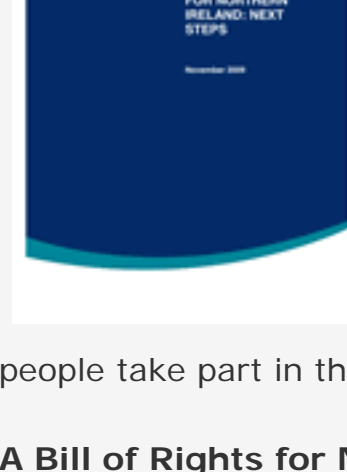


Monday 1 February 2010

[Bill of Rights](#) | [Research and investigations](#) | [Legislation and policy](#) | [Other news](#) | [NIHRC events](#) | [External events](#) | [Dates for your diary](#) | [Follow us](#) | [Feedback](#) | [Contact us](#)

Bill of Rights update



Government consultation on a Bill of Rights

On 10 December 2008, the Commission presented its [advice](#) to the Government on the possible content of a Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland. On 30 November 2009, the Government published its consultation paper [A Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland: Next Steps](#). More information about the consultation, including an optional [response form](#), can be found on the Northern Ireland Office [website](#). Responses should be sent to the Northern Ireland Office by 1 March 2010.

The Commission has produced a number of resources that can help people take part in the consultation:



A Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland: Advice to the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland

This is available in a number of formats:

- The [full report](#)
- A summary version in [English](#) and [Irish](#)
- [Easy-read](#) version
- [Poster](#) version
- Newspaper [supplement](#)



Education Pack on a Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland

This pack is aimed at citizenship teachers and youth leaders and is available to schools and youth organisations to help young people participate in the Government consultation. The key resources from the pack, including [guidance notes](#) and a [lesson plan](#), can be downloaded from our [website](#) and a limited number of hard copies are available [on request](#).

More information about the Bill of Rights can be found on our dedicated website [www.borini.info](#)

[back to top ↑](#)

Research and investigations update

Human trafficking in Northern Ireland

A new [study](#) into the nature and extent of human trafficking in Northern Ireland was published by the [Human Rights Commission](#) and the [Equality Commission for Northern Ireland](#) on 29 January 2010.

The study shows evidence of the trafficking of women and children for the purposes of sexual exploitation and forced labour. The authors of the report highlight significant gaps in knowledge about the extent and nature of trafficking and that a system of data collection in Northern Ireland is virtually non-existent. Of equal concern is the limited and ad-hoc nature of the provision of services for victims. The report recommends a multi-agency response including more training and awareness of trafficking for agencies and public authorities and more effective communication between the organisations involved in supporting victims. [Read more](#).

[Download the study](#)

Updated paper on identity cards

Our research paper [More than just a card: Intrusion, exclusion and suspect communities](#), first published in October 2008, on identity cards and the implications of the British National Identity Scheme has been updated.

The paper focuses on discrimination and a range of concerns are raised in relation to racial discrimination and the potential risks of exacerbating racial profiling in practice. The paper also examines identity cards and the particular circumstances of Northern Ireland.

[Download the research paper](#)

[back to top ↑](#)

Legislation and policy update

Legislative scrutiny of asylum support and destitution

In January, we gave evidence to the [Joint Committee on Human Rights](#) (JCHR) in respect of the legislative scrutiny of asylum support and destitution. The evidence focuses on the findings of the Commission's investigation report [No Home from Home: Homelessness for people with No or Limited Access to Public Funds](#). This report, published in September 2009, examines the extent and impact of destitution on non-UK nationals including asylum seekers.

[Download evidence](#)

A Commissioner for Older People in Northern Ireland

The Commission supports the commitment of the [OFMdFM](#) to establish a Commissioner for Older People and believes the recent [consultation on policy proposals and draft Bill](#) is a positive step towards fulfilling this commitment. In our response to the consultation, we welcome a number of provisions, such as the proposals relating to formal investigations, specifically the power to require evidence and to enter premises managed by a 'relevant authority'. We identify other areas where the proposals and draft Bill should be improved to ensure an effective and independent role for the Older People's Commissioner.

[Download response](#)

[back to top ↑](#)

Other news

Consultation - Migrant Workers Convention

The Joint Committee of representatives of the [Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission](#) and the [Irish Human Rights Commission](#) invites views on its [consultation paper](#) on the Migrant Workers Convention. The consultation closes on 26 February 2010. Full details, including how to respond, are available on our [website](#).

New Strategic Plan

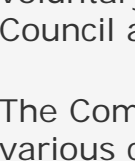
Our new Strategic Plan 2009-2011 is available on our [website](#).

Resignation of Commissioner Jonathan Bell

Jonathan Bell has resigned from the Commission to serve as a member of the Northern Ireland Assembly for the Strangford constituency. He was nominated by the DUP following Mrs Robinson's resignation last month. Jonathan was first appointed as a part-time member of the Commission in September 2005 and reappointed in September 2008. The Commission wishes him well in this new role.

[back to top ↑](#)

NIHRC events



Meet the Commission - Strabane reception

22 March 2010, 4.30pm-6pm, Strabane District Council, Strabane

The Commission would like to invite representatives from local community, voluntary and business sector organisations based in the Strabane District Council area to a reception, hosted by the Council, on Monday 22 March 2010.

The Commission has benefited from the advice of key stakeholders through various consultation processes in the past and we welcomed an opportunity to meet local opinion-formers. We are particularly welcome in hearing views on ways in which the Commission can enhance working relationships and address local human rights issues.

To book a place, please contact [Charlene Craig](#), tel: (028) 9024 3987 before Wednesday 12 March.

[back to top ↑](#)

External events

[Contact [Charlene Craig](#), if you would like to promote your human rights event here]

Women's sector, on a Bill of Rights

9 February 2010, 12pm-2pm, Equality Commission, Belfast

The Women's Ad hoc Policy Group have organised an event to discuss the Northern Ireland Office consultation paper [A Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland: Next Steps](#). Lunch will be provided. To book a place, please contact [Lynn Carvill](#), tel: (028) 9023 0212.

Protecting children and young people from discrimination - A legal overview

10 February 2010, 9.30am-12.30pm, Children's Law Centre, Belfast

This [Children's Law Centre](#) training will examine the main legal provisions for protecting children and young people from discrimination and may be of particular interest to those working for or on behalf of marginalised children and young people across the voluntary, statutory and legal sectors. Three CPD hours are available for solicitors and barristers. To book a place, please contact [Emma Campbell](#), Children's Law Centre, tel: (028) 9024 5704

NICEM 12th annual human rights and equality conference

12 February 2010, 9.15am-4.30pm, Wellington Park Hotel, Belfast

This conference will focus on four areas: a Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland and the current proposal from the Secretary of State; impact of the economic downturn on economic and social rights; public interests and judicial review of the year; and equality and immigration law update. 5.5 CPD points can be claimed for attendance. More information, including the agenda and registration details can be found on [NICEM's website](#).

Disability, discrimination and human rights conference

20 February 2010, 9am-1pm, Lanyon G10N QUB, Belfast

The [Human Rights Centre](#) in the School of Law at Queen's University Belfast in collaboration with Disability Action's [Centre on Human Rights for People with Disabilities](#) invite you to attend this morning conference on Disability, Discrimination and Human Rights - Recent National and International Developments. Two CPD Points can be claimed for attendance. [More details](#).

[back to top ↑](#)

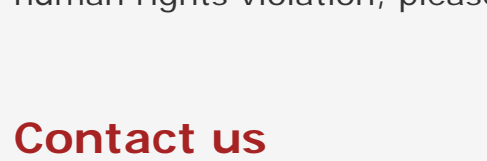
Dates for your diary

- 09 February - [Women's sector seminar](#)
- 10 February - [Children's Law Centre training](#)
- 12 February - [NICEM conference](#)
- 20 February - [Disability, discrimination and human rights conference](#)
- 26 February - [Migrant worker consultation deadline](#)
- 01 March - [Bill of Rights consultation deadline](#)

[back to top ↑](#)

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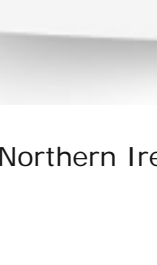
[back to top ↑](#)

Feedback

The Commission works hard to provide the best possible service and we welcome your feedback on this e-Newsletter. If you would like to comment on any aspect of our work, write to us at the address below or [contact us](#) on our website. We look forward to hearing your views. If you need to make a complaint about a human rights violation, please read our [FAQ](#).

[back to top ↑](#)

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