

# Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty – Progress Report 2025 - Port of Cork Company

## Executive Summary

This report is published in accordance with Section 42 of the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act 2014. It outlines how Port of Cork Company has had regard to its obligations to eliminate discrimination, promote equality of opportunity and treatment, and protect human rights in the performance of its functions.

Using the 2025 Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty report as a style and content guide, this document provides a factual, high-level account of relevant functions, policies, governance arrangements, and progress to date. No new commitments, initiatives, targets, or performance claims are introduced in this report.

## 1. Introduction

The Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty (the “Public Sector Duty”), set out in Section 42 of the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act 2014 (the “2014 Act”), places a statutory obligation on public bodies to have regard to human rights and equality considerations in the performance of their functions.

This report is prepared pursuant to Section 42 of the 2014 Act and relates to the statutory functions, activities, and employment practices of Port of Cork Company.

The report outlines relevant human rights and equality considerations arising from:

- Port of Cork Company’s role as an operator of strategic national port infrastructure; and
- Port of Cork Company’s role as an employer.

In performing its functions, Port of Cork Company has regard to the need to:

- eliminate discrimination.
- promote equality of opportunity and treatment; and
- protect the human rights of employees, port users, and other stakeholders.

## 2. Port of Cork Company

Port of Cork Company is a statutory commercial State body responsible for the management, control, operation, and development of port infrastructure within its harbour area. Its functions include the provision and regulation of port services, the management of port lands and assets, and the facilitation of safe, efficient, and sustainable maritime trade.

The purpose, values and strategic objectives of Port of Cork Company are set out in its corporate and strategic planning documents. These documents reflect commitments to safety, sustainability, good governance, respect for people, and compliance with applicable legal and regulatory obligations, including those relating to equality and human rights.

## 3. Services and Functions Relevant to the Public Sector Duty

### 3.1 Services to Port Users and Stakeholders

Port of Cork Company provides and facilitates access to port infrastructure and services for shipping lines, terminal operators, logistics providers, passengers, and other port users. While many operational services within the Port are delivered by licensed or authorised operators,

Port of Cork Company retains responsibility for regulatory oversight, safety management, and governance.

Relevant human rights and equality considerations in this context include:

- fair and transparent access to port infrastructure and facilities.
- compliance with applicable regulatory and safety standards.
- accessibility considerations where services or facilities are directly provided by Port of Cork Company; and
- engagement with stakeholders in a manner that is respectful, proportionate, and consistent with the rule of law.

### **3.2 Public-facing Statutory and Regulatory Functions**

Port of Cork Company carries out a range of statutory and regulatory functions under ports, maritime safety, environmental and planning legislation. These functions are exercised in accordance with statutory procedures, published policies where applicable, and established governance frameworks.

In exercising these functions, Port of Cork Company has regard to principles of fairness, proportionality, non-discrimination, and due process.

### **4. Port of Cork Company as an Employer**

As an employer, Port of Cork Company recognises its obligations under employment, equality, health and safety, and data protection legislation. Employment practices are conducted in a manner intended to be fair, transparent, and respectful of the dignity and rights of employees.

Port of Cork Company operates in accordance with applicable legislative and policy frameworks, which may include:

- employment equality and industrial relations legislation.
- health, safety, and welfare legislation.
- data protection legislation; and
- applicable public sector or sectoral codes, policies, and guidelines.

These frameworks inform Port of Cork Company's approach to recruitment, learning and development, performance management, workplace conduct, health and safety, and employee engagement.

## **5. Equality, Diversity and Human Rights Governance**

### **5.1 Diversity and Inclusion Policy and Board Oversight**

Equality and human rights considerations are supported by Port of Cork Company's Board-approved Diversity and Inclusion Policy, which sets out the organisation's commitment to fostering a welcoming, respectful, and inclusive working environment.

Oversight of equality, diversity and inclusion matters is provided through the Board and relevant Board sub-committee governance structures, within which people, governance and organisational matters are considered as part of established decision-making and oversight processes.

## **5.2 Action Planning and Thematic Pillars**

Port of Cork Company has developed action plans structured under defined equality and diversity pillars. These action plans support a coordinated and proportionate approach to considering equality, inclusion, and human rights issues across the organisation.

Progress is monitored through existing internal governance, management, and reporting arrangements, consistent with the organisation's overall governance framework.

## **5.3 Gender Pay Gap Reporting**

In accordance with statutory requirements, Port of Cork Company undertakes Gender Pay Gap reporting. This reporting provides transparency regarding gender pay differentials and informs ongoing consideration of workforce composition, employment practices, and equality objectives.

Gender Pay Gap reporting forms part of the wider framework through which equality considerations are reviewed and addressed.

## **5.4 Sustainability and Emerging Reporting Frameworks**

In the context of broader governance and sustainability reporting, Port of Cork Company has regard to evolving voluntary frameworks, including the Voluntary Sustainability Reporting Standard for non-listed SMEs (VSME), where appropriate and proportionate.

Consideration of such frameworks supports alignment between equality, human rights, governance, and sustainability objectives, without creating additional statutory obligations beyond those that apply.

## **6. Reporting and Transparency**

Port of Cork Company reports on its activities and performance through its established annual reporting and governance processes. This Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty report is intended to provide transparency regarding how Port of Cork Company has had regard to its obligations under Section 42 of the 2014 Act.

This report complements existing corporate, governance and statutory disclosures.

## **7. Conclusion**

Port of Cork Company is committed to carrying out its statutory functions in a manner that is consistent with the Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty. This includes ongoing regard to equality and human rights considerations in governance, operations, and employment practices.

This report reflects current practices and governance arrangements and will inform future consideration of the Public Sector Duty as part of the ongoing strategic and governance processes of Port of Cork Company.

*This report has been prepared using the structure, tone, and level of detail of the reference 2025 Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty report. It does not introduce new policies, initiatives, targets, or commitments beyond existing practices.*