

UNRESTRICTED

**Northern Ireland Assembly  
Commission**

**Draft Audit of Inequalities 2022-26**

*August 2022*

**Table of Contents:**

- 1. Introduction**
- 2. Role and Functions of the Northern Ireland Assembly Commission**
- 3. Equality Scheme Commitments and Legislation**
- 4. Methodology and Approach to the development of the Audit of Inequalities and Action Plan**
- 5. Assessment of Data and Potential Inequalities**
- 6. Draft Audit of Inequalities Action Plan 2022-26**

## 1. Introduction

1.1 The Equality Commission for Northern Ireland (ECNI) recommends designated public authorities undertake an audit of inequalities on a five-yearly basis. The purpose being to provide evidence to identify potential inequalities across all of the nine Section 75 categories that are relevant to their functions within Northern Ireland. The audit of inequalities report informs public authorities as they develop an action plan that addresses the inequalities found through their research. The audit of inequalities therefore includes an overview of the available data.

1.2 The Audit of Inequalities does not examine identified inequalities or potential inequalities on a policy by policy basis. These are scrutinised through the policy screening<sup>1</sup> process and Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA)<sup>2</sup> processes.

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<sup>1</sup> ECNI, The Guide, Chapter 7, Page 40.

<sup>2</sup> ECNI, The Guide, Chapter 7, Page 41.

## 2. Role and Functions of the Northern Ireland Assembly Commission

- 2.1 The Northern Ireland Assembly Commission ('the Assembly Commission') finds its statutory basis in Section 40 and Schedule 5 to the Northern Ireland Act 1998 ('the 1998 Act'). As a body corporate, it is responsible for providing the property, services and staff required for the Assembly's purposes. It consists of an MLA from each of the five main parties, plus the Speaker who acts as Chairperson.
- 2.2 The Equality & Good Relations Unit provides support for the Assembly Commission in assisting it to comply with all the statutory requirements of Section 75 (1) and 75(2) of the 1998 Act and Section 49A of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995.
- 2.3 The [Assembly Commission's Corporate Strategy](#) guides the direction of the Assembly Commission in providing support, services and advice to the Assembly. The current Strategy covers the five year-period from 2018 to 2023, and it sets out aims and objectives across four key areas: People, Culture, Engagement and Services.
- 2.4 The Corporate Plan 2019-23 outlines the actions that will be taken to deliver the aims and objectives set out in the Corporate Strategy. Many of the actions in the draft Audit of Inequalities Action Plan 2022-26 will support the work being undertaken through the Corporate Plan, in particular, the commitment to:
- **Ensuring high standards in equality, governance and regulatory compliance through effective and efficient processes.**

### 3. Equality Scheme Commitments and Legislation

- 3.1 Section 75 of the 1998 Act requires the Assembly Commission to comply with two statutory duties. The first duty is the Equality of Opportunity duty, which requires public authorities in carrying out their functions relating to Northern Ireland to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between nine equality categories: persons of different religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status or sexual orientation; men and women generally; persons with a disability and persons without; and persons with dependants and persons without.
- 3.2 The second duty, the Good Relations duty, requires that public authorities in carrying out their functions relating to Northern Ireland have regard to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different: religious belief; political opinion; and racial group.
- 3.3 The Assembly Commission's Equality Scheme contains a commitment to conduct an Audit of Inequalities that would inform the development of an Audit of Inequalities Action Plan. The Audit of Inequalities Action Plan is then included as an Annex to the Assembly Commission's Equality Scheme. As such, both documents are publicly consulted upon together during their draft stages.
- 3.4 The [Assembly Commission's current Equality Scheme 2016-21](#), [Audit of Inequalities 2016-21](#) and the [Audit of Inequalities Action Plan 2016-21](#) were approved by the ECNI in March 2016 and were due to come to an end in March 2021, with a successive Equality Scheme and Audit of Inequalities Action Plan due to come into place in March 2021.
- 3.5 Due to staff resourcing issues and, latterly the COVID-19 pandemic, an extension to the current end dates was sought from the ECNI in early 2021. This request was granted and in mid-2021 a further extension was sought due to additional staff departures. The ECNI granted an extension to the Assembly Commission's current Equality Scheme, Audit of Inequalities and its related

Action Plan stating “*Given that the Equality Scheme is a live document there is no difficulty in continuing on with the current Equality Scheme and associated documents until such a time as they can be reviewed. The Audit of Inequalities can also stay operational until that time.*” It is anticipated that the revised Equality Scheme, new Audit of Inequalities and the Audit of Inequalities Action Plan will be in place by October/November 2022.

3.6 It is proposed that the revised Equality Scheme, new Audit of Inequalities and the Audit of Inequalities Action Plan will cover the period 2022 to 2026.

## 4. Methodology and Approach to the development of the Audit of Inequalities and Action Plan

4.1 An assessment to identify the key inequalities has been carried out across the nine Section 75 categories alongside an assessment of the functions and services the Assembly Commission delivers in order to provide a strategic picture of inequalities.

4.2 It is important to note that not all actions need to be 'new', rather the importance is placed on capturing the inequalities and the proposed action measures to be taken to reduce or eliminate these.

4.2 It was considered that a four-stage approach was appropriate to review the Assembly Commission's Equality Scheme, and to develop the Audit of Inequalities and an Audit of Inequalities Action Plan.

### 4.3 Stage One: Review of the Assembly Commission's Equality Scheme.

A draft Equality Scheme 2022-26 for the Assembly Commission has been devised and will be publicly consulted upon. It will be submitted to the Secretariat Management Group (SMG) and Assembly Commission for approval prior to submission to the ECNI.

### 4.4 Stage Two: Review of information/data.

In conducting the Audit of Inequalities, the Equality Unit examined an extensive range of information sources, both external (through relevant desk research and engagement with stakeholders) and internal (user feedback, statistical information, workforce monitoring, complaints, strategies, programmes, etc.). The development of this Audit is timely, as there has been a range of detailed research undertaken recently by a number of Directorates across the Assembly Commission which contributed to assessing access and participation (this list is not exhaustive).

- Assembly Commission 5-year review of the Equality Scheme 2016-21

- Closure Report for Audit of Inequalities 2016-21
- Equality and Good Relations Survey, 2018
- Corporate Strategy 2018-23
- Visitor Survey (Good Relations), 2019
- Gender balance at SMG and Commission Meetings, 2016 – 2019
- Staff Survey – Gender Report 2019
- Section 75 survey, 2021
- Satisfaction Surveys (Engagement Office 2020 – 2021)
- BAME survey 2021
- Audit of Inequalities: Review of internal surveys, by RaISe
- Data gathered from the Assembly Commission’s Disability Action Plan public consultation responses, 2021
- Disability Action Plan 2022-25
- Data gathered in pre-consultation for the Assembly Commission’s Good Relations Action Plan 2022-25
- Good Relations Action Plan 2016-21
- Data received from the staff consultation on the Transgender Policy, 2021
- Assembly Commission HR staff profile data for 2021
- Fair Employment Annual Monitoring Return, 2021
- Staff Disability Annual Audit. 2021
- Digital First, Broadband Provision in Northern Ireland and Differential Access.

**External statistical data was also examined (this list is not exhaustive)**

- Labour Force Survey (LFS) March 2021
- NISRA 2011 census data



- NICS Equality Report 2021
- ONS Statistical Bulletin, Sexual orientation, UK: 2019
- ECNI guidance 'Let's Talk, Lets Listen'

#### **4.5 Stage three: Review of the current Audit of Inequalities.**

A review has been conducted of the Assembly Commission's previous Audit of Inequalities and Audit of Inequalities Action Plan 2016-21. This review has produced an Audit of Inequalities Action Plan Closure Report 2016-21. The Report:

- reviewed implementation to assess whether the stated aims of the Plan were achieved;
- assessed performance against the Plan's actions;
- identified and recognised achievements;
- identified the challenges and lessons learnt; and
- identified the next steps.

Stage three also included a review of Audit of Inequalities Action Plans produced by statutory bodies and other relevant bodies.

#### **4.6 Stage four: Consultation and Engagement.**

##### **Discussion with Heads of Business on what more can be done in their respective areas to promote equality.**

As part of consultation in developing the draft Audit of Inequalities a range of actions were undertaken in order to gather data, this included:

- The Heads of Business (HoB) updates for the Audit of Inequalities Closure Report 2016-21 were analysed;
- Questionnaires were issued to HoB to gather information about equality data in their respective areas;
- In July 2021, an online meeting with approximately 10 representatives from minority ethnic groups in Northern Ireland, including members of the North West Migrants Forum and The Executive Office (TEO) sponsored Race Equality sub-group was held. The meeting discussed

issues and perceived barriers concerning the participation of minority ethnic communities with the work of the Assembly; in particular, language-related concerns.

- As a follow up to the online meeting with ethnic minority groups, an online survey was issued to the same representatives. The survey was conducted between July and August 2021. A total of 109 valid responses were received representing 20 different ethnicities or countries of origin.

## 5. Assessment of Data and Potential Inequalities

### Section 75 Group: Ethnic Minorities

#### Summary of Quantitative and Qualitative Research

**Staff data:** Source: HR Data 2021 and Section 75 Staff Survey 2021.

Both the HR figures and the Section 75 Staff Survey figures show that the overwhelming majority (greater than 97.5%) of Assembly Commission staff have a White ethnicity.

#### Ethnicity in the Assembly Secretariat, 2021

Category	Count	% Assembly section 75 survey	% HR records
White	191	97.5	98.5
Asian	1	0.5	0
Other Ethnic Group	1	0.5	1.5
Prefer not to say	3	1.5	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>196</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

*196 employees responded to the Section Staff 75 survey 2021*

**External data:** Source: March 2021 Labour Force Survey.

The March 2021 Labour Force Survey records that 3.6% of the economically active population in Northern Ireland come from an ethnic minority. The proportion of Assembly Commission staff from an ethnic minority is 2.1% percentage points lower than from the economically active population (3.6%).

**External data:** Source: Assembly Commission Equality Unit BAME Survey 2021.

The Equality Unit conducted a survey of a number of BAME communities in Northern Ireland via Survey Monkey in July 2021 as part of consultation. The survey was designed to ascertain whether;

- (i) any barriers or obstacles existed which might prevent or limit engagement; and

(ii) how these barriers can be overcome.

The survey opened on 23 July 2021 and closed on 6 August 2021. A total of 109 valid responses were received. Respondents suggestions for increased engagement with ethnic minorities included:

- language support for non-English speakers;
- The Assembly website to be made accessible in different languages;
- provision of training on how the Assembly works, and
- an internal Advisory Group or Forum, composed of representatives of both the Assembly Secretariat and BAME communities.

### **Potential Inequalities**

**Ethnic minorities are currently under-represented within the Assembly Commission staff.**

- Action 1 of the draft Audit of Inequalities Action Plan 2022-26 will address this issue.

**The Northern Ireland Assembly Website is currently not available in languages other than English.**

- The draft Good Relations Action Plan 2022-25 action 4.5 will address this issue.

**The work of the Assembly Commission is not understood widely in Ethnic Minority Communities.**

- The draft Good Relations Action Plan 2022-25 actions 4.1, 4.2 & 4.3 will address this issue.

## Section 75 Group: Age

### Summary of Quantitative and Qualitative Research

**Staff data:** Source: HR Data 2021 and NISRA Census 2011 Data for external comparison.

The Assembly Commission has an older age profile than the comparator economically active population, aged 16 – 64.

In particular, at August 2021 the proportion of Assembly staff aged 50 and over (44.8%) was two and a half times more than the corresponding proportion of the economically active population (17.8%).

Conversely, the proportion of Assembly staff aged 34 or under (6.4%) was substantially less than the comparable economically active population (45.2%).

#### Assembly Commission Staff by Age

Category	Count	% Assembly HR records	% Economically Active (Census 2011)
16 - 24	2	0.6	17.9
25 - 34	19	5.8	27.3
35 - 49	159	48.8	37.0
50 - 59	99	30.4	14.9
60 +	47	14.4	2.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>326</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

*Figs. refer to 326 permanent staff*

In brief, when compared with the profile of those available for work in Northern Ireland (economically active), young people appear to be under-represented in the Assembly Commission workforce. When reviewing the figures, however, it is important to note that many Assembly Commission positions require a degree or higher, and in some areas specialist professional qualifications are required.

## Potential Inequalities

**Younger people are currently under-represented within the Assembly Commission workforce.**

**The proportion of Assembly Commission staff aged 34 or under (6.4%) is substantially less than the comparable economically active population (45.2%).**

- Actions 2, 3 and 4 of the draft Audit of Inequalities Action Plan 2022-26 will address this issue.

## Section 75 Group: Gender

### Summary of Quantitative and Qualitative Research

**Staff data:** Source: Human Resources Data 2022

Equality monitoring figures from the HR Office records that Assembly Commission staff are composed 53% Male and 47% female.

#### Assembly Commission Staff by Gender (N=334)

Grade	Male	Female	Total
Senior Management AG 1-4	23 (7%)	29 (9%)	52
Middle Management AG 5-6	46 (14%)	64 (19%)	110
Support Grades AG 7-8	107 (32%)	65 (19%)	172
<b>Total</b>	<b>176</b>	<b>158</b>	<b>334</b>

When analysing the HR data, it was noted that the largest differential in gender was at AG 7-8 which showed there were 13% more males than females within this band. Other grade bandings do not reflect significant differentials in terms of gender.

### Potential Inequalities

**Overall, there is a slight under representation of women in Assembly Commission staff. The largest gender differential is evident at Assembly Commission support grades AG7-8.**

- Actions 5 and 6 of the draft Audit of Inequalities Action Plan 2022-26 will address this issue.

## Section 75 Group: Disability

### Summary of Quantitative and Qualitative Research

It should be noted that the Assembly Commission has published a [Disability Action Plan 2022-25](#) that focuses on promoting positive attitudes towards disabled people and encouraging the participation of disabled people in public life. The actions contained within the Disability Action Plan will not be repeated within this document.

**Source:** Section 75 Staff Survey 2021 & Labour Force Survey 2021.

The Section 75 Staff Survey (June 2021) stated a figure of 38 staff (19.5%) who specified they have a disability. The comparable, economy-wide figure drawn from the Labour Force Survey (LFS) in March 2021 is 11.7%.

#### Proportion (%) with a Declared Disability

Source	%
Assembly section 75 survey (2021)	19.5
LFS (March 2021)	11.7

**Staff data:** Source: Assembly Commission Section 75 Staff Survey 2021.

Thirty-eight (19.5%) of respondents to the staff survey (2021) declared a disability. A total of 49 disabilities were reported, ten had a mobility impairment, while the next largest categories were hearing impairments, reduced physical capacity, and mental illness, with eight respondents each, a further 15 respondents noted their disability as 'other'.

**Source:** Assembly Commission Equality and Good Relations Staff Survey 2018.

Issues raised in the survey relating to disability came under three main headings, namely:

- a. **engagement** and consultation with people with disabilities;
- b. **physical access** in and around Parliament Buildings; and
- c. **disability-related training**.



The Assembly's Corporate Plan 2019-23 includes projects to reassess all allocated accommodation; and to undertake a strategic review of all accommodation. The needs of all building users, including wheelchair users, will be considered in those projects. In addition, a separate project is currently ongoing to review and update the broadcasting service to the Assembly including Committee meeting rooms. This will include consideration of accessibility to the rooms by staff and building users.

People with disabilities can arrange to be dropped off in the upper car park, even if they are not blue badge holders. The relevant Policy is reviewed on an ongoing basis and this includes access to parking spaces by persons with a disability.

An [Accessing Parliament Buildings webpage](#) has been created to highlight the facilities on offer for visitors with a disability, for example, the Changing Places toilet, accessible tours, the quiet room, etc. The webpage includes information about how to get to Parliament Buildings, disability parking and the security check.

## Potential Inequalities

**No new inequalities regarding Assembly Commission staff have been identified at the time of compiling this report.**

The Assembly Commission's Disability Action Plan 2022-25 addresses issues raised in this Audit of Inequalities including:

1. **Engagement and Consultation** with actions: 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 3.5, 3.6, 3.7, 5.1,
2. **Physical Access** with actions: 5.2, 5.3, 5.4
3. **Training** actions: 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5, 1.6,
4. **Website access** actions: 1.6, 3.8, 3.9.

## Section 75 Group: Religious Belief

### Summary of Quantitative and Qualitative Research

**Staff data:** Source: HR Data 2022 / Section 75 Staff Survey 2021.

Respondents to the Section 75 Staff Survey (N = 196) were asked to indicate their religious affiliation. Forty-two percent (**42.4%**) declared they were from the Protestant community, (**30.1%**) said they were Roman Catholic, 21 per cent had 'no religion' and five per cent (5.1%) preferred not to say. One per cent indicated their affiliation as 'other'.

It is important to compare this figure with HR data which confirms that **56% of the permanent workforce is from the Protestant community and 39% from a Roman Catholic Background.**

It is possible that the observed difference in the figures may be partially accounted for by the different ways in which the question was presented. While both the survey and HR forms ask a similar question, based on "community background" the Section 75 survey question gave respondents the additional option of stating "**no religion**". This may have enabled some staff, who are classified as either Protestant, Roman Catholic, or non-determined in the HR figures, to select the "no religion" option.

**Religious Affiliation (N = 196)**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>Per cent (%) Survey</b>	<b>Per cent (%) HR</b>
Roman Catholic community	59	30.1	37.8
Protestant community	83	42.4	58.2
Other religion	2	1.0	0.0
No religion	42	21.4	0.0
Non-determined	0	0.0	4.0
Prefer not to say	10	5.1	0.0
<b>Totals</b>	<b>196</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Section 75 Staff Survey is based on 196 respondents

**Assembly Commission Permanent Staff by Community Background  
(N=334)**

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Protestant</b>	<b>Roman Catholic</b>	<b>Non-determined</b>	<b>Total</b>
Senior Management AG 1-4	23 (7%)	26 (8%)	3 (1%)	52
Middle Management AG 5-6	45 (13%)	58 (17%)	7 (2%)	110
Support Grades AG 7-8	121 (36%)	46 (14%)	5 (1%)	172
<b>Total</b>	<b>189 (56%)</b>	<b>130 (39%)</b>	<b>15 (4%)</b>	<b>334</b>

*Percentages may not sum due to rounding*

When analysing the HR data, it was noted that the largest differential in community background was at AG 7 and AG 8 which showed there were 22% more permanent staff members from a Protestant background compared to a Roman Catholic Background.

**Visitor Data:** Source: Assembly Commission Visitors Survey 2019.

As Parliament Buildings has been largely closed to visitors during the COVID-19 public health emergency from March 2020, the data below relates to pre-pandemic information from the last visitors survey in 2019. The Survey received responses from seventy-three visitors who were taking tours or attending an event in Parliament Buildings. For almost three quarters of respondents (71.2%), this was the first time they visited Parliament Buildings.

When asked if visitors feel that Parliament Buildings is welcoming to people of different ethnic origin, religion or political opinion, excluding those who said they

have no opinion, **91.9%** of respondents said the building is welcoming. A further 6.5% said that the building was neutral (neither welcoming nor unwelcoming to people from different religious or political backgrounds or ethnic groups). One respondent said that they felt the building was not welcoming to people of different ethnic origin, religion or political opinion.

When visitors were asked how they felt that the flags, symbols or emblems in Parliament Buildings contribute to good relations (ethnic origin, religion and political opinion) within the Northern Ireland Assembly, almost three quarters of respondents (**72.7%**) said that they felt they make a positive contribution to good relations.

- A further 18.2% said they make neither a positive or negative contribution.
- 9.1% (4 out of 44) said the flags, symbols or emblems in Parliament Buildings make a negative contribution.

### **Potential Inequalities**

**There is an under-representation of Roman Catholic staff within Assembly Commission staff but with variations across differing grade boundaries. The largest differential is evident at Assembly Commission support grades AG7-8.**

- Actions 7 and 8 the draft Audit of Inequalities Action Plan 2022-26 will address this issue.

## Section 75 Group: Sexual Orientation

### Summary of Quantitative and Qualitative Research

**Staff Data:** Source: Section 75 Staff Survey 2021.

A majority of respondents to the 2021 staff survey (95.9%) stated their sexual orientation as heterosexual. Three respondents (1.6%) indicated they were either gay or lesbian.

#### Sexual Orientation (N = 194)

Category	Count	Per cent (%)
Heterosexual	186	95.9
Gay or Lesbian	3	1.6
Bisexual	0	0.0
I use another term (write in)	0	0.0
Prefer not to say	5	2.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>194</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Section 75 Survey 2021, 194 Responses.

**External Data:** Source: Office for National Statistics (Statistical Bulletin 2019)

An estimated 1.4 million people aged 16 years and over (2.7% of the UK population) identified as lesbian, gay or bisexual (LGB) in 2019, an increase from 1.2 million (2.2%) in 2018. The LGB population comprised 1.6% identifying as gay or lesbian and 1.1% as bisexual.

A lower proportion of people in Northern Ireland (1.3%) identified as lesbian, gay or bisexual (LGB) than in other UK countries and a higher proportion did so in London than in other English regions. Figures for Northern Ireland are based on relatively small sample sizes, which produce less reliable estimates.

### Potential Inequalities

**No inequalities have been identified at the time of compiling this report.**

## Section 75 Group: Political Opinion

### Summary of Quantitative and Qualitative Research

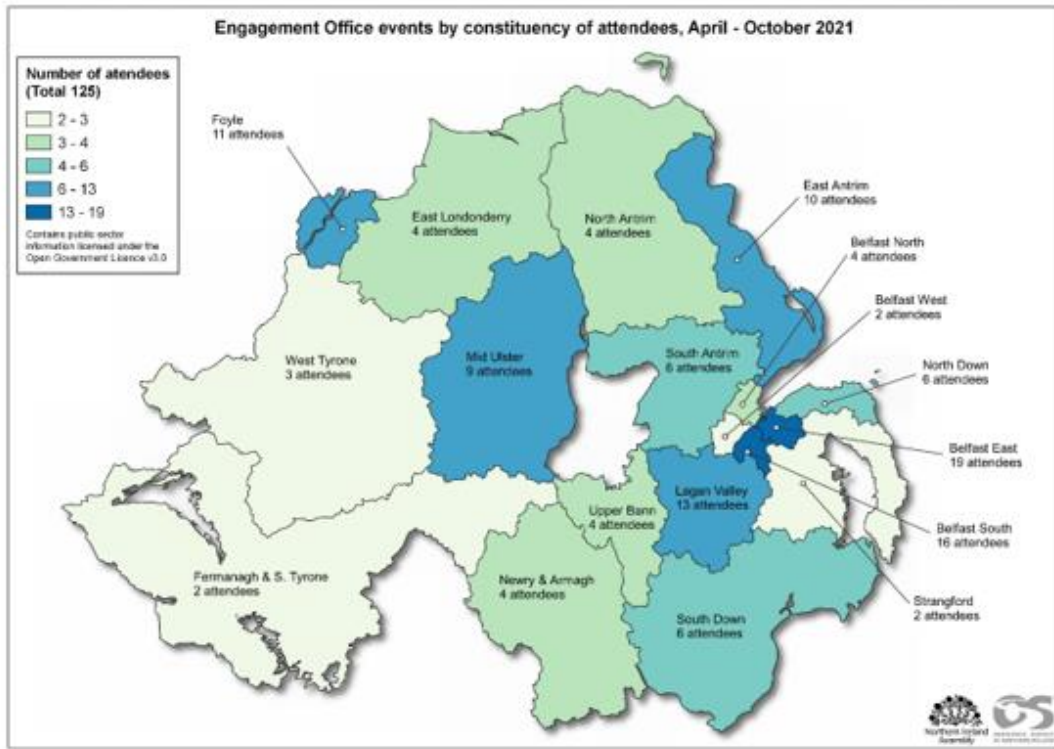
**Staff data:** No data has been collected for Assembly Commission staff, however the Assembly Commission will monitor political opinion when needed for policy development / screening.

**External data:** Source: Assembly Commission Engagement Unit Satisfaction Survey March to October 2021.

The Engagement Office delivers a range of training and educational services to external stakeholders throughout the year. These include private individuals, departmental and non-departmental staff, trade unions and professional associations, plus community and voluntary organisations. Attendees at training seminars are asked to complete a pre-event questionnaire and a brief, post-event satisfaction survey.

The events were organised and delivered by the Engagement Office during the period 28 April 2021 – 11 October 2021. Due to the current COVID-19 restrictions, all training seminars were conducted online using MS Teams and other platforms.

**Map 1: Attendees by Constituency, April 2021 – October 2021 (N = 133)**



All eighteen Assembly Areas are represented in the results. The four Belfast constituencies accounted for the largest number of attendees (41 attendees, 32.8%), followed by Lagan Valley (13 attendees, 10.4%), Foyle (11 attendees, 8.8%), and East Antrim (10 attendees, 8.0%).

### Potential Inequalities

**No inequalities have been identified at the time of compiling this report.**



## Section 75 Group: Marital and Dependent Status

### Summary of Quantitative and Qualitative Research

**Staff Data:** Source: Assembly Commission Section 75 Staff Survey 2021.

A substantial majority of respondents (70.9%) are married, one-in-five (19.9%) are single, and a small proportion (7.1%) are either separated, divorced, or 'other'.

#### Marital Status (N=196)

Category	Count	Per cent (%)
Single	39	19.9
Married	139	70.9
Separated	2	1.0
Divorced	9	4.6
Other (please specify)	3	1.5
Prefer not to say	4	2.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>196</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Based on 196 responses to Marital Status question

Just over a third (35.4%) of respondents to the 2021 staff survey have no caring responsibilities, while half – the largest category (50.8%) – care for one or more children. Nearly a quarter (22.1%) care for one or more adult dependants, while five respondents (2.6%) listed 'other' caring responsibilities.

Quantitative data indicates that currently 87 staff in total working either reduced hours or compressed hours.

**Visitors/Service Users:** No data sources identified.

### Potential Inequalities

**No inequalities have been identified at the time of compiling this report.**

## 6. Draft Audit of Inequalities Action Plan 2022-26

Num.	Equality Group	Audit of Inequality Findings	Equality Actions	Expected Outcomes	Lead and Timescale
1.	<b>Ethnicity</b>	<p>The majority of Assembly staff have a White ethnicity <b>(98.5%)</b></p> <p>The proportion of Assembly staff from an ethnic minority is two percentage points lower than the comparable figure for the economically active population <b>(3.6%)</b> in Northern Ireland, as drawn from the March 2021 Labour Force Survey (LFS).</p> <p>Ethnic minorities are under-represented in Assembly Commission staff.</p>	HR Office to use a focused welcoming statement on recruitment advertising, targeting a range of ethnic minority groups.	An increase in applications from people from ethnic minority communities.	<b>HR Office</b> Ongoing Yearly
2.	<b>Age (Younger People)</b>	<p>The proportion of Assembly staff aged 34 or under <b>(6.4%)</b> is substantially less than the comparable economically active population <b>(45.2%)</b>.</p> <p>Younger people are under - represented in Assembly Commission staff.</p>	HR Office to monitor the age of applicants applying for jobs with the Assembly Commission and consider findings with the intention of taking steps to address any known problems.	To see an increasing number of applications for employment by the Assembly Commission from younger people i.e. under the age of 35.	<b>HR Office</b> Ongoing Yearly

Num.	Equality Group	Audit of Inequality Findings	Equality Actions	Expected Outcomes	Lead and Timescale
3.	<b>Age (Younger People)</b>	See findings for action 2.	To participate in relevant University Recruitment Fairs and relevant Job Fairs.	<b>See Above.</b>	<b>HR Office</b> Ongoing Yearly
4.	<b>Age (Younger People)</b>	See findings for action 2.	The HR Office to use a focused welcoming statement on recruitment advertising targeting people under the age of 35 years old.	<b>See Above.</b>	<b>HR Office</b> Ongoing Yearly

Num.	Equality Group	Audit of Inequality Findings	Equality Actions	Expected Outcomes	Lead and Timescale
5.	<b>Gender</b>	<p>There is a slight under representation of women in the Assembly Commission staff. Monitoring figures record that Assembly Commission staff is composed <b>53% Male and 47% female.</b></p> <p>There are however variations between different grades of staff. So, for example, for staff at Assembly Grades 1 to 4 and Assembly Grades 5 and 6 there is a slight imbalance in favour of females.</p> <p>However, the largest differential is evident at Assembly Grades 7 and 8 in favour of males and that is the largest contributor to the overall figure.</p>	Using the relevant Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) categories, take positive action in recruitment and selection at Assembly Grades 7 and 8 to attract more female applicants to the Assembly Commission.	To see an increasing number of applications for employment by the Assembly Commission from females.	<b>HR Office</b> Ongoing Yearly
6.	<b>Gender</b>	Please see above.	To consider new contracts of employment for relevant posts at Assembly Grades 7 and 8 which may appeal to females e.g. not working during Summer Recess.	<b>See Above.</b>	<b>HR Office</b> Ongoing Yearly

Num.	Equality Group	Audit of Inequality Findings	Equality Actions	Expected Outcomes	Lead and Timescale
7.	<b>Religious Belief</b>	<p>HR data (2021) confirms that <b>56%</b> of the permanent workforce is from the Protestant community and <b>39%</b> from a Roman Catholic Background.</p> <p>When compared to the economically active population in Northern Ireland at the 2011 census where 52.6% Protestants were economically active compared to 47.4% Roman Catholics.</p>	HR Office to monitor the community background of applicants applying for jobs with the Assembly Commission and consider findings with the intention of taking steps to address any known problems.	Assembly Commission staff are more reflective of the economically active population of Northern Ireland.	<b>HR Office</b> Ongoing Yearly
8.	<b>Religious Belief</b>	See Above.	Using the relevant Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) categories, take positive action in recruitment and selection at Assembly Grades 7 and 8 to attract more applicants from a Roman Catholic	<b>See Above</b>	<b>HR Office</b> Yearly Ongoing