



Department of  
**Agriculture, Environment  
and Rural Affairs**

[www.daera-ni.gov.uk](http://www.daera-ni.gov.uk)

# **Equality & Disability Duties Screening**

## **Ruminant Genetics Programme**

**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.

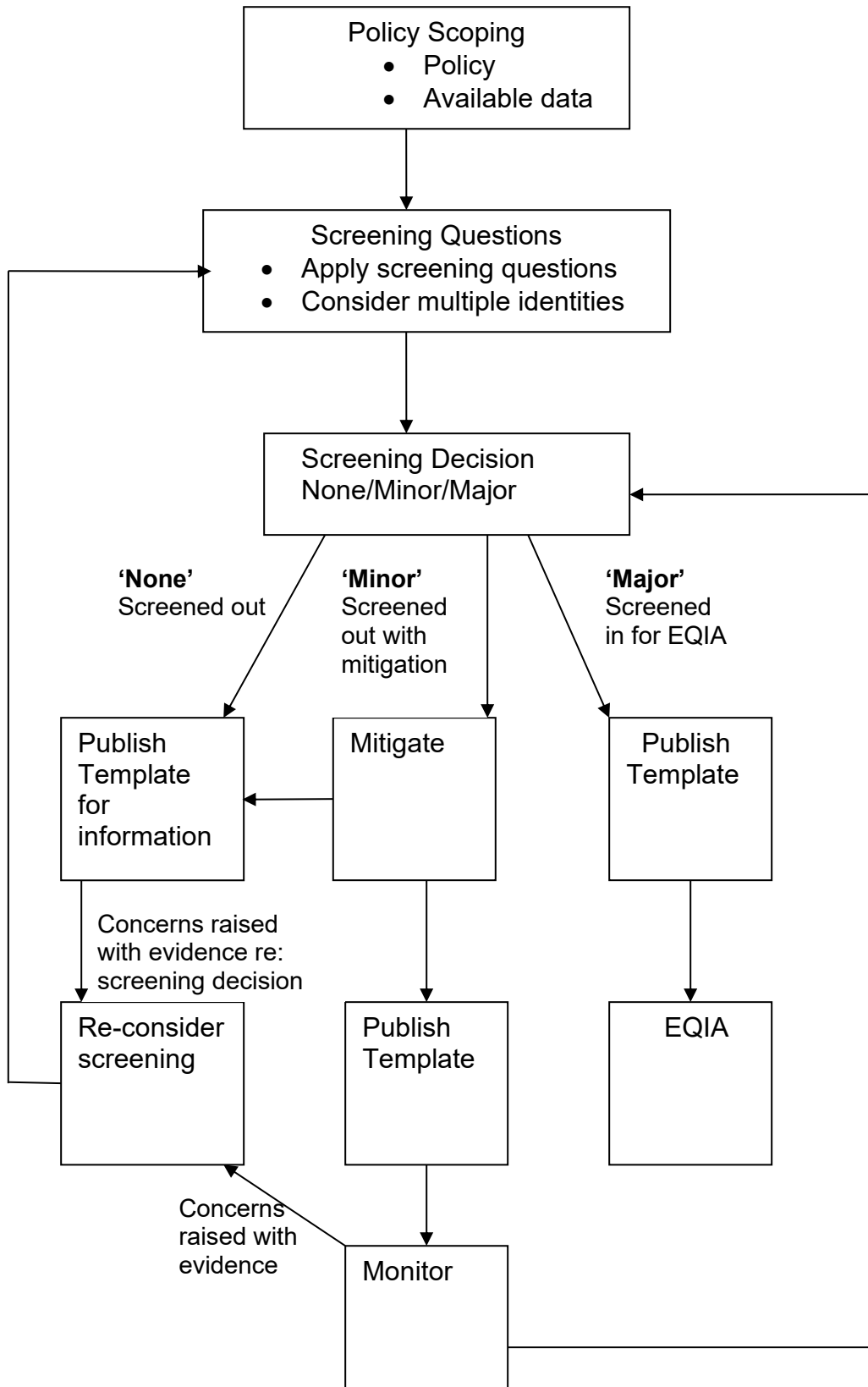
**Part 2. Screening questions** – asks about the extent of the likely impact of the policy on groups of people within each of the Section 75 categories. Details of the groups consulted and the level of assessment of the likely impact. This includes consideration of multiple identity and good relations 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 to introduce measures to mitigate the likely impact, or the introduction of an alternative policy to better promote equality of opportunity and/or good relations.

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

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

A screening flowchart is provided overleaf.



## **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**

Ruminant Genetics Programme.

#### **Is this an existing, revised or a new policy?**

The Ruminant Genetics Programme is a workstream within the Agricultural Policy Programme which is new agricultural policy being implemented by DAERA.

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

The Ruminant Genetics Programme is essential for DAERA and the wider NI agri-food industry. It will deliver wider public good benefits, such as contributing to the achievement of the targets to reduce Greenhouse Gas emissions, as detailed in the Climate Change Act (Northern Ireland) 2022, as well as providing farmers with the data and evidence necessary to breed healthier and more efficient animals. Through the establishment of an integrated data platform, the Ruminant Genetics Programme will collect and collate the necessary performance data, from various sources, and produce genetic evaluations, for the beef and dairy subsectors, from which producers can make informed breeding decisions to improve the genetic merit of their livestock. It will also provide physical benchmarking reports, at both individual animal and enterprise level, which will enable herd owners to assess their performance on key metrics, and how this compares to the performance of others. This will allow them to identify strengths and weaknesses and make better-informed herd management decisions which, in turn, will result in productivity improvements. This programme will be a fundamental management tool to help drive desired improvements in productivity and better environmental performance. For example, the outputs from this

programme will be essential tools to breed cattle with improved fertility and reduced age at slaughter, which will reduce the length of time that animals spend on-farm in an unproductive state, which in turn reduces emissions and carbon footprint. Also, given that enteric methane emissions are subject to genetic variations (of up to 20%), this important programme will provide a platform to breed directly for reduced enteric methane emissions. The outcome targets, by the end of Year 6 of Programme implementation, are summarised as follows:

#### Dairy-beef Genetic Gain

Target for increase in rate of genetic gain in dairy-beef = +£1.17/dairy cow mated to a beef sire/year.

#### Beef Genetic Gain

Target for increase in rate of genetic gain for beef herds = +£7.90/beef cow/year.

#### Bovine Tuberculosis (bTB) Benefits (i.e. from disease avoidance)

Estimated total value of bTB benefits = £0.6m/year.

#### Dairy and Beef Benchmarking (BM) Benefits

Dairy: Estimated total value of BM benefits = £7.4m/year.

Beef: Estimated total value of BM benefits = £1.1m/year.

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

**If so, explain how.**

The Future Agricultural Policy Decisions<sup>1</sup>, including the decision for DAERA to invest in the Ruminant Genetics Programme, have the potential to impact positively all people in Northern Ireland and potentially deliver benefit to all Section 75 categories generally as it seeks to contribute to a sustainable agricultural industry through the operation of voluntary schemes. Section 75 issues will be kept under review throughout the various stages of implementation of the Ruminant Genetics Programme.

#### **Who initiated or wrote the policy?**

The decision for DAERA to invest in the Ruminant Genetics Programme was part of the Future Agricultural Policy Decisions for Northern Ireland, which were announced by the DAERA Minister on 24 March 2022.

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<sup>1</sup> [Future Agricultural Policy Decisions for Northern Ireland Final pdf \(www.daera-ni.gov.uk\)](http://www.daera-ni.gov.uk)

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

DAERA will own and implement the Ruminant Genetics Programme through the Agricultural Policy Programme.

## **Implementation factors**

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

**If yes, are they (please delete as appropriate)**

**Financial** – It is currently proposed that the Green Growth budget will be the funding source for the capital expenditure which will be required during the first 5 years of Programme implementation. It is not yet known if the provision of funding for the Programme from the Green Growth budget will require notification and approval under EU State Aid mechanisms.

**Legislative** – The Ruminant Genetics Programme is cognisant of the requirements to meet the targets set out in the Climate Change Act (Northern Ireland) 2022<sup>2</sup>.

**Resourcing** – Ability to develop and implement all schemes within the Agricultural Policy Programme, including the Ruminant Genetics Programme, at same time.

**Communication and knowledge** – Delivery of timely, accurate and clear communication and knowledge to stakeholders and producers to encourage the required level of uptake and participation in the Programme to achieve the target outcomes.

## **Main stakeholders affected**

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

**Staff** – DAERA staff.

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<sup>2</sup> [Climate Change Act \(Northern Ireland\) 2022 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://legislation.gov.uk)

**Service users** – the main beneficiaries are cattle and sheep farmers.

**Rural community** - The programme will be developed to make a major contribution to the productivity and environmental sustainability of farm businesses in rural areas of Northern Ireland.

**Other, please specify** – There may also be an impact on food industry stakeholders.

## Other policies with a bearing on this policy

- what are they?

### **Farm Sustainability Payment**

The Farm Sustainability Payment is also a workstream within the Agricultural Policy Programme. It which will be area-based and available to all land-based agriculture and horticulture businesses which meet the eligibility conditions, will provide a basic safety net, but will be set at a level which does not blunt innovation or productivity. Initially, this measure will be the primary mechanism for direct support payments, as it follows on from the current direct support payment arrangements. However, over time, and in line with the capacity for delivery and uptake of new measures, which are being developed within the Agricultural Policy Programme, its budget will reduce to a much lower level as funding is released to the other measures. Claimants under the Farm Sustainability Payment will be required to provide data to support the Ruminant Genetics Programme, to drive performance and sustainability, and will incentivise producers to participate in the Ruminant Genetics Programme.

### **Beef Sustainability Package**

The Beef Sustainability Package is also a workstream within the Agricultural Policy Programme. It will support suckler cow producers and beef finishers to achieve better productivity, environmental performance and resilience. The Ruminant Genetics Programme will be interlinked with the Beef Sustainability Package, to accelerate the rate of improvement in the economic and environmental performance of the suckler herd, and to incentivise producers to participate in the Ruminant Genetics Programme.

## Green Growth Strategy for Northern Ireland

The Ruminant Genetics Programme will contribute to the objectives of the draft Green Growth Strategy for Northern Ireland<sup>3</sup>. Green Growth is an over-arching, multi-decade Strategy which sets out the long-term vision and a solid framework for tackling the climate crisis by balancing climate action with the need for a clean, resilient environment and economy. It has been developed by all Ministers and Government departments working together, in collaboration with external stakeholders from local government, the private sector, voluntary and community sectors and others. The cross-cutting strategy will be delivered through a series of Climate Action Plans, which will set out the actions to meet sector-specific greenhouse gas (GHG) emission targets to deliver a cleaner environment rich in biodiversity; delivering a more efficient use of resources within a circular economy; and green jobs.

### • who owns them?

DAERA is developing the Farm Sustainability Payment and Beef Sustainability Package.

DAERA is co-designing the Green Growth Strategy and Delivery Framework on behalf of the NI Executive.

### Available evidence

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

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

**Religious belief** evidence/information:

Consideration has been given to the Northern Ireland Life and Times Survey (2020)<sup>4</sup>, 2021 Census of Northern Ireland (phase 1)<sup>5</sup> and the DAERA Farm

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<sup>3</sup> <http://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/consultations/consultation-draft-green-growth-strategy-northern-ireland>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.ark.ac.uk/nilt/2020/>

<sup>5</sup> [Census 2021 main statistics for Northern Ireland \(phase 1\) | Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency \(nisra.gov.uk\)](https://www.nisra.gov.uk/census-2021-main-statistics-for-northern-ireland-phase-1)

Equality Indicators Report October 2018<sup>6</sup> ('Equality Indicators for Northern Ireland Farmers'). In the 2020 Life and Times Survey 41% of the respondents viewed themselves as part of the Protestant Community, 26% as Catholic and 33% as neither. 4% of respondents considered themselves as part of a minority ethnic community while 93 % did not. The 2021 Census indicated that religious beliefs across the NI community are 43.5% Protestant and 45.7% Catholic.

The DAERA Farm Equality Indicators Report October 2018 ('Equality Indicators for Northern Ireland Farmers') stated that 51% of farms in Northern Ireland were farmed by a member of the Protestant community and 42% by a member of the Catholic community. Catholics were more likely than Protestants to farm on very small farms, with 85% of Catholics farming small farms compared with 68% of Protestants, and only 2% having large farms compared with 10% of Protestant farmers. Catholic farmers were also more likely to be engaged in cattle and sheep farming in Less Favoured Areas, with over three quarters (77%) engaged in this type of farming activity compared with less than half (45%) of Protestant farmers. In contrast, a much higher proportion of Protestant (16%) than Catholic (5%) farmers were dairy farmers, and twice as many Protestant (25%) as Catholic (12%) farmers were lowland cattle and sheep farmers.

There was no specific reference to religious belief included in the future agricultural policy decisions however, further policy development in line with the decisions will be subject to public consultation where necessary and should any Section 75 issues be raised they will be considered.

### **Political Opinion** evidence/information:

The Northern Ireland life and Times Survey 2020 found that 19% of the NI population describe themselves as nationalist, 35% as unionist and 42% held neither political opinion.

The DAERA Farmer Equality Indicators Report 2018 suggested that national identity is a reasonable proxy indicator for the Unionist/Nationalist divide. 44% of farmers have reported their identity as British only, 26% as Irish only and 23% as Northern Irish only with 8% stating another identity or a combination of more than one identity.

Information on political opinion was not collected in the 2021 or 2011<sup>7</sup> Census of Northern Ireland. However, as a question on National Identity was included,

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<sup>6</sup> <https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/equality-indicators-report>

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.nisra.gov.uk/statistics/census/2011-census>

responses for 2011 were analysed against farm size, type and land characteristics as a proxy metric for political opinion. Overall, 44% of farmers reported their identity as British only, 26% as Irish only and 23% as Northern Irish only, with 8% stating another identity or a combination of more than one identity. However, the religious profile varied across farm characteristics, with the proportions stating a British only identity increasing with farm size, from 40% of those in very small farms to 65% of those in large farms.

A higher proportion of those stating an Irish only or Northern Irish only identity farmed on very small farms (85% and 81% respectively) than those stating a British only identity (69%). In contrast, the proportion of those stating a British only identity farming on large farms (9%) was more than double that of those who stated Irish only (2%) or Northern Irish only (4%) identities. High proportions of dairy farmers (62%) and those engaged in mixed farming (63%) stated a British only identity. More than three quarters of those describing their identity as Irish only (77%) and two-thirds of those with a Northern Irish only (68%) identity were engaged in cattle and sheep farming in Less Favoured Areas, compared to less than half (48%) of farmers of British only identity.

In contrast, those stating a British only identity were much more likely to be engaged in farming cattle and sheep in lowland areas, dairy farming, or other types of farming activity, than those stating an Irish only or Northern Irish only identity. Farmers with an Irish only identity were almost twice as likely to farm in Severely Disadvantaged Areas (55%) than farmers with a British only identity (28%). The proportion of those with a Northern Irish identity farming in Severely Disadvantaged Areas was also very high at 48%. On the other hand, the proportion of those describing themselves as British only who farmed in lowland areas (39%) was more than twice that of those with an Irish only identity (15%) and much higher than those with a Northern Irish only identity (24%).

There was no specific reference to political opinion included in the future agricultural policy decisions, however further policy development in line with the decisions, will be subject to public consultation where necessary and should any Section 75 issues be raised they will be considered.

### **Racial Group** evidence/information:

The 2021 Census of Northern Ireland indicated that 96.6% of the population are white (further geographical breakdown scheduled for Summer 2023 that will allow analysis of rural profile). The 2011 Census indicated that 99% of the rural population are white and the farming population has a similar pattern. DAERA's

Equality Indicators Report (2018) stated the proportion of farmers stating an ethnicity other than white was too small to examine differences by farm characteristics. This would support the view that the future agricultural policy decisions for Northern Ireland are likely to affect largely white beneficiaries as this reflects the makeup of the population.

NI: IN PROFILE Key statistics on Northern Ireland (nisra.gov.uk) 2021<sup>8</sup> figures indicate there are around 53,000 people living here in 2019 who were born in the rest of the EU (excluding UK and Ireland). A small number of migrant workers are employed within the farming industry.

There is no specific reference to racial groups included in the future agricultural policy decisions, however further policy development in line with the decisions, will be subject to public consultation where necessary and should any Section 75 issues be raised they will be considered.

#### **Age evidence/information:**

The 2021 Census of Northern Ireland reported 326,500 people 65 years and over, comprising 17% of the population.

The Annual Report of the Registrar General, RG Annual Report 2019.PDF (nisra.gov.uk)<sup>9</sup> states the NI population continues to age with the number of those aged 65 and over increasing by 2.1 per cent to reach 314,700 people (16.6 per cent of the population).

The DAERA Farm Equality Indicators Report 2018 showed that 36% of principal farmers are 65 years and over with 8% under forty years of age, with the average age being 59 years.

There was no specific reference to age included in the future agricultural policy decisions, however further policy development in line with the decisions on the Generational Renewal measure, will be cognisant of Section 75 issues in relation to age.

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<sup>8</sup> [https://www.nisra.gov.uk/sites/nisra.gov.uk/files/publications/NI%20IN%20PROFILE%20-%203%20March%202021\\_0.pdf](https://www.nisra.gov.uk/sites/nisra.gov.uk/files/publications/NI%20IN%20PROFILE%20-%203%20March%202021_0.pdf)

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.nisra.gov.uk/publications/registrar-general-annual-reports-2011-2019>

### **Marital Status** evidence/information:

The 2021 Census for Northern Ireland reported that around 46% of the population were married or in a civil partnership, and 38% were single.

The DAERA Farm Equality Indicators Report 2018 showed that around 73% of all farmers are married and living with a wife/husband.

There is no specific reference to marital status included in the future agricultural policy decisions, however further policy development in line with the decisions, will be subject to public consultation where necessary and should any Section 75 issues be raised in relation to marital status they will be considered.

### **Sexual Orientation** evidence/information:

The 2021 Census for Northern Ireland reported that around 2% of the population identify as being gay, lesbian or bisexual and around 8% of the population either preferred not to say or did not state their sexual orientation.

There are also a number of new and emerging inequalities, for which evidence is limited but would include issues such as, inequalities experienced by transgender people. As further evidence becomes available DAERA will consider the relevance for future agricultural policy development.

There is no specific reference to sexual orientation included in the future agricultural policy decisions, however further policy development in line with the decisions, will be subject to public consultation where necessary and should any Section 75 issues be raised in relation to sexual orientation they will be considered.

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

Consideration has been given to the Northern Ireland Life, and Times Survey (2020) the 2021 Census for Northern Ireland and the DAERA Farm Equality Indicators 2018 data. The 2021 Census showed that 51% of the population were female and 49% male.

The estimated employment rate in NI for those aged 16-64 in 2020 was 74.8% for males (432,000) and 66.5% for females (392,000). The estimated economic inactivity rate (16-64) was 22.8% for males (132,000) and 31.6% for females (186,000). The number of self-employed (aged 16+) in Northern Ireland was estimated at 134,000 in 2019, equivalent to just over 15% of all employed people aged 16+. Self-employment was more likely among employed men than women,

22% of all employed men were self-employed, compared with 8% of all employed women.

The DAERA Farm Equality Indicators 2018 data showed that 91% of farmers in Northern Ireland are males. Female farmers were more likely than their male counterparts to farm on very small farms (87% of women farmers had small farms compared to 75% of male farmers). Farmers engaged in 'other types' of farming (such as running specialist horse farms) were twice as likely to be women as were farmers engaged in other activity types.

There is no specific reference to males or females generally, included in the future agricultural policy decisions, however further policy development in line with the decisions, will be subject to public consultation where necessary and should any Section 75 issues be raised in relation to men and women generally they will be considered.

#### **Disability** evidence/information:

The 2021 Census for Northern Ireland reported that around 11% of the population found their day-to-day activities to be limited a lot due to a disability and around 13% found their activities limited a little. The DAERA Farmer Equality Indicators 2018 data indicated that almost a third of farmers (30%) suffered from a disability limiting their day-to-day activities, with the incidence of disability inversely related to farm size. The proportion of farmers of very small farms stating that their activities were limited a lot (16%) was twice that of farmers of large farms (8%). Farmers in disadvantaged areas (16%) were slightly more likely than lowland farmers (12%) to state that their activities were limited. Some of the differences in farm characteristics by disability may be partly due to the variation in age profiles of those with and without disabilities. The incidence of those reporting that their activities were limited either a little or a lot rises steeply with age.

NI: IN PROFILE Key statistics on Northern Ireland (nisra.gov.uk) 2021 reports that one in five people have a disability or limiting long-term illness. With 12% of people claim Disability Living Allowance/Personal Independence Payment.

The Disability Strategy Expert Advisory Panel (communities-ni.gov.uk) report, published in December 2020<sup>10</sup>, developed by the Disability Strategy Expert Advisory Panel appointed by the Department for Communities make evidence-based recommendations on the scope of a new Disability Strategy. This report helps us to understand the experience of, and issues faced by disabled people

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<sup>10</sup> <https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/system/files/publications/communities/dfc-social-inclusion-strategy-disability-expert-advisory-panel-report.pdf>

appropriate including participation and leadership, economic security and autonomy of persons with disabilities. It provides valuable insights which will be used in the development of policies and strategies such as Green Growth.

The new NI Disability Strategy, scheduled to be published as part of a suite of 4 Social Inclusion Strategies (Anti-Poverty Strategy, Disability Strategy, Gender Strategy and Sexual Orientation Strategy), is being developed through co-design. The methods and learning from this development will be implemented to ensure the future agricultural policy proposals for Northern Ireland meet, as far as is reasonably possible, the present and future needs of persons with disabilities.

### **Dependants** evidence/information:

2018/19 Family Resources Survey, Northern Ireland<sup>11</sup> indicated that 33% of NI households have dependent children (Those aged 0-16 and person aged 16-19 who is unmarried and in full time non-advanced education).

The most recent data from the 2018 DAERA Farmer Equality Indicators report revealed that almost 40% of households supported by family farms included one or more dependants. Households of medium sized farms were slightly more likely than smaller or larger farms to contain dependants, as were the households of farmers engaged in pig, poultry or mixed farming. Farm households in Disadvantaged Areas (41%) were slightly more likely than those in lowland areas (38%) to contain dependants.

NI: IN PROFILE Key statistics on Northern Ireland (nisra.gov.uk) 2021 reports that one in three households have a dependent child<sup>12</sup>. NISRA Women in Northern Ireland 2020 report indicates that over the past 10 years there have been consistently more economically inactive women than men. The most common reason for inactivity among women was family and home commitments. 76% of women with dependent children were economically active, compared with 92% of men with dependent children.

There was no specific reference to dependants included in the future agricultural policy decisions however, further policy development in line with the decisions will be subject to public consultation where necessary and should any Section 75 issues be raised in relation to dependants they will be considered.

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<sup>11</sup> <https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/system/files/publications/communities/frs-household-1819-tables.XLSX>

<sup>12</sup> [https://www.nisra.gov.uk/sites/nisra.gov.uk/files/publications/NI%20IN%20PROFILE%20-%20February%202020\\_0.pdf](https://www.nisra.gov.uk/sites/nisra.gov.uk/files/publications/NI%20IN%20PROFILE%20-%20February%202020_0.pdf)

## Needs, experiences and priorities

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

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

### ***Religious belief***

In response to 2018 stakeholder engagement on Northern Ireland Future Agricultural Policy Framework with stakeholders representing the wider farming, food and environmental sectors, the Department received 21 comments relating to (a) farmers needed to be viewed as equal partners in the food supply chain, (b) fairness was important, (c) horticulture needed to be included and (d) support should be proportionate to the environmental benefit produced. There was some concern raised about the potential for inclusion of a qualification requirement for grants. No specific responses indicated that the future agricultural policy framework would create any inequality in respect of religious belief.

During the pre-engagement stage for the consultation on Future Agricultural Policy Proposals for Northern Ireland, stakeholder input was sought on needs, experiences and priorities in relation to equality and no issues were raised in relation to religious belief.

The 2021 consultation on Future Agricultural Policy Proposals for Northern Ireland, received 43 responses in relation to equality issues. Six responses specifically indicated that the policy proposal to change the active farmer definition to 10ha threshold could create inequality in respect of religious belief. The future agricultural policy decisions, reached via consideration of the consultation responses, revised the active farmer definition to include a minimum of 5 ha, thereby addressing the concern raised.

The need for further evidence relating to potential impacts on the needs, experience and priorities in relation to religious belief issues will be reviewed as the Ruminant Genetics Programme is further developed, in line with the policy decisions, and evolves towards implementation.

## ***Political Opinion***

In response to the 2018 stakeholder engagement on the Northern Ireland Future Agricultural Policy Framework from stakeholders representing the wider farming, food and environmental sectors the Department received one comment in relation to political opinion that indicated that future agricultural policy should ensure that it does not disproportionately discriminate against one community over the other (nationalist and unionist).

During the pre-engagement stage for the consultation on Future Agricultural Policy Proposals for Northern Ireland, stakeholder input was sought on needs, experiences and priorities in relation to equality and no issues were raised in relation to political opinion.

One political party requested a review of the equality screening process undertaken for the consultation on the Future Agricultural Policy Proposals for Northern Ireland, challenging the assessment that there would be no equality impact on equality groupings in relation to the proposal to change the definition of an active farmer. The subsequent future agricultural policy decisions negated the need for further assessment.

The need for further evidence relating to potential impacts on the needs, experience and priorities in relation to religious belief issues will be reviewed as the Ruminant Genetics Programme is further developed, in line with the policy decisions, and evolves towards implementation.

## ***Racial Group***

In response to the 2018 stakeholder engagement on Northern Ireland Future Agricultural Policy Framework from stakeholders representing the wider farming, food and environmental sectors, the Department did not receive any responses to indicate that the future agricultural policy framework would create any inequality in respect of racial group.

During both the pre-engagement and consultation stages of seeking views on the Future Agricultural Policy Proposals for Northern Ireland, stakeholder input was sought on needs, experiences and priorities in relation equality and no issues were raised in relation to racial group.

The need for further evidence relating to potential impacts on the needs, experience and priorities in relation to religious belief issues will be reviewed as

the Ruminant Genetics Programme is further developed, in line with the policy decisions, and evolves towards implementation.

## **Age**

In response to the 2018 stakeholder engagement on the Northern Ireland Future Agricultural Policy Framework from stakeholders representing the wider farming, food and environmental sectors the Department received a number of responses that included concerns about age discrimination if qualification requirements were introduced for grants and a request to support age proofing.

During the pre-engagement stage for the consultation on Future Agricultural Policy Proposals for Northern Ireland, stakeholder input was sought on needs, experiences and priorities in relation to equality and no issues were raised in relation to age.

The 2021 consultation on Future Agricultural Policy Proposals for Northern Ireland, received 5 responses in relation to equality issues associated with age. Three individuals and one farming focused organisation expressed concerns about encouraging younger college trained staff into the sector. One individual was concerned that the proposals inferred that older farmers needed to be replaced with younger people to facilitate positive change.

The future agricultural policy decisions on 'Knowledge and Innovation' and 'Generational Renewal' measures provide a direction of travel for policy development that will address the concerns raised.

The need for further evidence relating to potential impacts on the needs, experience and priorities in relation to religious belief issues will be reviewed as the Ruminant Genetics Programme is further developed, in line with the policy decisions, and evolves towards implementation.

## **Marital status**

In response to the 2018 stakeholder engagement on Northern Ireland Future Agricultural Policy Framework from stakeholders representing the wider farming, food and environmental sectors, the Department did not receive any responses to indicate that the future agricultural policy framework would create any inequality in respect of marital status.

During both the pre-engagement and the consultation stages of seeking views on the Future Agricultural Policy Proposals for Northern Ireland, stakeholder input was sought on needs, experiences and priorities in relation equality and no issues were raised in relation to marital status.

The need for further evidence relating to potential impacts on the needs, experience and priorities in relation to religious belief issues will be reviewed as the Ruminant Genetics Programme is further developed, in line with the policy decisions, and evolves towards implementation.

### ***Sexual orientation***

In response to the 2018 stakeholder engagement on Northern Ireland Future Agricultural Policy Framework from stakeholders representing the wider farming, food and environmental sectors, the Department did not receive any responses to indicate that the future agricultural policy framework would create any inequality in respect of sexual orientation.

During both the pre-engagement and the consultation stages of seeking views on the Future Agricultural Policy Proposals for Northern Ireland, stakeholder input was sought on needs, experiences and priorities in relation equality and no issues were raised in relation to sexual orientation category.

The need for further evidence relating to potential impacts on the needs, experience and priorities in relation to religious belief issues will be reviewed as the Ruminant Genetics Programme is further developed, in line with the policy decisions, and evolves towards implementation.

### ***Men and Women Generally***

In response to the 2018 stakeholder engagement on Northern Ireland Future Agricultural Policy Framework from stakeholders representing the wider farming, food and environmental sectors, the Department did not receive any responses to indicate that the future agricultural policy framework would create any inequality in respect of men and women generally.

During the pre-engagement stage for the consultation on Future Agricultural Policy Proposals for Northern Ireland, stakeholder input was sought on needs, experiences and priorities in relation equality and no issues were raised in relation to men and women generally.

The 2021 consultation on Future Agricultural Policy Proposals for Northern Ireland, received 5 responses that commented on encouraging females into the farming sector.

The future agricultural policy decisions are cognisant of the need to encourage females in farming and eliminate any perceived barriers to accessing the industry as a viable career path.

The need for further evidence relating to potential impacts on the needs, experience and priorities in relation to religious belief issues will be reviewed as the Ruminant Genetics Programme is further developed, in line with the policy decisions, and evolves towards implementation.

### ***Disability***

In response to the 2018 stakeholder engagement on Northern Ireland Future Agricultural Policy Framework from stakeholders representing the wider farming, food and environmental sectors, the Department did not receive any responses to indicate that the future agricultural policy framework would create any inequality in respect of disability.

During the pre-engagement stage for the consultation on Future Agricultural Policy Proposals for Northern Ireland, stakeholder input was sought on needs, experiences and priorities in relation equality and no issues were raised in relation to disability.

The 2021 consultation on Future Agricultural Policy Proposals for Northern Ireland, received 1 response that raised potential lack of access to schemes due to disability. This will be addressed through the Programme design principles for future agricultural policy.

The need for further evidence relating to potential impacts on the needs, experience and priorities in relation to religious belief issues will be reviewed as the Ruminant Genetics Programme is further developed, in line with the policy decisions, and evolves towards implementation.

### ***Dependants***

In response to the 2018 stakeholder engagement on Northern Ireland Future Agricultural Policy Framework from stakeholders representing the wider farming, food and environmental sectors, the Department did not receive any responses

to indicate that the future agricultural policy framework would create any inequality in respect of dependants.

During both the pre-engagement and consultation stages of seeking views on the Future Agricultural Policy Proposals for Northern Ireland, stakeholder input was sought on needs, experiences and priorities in relation equality and no issues were raised in relation to dependants.

The need for further evidence relating to potential impacts on the needs, experience and priorities in relation to religious belief issues will be reviewed as the Ruminant Genetics Programme is further developed, in line with the policy decisions, and evolves towards implementation.

## **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**

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

concerns amongst affected individuals and representative groups, for example in respect of multiple identities;

- e) The policy is likely to be challenged by way of judicial review;
- f) The policy is significant in terms of expenditure.

### **In favour of 'minor' impact**

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

### **In favour of none**

- a) The policy has no relevance to equality of opportunity or good relations.
- b) The policy is purely technical in nature and will have no bearing in terms of its likely impact on equality of opportunity or good relations for people within the equality and good relations categories.

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.

DAERA has reviewed any section 75 issues raised during the Future Agricultural Policy Proposals for Northern Ireland consultation and considered these in reaching the future agricultural policy decisions. Consideration of Section 75 issues will continue as the Ruminant Genetics Programme is further developed, in line with the policy decisions, and evolves towards implementation.

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

The future agricultural policy decisions for Northern Ireland are considered to have no differential impact on the Religious Belief category.

Further policy development in line with the decisions, will be subject to public consultation where necessary and should there be any Section 75 issues raised in relation to 'Religious Belief' they will be considered.

#### **What is the level of impact?**

None

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

Equality Commission monitoring guidelines for public authorities suggest that community background/religion is a reasonable proxy indicator for the unionist/nationalist divide. Applying this principle to the likely impact of the future agricultural policy decisions for Northern Ireland suggests that, as detailed under Religious Belief, there should not be a differential impact on those of differing political opinion. Further policy development in line with the decisions, will be subject to public consultation where necessary and should there be any Section 75 issues raised in relation to 'Political Opinion' they will be considered.

#### **What is the level of impact?**

None

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

The future agricultural policy decisions for Northern Ireland are considered to have no differential impact on Racial Group. Category should not be affected however further policy development in line with the decisions, will be subject to public consultation where necessary and should there be any Section 75 issues raised in relation to 'Racial Group' they will be considered.

**What is the level of impact?**

None

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

The Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs report (October 2018), 'Equality Indicators for Northern Ireland Farmers' states that the average age of farmers in Northern Ireland was 59 years.

The future agricultural policy decisions for Northern Ireland are considered to have no differential impact on the 'Age' category. Category should not be affected however further policy development in line with the decisions, will be subject to public consultation where necessary and should there be any Section 75 issues raised in relation to 'Age' they will be considered.

**What is the level of impact?**

None

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

The future agricultural policy decisions for Northern Ireland are considered to have no differential impact on the 'Marital Status' category. Category should not be affected however further policy development in line with the decisions, will be subject to public consultation where necessary and should there be any Section 75 issues raised in relation to 'Marital Status' they will be considered.

**What is the level of impact?**

None

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

The future agricultural policy decisions for Northern Ireland are considered to have no differential impact on the ‘Sexual Orientation’ category. Category should not be affected however further policy development in line with the decisions, will be subject to public consultation where necessary and should there be any Section 75 issues raised in relation to ‘Sexual Orientation’ they will be considered.

**What is the level of impact?**

None

**Details of the likely policy impacts on *Men and Women*:**

The future agricultural policy decisions for Northern Ireland are considered to have no differential impact based on gender. Further policy development in line with the decisions, will be subject to public consultation where necessary and should there be any Section 75 issues raised in relation to ‘Men and Women’ they will be considered.

**What is the level of impact?**

None

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

The future agricultural policy decisions for Northern Ireland are considered to have no differential impact on the ‘Disability’ category. Further policy development in line with the decisions, will be subject to public consultation where necessary and should there be any Section 75 issues raised in relation to ‘Disability’ they will be considered.

**What is the level of impact?**

None

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

The future agricultural policy decisions for Northern Ireland are considered to have no differential impact on the ‘Dependants’ category. Further policy development in line with the decisions, will be subject to public consultation

where necessary and should there be any Section 75 issues raised in relation to 'Dependants' they will be considered.

**What is the level of impact?**

None

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

No

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

DAERA actively seeks opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity. It is unlikely that there will be any facility with the Ruminant Genetics Programme to better promote equality of opportunity for those affected by the programme. However the further development of the Ruminant Genetics Programme, in line with the policy decisions, will take cognisance of any inequality issues identified and evidenced by stakeholders and where possible promote equality of opportunity.

***Religious Belief –***

**If No, provide reasons:**

DAERA actively seeks opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity. It is unlikely that there will be any facility with the Ruminant Genetics Programme to better promote equality of opportunity for those affected by the policies. However the further development of the Ruminant Genetics Programme, in line with the policy decisions, will take cognisance of any inequality issues identified and evidenced by stakeholders and where possible promote equality of opportunity.

***Political Opinion -***

**If No, provide reasons:**

DAERA actively seeks opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity. It is unlikely that there will be any facility with the Ruminant Genetics Programme to better promote equality of opportunity for those affected by the policies. However the further development of the Ruminant Genetics

Programme, in line with the policy decisions, will take cognisance of any inequality issues identified and evidenced by stakeholders and where possible promote equality of opportunity.

***Racial Group -***

**If No, provide reasons:**

DAERA actively seeks opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity. It is unlikely that there will be any facility with the Ruminant Genetics Programme to better promote equality of opportunity for those affected by the policies. However the further development of the Ruminant Genetics Programme, in line with the policy decisions, will take cognisance of any inequality issues identified and evidenced by stakeholders and where possible promote equality of opportunity.

***Age -***

**If No, provide reasons:**

DAERA actively seeks opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity. It is unlikely that there will be any facility with the Ruminant Genetics Programme to better promote equality of opportunity for those affected by the policies. However the further development of the Ruminant Genetics Programme, in line with the policy decisions, will take cognisance of any inequality issues identified and evidenced by stakeholders and where possible promote equality of opportunity.

***Marital Status -***

**If No, provide reasons:**

DAERA actively seeks opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity. It is unlikely that there will be any facility with the Ruminant Genetics Programme to better promote equality of opportunity for those affected by the policies. However the further development of the Ruminant Genetics Programme, in line with the policy decisions, will take cognisance of any inequality issues identified and evidenced by stakeholders and where possible promote equality of opportunity.

***Sexual Orientation -***

**If No, provide reasons:**

DAERA actively seeks opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity. It is unlikely that there will be any facility with the Ruminant Genetics Programme to better promote equality of opportunity for those affected by the policies. However the further development of the Ruminant Genetics Programme, in line with the policy decisions, will take cognisance of any inequality issues identified and evidenced by stakeholders and where possible promote equality of opportunity.

***Men and Women generally -***

**If No, provide reasons:**

DAERA actively seeks opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity. It is unlikely that there will be any facility with the Ruminant Genetics Programme to better promote equality of opportunity for those affected by the policies. However the further development of the Ruminant Genetics Programme, in line with the policy decisions, will take cognisance of any inequality issues identified and evidenced by stakeholders and where possible promote equality of opportunity.

***Disability -***

**If No, provide reasons:**

DAERA actively seeks opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity. It is unlikely that there will be any facility with the Ruminant Genetics Programme to better promote equality of opportunity for those affected by the policies. However the further development of the Ruminant Genetics Programme, in line with the policy decisions, will take cognisance of any inequality issues identified and evidenced by stakeholders and where possible promote equality of opportunity.

***Dependants -***

**If No, provide reasons:**

DAERA actively seeks opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity. It is unlikely that there will be any facility with the Ruminant Genetics Programme to better promote equality of opportunity for those affected by the policies. However the further development of the Ruminant Genetics

Programme, in line with the policy decisions, will take cognisance of any inequality issues identified and evidenced by stakeholders and where possible promote equality of opportunity.

**3. 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*:**

The Ruminant Genetics Programme is likely to have no impact on good relations between people of different religious belief. However, DAERA is proactive in improving good relations between people of different religious belief and will review any issues identified during the implementation of the programme.

**What is the level of impact?**

None.

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

The Ruminant Genetics Programme is likely to have no impact on good relations between people of different political opinion. However DAERA is proactive in improving good relations between people of different political opinion and will review any issues identified during the implementation of the programme.

**What is the level of impact?**

None.

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

The Ruminant Genetics Programme is likely to have no impact on good relations between people of different racial group. However DAERA is proactive in improving good relations between people of different racial group and will review any issues identified during the implementation of the programme.

**What is the level of impact?**

None.

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

No

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

**If No, provide reasons:**

***Religious Belief -***

**If No, provide reasons**

The Ruminant Genetics Programme is likely to have no impact on promoting good relations between people of different religious belief. However DAERA is proactive in improving good relations between people of different religious belief and will review any opportunities identified during the implementation of the programme.

***Political Opinion -***

**If No, provide reasons**

The Ruminant Genetics Programme is likely to have no impact on promoting good relations between people of political opinion. However DAERA is proactive in improving good relations between people of different political opinion and will review any opportunities identified during the implementation of the programme.

***Racial Group -***

**If No, provide reasons**

The Ruminant Genetics Programme is likely to have no impact on promoting good relations between people of different racial group. However DAERA is proactive in improving good relations between people of different racial group and will review any opportunities identified during the implementation of the programme.

## 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? If so, please detail below.**

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

It is envisaged that there will be a significant number of beneficiaries from the Ruminant Genetics Programme. At a farm population level, any differential effect on people who fall into more than one Section 75 category is likely to be negligible. DAERA will review any issues identified in relation to multiple identity during the implementation of the programme.

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

There are no potential impacts on people with multiple identities from the Ruminant Genetics Programme.

DAERA also has legislative obligations to meet under the [Disability Discrimination Order](#). Questions 5 – 6 relate to these.

## Consideration of Disability Duties

**5. Does this proposed policy or decision provide an opportunity for DAERA to better promote positive attitudes towards disabled people?**

No.

It is very unlikely that there will be any facility in the Ruminant Genetics Programme to promote positive attitudes towards people with disabilities but any opportunities identified during the implementation of the programme and any further public consultation will be welcomed.

**6. Does this proposed policy or decision provide an opportunity to actively increase the participation by disabled people in public life?**

No.

It is very unlikely that there will be any facility in the Ruminant Genetics Programme to increase the participation by disabled people in public life but any opportunities identified during the implementation of the programme and any further public consultation will be welcomed.

### Part 3. Screening decision

“Screened out without mitigation”

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

The effects at Northern Ireland level of the Ruminant Genetics Programme will not have an identifiable differential impact because of an individual’s religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status, sexual orientation, gender, disability or whether or not he/she has dependents.

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: [A Practical Guide to 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?**

Not applicable.

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

Not applicable.

## 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.

Not applicable.

**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	
<b>Total score</b>	

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?**

Not applicable.

**If yes, please provide details.**

## **Part 4. Monitoring**

**Section 75 places a requirement on DAERA to have equality monitoring arrangements in place in order to assess the impact of policies and services etc; and to help identify barriers to fair participation and to better promote equality of opportunity. Please note the following excerpt from The Equality Commission for Northern Ireland in relation to monitoring:**

*A system must be established to monitor the impact of the policy in order to find out its effect on relevant groups. The results of ongoing monitoring must be reviewed on an annual basis. The public authority is required to publish the results of this monitoring. And they must be included in the public authorities' annual review on progress to the Equality Commission. The Equality Scheme must specify how and where such monitoring information will be published. It is therefore essential that monitoring is carried out in a systematic manner and that the results are widely and openly published.*

*If the monitoring and analysis of results over a two year period show that the policy results in greater adverse impact than predicted, or if opportunities arise which would allow for greater equality of opportunity to be promoted, the public authority must ensure that the policy is revised to achieve better outcomes for the relevant equality groups.*

**Further advice on monitoring can be found at: [ECNI Monitoring Guidance for Public Authorities](#)**

**Outline what data you will collect in the future in order to monitor the impact of this policy or decision on equality, good relations and disability duties.**

### **Equality:**

Any future consultation needed as a result of implementing the Ruminant Genetics Programme will issue to a range of Section 75 groups. Comments from any and all of the Section 75 groups are welcome, especially if any group considers that it is significantly affected by the decisions.

### **Good Relations:**

Any future consultation needed as a result of implementing the Ruminant Genetics Programme will issue to a range Section 75 groups. Comments from

any of the Section 75 groups are welcome, especially if any group considers that it is significantly affected by the decisions.

### **Disability Duties:**

Any future consultation needed as a result of implementing Ruminant Genetics Programme will issue to a range Section 75 groups. Comments from any of the Section 75 groups are welcome, especially if any group considers that it is significantly affected by the decisions.

### **Part 5 - Approval and authorisation**

Screened by: Francis Breen  
Position/Job Title: Head of Livestock Genetics and Data Branch /  
Agricultural Inspector Grade I  
Date: 4 May 2023

Approved by: Martin McKendry  
Position/Job Title: Head of FFRAG  
Date: 10/12/24

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