

# NATIONAL ACTION PLAN AGAINST RACISM

## Galway Submission July 2021



Galway County  
**Public Participation  
Network**

Líonra Rannpháirtíochta Phoiblí  
Chontae na Gaillimhe



Galway City Community Network  
Líonra Pobail Chathair Na Gaillimhe



Galway City Partnership  
Comhpháirtíocht Chathair na Gaillimhe

a tide for change  
an taoide ag casadh



Galway Traveller Movement

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### Preface

Established in 2014, **Galway City Community Network** (GCCN) is the Public Participation Network in Galway City. It represents groups and organisations in the community, voluntary and environmental sectors in Galway City. The twin objectives that GCCN pursues are to:

- Advance the values of sustainability, equality, culture, community, empowerment and inclusivity and embed these in the policies, programmes and practice of local government, state organisations, national government and civil society.
- Develop and implement progressive models of and approaches to representation, participation and engagement for civil society in informing and shaping policy development and implementation.

GCCN welcomes the opportunity to coordinate a joint submission on the National Action Plan Against Racism from Galway civil society. The recommendations contained in the submission were developed through collaborative workshops hosted by GCCN, the Bridge Project Galway City Partnership and Galway County PPN.

This submission is submitted from Galway City Community Network, Galway City Partnership, Galway Traveller Movement, Galway Anti Racism Network, Galway County PPN and Blue Teapot Theatre Company.



## General comments

### ***“Racism is a poison, and the outcomes of systematic racism are many”***

Dr. Mike Ryan, World Health Organization speaking at the Build Homes, Build Health, Build Hope event organised by Galway Traveller Movement, July 7<sup>th</sup> 2021

Galway City was the first area to develop and publish a local action plan against racism, *Towards a City of Equals*, in 2005. Galway City Community Network, Galway City Partnership, Galway Traveller Movement, Galway Anti Racism Network, Galway County PPN and Blue Teapot Theatre Company welcomes the development of a new National Action Plan Against Racism to provide a strategic framework for addressing racism in Ireland.

We welcome the intent as set out in the Programme for Government and is being pursued by the Minister for Children, Equality, Disability, Integration, and Youth, to continue to build on hard-won progress to give real meaning to our best values of equality and fairness.<sup>1</sup>

We welcome the understanding of racism underpinning the work of the Anti-Racism Committee and commends the Committee for ensuring that the focus is firmly on systemic racism whether that is perpetrated on purpose or in effect.

We believe that the central role of the community sector as both rights holders and duty bearers needs to be named in the Plan and an emphasis placed on the need for community work to support real collective empowerment of minority groups.

To ensure robust and effective actions we recommend the use of action words throughout the Plan such as “demands” in place of “encourages”, “implements” in place of “supports”.

Below we set out a number of actions that we believe would be useful to include in the Action Plan.

## Access to Justice

In relation to Access to Justice, what is required is:

- Implement the Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty that requires all public bodies to promote equality, prevent discrimination and protect the human rights of their employees, customers, service users and everyone affected by their policies and plans, throughout the Justice system
- Robust mechanisms to address racism within public bodies
- Ensure Anti-Racism and Cultural Competency training throughout the Justice system
- Develop and implement a complaints mechanism for all associated with the Justice system, particularly Gardaí, solicitors, and judges

<sup>1</sup> Department of an Taoiseach (2020), *Programme for Government: Our Shared Future*, p.76.

- Provide accessible and clear pathways to report incidents of racism, taking language and ability to navigate systems into account
- A clear pathway from reporting to redress and action
- Raising awareness of the importance of reporting incidents of racism
- Ensuring it is an aggravating factor when it comes to sentencing perpetrators of racism
- Extend the supports available to victims of crime to victims of racism
- Ensure the prison service is trained to identify and address racism within the prison system
- Protocol in relation to ethnic profiling
- Re-establishment of the Equality Tribunal
- Review of legislation to give full effect to the provisions of CERD in domestic legal order.
- Ethnic identifier implemented across the justice system and used to monitor and report on levels of racist crime and minority ethnic groups experience across the justice system.
- Programmes to increase diversity within the justice system including within An Garda Síochána and the legal professions
- Sufficient resourcing for community policing and Garda Diversity Officers
- Repeal of the 27th Amendment
- Ensure full implementation of the current legislation

## Media

“If we can see ourselves in the media that goes a long way”

- Workshop participant

In relation to the media, including social media:

- Enact legislation in relation to Hate Speech
- Ensure that those that work in the media are required to undergo Anti-Racism training
- Monitor all media for evidence of racism and take action where required
- Develop a mechanism for monitoring and sanctions where reporting fails to meet codes of practice for example NUJ's Guidelines of 'Reporting Race' and 'Reporting on Refugees'
- Development of guidelines for appropriate commentators and experts on issues related to minority ethnic groups and sanctioning of media outlets that feature Far Right commentators speaking on these issues
- Develop and implement a national campaign highlighting hate speech
- Engage with Social Media platforms on their definition of hate speech, their enforcement of 'Community Standards' and their monitoring of disinformation campaigns including sock puppet and bot accounts.
- Programmes which support diversity and meaningful representation across the media



## Public Services

In relation to public services generally:

- Implement the Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty that requires all public bodies to promote equality, prevent discrimination and protect the human rights of their employees, customers, service users and everyone affected by their policies and plans, throughout all public services
- Reporting requirements and accountability mechanisms developed in relation to the implementation of the Public Sector Duty
- Ethnic identifier across services and analysis of service use and outcomes
- Improved access to language interpretation services to support equitable access to services e.g. work of Interpreting Ireland
- Ensure that Action 15 in the Migrant Integration Strategy (“Information will be provided in language-appropriate formats and in a manner easily accessible by migrants”) and Action 19 (“The availability of interpreting will be prominently displayed in a range of languages in public offices.”) is implemented fully, as these were indicated as delayed in the 2019 Progress Report as ‘delayed’.<sup>2</sup> Once implemented, this should be continually monitored and expanded to encompass new languages and formats as required.
- Ensure that adequate interpreting facilities are provided. Action 18 of the Migrant Integration Strategy states that “Mechanisms for providing adequate interpreting facilities will be explored in order to facilitate equality of access to services”. This was indicated as delayed in the 2019 Progress Report.<sup>3</sup> Not only should the mechanisms be explored, but they should be implemented to ensure equity.

## Education

In relation to the education at all levels:

- Embed Anti-Racism training throughout the education system
- Impose regulations on education services, schools and institutions requiring evidence based compliance with proactive Anti-Racism policies
- Impose sanctions where there are breaches of these regulations
- Diversity embedded within teacher training programmes and syllabus
- Require teacher training to include anti-racism and diversity training, and specifically, linguistic diversity training to enable teachers to better support students who speak languages other than Irish or English as their home language. The English Language Support Teachers of Ireland (ELSTA) currently runs a CPD course for in-service teachers on anti-racism and linguistic diversity. Consideration should be made for rolling this course out as a compulsory component of teacher training at the national level (Action 31 in the Migrant Integration Strategy “The effectiveness of training for teachers on managing diversity and tackling racism will be reviewed,” which was reported as delayed.”<sup>4</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Government of Ireland (2019), The Migrant Integration Strategy 2017-2020 Progress Report to the Government Office for the Promotion of Migrant Integration 2019, p. 28 and 31 respectively.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid, p.31.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid, p. 40.

- Emphasis should be placed on ensuring that the PLC/CTB is implemented across the sector. The PLC/CTB's emphasis on learning across languages should be embedded in school policy and pedagogical practice. Students of migrant access should be given full access to the Irish language and not for example, denied the opportunity to gain competence in Irish because of the age of their arrival in the State, or have their EAL support scheduled primarily during Irish language classes in the mainstream classrooms, as is often the de facto policy in many schools
- Free and low-cost EAL provision in adult education which is easily accessible in terms of location, times, etc. The current Migration Integration Strategy emphasises the need to “develop a programme to advance integration outcomes in adult education (in particular English language acquisition)”.<sup>5</sup> A national programme, which is either no or low cost given individual circumstances, and which is widely available through all parts of the State, both urban and rural, and online, should be considered. Further, although EAL provision and adult education is usually mentioned in conjunction with employment, it should also specifically include persons of migrant backgrounds who are not seeking full-time employment (i.e. those who are caregivers)
- Eliminate the culture that imposes lower educational expectations of Traveller and other ethnic minority children and young people
- Eliminate the disproportionate imposition of the ‘reduced hours’ mechanism on Traveller and other ethnic minority children and young people
- Fully implement ‘Languages Connect - Ireland’s Strategy for Foreign Languages in Education 2017-2026’
- Improved access to conversion courses and development of a skillnet programme to match skills and qualifications to prevent the need for full retraining.

## Employment

In relation to employment:

- Incentivise employers to develop and implement proactive employment diversity policies in favour of ethnic minorities
- Require public sector employers to implement employment diversity policies
- Develop and implement an Employment Strategy for Traveller and Ethnic Minorities
- Remove barriers to accessing the labour market in full for those living under the direct provision system
- Public Service recruitment targets which need to be reported on annually - targets need to be robust and set to ambitious levels which will address employment inequalities across communities
- Enhanced opportunities for adults to acquire the linguistic competency requisite for employment. Ideally, a national programme that provided low and free EAL provision, complemented by the local support initiatives in Action Point 40 (p. 49) of the Migrant Integration Strategy Progress Report.

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<sup>5</sup> Government of Ireland (2017), The Migrant Integration Strategy, p.83.

## Health

In relation to health:

- Immediate action to address perinatal mortality rates of minority ethnic group communities
- Further resourcing to address health inequalities experienced by the Traveller community
- Action 49 in the Migration Integration Strategy reads “An appropriate model will be developed for the provision of interpreting services to users within the health area who are not proficient in English”. This was reported as ‘on track’ in the 2019 Migration Integration Strategy progress report.<sup>6</sup> However, once this model is developed, it must be implemented across the State.

## Accommodation

In relation to accommodation:

- The right to housing must be enshrined in the Constitution and the EU Convention of Economic, Social and Cultural Rights should be transposed into Irish law
- Ensure a swift end to direct provision. We understand that there must be a progressive realisation of the White Paper to End Direct Provision but there can be no regression
- Sanctions applied to Local Authorities if Traveller Accommodation budgets are not drawn down and spent
- Implementation of recommendations of the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission’s Equality Review of the Provision of Traveller Accommodation by Local Authorities
- Implementation of the recommendations arising from the 2019 Traveller Accommodation Expert Review.<sup>7</sup>
- Ensure significant penalties for private accommodation providers where there is evidence of racism in the letting of properties
- Regulation of the private rental sector to ensure accountability for accommodation which does not meet minimum standards
- Implementation of the provisions within the Residential Tenancies (Amendment) Act 2015 to establish a Tenancy Deposit Protection Scheme managed by the Residential Tenancies Board.

<sup>6</sup> Government of Ireland (2019), The Migrant Integration Strategy 2017-2020 Progress Report to the Government Office for the Promotion of Migrant Integration 2019, p. 56.

<sup>7</sup> Expert Group on behalf of the Minister of the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government (2019), Traveller Accommodation Expert Review.



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BRIDGE Building a Receptive and  
Integrated Galway of Equals



## Inclusion and Participation

“It is hard to feel you belong”

- Workshop participant

In relation to inclusion and participation:

- Ensure positive action/interventions where there is a failure to ensure diversity in representation and participation at all levels of the political spectrum.
- Invest in community and migrant led organisations that are already working to address and challenge racism
- Invest in awareness campaigns of the damaging effects of racism, and the benefits of an intercultural society

