

Civil Society Panel

Our Agenda for Today

1. Welcome and introductions
2. Recap on last meeting, comments and thoughts
3. The public sector duty in more detail
4. Building our profile
5. Next Steps
6. AOB

Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty

The Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty was brought into law in 2014

Section 42 Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act 2014 says that

- A Public Body must have regard for the need to;
- **Eliminate discrimination**
- **Promote equality of opportunity and treatment** for its staff and service users and
- **Protect the human rights** of its members, staff and people who use it's services.



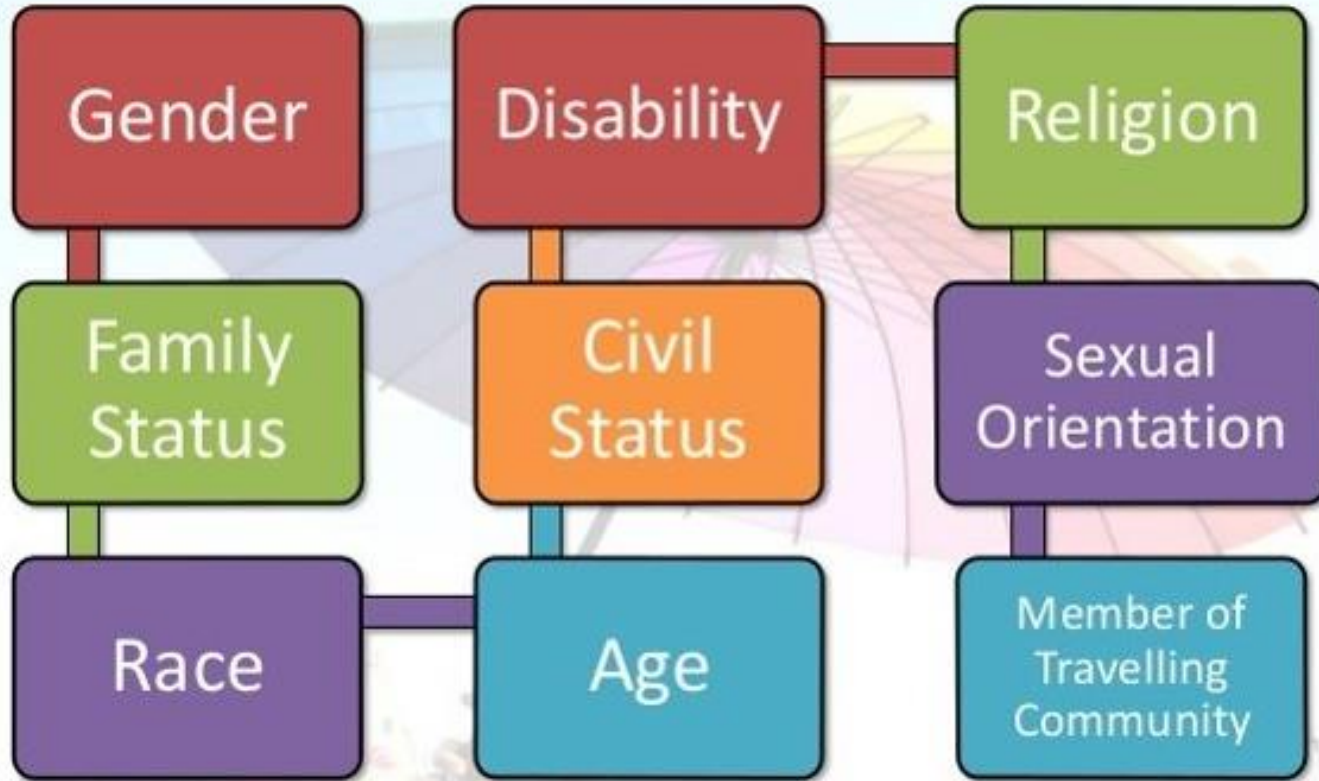
Who are the Groups the Duty is Focussed on

The primary focus of the duty is on the grounds named in Irish Equality laws. These are

- The Equal Status Act (goods and services and
- Employment Equality Act (pay, vocational training, access to **employment**, work experience and promotion).
- These laws outlaw discrimination on 9 grounds.



What are the grounds covered?



And a “10th Ground” People at risk of poverty and social exclusion



Who is Responsible for Overseeing the Duty in Ireland?

- The **Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission (IHREC)** have overall responsibility for supporting implementation of the Duty by Public Bodies.
- **State Agencies** or **Non-Commercial State Agencies** in Ireland are public sector bodies of the state that have a statutory obligation to perform specific tasks on behalf of the [Government of Ireland](#).

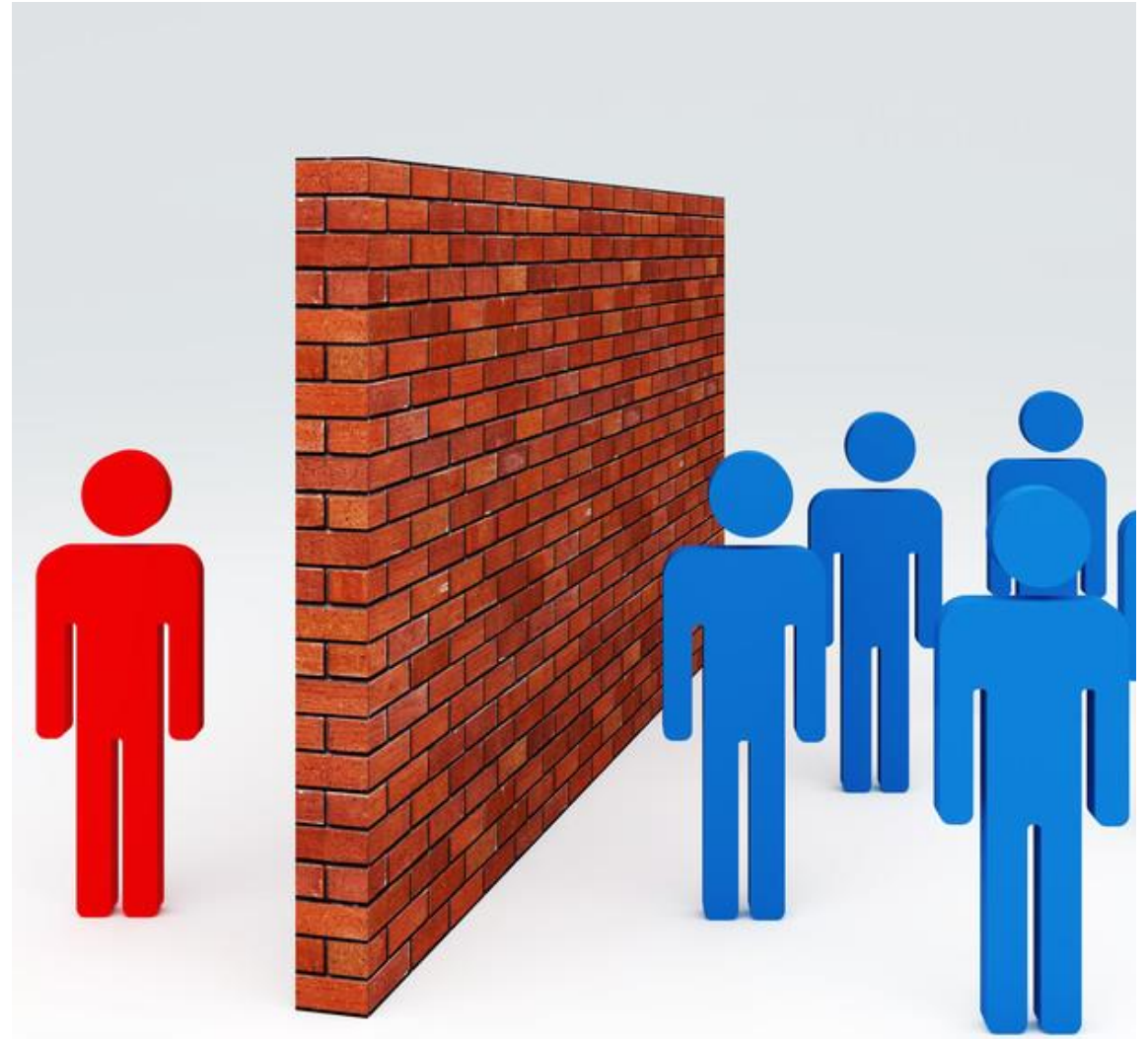


What Does a Public Body
have to Do?

1. Assess

Set out in its strategic plan or corporate plan the equality and human rights issues relevant to their work.

This assessment must be **based on evidence such as** research, government policies (e.g. national strategy for women and girls, national Traveller and Roma inclusion Strategy), consultation with staff and service users.



2. Address

- Set out in its strategic plan the policies, plans and actions that they have or will put in place to address those issues, in a way that is transparent and accessible to the public.
- This includes positive actions to bring people to a level playing field



3. Report

Report on developments and achievements in its ANNUAL REPORT, in a manner that is accessible to the public.



Q. What parts of an organisations work are covered? A. All parts

- **Organisational Planning / Corporate Services** (*planning, budgets, procurement, grants*)
- **Human Resources** (*recruitment, HR staff training*)
- **Service Provision** (*delivery of a service or engagement with key stakeholders*)
- **Research and Policy**
- **Regulation and Oversight**



<https://www.ihrec.ie/our-work/public-sector-duty/>



Where do communities and civil society fit in?

- We can use our expertise as rights holders to support public bodies to develop their equality and human rights assessment and action plan
- We can act as partners in monitoring compliance with the Duty
- We can use the Duty as a tool to highlight our equality and human rights issues in our engagement with public bodies



Your
Comments
and
Questions at
This Stage



Consultation and Engagement are Key

Key messages to public bodies:

- ✓ **Consult with service users and staff** at each of the three stages of *Assess, Address and Report* in a timely way – strategic planning cycle
- ✓ **Inclusive consultation with all identified groups** – nine grounds and persons at risk of poverty and social exclusion
- ✓ **Invite groups to give feedback on draft assessment, draft action plan *and* the draft report on progress and achievements**

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Key Messages in Relation to the Duty Overall

1. **Statutory obligation** since 1 November 2014
2. **It needs Senior Level Commitment**, Leadership, and Strategy
3. The Duty must be central to and align with **strategic planning process/cycles** (ongoing)
4. **Vision and Values** – Human Rights and Equality must be at their heart
5. Duty applies to -**Staff and Service Users** - **daily work**, across **all functions** – its about **everyday practice**, a **culture of respect** for human rights and equality

Key Messages in Relation to the Duty Overall



6. Evidence based approach: Importance of Data, participation - Mechanisms for listening to and understanding diverse communities and groups

7. Implementation structure to drive the Duty

8. Build on structures and initiatives already in place

9. Coherent framework for progressing actions relating to equality and human rights under national policies, strategies