

# Equality & Disability Duties Screening Template

December 2023 version



**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. This section also includes two questions related to the Disability Duties.

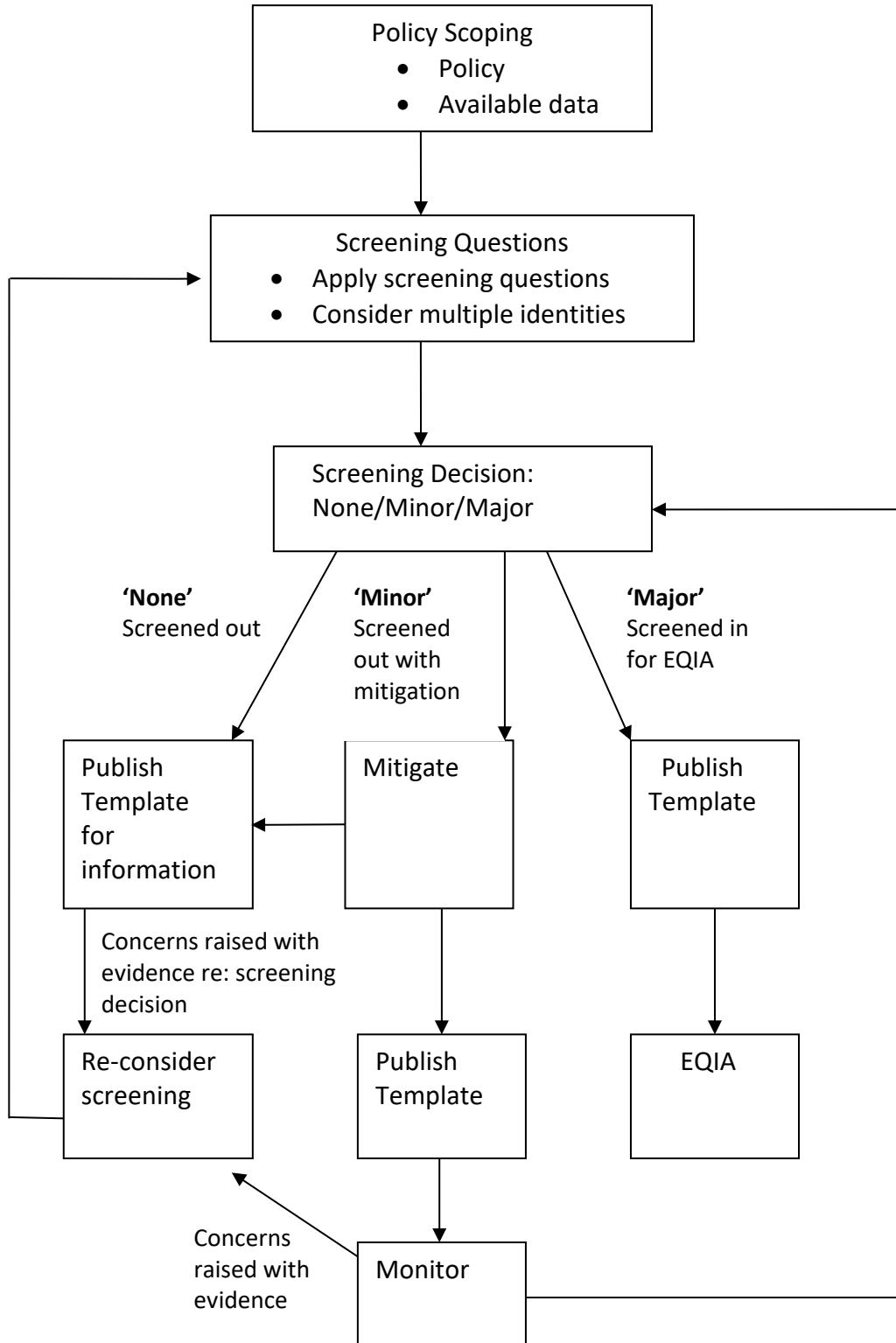
**Part 3. Screening decision** – guides the public authority to reach a screening decision as to whether or not there is a need to carry out an equality impact assessment (EQIA), or to introduce measures to mitigate the likely impact, or the introduction of an alternative policy to better promote equality of opportunity and/or good relations.

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

**Part 5. Consideration of Human Rights** – please note this is not a Human Rights Screening form but rather a prompt that impacts on Human Rights should be considered.

**Part 6. 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 below.



## 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 Hemp (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2026 (TBC)

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

This is a revised policy which took effect from 01 January 2023.

**Brief Decision of the Policy / decision being screened and**

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

Article 189 of Regulation (EU) No 1308/2013 lays out the rules for checks of imports of hemp and hemp seeds to ensure that they offer certain guarantees regarding their tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) content. Prior to January 2023, imports of hemp, including acceptable levels of THC content, into the European Union were set by Regulation (EU) No 1307/2013, establishing rules for direct payments to farmers under support schemes within the framework of the common agricultural policy. With regards to hemp, Regulation (EU) No 1307/2013 lays out that true hemp/hemp seeds must not have a THC content greater than 0.2%. Article 189 of 1308/2013 refers to 1307/2013 to set the maximum acceptable THC level that may be imported into the Union. Regulation (EU) No 1307/2013 was repealed and replaced by Regulation 2021/2115, which took effect from 01 January 2023. These new regulations raised the THC level of eligibility for direct payments from 0.2% to 0.3%.

In December 2023, the European Commission issued a notice clarifying that it followed that Regulation 2021/2115 meant that the maximum allowed THC levels for imports of raw true hemp and seeds of varieties of hemp for sowing also increased from 0.2% to 0.3% from 1 January 2023. The Direct Payment regulations (2021/2115) are not directly applicable in Northern Ireland. However, EU hemp imports regulations are directly applicable in Northern Ireland.

The UK's domestic regulations, The Hemp (Third Country Imports) Regulations 2002, stipulate that no person shall import true hemp or hemp seeds for sowing from a third country where the THC content is greater than

0.2%. As EU hemp imports regulations are directly applicable in Northern Ireland under Annex 2 of the Windsor Framework, the domestic legislation is out of date and will need to be updated on a NI basis.

The Hemp Third Country Import (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2026 (TBC) will be used to increase the maximum THC level for imports of hemp and hemp seeds from 0.2% to 0.3%, in line with EU Regulation 1308/2013, which is directly applicable in Northern Ireland under Annex 2 of the Windsor Framework. The amending regulations will also make technical amendments which will include updating legislative references, adding CN codes alongside product names, updating terminology (“attestation” to “documentation”) and revoking several articles that are duplicated in other pieces of EU regulation.

The relaxation to the maximum acceptable THC will allow for a greater selection of hemp and hemp seeds available, but it is not expected to make any significant impact on industry or how policy currently operates. The SR will maintain the status quo as far as possible. As such no major impact is envisaged as a result of the Amendment Regulations.

To note, UK government intend to implement similar changes to legislation in GB. The Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs (ACMD) published a report recommending raising the max THC level to 0.3% for the UK. The UK Government responded to the ACMD's report saying they intend to implement suggested changes. However, Defra have confirmed that UKG's amendment regulations will be made under the planned European Partnership Bill (tbc), which only have scope to extend to GB, but this amendment will prevent any divergence between NI and GB.

Also to note, it is our understanding that that since EU exit there haven't been any hemp products moved from Great Britain to Northern Ireland outside of the Northern Ireland Retail Movement Scheme (NIRMS). Forest Service are unaware of how much hemp has moved using NIRMS.

**Are there any Section 75 categories which might be expected to benefit from the intended policy?**     Yes     No (select as appropriate)

**If so, explain how.**

**Who initiated or wrote the policy?**

The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) made the Hemp (Third Country Imports) Regulations 2002 on a UK-wide basis to complement EU requirements relating to importing hemp from third countries.

Regulation (EU) 1308/2013 of the European Parliament and Council lays out the rules for hemp imports from third countries. The hemp import rules are directly applicable in NI under Annex 2 of the Windsor Framework, and as a result EU legislation remains directly applicable in Northern Ireland. The amendments to Northern Ireland domestic legislation are required as a result

of updates that were made by the EU that came into force on 01 January 2023.

The Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) has written the 2026 Amendment Regulations to raise the maximum acceptable THC level for hemp or hemp seeds imported from third countries from 0.2% to 0.3%. The amending regulations will also make technical amendments which update legislative references.

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

The Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs is responsible for updating the domestic regulations, the 2002 Hemp (Third Country Import) Regulations 2002 on behalf of Northern Ireland as under the terms of the Withdrawal Agreement the new EU rules will apply in Northern Ireland. The UK Government have confirmed plans to make similar changes. However, these will be made under powers from the planned European Partnership Bill (tbc), which only have scope over Great Britain.

**Implementation factors**

**Are there any factors which could contribute to/detract from the intended aim/outcome of the policy/decision?**  Yes  No (select as appropriate)

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

**Financial**

**Legislative**

**other, please specify:**

## Main stakeholders affected

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

Staff

Service users

Other public sector organisations

Voluntary/community/trade unions

Other, please specify

Other - The Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs has written the 2026 Amendment Regulations to raise the maximum acceptable THC content for hemp products from 0.2% to 0.3% and will make technical amendments which update legislative. The Amendment Regulations will ensure that the hemp industry will have access to the variety of hemp plant that they're entitled to in line with EU and GB regulations.

The changes made by new EU legislation are directly applicable to NI under Annex 2 of the Windsor Framework. However, they will make minimal changes to domestic regulations to allow for their implementation.

It should be noted that colleagues in Forest Service have confirmed that there have been no hemp movements into Northern Ireland from GB, the EU or third countries into Northern Ireland since EU exit, outside of the Northern Ireland Retail Movement Scheme (NIRMS).

## Other policies with a bearing on this policy

### What are they?

The EU Withdrawal Act stipulates that certain EU Regulations will apply to Northern Ireland, including part III of Regulations (EU) 1308/2013 on importing hemp products from a third country.

EU Direct payments regulations (formerly 1307/2013, now 2021/2115) is cited within 1308/2013 and sets the maximum acceptable THC level that may be imported into the Union, raising THC level of eligibility for direct payments and imports from third countries from 0.2% to 0.3%.

Domestic Direct Payment regulations (assimilated Regulation (EU) No 1307/2013) currently sets that the maximum THC content that can be eligible for direct payments is 0.2%.

### Who owns them?

The Withdrawal Act was agreed between UK Government and the EU. DAERA is responsible for ensuring that relevant domestic legislation is updated to allow for enforcement of relevant EU legislation, such as the update to hemp third country import rules.

EU direct payment regulations are not directly applicable within Northern Ireland. However, domestic Direct Payment regulations can be amended on an NI basis through powers from the Agriculture Act 2020 by DAERA. They

will be amended to allow for hemp farmers to be eligible for direct payment up to a maximum of 0.3% THC.

## 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.

*Please ensure all data used is the most current and up to date available. You should verify this by contacting the Departmental Statisticians.*

### Religious belief evidence/information:

No data is available on the religious beliefs of individuals or businesses involved in the importation of hemp. However, Census 2021 figures show the following breakdown of ‘religious belief or religion brought up in’ throughout the NI population:

- Catholic – 45%
- Protestant – 46%
- Other/None – 9%

The Department will carry out a consultation with targeted stakeholders using a policy document which will highlight key changes that will be implemented by the “Hemp Third Country Import (Amendment) Regulations (Northern

Ireland) 2026”. The consultation will invite views and evidence on any equality impacts. Stakeholders will include non-profit organisations and the UFU.

The EU’s updated rules for hemp third country imports will introduce new changes compared to current regulations. However, these changes are not expected to make any significant impact on how policy currently operates. Therefore, no impact is anticipated as a result of the Amendment Regulations in respect of the religious beliefs of hemp stakeholders.

### Political Opinion evidence/information:

No data is available on the political opinions of individuals or businesses involved in the importation of hemp. However, results from the Northern Ireland Life and Times 2023 survey showed the following political opinions of those interviewed:

- Unionist – 30%
- Nationalist – 28%
- Other/None – 42%

The Department will carry out a consultation with targeted stakeholders using a policy document which will highlight key changes that will be implemented by the “Hemp Third Country Import (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2026”. The consultation will invite views and evidence on any equality impacts. Stakeholders will include non-profit organisations and the UFU.

The EU's updated rules for hemp third country imports will introduce new changes compared to current regulations. However, these changes are not expected to make any significant impact on how policy currently operates. Therefore, no impact is anticipated as a result of the Amendment Regulations in respect of the political opinion of hemp stakeholders.

**Racial Group evidence/information:**

No data is available on the racial makeup of individuals or businesses involved in the importation of hemp. However, Census 2021 figures show 97% of the population identify as White.

The Department will carry out a consultation with targeted stakeholders using a policy document which will highlight key changes that will be implemented by the "Hemp Third Country Import (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2026". The consultation will invite views and evidence on any equality impacts. Stakeholders will include non-profit organisations and the UFU.

The EU's updated rules for hemp third country imports will introduce new changes compared to current regulations. However, these changes are not expected to make any significant impact on how policy currently operates. Therefore, no impact is anticipated as a result of the Amendment Regulations in respect of the race of people involved with hemp imports.

**Age evidence/information:**

No data is available on the age of individuals or businesses involved in the importation of hemp. However, Census 2021 figures show the following age breakdown for the NI population aged 16 and over:

- 16-24 – 13%
- 25-44 – 32%
- 45-64 – 33%
- 65 and over – 22%

The Department will carry out a consultation with targeted stakeholders using a policy document which will highlight key changes that will be implemented by the “Hemp Third Country Import (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2026”. The consultation will invite views and evidence on any equality impacts. Stakeholders will include non-profit organisations and the UFU.

The EU’s updated rules for hemp third country imports will introduce new changes compared to current regulations. However, these changes are not expected to make any significant impact on how policy currently operates. Therefore, no impact is anticipated as a result of the Amendment Regulations in respect of the age of people involved with hemp imports.

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

No data is available on the marital status of individuals or businesses involved in the importation of hemp. However, Census 2021 figures show the following marital status breakdown for the NI population aged 16 and over:

- Single – 38%
- Married or civil partnership – 46%
- Other – 16%

The Department will carry out a consultation with targeted stakeholders using a policy document which will highlight key changes that will be implemented by the “Hemp Third Country Import (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2026”. The consultation will invite views and evidence on any equality impacts. Stakeholders will include non-profit organisations and the UFU.

The EU’s updated rules for hemp third country imports will introduce new changes compared to current regulations. However, these changes are not expected to make any significant impact on how policy currently operates. Therefore, no impact is anticipated as a result of the Amendment Regulations in respect of the marital status of the people involved with hemp imports.

**Sexual Orientation evidence/information:**

No data is available on the sexual orientation of individuals or businesses involved in the importation of hemp. However, results from the Northern Ireland Life and Times 2023 showed the following sexual orientation of those interviewed:

- Straight or heterosexual – 93%
- Gay/lesbian/bisexual - 7%
- Other - <1%

The Department will carry out a consultation with targeted stakeholders using a policy document which will highlight key changes that will be implemented by the “Hemp Third Country Import (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2026”. The consultation will invite views and evidence on any

equality impacts. Stakeholders will include non-profit organisations and the UFU.

The EU's updated rules for hemp third country imports will introduce new changes compared to current regulations. However, these changes are not expected to make any significant impact on how policy currently operates. Therefore, no impact is anticipated as a result of the Amendment Regulations in respect of the sexual orientation of the people involved with hemp imports.

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

No holistic data is available on the gender of individuals or businesses involved in the importation of hemp. Census 2021 figures show the following figures for the NI population aged 16 and over:

- Female – 51%
- Male – 49%

The Department will carry out a consultation with targeted stakeholders using a policy document which will highlight key changes that will be implemented by the “Hemp Third Country Import (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2026”. The consultation will invite views and evidence on any equality impacts. Stakeholders will include non-profit organisations and the UFU.

The EU's updated rules for hemp third country imports will introduce new changes compared to current regulations. However, these changes are not expected to make any significant impact on how policy currently operates.

Therefore, no impact is anticipated as a result of the Amendment Regulations in respect of the sexual orientation of the people involved with hemp imports.

**Disability evidence/information:**

No data is available on the disability status of individuals or businesses involved in the importation of hemp. However, Census 2021 figures show 28% of the population aged 16 and over identify as having a disability.

The Department will carry out a consultation with targeted stakeholders using a policy document which will highlight key changes that will be implemented by the “Hemp Third Country Import (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2026”. The consultation will invite views and evidence on any equality impacts. Stakeholders will include non-profit organisations and the UFU.

The EU’s updated rules for hemp third country imports will introduce new changes compared to current regulations. However, these changes are not expected to make any significant impact on how policy currently operates. Therefore, no impact is anticipated as a result of the Amendment Regulations in respect of the sexual orientation of the people involved with hemp imports.

**Dependants evidence/information:**

No data is available on the number of dependants of individuals or businesses involved in the importation of hemp. However, Continuous Household Survey 2018/19 figures show the following household structure figures based on their responses:

- A child or children – 33%
- Adult with disability – 10%

- Dependant elderly – 9%
- None – 48%

The Department will carry out a consultation with targeted stakeholders using a policy document which will highlight key changes that will be implemented by the “Hemp Third Country Import (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2026”. The consultation will invite views and evidence on any equality impacts. Stakeholders will include non-profit organisations and the UFU.

The EU’s updated rules for hemp third country imports will introduce new changes compared to current regulations. However, these changes are not expected to make any significant impact on how policy currently operates. Therefore, no impact is anticipated as a result of the Amendment Regulations in respect of dependents of the people involved with hemp imports.

### 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**

Religious belief does not create any specific needs, experience, or priorities in relation to The Hemp Third Country Import (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2026.

### **Political Opinion**

Political opinion does not create any specific needs, experience, or priorities in relation to The Hemp Third Country Import (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2026.

### **Racial Group**

Racial groups do not create any specific needs, experience, or priorities in relation to The Hemp Third Country Import (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2026.

### **Age**

Age does not create any specific needs, experience, or priorities in relation to The Hemp Third Country Import (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2026.

### **Marital status**

Marital status does not create any specific needs, experience, or priorities in relation to The Hemp Third Country Import (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2026.

### **Sexual orientation**

Sexual orientation does not create any specific needs, experience, or priorities in relation to The Hemp Third Country Import (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2026.

## Men and Women Generally

Men and Women generally do not create any specific needs, experience, or priorities in relation to The Hemp Third Country Import (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2026

## Disability

Disability does not create any specific needs, experience, or priorities in relation to The Hemp Third Country Import (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2026.

## Dependants

Dependants do not create any specific needs, experience, or priorities in relation to The Hemp Third Country Import (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2026.

## 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.

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**

- 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*:**

The Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs has written The Hemp Third Country Import (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2026 to raise the maximum acceptable THC content for hemp products from 0.2% to 0.3% and will make technical amendments which update legislative references. The updated regulations will ensure that the hemp industry will have access to the variety of hemp plant that they're entitled to in line with EU regulations. However, it is not expected to make any significant impact on industry or how policy currently operates and the SR will maintain the status quo as far as possible. Therefore, no impacts either generally, or specifically on equality of opportunity related to religious belief expected as a result.

The Department will carry out a consultation with targeted stakeholders using a policy document which will highlight key changes that will be implemented by the “Hemp Third Country Import (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2026”. The consultation will invite views and evidence on any equality impacts. Stakeholders will include non-profit organisations and the UFU.

**What is the level of impact?** Minor  Major  None   
(select as appropriate)

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

The Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs will draft The Hemp Third Country Import (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2026 to raise the maximum acceptable THC content for hemp products from 0.2% to 0.3% and will make technical amendments which update legislative references. The updated regulations will ensure that the hemp industry will have access to the variety of hemp plant that they’re entitled to in line with EU regulations. However, it is not expected to make any significant impact on industry or how policy currently operates and the SR will maintain the status quo as far as possible. Therefore, no impacts either generally, or specifically on equality of opportunity related to political opinion expected as a result.

The Department will carry out a consultation with targeted stakeholders using a policy document which will highlight key changes that will be implemented by the “Hemp Third Country Import (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2026”. The consultation will invite views

and evidence on any equality impacts. Stakeholders will include non-profit organisations and the UFU.

**What is the level of impact?** Minor  Major  None

(select as appropriate)

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

The Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs will draft The Hemp Third Country Import (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2026 to raise the maximum acceptable THC content for hemp products from 0.2% to 0.3% and will make technical amendments which update legislative references. The updated regulations will ensure that the hemp industry will have access to the variety of hemp plant that they're entitled to in line with EU regulations. However, it is not expected to make any significant impact on industry or how policy currently operates and the SR will maintain the status quo as far as possible. Therefore, no impacts either generally, or specifically on equality of opportunity related to political opinion expected as a result.

The Department will carry out a consultation with targeted stakeholders using a policy document which will highlight key changes that will be implemented by the "Hemp Third Country Import (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2026". The consultation will invite views and evidence on any equality impacts. Stakeholders will include non-profit organisations and the UFU.

**What is the level of impact?** Minor  Major  None

(select as appropriate)

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

The Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs will draft the Hemp Third Country Import (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2026 to raise the maximum acceptable THC content for hemp products from 0.2% to 0.3% and will make technical amendments which update legislative references. The updated regulations will ensure that the hemp industry will have access to the variety of hemp plant that they're entitled to in line with EU regulations. However, it is not expected to make any significant impact on industry or how policy currently operates and the SR will maintain the status quo as far as possible. Therefore, no impacts either generally, or specifically on equality of opportunity related to political opinion expected as a result.

The Department will carry out a consultation with targeted stakeholders using a policy document which will highlight key changes that will be implemented by the "Hemp Third Country Import (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2026". The consultation will invite views and evidence on any equality impacts. Stakeholders will include non-profit organisations and the UFU.

**What is the level of impact?** Minor  Major  None

(select as appropriate)

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

The Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs will draft the The Hemp Third Country Import (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2026 to raise the maximum acceptable THC content for hemp products from 0.2% to 0.3% and will make technical

amendments which update legislative references. The updated regulations will ensure that the hemp industry will have access to the variety of hemp plant that they're entitled to in line with EU regulations. However, it is not expected to make any significant impact on industry or how policy currently operates and the SR will maintain the status quo as far as possible. Therefore, no impacts either generally, or specifically on equality of opportunity related to political opinion expected as a result.

The Department will carry out a consultation with targeted stakeholders using a policy document which will highlight key changes that will be implemented by the "Hemp Third Country Import (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2026". The consultation will invite views and evidence on any equality impacts. Stakeholders will include non-profit organisations and the UFU.

**What is the level of impact?** Minor  Major  None

(select as appropriate)

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

The Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs will draft The Hemp Third Country Import (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2026 to raise the maximum acceptable THC content for hemp products from 0.2% to 0.3% and will make technical amendments which update legislative references. The updated regulations will ensure that the hemp industry will have access to the variety of hemp plant that they're entitled to in line with EU regulations. However, it is not expected to make any significant impact on industry or how policy currently operates and the SR will maintain the status quo as far as possible.

Therefore, no impacts either generally, or specifically on equality of opportunity related to political opinion expected as a result.

The Department will carry out a consultation with targeted stakeholders using a policy document which will highlight key changes that will be implemented by the “Hemp Third Country Import (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2026”. The consultation will invite views and evidence on any equality impacts. Stakeholders will include non-profit organisations and the UFU.

**What is the level of impact** Minor  Major  None

(select as appropriate)

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

The Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs will draft the The Hemp Third Country Import (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2026 to raise the maximum acceptable THC content for hemp products from 0.2% to 0.3% and will make technical amendments which update legislative references. The updated regulations will ensure that the hemp industry will have access to the variety of hemp plant that they’re entitled to in line with EU regulations. However, it is not expected to make any significant impact on industry or how policy currently operates and the SR will maintain the status quo as far as possible. Therefore, no impacts either generally, or specifically on equality of opportunity related to political opinion expected as a result.

The Department will carry out a consultation with targeted stakeholders using a policy document which will highlight key changes that will be

implemented by the “Hemp Third Country Import (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2026”. The consultation will invite views and evidence on any equality impacts. Stakeholders will include non-profit organisations and the UFU.

**What is the level of impact?** Minor  Major  None

(select as appropriate)

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

The Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs will draft the The Hemp Third Country Import (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2026 to raise the maximum acceptable THC content for hemp products from 0.2% to 0.3% and will make technical amendments which update legislative references. The updated regulations will ensure that the hemp industry will have access to the variety of hemp plant that they’re entitled to in line with EU regulations. However, it is not expected to make any significant impact on industry or how policy currently operates and the SR will maintain the status quo as far as possible. Therefore, no impacts either generally, or specifically on equality of opportunity related to political opinion expected as a result.

The Department will carry out a consultation with targeted stakeholders using a policy document which will highlight key changes that will be implemented by the “Hemp Third Country Import (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2026”. The consultation will invite views and evidence on any equality impacts. Stakeholders will include non-profit organisations and the UFU.

**What is the level of impact?** Minor  Major  None

(select as appropriate)

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

The Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs will draft The Hemp Third Country Import (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2026 to raise the maximum acceptable THC content for hemp products from 0.2% to 0.3% and will make technical amendments which update legislative references. The updated regulations will ensure that the hemp industry will have access to the variety of hemp plant that they're entitled to in line with EU regulations. However, it is not expected to make any significant impact on industry or how policy currently operates and the SR will maintain the status quo as far as possible. Therefore, no impacts either generally, or specifically on equality of opportunity related to political opinion expected as a result.

The Department will carry out a consultation with targeted stakeholders using a policy document which will highlight key changes that will be implemented by the "Hemp Third Country Import (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2026". The consultation will invite views and evidence on any equality impacts. Stakeholders will include non-profit organisations and the UFU.

**What is the level of impact?**  Major  None

(select as appropriate)

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

Yes     No (select as appropriate)

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

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

**If No, provide reasons:**

The Hemp (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2026 will raise the maximum acceptable THC content for hemp products from 0.2% to 0.3% and will make technical amendments which update legislative references. The updated regulations will ensure that the hemp industry will have access to the variety of hemp plant that they're entitled to in line with EU regulations. However, it is not expected to make any significant impact on industry or how policy currently operates and the SR will maintain the status quo as far as possible. Therefore, there is no opportunity to promote equality of opportunity related to religious belief expected as a result.

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

**If No, provide reasons:**

The Hemp (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2026 will raise the maximum acceptable THC content for hemp products from 0.2% to

0.3% and will make technical amendments which update legislative references. The updated regulations will ensure that the hemp industry will have access to the variety of hemp plant that they're entitled to in line with EU regulations. However, it is not expected to make any significant impact on industry or how policy currently operates and the SR will maintain the status quo as far as possible. Therefore, there is no opportunity to promote equality of opportunity related to political opinion expected as a result.

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

**If No, provide reasons:**

The Hemp (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2026 will raise the maximum acceptable THC content for hemp products from 0.2% to 0.3% and will make technical amendments which update legislative references. The updated regulations will ensure that the hemp industry will have access to the variety of hemp plant that they're entitled to in line with EU regulations. However, it is not expected to make any significant impact on industry or how policy currently operates and the SR will maintain the status quo as far as possible. Therefore, there is no opportunity to promote equality of opportunity related to racial group expected as a result.

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

**If No, provide reasons:**

The Hemp (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2026 will raise the maximum acceptable THC content for hemp products from 0.2% to 0.3% and will make technical amendments which update legislative references. The updated regulations will ensure that the hemp industry will have access to the variety of hemp plant that they're entitled to in line with EU regulations. However, it is not expected to make any significant impact on industry or how policy currently operates and the SR will maintain the status quo as far as possible. Therefore, there is no opportunity to promote equality of opportunity related to age expected as a result.

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

**If No, provide reasons**

The Hemp (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2026 will raise the maximum acceptable THC content for hemp products from 0.2% to 0.3% and will make technical amendments which update legislative references. The updated regulations will ensure that the hemp industry will have access to the variety of hemp plant that they're entitled to in line with EU regulations. However, it is not expected to make any significant impact on industry or how policy currently operates and the SR will maintain the status quo as far as possible. Therefore, there is no opportunity to promote equality of opportunity related to marital status expected as a result.

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

**If No, provide reasons:**

The Hemp (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2026 will raise the maximum acceptable THC content for hemp products from 0.2% to 0.3% and will make technical amendments which update legislative references. The updated regulations will ensure that the hemp industry will have access to the variety of hemp plant that they're entitled to in line with EU regulations. However, it is not expected to make any significant impact on industry or how policy currently operates and the SR will maintain the status quo as far as possible. Therefore, there is no opportunity to promote equality of opportunity related to sexual orientation expected as a result.

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

**If No, provide reasons:**

The Hemp (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2026 will raise the maximum acceptable THC content for hemp products from 0.2% to 0.3% and will make technical amendments which update legislative references. The updated regulations will ensure that the hemp industry will have access to the variety of hemp plant that they're entitled to in line with EU regulations. However, it is not expected to make any significant impact on industry or how policy currently operates and the SR will maintain the status quo as far as possible. Therefore, there is no opportunity to promote equality of opportunity related to men and women expected as a result.

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

**If No, provide reasons:**

The Hemp (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2026 will raise the maximum acceptable THC content for hemp products from 0.2% to 0.3% and will make technical amendments which update legislative references. The updated regulations will ensure that the hemp industry will have access to the variety of hemp plant that they're entitled to in line with EU regulations. However, it is not expected to make any significant impact on industry or how policy currently operates and the SR will maintain the status quo as far as possible. Therefore, there is no opportunity to promote equality of opportunity related to disability expected as a result.

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

**If No, provide reasons:**

The Hemp (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2026 will raise the maximum acceptable THC content for hemp products from 0.2% to 0.3% and will make technical amendments which update legislative references. The updated regulations will ensure that the hemp industry will have access to the variety of hemp plant that they're entitled to in line with EU regulations. However, it is not expected to make any significant impact on industry or how policy currently operates and the SR will maintain the status quo as far as possible. Therefore, there is

no opportunity to promote equality of opportunity related to dependants expected as a result.

**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 2026 Amendment Regulations will apply to all hemp stakeholders in Northern Ireland and therefore will have no impact on good relations between people of different religious belief.

**What is the level of impact?** Minor  Major  None

(select as appropriate)

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

The 2026 Amendment Regulations will apply to all hemp stakeholders in Northern Ireland and therefore will have no impact on good relations between people of different political opinions. To note, UK government intend to implement similar changes to legislation in GB which will prevent any divergence between NI and GB.

**What is the level of impact?** Minor  Major  None   
(select as appropriate)

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

The 2026 Amendment Regulations will apply to all hemp stakeholders in Northern Ireland and therefore will have no impact on good relations between people of different racial groups.

**What is the level of impact?** Minor  Major  None   
(select as appropriate)

**4. 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 Yes, provide details:**

**If No, provide reasons:**

The 2026 Amendment Regulations will apply to all hemp stakeholders in Northern Ireland and therefore will have no opportunity to promote good relations between people of different religious beliefs.

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

**If No, provide reasons:**

The 2026 Amendment Regulations will apply to all hemp stakeholders in Northern Ireland and therefore will have no opportunity to promote good relations between people of different political opinions.

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

**If No, provide reasons:**

The 2026 Amendment Regulations will apply to all hemp stakeholders in Northern Ireland and therefore will have no opportunity to promote good relations between people of different racial groups.

## 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).*

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

The Hemp (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2026 will raise the maximum acceptable THC content for hemp products from 0.2% to 0.3% and will make technical amendments which update legislative references. The updated regulations will ensure that the hemp industry will have access to the variety of hemp plant that they're entitled to in line with EU regulations. However, it is not expected to make any significant impact on industry or how policy currently operates and the SR will maintain the status quo as far as possible. The Hemp Third Country Import (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2026 will apply to all hemp stakeholders in Northern Ireland and therefore there will be no impact on people with multiple identities.

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?**

The Hemp (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2026 will raise the maximum acceptable THC content for hemp products from 0.2% to 0.3% and will make technical amendments which update legislative references. However, it is not expected to make any significant impact on industry or how policy currently operates and the SR will maintain the status quo as far as possible. Therefore, there is no opportunity to better promote positive attitudes towards disabled people.

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

The Hemp (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2026 will raise the maximum acceptable THC content for hemp products from 0.2% to 0.3% and will make technical amendments which update legislative references. However, it is not expected to make any significant impact on industry or how policy currently operates and the SR will maintain the status quo as far as possible. Therefore, there is no opportunity to actively increase the participation of disabled people in public life.

### Part 3. Screening decision (Please delete as appropriate)

1. “Screened in” for equality impact assessment.
2. “Screened out” with mitigation or an alternative policy proposed to be adopted.
3. “Screened out” without mitigation or an alternative policy proposed to be adopted.

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

Article 189 of Regulation (EU) No 1308/2013 lays out the rules for checks of imports of hemp and hemp seeds to ensure that they offer certain guarantees regarding their tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) content. Prior to January 2023, imports of hemp, including acceptable levels of THC content, into the European Union were set by Regulation (EU) No 1307/2013, establishing rules for direct payments to farmers under support schemes within the framework of the common agricultural policy. With regards to hemp, Regulation (EU) No 1307/2013 lays out that true hemp/hemp seeds must not have a THC content greater than 0.2%. Article 189 of 1308/2013 refers to 1307/2013 to set the maximum acceptable THC level that may be imported into the Union. Regulation (EU) No 1307/2013 was repealed and replaced by Regulation 2021/2115, which took effect from 01 January 2023. These new regulations raised the THC level of eligibility for direct payments from 0.2% to 0.3%.

In December 2023, the European Commission issued a notice clarifying that it followed that Regulation 2021/2115 meant that the maximum

allowed THC levels for imports of raw true hemp and seeds of varieties of hemp for sowing also increased from 0.2% to 0.3% from 1 January 2023.

The UK's domestic regulations, The Hemp (Third Country Imports) Regulations 2002, stipulate that no person shall import true hemp or hemp seeds for sowing from a third country where the THC content is greater than 0.2%. As EU hemp imports regulations are directly applicable in Northern Ireland under Annex 2 of the Windsor Framework, the domestic legislation is out of date and will need to be updated on a NI basis.

The Hemp Third Country Import (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2026 (TBC) will be used to increase the maximum THC level for imports of hemp and hemp seeds from 0.2% to 0.3%, in line with EU Regulation 1308/2013, which is directly applicable in Northern Ireland under Annex 2 of the Windsor Framework. The amending regulations will also make technical amendments which will update legislative references.

The relaxation to maximum acceptable THC will allow for a greater selection of hemp and hemp seeds available to hemp stakeholders, but it is not expected to make any significant impact on industry or how policy currently operates. The SR will maintain the status quo as far as possible. As such no differential impacts are expected on any section 75 groups or implications relating to good relations, human rights or disability issues and will be "Screened Out".

The Department will carry out a consultation with targeted stakeholders using a policy document which will highlight key changes that will be implemented by The Hemp Third Country Import (Amendment)

Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2026. The consultation will invite views and evidence on any equality impacts. Stakeholders will include non-profit organisations and the UFU.

**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: [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?**  Yes  No (select as appropriate)

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

N/A
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## 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	
<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?**  Yes  No (select as appropriate)

**If yes, please provide details.**

Article 189 of 1308/2013 refers to 1307/2013 to set the maximum acceptable THC level that may be imported into the Union. Regulation (EU) No 1307/2013 was repealed and replaced by Regulation 2021/2115, which took effect from 01 January 2023. These new regulations raised the THC level of eligibility for direct payments from 0.2% to 0.3%.

In December 2023, the European Commission issued a notice clarifying that it followed that Regulation 2021/2115 meant that the maximum allowed THC levels for imports of raw true hemp and seeds of varieties of hemp for sowing also increased from 0.2% to 0.3% from 1 January 2023.

It is necessary to bring forth this domestic legislation as there is now a gap in the domestic statute book.

## 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:**

The EU's updated rules for hemp third country imports will introduce new changes compared to current regulations. However, these changes are not expected to make any significant impact on how policy currently operates. As such it is not necessary to monitor the specific impact on equality for The Hemp Third Country Import (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2026.

The Department will carry out a consultation with targeted stakeholders using a policy document which will highlight key changes that will be implemented by The Hemp Third Country Import (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2026. The consultation will invite views and evidence on any equality impacts. Stakeholders will include non-profit organisations and the UFU.

The Department will continue to have open channels of communication with stakeholders involved with The Hemp Third Country Import (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2026 and monitor for any unintended negative consequences.

**Good Relations:**

The EU's updated rules for hemp third country imports will introduce new changes compared to current regulations. However, these changes are not expected to make any significant impact on how policy currently operates. As such it is not necessary to monitor the specific impact on good relations for The Hemp Third Country Import (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2026.

The Department will carry out a consultation with targeted stakeholders using a policy document which will highlight key changes that will be implemented by The Hemp Third Country Import (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2026. The consultation will invite views and evidence on any equality impacts. Stakeholders will include non-profit organisations and the UFU.

The Department will continue to have open channels of communication with stakeholders involved with The Hemp Third Country Import (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2026 and monitor for any unintended negative consequences.

**Disability Duties:**

The EU’s updated rules for hemp third country imports will introduce new changes compared to current regulations. However, these changes are not expected to make any significant impact on how policy currently operates. As such it is not necessary to monitor the specific impact on equality for the The Hemp Third Country Import (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2026.

The Department will carry out a consultation with targeted stakeholders using a policy document which will highlight key changes that will be implemented by The Hemp Third Country Import (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2026. The consultation will invite views and evidence on any equality impacts. Stakeholders will include non-profit organisations and the UFU.

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The Department will continue to have open channels of communication with stakeholders involved with The Hemp Third Country Import (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2026 and monitor for any unintended negative consequences.

## Part 5. Consideration of Human Rights

**7. The Human Rights Act (HRA) 1998 brings the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) into UK law and it applies in N Ireland. Indicate below by deleting Yes/No as appropriate, any potential adverse impacts that the policy or decision may have in relation to human rights issues.**

See Annex A for brief synopsis on each of the Human Rights Articles & Protocols.

Right to Life	<b>Article 2</b>	No
Prohibition of torture, inhuman or degrading treatment	<b>Article 3</b>	No

Prohibition of slavery and forced labour	<b>Article 4</b>	No
Right to liberty and security	<b>Article 5</b>	No
Right to a fair and public trial	<b>Article 6</b>	No
Right to no punishment without law	<b>Article 7</b>	No
Right to respect for private and family life, home and correspondence	<b>Article 8</b>	No
Right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion	<b>Article 9</b>	No
Right to freedom of expression	<b>Article 10</b>	No
Right to freedom of peaceful assembly and association	<b>Article 11</b>	No
Right to marry and to found a family	<b>Article 12</b>	No
The prohibition of discrimination	<b>Article 14</b>	No
Protection of property and enjoyment of possessions	<b>Protocol 1 Article 1</b>	No
Right to education	<b>Protocol 1 Article 2</b>	No
Right to free and secret elections	<b>Protocol 1 Article 3</b>	No

**8. Please explain any adverse impacts on human rights that you have identified.**

No adverse impacts on human rights have been identified.

**9. Please indicate any ways which you consider the policy positively promotes human rights.**

None

## Part 6 - Approval and authorisation

Before signing off this screening template please confirm that you have completed all the actions listed below.

I can confirm that all the actions listed below have been completed -

- I have explained any technical issues in plain English (easily understood by a 12 year old)
- I have used the most relevant, current & up to date data available
- I have added evidence and explained my assessments in full
- I have provided a brief note to justify my decision to 'Screen In' or 'Screen Out'

- A copy of this screening template and the final decision has been sent to the Equality Unit for their consideration before it has been forwarded for sign-off

**Screening assessment completed by (Staff Officer level or above) -**

**Name:** Kevin Comber

**Grade:** Deputy Principal

**Branch:** Agri-Food Policy – Poultrymeat, eggs, dairy, wines, spirits, hops and hemp

**Date:** 21/05/2026

**Signature:** please insert a scanned image of your signature.



**Screening decision approved by (must be Grade 3/Deputy Secretary or above) -**

**Name:**

**Grade:**

**Branch:**

**Date:**

**Signature:** please insert a scanned image of your signature.



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.

Please save the final signed version of the completed screening form in the CM container (AE2-19-11940) below as soon as possible after completion and forward the CM link to Equality Branch at [equality@daera-ni.gov.uk](mailto:equality@daera-ni.gov.uk). The screening form will be placed on the DAERA website and a link provided to the Department's Section 75 consultees.

For more information about equality screening, contact:

DAERA Equality Unit

Capacity, Capability, Equality & Diversity Branch

Jubilee House

111 Ballykelly Road

LIMAVADY

BT49 9HP

Email: [equality@daera-ni.gov.uk](mailto:equality@daera-ni.gov.uk)

Tel: 028 7744 2027



Department of  
**Agriculture, Environment  
and Rural Affairs**  
[www.daera-ni.gov.uk](http://www.daera-ni.gov.uk)

An Roinn  
**Talmhaíochta, Comhshaoil  
agus Gnóthaí Tuaithe**

Department o'  
**Fairmin, Environment  
an' Kintra Matthers**

## Annex A

### Synopsis of Human Rights Act Articles & Protocols

#### **ARTICLE 2**

##### ***Right to life***

1. Everyone's right to life shall be protected by law. No one shall be deprived of his life intentionally save in the execution of a sentence of a court following his conviction of a crime for which this penalty is provided by law.

2. Deprivation of life shall not be regarded as inflicted in contravention of this Article when it results from the use of force which is no more than absolutely necessary:
  - a. In defense of any person from unlawful violence;
  - b. In order to effect a lawful arrest or to prevent the escape of a person lawfully detained;
  - c. In action lawfully taken for the purpose of quelling a riot or insurrection.

### **ARTICLE 3**

#### ***Prohibition of torture***

No one shall be subjected to torture or to inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

### **ARTICLE 4**

#### ***Prohibition of slavery and forced labour***

1. No one shall be held in slavery or servitude.
2. No one shall be required to perform forced or compulsory labour.
3. For the purpose of this Article the term “forced or compulsory labour” shall not include:
  - a. Any work required to be done in the ordinary course of detention imposed according to the provisions of Article 5 of this Convention or during conditional release from such detention;
  - b. Any service of a military character or, in case of conscientious objectors in countries where they are recognised, service exacted instead of compulsory military service;
  - c. Any service exacted in case of an emergency or calamity threatening the life or well-being of the community;
  - d. Any work or service which forms part of normal civic obligations.

## **ARTICLE 5**

### ***Right to liberty and security***

1. Everyone has the right to liberty and security of person. No one shall be deprived of his liberty save in the following cases and in accordance with a procedure prescribed by law:
  - a. The lawful detention of a person after conviction by a competent court;
  - b. The lawful arrest or detention of a person for non-compliance with the lawful order of a court or in order to secure the fulfilment of any obligation prescribed by law;
  - c. the lawful arrest or detention of a person effected for the purpose of bringing him before the competent legal authority on reasonable suspicion of having committed an offence or when it is reasonably considered necessary to prevent his committing an offence or fleeing after having done so;
  - d. the detention of a minor by lawful order for the purpose of educational supervision or his lawful detention for the purpose of bringing him before the competent legal authority;
  - e. The lawful detention of persons for the prevention of the spreading of infectious diseases, of persons of unsound mind, alcoholics or drug addicts or vagrants;
  - f. The lawful arrest or detention of a person to prevent his effecting an unauthorised entry into the country or of a person against whom action is being taken with a view to deportation or extradition.
2. Everyone who is arrested shall be informed promptly, in a language which he understands, of the reasons for his arrest and of any charge against him.

3. Everyone arrested or detained in accordance with the provisions of paragraph 1(c) of this Article shall be brought promptly before a judge or other officer authorised by law to exercise judicial power and shall be entitled to trial within a reasonable time or to release pending trial. Release may be conditioned by guarantees to appear for trial.
4. Everyone who is deprived of his liberty by arrest or detention shall be entitled to take proceedings by which the lawfulness of his detention shall be decided speedily by a court and his release ordered if the detention is not lawful.
5. Everyone who has been the victim of arrest or detention in contravention of the provisions of this Article shall have an enforceable right to compensation.

### **ARTICLE 6**

#### ***Right to a fair trial***

1. In the determination of his civil rights and obligations or of any criminal charge against him, everyone is entitled to a fair and public hearing within a reasonable time by an independent and impartial tribunal established by law. Judgment shall be pronounced publicly but the press and public may be excluded from all or part of the trial in the interest of morals, public order or national security in a democratic society, where the interests of juveniles or the protection of the private life of the parties so require, or to the extent strictly necessary in the opinion of the court in special circumstances where publicity would prejudice the interests of justice.

2. Everyone charged with a criminal offence shall be presumed innocent until proved guilty according to law.
3. Everyone charged with a criminal offence has the following minimum rights:
  - a. To be informed promptly, in a language which he understands and in detail, of the nature and cause of the accusation against him;
  - b. To have adequate time and facilities for the preparation of his defense;
  - c. To defend himself in person or through legal assistance of his own choosing or, if he has not sufficient means to pay for legal assistance, to be given it free when the interests of justice so require;
  - d. To examine or have examined witnesses against him and to obtain the attendance and examination of witnesses on his behalf under the same conditions as witnesses against him;
  - e. To have the free assistance of an interpreter if he cannot understand or speak the language used in court.

## **ARTICLE 7**

### ***No punishment without law***

1. No one shall be held guilty of any criminal offence on account of any act or omission which did not constitute a criminal offence under national or international law at the time when it was committed. Nor shall a heavier penalty be imposed than the one that was applicable at the time the criminal offence was committed.
2. This Article shall not prejudice the trial and punishment of any person for any act or omission which, at the time when it was committed, was

criminal according to the general principles of law recognised by civilised nations.

## **ARTICLE 8**

### ***Right to respect for private and family life***

1. Everyone has the right to respect for his private and family life, his home and his correspondence.
2. There shall be no interference by a public authority with the exercise of this right except such as is in accordance with the law and is necessary in a democratic society in the interests of national security, public safety or the economic well-being of the country, for the prevention of disorder or crime, for the protection of health or morals, or for the protection of the rights and freedoms of others.

## **ARTICLE 9**

### ***Freedom of thought, conscience and religion***

1. Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief, in worship, teaching, practice and observance.
2. Freedom to manifest one's religion or beliefs shall be subject only to such limitations as are prescribed by law and are necessary in a democratic

society in the interests of public safety, for the protection of public order, health or morals, or for the protection of the rights and freedoms of others.

## **ARTICLE 10**

### ***Freedom of expression***

1. Everyone has the right to freedom of expression. This right shall include freedom to hold opinions and to receive and impart information and ideas without interference by public authority and regardless of frontiers. This Article shall not prevent States from requiring the licensing of broadcasting, television or cinema enterprises.
2. The exercise of these freedoms, since it carries with it duties and responsibilities, may be subject to such formalities, conditions, restrictions or penalties as are prescribed by law and are necessary in a democratic society, in the interests of national security, territorial integrity or public safety, for the prevention of disorder or crime, for the protection of health or morals, for the protection of the reputation or rights of others, for preventing the disclosure of information received in confidence, or for maintaining the authority and impartiality of the judiciary.

## **ARTICLE 11**

### ***Freedom of assembly and association***

1. Everyone has the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and to freedom of association with others, including the right to form and to join trade unions for the protection of his interests.
2. No restrictions shall be placed on the exercise of these rights other than such as are prescribed by law and are necessary in a democratic society in the interests of national security or public safety, for the prevention of

disorder or crime, for the protection of health or morals or for the protection of the rights and freedoms of others. This Article shall not prevent the imposition of lawful restrictions on the exercise of these rights by members of the armed forces, of the police or of the administration of the State.

## **ARTICLE 12**

### ***Right to marry***

Men and women of marriageable age have the right to marry and to found a family, according to the national laws governing the exercise of this right.

## **ARTICLE 14**

### ***Prohibition of discrimination***

The enjoyment of the rights and freedoms set forth in this Convention shall be secured without discrimination on any ground such as sex, race, colour, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, association with a national minority, property, birth or other status.

## **Protocol 1**

### **ARTICLE 1**

#### ***Protection of property***

Every natural or legal person is entitled to the peaceful enjoyment of his possessions. No one shall be deprived of his possessions except in the public interest and subject to the conditions provided for by law and by the general principles of international law.

The preceding provisions shall not, however, in any way impair the right of a State to enforce such laws as it deems necessary to control the use of property

in accordance with the general interest or to secure the payment of taxes or other contributions or penalties.

### **Protocol 1**

#### **ARTICLE 2**

##### ***Right to education***

No person shall be denied the right to education. In the exercise of any functions which it assumes in relation to education and to teaching, the State shall respect the right of parents to ensure such education and teaching in conformity with their own religious and philosophical convictions.

### **Protocol 1**

#### **ARTICLE 3**

##### ***Right to free elections***

The High Contracting Parties undertake to hold free elections at reasonable intervals by secret ballot, under conditions which will ensure the free expression of the opinion of the people in the choice of the legislature.

For further information:

Equality Unit,  
Equality & Diversity Branch  
Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA)  
Jubilee House  
111 Ballykelly Road  
Ballykelly  
Limavady  
BT49 9HP

Tel: 028 7744 2027

Email: [equality@daera-ni.gov.uk](mailto:equality@daera-ni.gov.uk)

