

Review of Equality Statistics for the Northern Ireland Civil Service 2023

Background

In light of the financial challenge facing public services in Northern Ireland, NISRA has been developing strategies to tailor our outputs and activities to align with available resources while continuing to produce high quality statistics.

As part of the wider effort to operate within these financial constraints, the Human Resource Consultancy Services (HRCS) team within NISRA, has reviewed the content and format of a number of publications in 2023. This included the annual [Equality Statistics for the NICS](#) report.

A formal consultation with users opened on Wednesday 17 May 2023 and closed on Friday 9 June 2023. Notice of the consultation was placed on Departmental Intranets, the NISRA website, Twitter and Facebook feeds. In addition, an email was sent to those on the Equality in the NICS user mailing list. Users were invited to complete our online [questionnaire](#) to provide feedback on :

- their usage of the report and particular sections within it;
- how the report meets their needs;
- the information provided, and
- timing and data quality

Summary of Responses

Users

We received 20 responses to the consultation from users of the report. The majority of users were NICS employees with a single respondent from another public sector organisation.

The main reasons for use for each section of the report were personal interest, policy making/monitoring and statutory/legislative requirements.

Meeting Needs

When asked to what extent each section of the Equality Statistics in the NICS report met their needs, most users (at least 14) reported the corresponding section fully or mostly met their needs.

There was some interest in:

- additional NICS information e.g. socio-economic status, as well as information on carers, which is not available on the NISRA database.
- additional analysis of ethnicity, staff declaring a disability and sexual orientation, which is not feasible due to small numbers in these categories.
- comparison with other public sector and private sector organisations, which NISRA will explore further.

Most users fully or mostly understood the information provided in each section of the report. All respondents stated that annual reporting met their needs with two noting that a quarterly report and one noting a 6 monthly report would be beneficial.

Proposals

Five respondents indicated that they used the report for statutory/legislative requirements. As these users provided contact details, follow-up online meetings explored the option of scaling back the Equality Report. It was proposed to publish Composition (Staff-In-Post) annually and suspend the Recruitment,¹ Promotion, and Leavers chapters. These users were content with the proposal to streamline the report on the understanding that this position will be kept under review.

¹ Equality Information on recruitment competitions is available in the NISRA [Analysis of NICS Recruitment Competitions](#) report.

Proposed Action

HRCS welcomes the positive feedback reflecting the value that users place on this report. However, in view of the tight financial position, NISRA intends to scale back the content of the Equality Statistics for the NICS report, in order to enable resources to be focused on key issues of policy importance. This position will be kept under review.

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