this policy should be positive.

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Age**: (insert text here)

What is the level of impact? Minor / Major / None (circle as appropriate)

We do not expect there to be any adverse impact on people of different age. Any impacts of this policy should be positive

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Marital Status**: (insert text here)

What is the level of impact? Minor / Major / None (circle as appropriate)

We do not expect there to be any adverse impact on people of different marital status. Any impacts of this policy should be positive

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

What is the level of impact? Minor / Major / None (circle as appropriate)

We do not expect there to be any adverse impact on people of different sexual orientation. Any impacts of this policy should be positive

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Men and Women**: (insert text here)

What is the level of impact? Minor / Major / None (circle as appropriate)

We do not expect there to be any adverse impact on people of different gender. Any impacts of this policy should be positive.

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Disability**: (insert text here)

What is the level of impact? Minor / Major / None (circle as appropriate)

We do not expect there to be any adverse impact on people with a disability. Any impacts of this policy should be positive.

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

What is the level of impact? Minor / Major / None (circle as appropriate)

**This investment will primarily benefit people with a learning disability, dependants could also benefit from this investment through volunteering opportunities and also some respite from the care that is needed in some of the more extreme cases of intellectual disability.**

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

**Detail opportunities of how this policy could promote equality of opportunity for people are outlined within each of the Section 75 Categories below and incorporated in the project**

**Religious Belief -** If Yes, provide details:

**The investment into Special Olympics Ireland aims to deliver sporting activities to people with learning disabilities across Northern Ireland, with a particular focus on participation in sport, improved physical and mental health, improved education, supporting volunteers and raising awareness of social inclusion. The investment will contribute towards Sport NI’s two strategic outcomes (1) people adopting and sustaining participation in sport and physical activity and (2) our athletes amongst the best in the world, This will embed the four cornerstones committing to equality and inclusion.**

**Special Olympics Ulster will deliver a wide range of sporting activities which are representative of all religious groups for example, programming will include a variety of sports that draw participation form all sections of the community.**

**Political Opinion -** If Yes, provide details:

**The investment into Special Olympics Ireland aims to deliver sporting activities to people with learning disabilities across Northern Ireland, with a particular focus on participation in sport, improved physical and mental health, improved education, supporting volunteers and raising awareness of social inclusion. The investment will contribute towards Sport NI’s two strategic outcomes (1) people adopting and sustaining participation in sport and physical activity and (2) our athletes amongst the best in the world. This will embed the four cornerstones committing to equality and inclusion.**

**Special Olympics Ulster will deliver a wide range of sporting activities which will attract all irrespective of political opinion for example, programming will include a variety of sports that draw participation form all sections of the community e.g. Football, Athletics, Golf and basketball.**

**Racial Group -** If Yes, provide details:

**The investment into Special Olympics Ireland aims to deliver sporting activities to people with learning disabilities across Northern Ireland, with a particular focus on participation in sport, improved physical and mental health, improved education, supporting volunteers and raising awareness of social inclusion. The investment will contribute towards Sport NI’s two strategic outcomes (1) people adopting and sustaining participation in sport and physical activity and (2) our athletes amongst the best in the world, This will embed the four cornerstones committing to equality and inclusion.**

**Special Olympics Ulster will deliver a wide range of sporting activities which will attract people with learning disabilities from culturally diverse backgrounds.**

**Age -** If Yes, provide details:

**The investment into Special Olympics Ireland aims to deliver sporting activities to people with learning disabilities across Northern Ireland, with a particular focus on participation in sport, improved physical and mental health, improved education, supporting volunteers and raising awareness of social inclusion. The investment will contribute towards Sport NI’s two strategic outcomes (1) people adopting and sustaining participation in sport and physical activity and (2) our athletes amongst the best in the world, This will embed the four cornerstones committing to equality and inclusion.**

**Special Olympics Ulster programming is inclusive when it comes to age, people of all ages participate in all the sports delivered and they will focus on delivering young athletes clubs for the youngest in our society e.g. 4 years up to 13 years.**

**Marital Status -** If Yes, provide details:

**The investment into Special Olympics Ireland aims to deliver sporting activities to people with learning disabilities across Northern Ireland, with a particular focus on participation in sport, improved physical and mental health, improved education, supporting volunteers and raising awareness of social inclusion. The investment will contribute towards Sport NI’s two strategic outcomes (1) people adopting and sustaining participation in sport and physical activity and (2) our athletes amongst the best in the world. This will embed the four cornerstones committing to equality and inclusion.**

**Special Olympics Ulster will deliver a wide range of sporting activities which will attract all irrespective of marital status programming will include a variety of sports that draw participation form all sections of the community.**

**Sexual Orientation -** If Yes, provide details:

**The investment into Special Olympics Ireland aims to deliver sporting activities to people with learning disabilities across Northern Ireland, with a particular focus on participation in sport, improved physical and mental health, improved education, supporting volunteers and raising awareness of social inclusion. The investment will contribute towards Sport NI’s two strategic outcomes (1) people adopting and sustaining participation in sport and physical activity and (2) our athletes amongst the best in the world, This will embed the four cornerstones committing to equality and inclusion.**

**Special Olympics Ulster will deliver a wide range of sporting activities which will attract all including LBGTQIA+ communities.**

**Men and Women generally -** If Yes, provide details:

**The investment into Special Olympics Ireland aims to deliver sporting activities to people with learning disabilities across Northern Ireland, with a particular focus on participation in sport, improved physical and mental health, improved education, supporting volunteers and raising awareness of social inclusion. The investment will contribute towards Sport NI’s two strategic outcomes (1) people adopting and sustaining participation in sport and physical activity and (2) our athletes amongst the best in the world, This will embed the four cornerstones committing to equality and inclusion.**

**Special Olympics Ulster will deliver a wide range of sporting activities which cater for both men and woman. programming will include a variety of sports that engage both men and women, boys and girls.**

**Disability -** If Yes, provide details:

If No, provide reasons:

**The investment into Special Olympics Ireland aims to deliver sporting activities to people with learning disabilities across Northern Ireland, with a particular focus on participation in sport, improved physical and mental health, improved education, supporting volunteers and raising awareness of social inclusion. The investment will contribute towards Sport NI’s two strategic outcomes (1) people adopting and sustaining participation in sport and physical activity and (2) our athletes amongst the best in the world, This will embed the four cornerstones committing to equality and inclusion.**

**The investment will pro-actively target people with a disability thus creating opportunities in a safe and friendly environment for the most marginalised in our society. All sports are adaptable, so disabled people feel welcome and confident to participate in.**

**Dependants -** If Yes, provide details:

If No, provide reasons:

**The investment into Special Olympics Ireland aims to deliver sporting activities to people with learning disabilities across Northern Ireland, with a particular focus on participation in sport, improved physical and mental health, improved education, supporting volunteers and raising awareness of social inclusion. The investment will contribute towards Sport NI’s two strategic outcomes (1) people adopting and sustaining participation in sport and physical activity and (2) our athletes amongst the best in the world, This will embed the four cornerstones committing to equality and inclusion.**

**Dependants will benefit from this investment through volunteering and supporting opportunities to create a positive link to physical activity for all.**

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

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

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Religious belief**: (insert text here)

What is the level of impact? Minor / Major / None (circle as appropriate)

This investment into Special Olympics Ireland will benefit people with a learning disability who are members of Special Olympic clubs, from all religious belief categories. All special Olympic clubs are inclusive and do not discriminate on religious grounds. The clubs will have members from all sections of the community representing different religions. The community feel within clubs will result in positive relations between people of different religions.

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Political Opinion**: (insert text here)

What is the level of impact? Minor / Major / None (circle as appropriate)

This investment into Special Olympics Ireland will benefit people with a learning disability who are members of special Olympic clubs irrespective of political opinion. All special Olympic clubs are inclusive and do not discriminate on political belief. The clubs will have members from all sections of the community with different political opinions The community feel within clubs will result in positive relations between people of different political opinions.

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Racial Group**: (insert text here)

What is the level of impact? Minor / Major / None (circle as appropriate)

This investment into Special Olympics Ireland will benefit people with a learning disability who are members of special Olympic clubs irrespective of racial background. All special Olympic clubs are inclusive and do not discriminate on race. The clubs will have members from all sections of the community from different racial groups. The community feel within clubs will result in positive relations between people of different race.

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

Detail opportunities of how this policy could better promote good relations for people within each of the Section 75 Categories below:

**Religious Belief -**

If No, provide reasons:

There is no negative impact of this investment on good relations for people of different religious belief. The project is inclusive and encourages good relations through inclusive programming and welcoming clubs open for all irrespective of religious belief.

**Political Opinion -**

If No, provide reasons

There is no negative impact of this investment on good relations for people of different political opinion. The project is inclusive and encourages good relations through inclusive programming and welcoming clubs open for all irrespective of political opinion.

**Racial Group -**

If No, provide reasons

There is no negative impact of this investment on good relations for people of different race. The project is inclusive and encourages good relations through inclusive programming and welcoming clubs open for all irrespective of race.

**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).*

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

**The investment will have a positive impact on each individual category and by extension, those with multiple identities, as considered in this screening exercise.**

**The investment seeks to create sport opportunities that are accessible to all and where performance and excellence are nurtured and enabled for everyone. It will seek to provide opportunities for people of all ages and abilities.**

**This project is targeted at all sections of the community therefore, there may be positive impacts on individuals within the community with multiple identities. For example, the investment will benefit older female disabled persons and disabled people from culturally diverse groups.**

**Part 3. Screening decision**

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

**This investment does not negatively impact any of the S75 groups, its purpose is solely to provide opportunities for people with a learning disability including any intersectionality with S75 groups. All S75 groups will have the opportunity to benefit from this project. With this in mind it has been decided that an EQIA is not required.**

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.

**N/A**

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

**N/A**

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.

**N/A**

**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 |  |
| Social need |  |
| Effect on people’s daily lives |  |
| Relevance to a public authority’s functions |  |

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?

If yes, please provide details.

**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.

**Although no potential/actual adverse impacts have been identified, there will be annual monitoring of the performance of this investment which will be mindful of equality impacts.**

**The monitoring framework for this investment will be reviewed and updated for future investments as some information pertaining to S75 groups are not being collected by Special Olympics Ireland**

**Sport NI will provide information to enable the analysis of the direct and indirect impact of the project.**

**Sport NI will monitor, evaluate and review on a regular basis to ensure that progress is made. Where there is found to be adverse impact, or if opportunities arose which would allow for greater equality of opportunity to be promoted, we will ensure that the investment is reviewed to determine whether or not better outcomes for relevant equality groups can be achieved.**

**Part 5 - Approval and authorisation**

Screened by: Patrick O Toole/Robbie Geary

Position/Job Title: Sports Developer/Sports Development Manager

Date: 28/02/25

Approved by: Alan Curran

Position/Job Title: Interim Head of Sport Systems (G7)

Date: 04/03/25

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.