

Section 75 Policy Screening Form

Part 1. Policy Scoping

The first stage of the screening process involves scoping the policy or policy area. 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.

You 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:

Gaining Access To Employment (GATE) - Disadvantaged Worker Employment Grant.

Is this an existing, revised or a new policy?

Revised Policy – introduces a new type of targeted employment related grant within Invest NI's existing Selective Financial Assistance (SFA) scheme.

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

This programme will follow the existing SFA scheme principles but will provide a GATE employment grant for projects which recruit and retain individuals meeting the disadvantaged worker criteria, defined by the EU as 'have not been in regular paid employment for the previous 6 months'.

The introduction of the grant therefore aims to:

- Secure employment creation projects across Northern Ireland.
- Encourage the recruitment and retention of people not in regular paid employment.

Target: direct promotion of 100-150 jobs by 31 March 2017

Are there any Section 75 categories which might be expected to benefit from the intended policy? If so, explain how.

Indirectly the policy is expected to benefit specifically the youth unemployed and will also encourage recruitment from the long term unemployed.

GATE will be open to existing large (over 250 employees) Invest NI companies in the manufacturing and tradable services sectors that are external sales growth orientated. These types of companies are based across all parts of Northern Ireland.

Who initiated or wrote the policy?

Invest NI

Who owns and who implements the policy?

The Employment and Enterprise team within Invest NI.

Implementation factors

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

If yes, are they

Financial: Y / N – budget approval for each GATE project is still required and will be on a case by case basis.

Legislative: Y / N

Other, please specify: _____

Main stakeholders affected

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

Staff: No

Service users: Yes

Other public sector organisations: No

Voluntary/community/trade unions: No

Other, please specify _____

Other policies with a bearing on this policy

- What are they?

Selective Financial Assistance Scheme

Invest NI's Selective Financial Assistance (SFA) scheme incentivises companies to start up, locate and expand in Northern Ireland by assisting new investment and job creation. It remains one of Invest NI's principal financial assistance instruments for supporting job creation in businesses across the manufacturing and tradeable services' sectors.

SFA can still be used to attract first time inward investment, assist start-ups and to support existing large companies located here to invest in new economic activity either through product diversification or setting up additional establishments in Northern Ireland. SFA can also still be used to assist SME start-ups and follow-on expansion project.

Economic Inactivity

The aims and objectives of the Northern Ireland Executive's Programme for Government 2011–2015 included a commitment for the Department for Employment and Learning (DEL) and the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment (DETI) to develop a strategy to tackle economic inactivity through targeted incentives, skills and training programmes and job creation. In recognition of the magnitude and scope of the issues associated with economic inactivity in Northern Ireland, and the cross-government approach required to successfully address these issues, the strategy was developed in partnership with the Department for Social Development, Invest NI and the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety.

The inactivity strategy was published in March 2015 and is entitled "*Enabling Success: Supporting the Transition from Economic Inactivity to Employment – A Strategy to Tackle Economic Inactivity in Northern Ireland*".

- Who owns them?

Selective Financial Assistance Scheme - Invest NI's Employment and Enterprise Team.

Inactivity Strategy – DfE & DfC (formerly DEL and DETI).

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.

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

Section 75 category	Details of evidence/information
All	<p>In the period April 2015 – June 2015 Northern Ireland experienced an increase over the quarter in the number of economically inactive and unemployed while the number of employed decreased¹. The employment rate for those aged 16-64 was estimated at 67.8%, below the UK average (73.4%) and was the lowest rate among the twelve UK regions. In addition, the unemployment rate for the same period was estimated at 6.5%.</p> <p>Some 58.6% of unemployed people have been unemployed for 1 year or more – up 6.7% percentage points over the year and higher than the UK average of 31.5%. The youth unemployment rate (percentage of economically active 18 - 24 year olds who are unemployed) was estimated at 19.5% and was again higher than the UK average rate of 14%.</p> <p>Northern Ireland’s economic inactivity rate for those aged 16-64 stood at 27.4% (some 575,000). This figure is up 5,000 over the quarter and up 8,000 over the year). This is significantly higher than the UK average rate of 22.1% and is the highest of the twelve UK regions.</p> <p>Although unemployment overall has fallen since early 2013 and is currently 6.5%, youth unemployment in Northern Ireland remains significantly in excess of other age groups. In addition, as the statistics indicate Northern Ireland continues to suffer from rates of long term unemployment and economic inactivity significantly in excess of the rest of the UK.</p> <p>It is anticipated that the GATE grant scheme also has the potential to help reduce the brain drain from Northern Ireland by providing an effective tool to help incentivize employers to employ recent graduates that have not as yet secured full-time employment.</p>

¹ Labour Force Survey April - June 2015, DETI August 2015

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 for each of the Section 75 categories

Section 75 category	Details of needs/experiences/priorities
All	<p>The GATE grant can be accessed by companies recruiting staff that have completed 'Bridge to Employment' therefore ensuring the disadvantaged worker eligibility criteria is met by targeting both unemployed and long term unemployed.</p> <p>It is proposed that the recruitment should be based on affirmative action to target the above groupings, therefore Invest NI have linked up with the Department for Economy who will recruit from the unemployed and will provide pre-employment training (under 'Bridge to Employment'). After the completion of Bridge to Employment, the participants will be selected based on meritocracy for employment by the Invest NI client company offering positions.</p> <p>As part of this affirmative action, the Department for Economy would advertise through channels that are most likely to reach the disadvantaged demographics.</p> <p>The recruitment process will be based on the merit principle, with all applicants who have completed 'Bridge to Employment' treated consistently and fairly according to the company's recruitment policy and procedures.</p> <p>The proposed GATE grant will provide Invest NI with a tool to encourage and incentivise companies to recruit in volume the long term unemployed and directly impact on those groups which remain most affected by the recession and who are generally the most distant from the labour market as noted above.</p>

Part 2: Screening Questions

Introduction

1. If the public authority's conclusion is **none** in respect of all of the Section 75 categories, then you may decide to screen the policy **out**. If a policy is 'screened out', you should give details of the reasons for the decision taken.
2. If the public authority's conclusion is **major** in respect of one or more of the Section 75 categories, then consideration should be given to subjecting the policy to an EQIA.
3. If the public authority's conclusion is **minor** in respect of one or more of the Section 75 categories, then consideration should still be given to proceeding with an EQIA, or to measures to mitigate the adverse impact; or an alternative policy.

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 hence it would be appropriate to conduct an EQIA;
- 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 among 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 earlier evidence, consider and comment on the likely impact on equality of opportunity / good relations for those affected by this policy, by applying the following screening questions and the 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 grounds? Minor/Major/None		
Section 75 category	Details of policy impact	Level of impact? Minor/Major/None
Religious belief	Young Catholic and Protestant males may be affected in terms of opportunity as data suggest that unemployment is particularly high within this category.	Minor
Political opinion	As above	Minor
Racial group	Ethnic minorities are likely to benefit from the encouragement of companies to recruit with less emphasis on experience.	Minor
Age	Whilst, this is a positive action which is not designed to have any detrimental effect on any Section 75 category, it is indirectly expected to have a positive impact on young people (those under 24) seeking access to the labour market.	Minor
Marital status		None
Sexual orientation		None
Men and women generally	See note re Catholic and Protestant males under Religious Belief.	Minor
Disability	As this group has a high level of economic inactivity the Programme is likely to have a positive impact.	Minor
Dependants	Both full time and part time positions will be supported under the scheme and therefore	Minor

	may have a positive impact in terms of benefiting part time workers with dependants.	
2 Are there opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity for people within any of the Section 75 categories?		
Section 75 category	If Yes, provide details	If No, provide reasons
All	Indirectly the GATE grant, through supporting employment for disadvantaged workers, will promote greater equality of opportunity for young people aged 24 or under and unemployed and the long term unemployed.	

3 To what extent is the policy likely to impact on good relations between people of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group? Minor/Major/None		
Good relations category	Details of policy impact	Level of impact Minor/Major/None
Religious belief		None
Political opinion		None
Racial group		None

4 Are there opportunities to better promote good relations between people of different

religious belief, political opinion or racial group?		
Good relations category	If Yes, provide details	If No, provide reasons
		Not at this time.

Additional considerations

Multiple identity

Generally speaking, people can fall into more than one Section 75 category. Taking this into consideration, are there any potential impacts of the policy/decision on people with multiple identities?

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

Young Catholic and Protestant men, disabled minority ethnic people.

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

These groups are over represented within the economically inactive and will benefit from the project.

Part 3: Screening Decision

In light of your answers to the previous questions, do you feel that the policy should (please underline one):

1. Not be subject to an EQIA (with no mitigating measures required)
2. Not be subject to an EQIA (with mitigating measures /alternative policies)
3. Not be subject to an EQIA at this time
4. Be subject to an EQIA

If 1. or 2. (i.e. not be subject to an EQIA), please provide details of the reasons why:

Not felt necessary at this time. However we do commit to continuing to monitor and review GATE grant projects, particularly with regard to uptake by Section 75 groups.

If 2. (i.e. not be subject to an EQIA), in what ways can identified adverse impacts attaching to the policy be mitigated or an alternative policy be introduced?

Not applicable

In light of these revisions, is there a need to re-screen the revised/alternative policy? Yes / No. If No, please explain why

Not applicable

If 3. or 4. (i.e. to conduct an EQIA), please provide details of the reasons:

Not applicable

Timetabling and prioritising EQIA

If 3. or 4., is the policy affected by timetables established by other relevant public authorities? YES / NO

If YES, please provide details:

Please answer the following questions to determine priority for timetabling the EQIA. 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 EQIA.

Priority criterion	Rating (1-3)
Effect on equality of opportunity and good relations	
Social need	
Effect on people's daily lives	
Relevance to a public authority's functions	

Note: The Total Rating Score should be used to prioritise the policy in rank order with other policies screened in for EQIA. This list of priorities will assist you in timetabling the EQIA. Details of your EQIA timetable should be included in the quarterly Section 75 report.

Proposed date for commencing EQIA: _____

Part 4: Monitoring

Effective monitoring will help identify any future adverse impacts arising from the policy which may lead you to conduct an EQIA, as well as help with future planning and policy development. You should consider the guidance contained in the Commission's Monitoring Guidance for Use by Public Authorities (July 2007). The Commission recommends that where the policy has been amended or an alternative policy introduced, then you should monitor more broadly than for adverse impact (See Benefits, P.9-10, paras 2.13 – 2.20 of the Monitoring Guidance).

Please detail proposed monitoring arrangements below:

Companies will be asked to complete a data capture form (previously used on Invest NI's Jobs Fund Programme) in relation to each new employee assisted through the GATE grant, which includes monitoring questions relating to racial group, community background, age, gender and disability.

Part 5: Approval and Authorisation

Screened by:	Position/Job Title	Date
Frankie McCourt	Programme Manager	
Signed: 		16/9/16
Approved by:		
Stephen Wightman	Head of Employment & Enterprise	
Signed: 		16/9/16

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 your website as soon as possible following completion and made available on request.