

Department of Transport Public Sector Duty Assessment and Action Plan

2023 – 2025



An Roinn Iompair
Department of Transport

**Department of Transport Assessment under Section 42 of the Irish Human Rights and
Equality Act 2014**

Public Sector Duty Assessment and Action Plan 2023 - 2025

All public bodies in Ireland have responsibility, under the Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty or Public Sector Duty, to promote equality, prevent discrimination and protect the human rights of their employees, customers, service users, and everyone affected by their policies and plans. This is a legal obligation and is contained in Section 42 of [the Irish Human Rights and Equality Act 2014](#).

Section 42 states:

A public body shall, in the performance of its functions, have regard to the need to:

1. Eliminate discrimination,
2. Promote equality of opportunity and treatment of its staff and the persons to whom it provides services, and
3. Protect the human rights of its members, staff and the persons to whom it provides services.

Section 42 of the Act also sets out three core steps to be taken by public bodies. These are:

1. In preparing strategic plans, public sector bodies must assess and identify the human rights and equality issues that are relevant to their functions. These issues must relate to all of its functions as policy maker, employer and service provider.
2. Public bodies must then identify the policies and practices that they have in place or that they plan to put in place to address these issues.
3. In their annual reports, or equivalent documents, public bodies must report in a manner accessible to the public on their developments and achievement in that regard.

This department is committed to ensuring that there is a culture of respect for human rights and equality among our staff and for the people to whom we provide services.

A departmental Working Group (WG) was established by the Management Board in January 2020 to drive implementation of our Public Sector Duty (PSD). The cross-sector, cross-grade

working group reports to Management Board periodically and assists with assessing what human rights and equality issues are relevant to our functions and identifying the policies, plans and actions in place to address those issues.

The Department of Transport's first Public Sector Duty Assessment and Action Plan was published in October 2020 to align with the department's Statement of Strategy (SOS) 2021-2023. That Assessment and Action Plan has now been reviewed and updated in line with the publication of the department's [Statement of Strategy 2023-2025](#) and to reflect progress to date.

Key actions since publication in 2020:

- The delivery of information sessions on the PSD Assessment and Action Plan in 2021 to all divisions.
- Working closely with the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission (IHREC) in the development of its introductory eLearning module Equality and Human Rights in the Public Service. The e-learning module was launched in April 2022 and has been rolled out to all staff.
- Development and roll out of Disability Awareness Training for staff.
- Publication of the Report on the Gender Pay Gap in the department.
- The department introduced its first dedicated equality budgeting spending line in the budget alongside dedicated performance indicators, to capture €15.35m provided to the Accessibility Retrofit Programme. This Programme includes the upgrading of existing and older facilities to promote access for people with disabilities, older people, and people with impaired mobility.
- Continuous awareness measures including dedicated repository of information for staff, information on related webinars circulated to all staff and circulation of all relevant equality and human rights information to agencies.
- A number of staff members have now completed IPA Professional Diploma in Human Rights and Equality.
- New members welcomed to PSD WG in 2022 aligning the WG to the department reorganisation with all sectoral areas represented including HR, Finance and Facilities.
- Live webinar with the Ministers highlighting on gender equality on state boards as part of international women's day
- Work on gender in transport and gender analysis toolkit
- Close collaboration and ongoing engagement with areas of the department and networks that are progressing the broader equality, diversity, and inclusion agenda
 - Diversity & Inclusion Networks Partnership;
 - Department LGBTQ+ network;(Pride@Transport) and
 - Department Disability Awareness and Support Network for staff.
- Unconscious Bias online seminar held in March 2022.

In October 2022, the PSD Working Group presented an update on the implementation of the Public Sector Duty in the Department of Transport to the Management Board. Approved by the Management Board, a work programme was developed by the WG focusing on

- Awareness Raising
- Assessment of Equality and Human Rights by Divisions and
- Strategy and Policy Formulation

Other actions and activity in the department relating to human rights and equality

The department actively participates on a number of interdepartmental implementation groups in the areas of disability, integration, gender and inclusion.

Accessibility Consultative Committee

Under the National Disability Inclusion Strategy 2017 – 2021 (NDIS), every department is required to have a departmental consultative committee and this department's is called the Accessibility Consultative Committee (ACC). The main purpose of the departmental consultative committees is to oversee and monitor each department and its agencies actions under the NDIS. The department chairs and provides the secretariat for the ACC. The ACC comprises representatives of the Disability Stakeholders Group (who are appointed by the Minister for Disability), disability organisations and relevant State agencies and meets quarterly to review progress on the Department's Accessibility Work Programme. The next iteration (including reporting structures) of the NDIS is currently under development.

Department of Transport's People Strategy

The department is currently developing its next iteration of its People Strategy which will continue to champion equality, diversity and inclusion.

Under the previous HR Development Strategy 2020 – 2022, we committed to “nurturing an attractive, rewarding and inclusive work environment” having built a more attractive, rewarding, inclusive and innovative department which continues to effectively lead and address public policy challenges across the sectors for which we have responsibility.

Relevant actions include:

- Investing in and promoting wellness initiatives for staff: this is on-going.
- Actively promoting inclusion and diversity in the department through initiatives such as the LGBTQ+ and Disability Networks. The LGBTQ+ network, Pride@Transport, was established in early 2020.

The department actively participated in Dublin Pride since 2019, including marching in the Dublin Pride Parade in 2022 and has facilitated “lunch and learn” seminars for both LGBTQ+ and disability issues.

- In April 2022, the co-chairs of Pride@Transport provided an update on their work to date and plans for the future to MB. Plans for 2023 were welcomed and approved,
- In 2021, staff established the Disability Awareness and Support Network, actively raising awareness and providing peer support to staff. Each year the department supports the International Day of Persons with Disabilities, including lighting the building purple. The network also holds ‘lunch and learn’ sessions presented by staff members and external experts on a variety of topics related to disability
- There are additional annual events to mark national and international days of observations, such as International’s Women’s Day, International Men’s Day, World Mental Health Day, etc.
- Facilitating the introduction of networks at all grades to be led by staff with appropriate support where required: the department is examining options to expand on the number and variety of its networks
- The Department of Transport runs all of its recruitment and promotions competitive processes in line with Commission for Public Service Appointments (CPSA) [Code of Practice](#). The principles established by the Commission in this Code of Practice are underpinned by the core values that define probity such as integrity, impartiality, fairness, reliability and ethical conduct.

As part of aligning and integrating our Public Sector Duty with our strategic planning processes, our initial Assessment and Action Plan for 2021-2023 has been reviewed and updated to take account of the approved work plan, covers the period 2023-2025 and is detailed below. We will continue to ensure organisational commitment with senior management and, through our Working Group, we will continue to work with all staff in delivering on our commitments identified in this Action Plan. The Action Plan will be integrated into our business planning process and we will report progress in our department's Annual Reports. Our assessment and action plan will continue to evolve with the functions and activities of the department, reflecting the fact that this is an ongoing duty that must be continuously monitored, reviewed and developed.

**DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORT PUBLIC SECTOR DUTY ASSESSMENT AND ACTION
PLAN 2023-2025**

	Assessment	Action Required	Timeline in 3 year SOS Cycle
1.	Continued awareness-raising of the Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty is required in the department	Awareness-raising of our Public Sector Duty and of IHREC will continue for all staff in line with the PSD Work Programme.	Year 1 – Year 3
2.	Awareness of Human Rights obligations among staff of the department needs to be raised	Awareness raising of Human Rights obligations to continue in line with PSD Work Programme.	Year 1 – Year 3
3.	There is a high level of awareness of 9 of the 10 grounds on which it is unlawful to discriminate. The exception being, people in receipt of Housing Assistance payment	Continued awareness raising of Equality and Human Rights legislation.	Year 1- Year 3
4.	While staff appear to have confidence in their own abilities to perform particular functions without discriminating against or infringing on human rights of colleagues and customers, the department needs to ensure that this confidence is grounded in an appropriate awareness of equality and human rights obligations and supported by necessary skills development.	Continued roll out of training in line with PSD work programme	Year 1 – Year 3
5.	There is a need to consider human rights and equality obligations at a Divisional level. The aim of these assessments will be to identify	Analyse each Division to obtain the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Description of work 	Year 1 and 2

	<p>the human rights and equality issues relevant to the division's functions, to the services it provides, or regulates or oversees, and to its employees.</p> <p>As part of this we will engage with our external stakeholders and service users.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public Sector Duty / Equality and Human Rights issues • Current measures in place in relation to PSD, equality and Human Rights • Gaps and planned measures to mitigate gaps 	
6.	Continue to ensure that the Agencies under the remit of the department are aware of their obligations in relation to the Public Sector Duty.	Build upon the increased awareness achieved from 2020 – 2022 and explore approaches to promoting the implementation of the Public Sector Duty with public bodies under the aegis of our department.	Year 2
7.	Opportunities will arise on an ongoing basis during this action plan where our Public Sector Duty can be promoted and implemented.	The timelines associated with the Assessment and Action Plan will not restrict the department in promoting and implementing its Public Sector Duty when opportunities arise.	Ongoing