



**International Convention on
the Elimination of All Forms
of Racial Discrimination**

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Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination

**Combined fifth to ninth periodic reports
submitted by Ireland under article 9 of the
Convention, due in 2014^{*, **}**

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* The present document is being issued without formal editing.
** The appendices can be consulted in the files of the Secretariat.

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I. General

A. Introduction

1. This report to the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) outlines the measures that the Government of Ireland is taking to give effect to its undertakings under the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination.

2. As recommended by the Committee in its concluding observations on Ireland's third and fourth reports, Ireland has combined its fifth, sixth and seventh reports. This report is an update of Ireland's previous periodic report, to which reference is made, namely the combined third and fourth periodic report (CERD/C/IRL/3-4) submitted on 22 December 2009, and attached at Appendix V. Reference is also made to the concluding observations (CERD/C/IRL/CO/3-4) adopted by the Committee on 9 March 2011 on that report. Reference is further made to the additional information (CERD/C/IRL/CO/3-4/Add.1) provided by the Government of Ireland on 24 May 2012. For the purposes of the present report, when reference is made to "the concluding observations" without any further specification, this shall refer to the Committee's concluding observations on Ireland's combined third and fourth periodic report.

3. The present report covers the period from 2010 to 2017. Where there have been no relevant legislative, judicial or administrative changes during this period, reference is made to the third and fourth report or other previous reports. This report has been compiled by the Office for the Promotion of Migrant Integration (OPMI) which is part of the Department of Justice and Equality. Material has been supplied by Government Departments and Agencies. OPMI also engaged in a public consultation exercise on the draft report in late 2017/early 2018. This comprised three regional "town-hall" style events and an open invitation for online written submissions.

B. General Context

4. This combined 5th, 6th and 7th report is being submitted to the Committee approximately 7 years since the concluding observations on Ireland's 3rd and 4th report were adopted by the Committee in 2011. The period covered by this report (2010–2017) has been a time of significant change in Ireland in terms of our economic, political and societal landscape. Key developments include the following.

(i) Economy

5. Ireland's economy made the transition from a period of deep recession beginning in 2007, through a period of austerity to its present recovery. In 2017, the Irish economy grew by 7.8%. In 2018, GDP is expected to grow by 4.8%, according to the spring 2018 economic forecast from the Economic and Social Research Institute. Strong domestic consumption and investment, along with improving international conditions, are the main factors underpinning this growth. Unemployment averaged 6.7% in 2017 and is expected to decline to 5.4% in 2018 and 4.5% in 2019. It is expected that increased tax revenue will lead to budget surpluses in 2018 and 2019.

(ii) Society

6. The ethnic, national and cultural diversity among the population has continued to grow as evidenced in Census 2011 and Census 2016. In Census 2016 the number of Irish residents born outside Ireland stood at 810,406 (approximately 17% of the population), an increase of 43,636 on the 2011 figure. This figure includes Irish people born abroad or in Northern Ireland. In Census 2016, the proportion of the resident population that is of non-Irish nationality stood at 11.9%, or 535,475 people.

7. Over the reporting period Ireland saw significant changes to patterns and sources of inward migration. At the end of 2016, approximately 115,000 non-EEA nationals had permission to remain in Ireland. The top five nationalities, accounting for 48.5% of all persons registered were Brazil (13.2%), India (12.2%), China (9.2%), USA (7.9%), and Pakistan (6%). A total of 9,373 employment permits were issued during 2016, an increase over the 2015 total of 7,253. As in 2015, India was the top nationality for receipt of work permits.

8. The number of newly arriving immigrants increased year-on-year to 84,600 at April 2017 from 82,300 at end April 2016. Non-Irish nationals from outside the EU accounted for 34.8% of total immigrants. Net inward migration for non-EU nationals is estimated at 15,700.

(iii) Public Policy and Legislation

9. The Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act of 2014 introduced a positive legal duty on all public bodies to have regard to the elimination of discrimination and the promotion and protection of human rights and equality in the course of their work.

10. In 2015 a constitutional referendum on marriage equality was passed and legislation was subsequently enacted by the Oireachtas (Irish Parliament) to make legal provision for same sex marriage.

11. The International Protection Act that became law in 2015 represents a complete overhaul of legislation governing international protection applicants, aiming to streamline processes and consequently reduce processing times for protection applicants.

12. In 2017 the State formally recognised Travellers as an ethnic minority. This historic step was widely welcomed by representatives of Traveller communities.

13. Also in 2017, the Government introduced new multi-annual national strategies in the areas of Migrant Integration (incorporating Combating Racism and Xenophobia), Equality for Women and Girls, Traveller and Roma Inclusion, and Disability Inclusion.

C. Census of Population, 2016

14. Between Census 2002, the first census to record nationality, and Census 2006, the non-Irish national population increased from 224,261 to 419,733 persons (an 87% increase). Between Census 2006 and Census 2011, the non-Irish national population increased from 419,733 to 544,357 persons (a 29.7% increase). However, between Census 2011 and Census 2016 the number of non-Irish nationals fell for the first time since 2002 and stood at 535,475 in 2016, a fall of 1.6%.

15. This fall in non-Irish nationals is explained in part by the rise in the number of those with dual Irish nationality. Between 2011 and 2016, an estimated 94,000 people acquired Irish citizenship through naturalisation, which contributed to a large increase in the number of persons recorded as having dual Irish nationality in Census 2016. Census 2011 recorded 55,905 people with dual Irish nationality, while in 2016 this had increased by 87% to 104,784 people.

Breakdown of Non-Irish national population in Census 2016

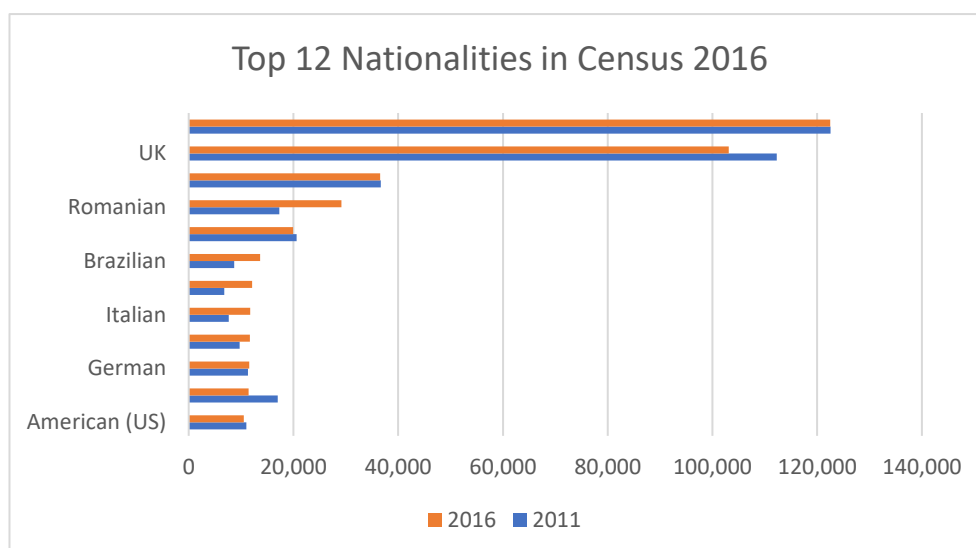
16. EU28 (excluding Irish) nationals numbered 408,918 persons or 76.4% of the non-Irish national total. Asians were next at 50,661 (9.5%), followed by Africans at 22,150 (4.1%).

Remarkable diversity in Ireland 2016

17. The 535,475 non-Irish nationals living in Ireland in April 2016 originate from almost 200 nations. While the vast majority of these people were from a small number of nationalities, there was remarkable diversity in the range of nations identified in Census 2016.

Top 12 Nationalities in 2016 Census

18. 12 countries, each with over 10,000 residents, accounted for 73.6% of all non-Irish nationals in 2016. A further 32 countries with between 1,001 and 10,000 residents accounted for a further 19.7% of the total, with the remaining percentage made up of persons from 156 different countries. Figure 1 below shows the 12 largest non-Irish national groups in 2016 and the change in their numbers since 2011. While the number of Polish nationals (122,515) has remained virtually unchanged since 2011, the number of UK nationals fell by 9,146 to 103,113.

Figure 1*Ethnic or Cultural Background*

19. Of the 4,689,921 persons resident in the State at the time of Census 2016, the following was the breakdown on ethnic or cultural lines:

- 3,854,226 were White Irish (82.2%);
- 30,987 were White –Irish Travellers (0.7%);
- 446,727 were White -Any other white background (9.5%);
- 57,850 were Black or Black Irish — African (1.2%);
- 6,789 were Black or Black Irish — Any other Black background (0.1%);
- 19,447 were Asian or Asian Irish — Chinese (0.4%);
- 79,273 were Asian or Asian Irish — Any other Asian background (1.7%);
- 70,603 were “Other including mixed background” (1.5%);
- 124,019 were Not Stated (2.6%).

20. Between 2011 and 2016 the number of people categorised as White Irish increased by 0.8% while those in the Black Irish or Black African category fell by 1.4%. Those classified as Other Asian increased by 18.6%.

Religious Diversity

21. Ireland’s religious diversity continues to increase. The proportion of the population normally resident in the State identifying as Catholics continued to decline to reach its lowest point at 78.8 per cent in Census 2016. The overall number of Catholics fell by 134,543 people to 3.7 million. There were 122,612 members of the Church of Ireland in April 2016, a decrease of 1.5% on 2011. There were 62,032 Muslims in Ireland in April 2016, an increase of 28.9% on 2011, 60,777 Orthodox Christians, a 38.1% increase on 2011 and 22,188 Presbyterians, down on the 2011 figure of 22,835.

Language other than English or Irish spoken at home

22. In 2016, a question on foreign languages was included for the first time in the Census. The results show that 612,018 people speak a language other than English or Irish at home. This equates to 13% of the population. Polish was the most common language, followed by French, Romanian, Lithuanian, Spanish, German and Russian.

II. State Responses to Committee Concerns and Recommendations contained in Part C of Committee's Concluding Observations (CERD/C/IRL/CO/3-4)

23. This section of the State Report provides responses to the Committee's concerns and recommendations contained in paragraphs 11 to 36 of the Committee's Concluding Observations to Ireland's 3rd and 4th State Report (CERD/C/IRL/CO/3-4).

Re: Committee's Concluding Observations — Paragraph 11

24. Please see CERD/C/IRL/CO/3-4/Add.1.

25. The Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act 2014 which established the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission (IHREC) is designed to comply fully with the standards required by EU law and the Paris Principles [No. 2].¹ In preparation of the 2014 Act, consultations were held with the office of the UN Deputy High Commissioner for Human Rights. IHREC's founding legislation ensures its structural independence from Government and public recruitment processes. The strength of IHREC's mandate also compares favourably to similar bodies in other jurisdictions and it reports directly to the Oireachtas. In 2015, IHREC was accredited as an "A" status National Human Rights Institution by the International Coordinating Committee on national human rights. This accreditation status is awarded only to those national human rights institutions deemed by the Committee to be fully compliant with the Paris Principles.

26. IHREC's mandate incorporates all the functions of two previous bodies, the Irish Human Rights Commission and the Equality Authority, as well as a number of new functions introduced by the 2014 Act. As regards the role of the former National Consultative Committee on Racism and Interculturalism, IHREC has a role in relation to integration and combating racism. It has functions to encourage good practice in intercultural relations and to promote tolerance and acceptance of diversity in the State, and respect for the freedom and dignity of each person. Some of the functions of the Committee were subsequently absorbed into the Department of Justice and Equality's Office for the Promotion of Migrant Integration. An estimated €2 million in additional funding was provided to IHREC in 2014. Its budget rose to €6.522 million in 2017 and again in 2018 to €6.7 million. Staffing levels are also set to rise from the currently approved level of 56 posts to 64 in 2018.

Re: Committee's Concluding Observations — Paragraph 12

27. Please see CERD/C/IRL/CO/3-4/Add.1.

28. On 1 March 2017, the Government announced the State's formal recognition of Travellers as a distinct ethnic group in Ireland. This event was historic and notable for the all-party consensus on the issue.

29. By taking this important step, the State hopes to foster pride and self-esteem among Travellers and support them in overcoming the legacy of economic marginalisation and discrimination. Travellers now have a new platform for positive engagement and dialogue with Government in seeking sustainable solutions to the issues faced by their community in areas such as health, education, employment and accommodation. In announcing the decision, the Government stressed that it is without prejudice to Travellers being (and self-identifying as) part of the Irish nation.

¹ <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/StatusOfNationalInstitutions.aspx>.

Re: Committee's Concluding Observations — Paragraph 13

30. Substantial changes have been made to the structures for consultation with and participation by Traveller and Roma communities since 2014. It is the State's policy to address Traveller and Roma needs under a single Strategic Framework (see below).

The National Traveller and Roma Inclusion Strategy Steering Group

31. The National Traveller and Roma Inclusion Strategy Steering Group was formed in 2015 and is chaired by Mr. David Stanton, T.D., Minister of State with special responsibility for Equality, Immigration, and Integration. It comprises senior officials from Government Departments and Agencies and Traveller and Roma representatives. The establishment of the Steering Group forms part of Ireland's response to the recommendations of the European Commission's 2014 report on progress in Ireland on Roma integration. The Steering Group's work gives due regard to the 10 Common Basic Principles of Roma Inclusion.

32. The main functions of the Steering Group are:

- To monitor and assess the impact that integration efforts have on the situation of Traveller and Roma people, in relation to the key areas of education, health, employment, housing and combating discrimination;
- To agree the impacts to be monitored and assessed under each of the key priority areas of accommodation, health, education, employment and anti-discrimination, in line with European Commission recommendations;
- To agree the monitoring and assessment mechanisms;
- To ensure that meaningful conclusions are established through the monitoring and assessment process, and that these conclusions are used to inform policy development in key areas of accommodation, health, employment, education and anti-discrimination;
- To present annual progress reports to the relevant Cabinet Committee;
- To lead the development of a new 5 year National Strategy for Traveller and Roma Inclusion.

A new National Traveller and Roma Inclusion Strategy 2017–2021

33. A new National Traveller and Roma Inclusion Strategy (NTRIS) was adopted by Government and published in June 2017. It is broad-ranging with an ambitious set of objectives. Arising from a comprehensive consultation process which included consultations with Traveller groups, written submissions and public meetings, ten themes were identified as central to the success of the Inclusion Strategy — cultural identity, education, employment and the Traveller economy, children and youth, health, gender equality, anti-discrimination and equality, accommodation, Traveller and Roma communities and public services.

34. Key commitments in the Strategy include:

- Increased funding to be invested by the State to promote knowledge of, and pride in, Traveller culture and heritage;
- Investment by the State in community-based support mechanisms to ensure earlier access and greater retention of Traveller and Roma children and youths in the education system;
- A range of assistive and targeted measures including proposals for internships, promotion of existing opportunities, entrepreneurship supports, anti-racism and cultural awareness training for public sector employees;
- A commitment to ensure that Traveller and Roma children and youth are given a stronger voice in participative structures and the development of policy;

- Increased efforts to ensure that Travellers and Roma interact fully with the public health sector in order to address some of the underlying health-related challenges they face;
- Initiatives to assist Traveller and Roma women to engage effectively with stakeholder groups and support for community leadership programmes in gender equality;
- A review of the Traveller Accommodation Act; a ring-fenced budget for Traveller accommodation, and mechanisms to monitor progress and identify new needs;
- The design and implementation of a sustained intervention to tackle feuding within the Traveller community;
- The development of a new system of ethnic identifiers across the public sector to help track progress on, and challenges for, the Traveller and Roma communities in Ireland.

35. An education sub-committee of the NTRIS Steering Group has been set up with a focus on the retention of Traveller and Roma children in education. A pilot proposal to be funded jointly by the Department of Education and Science, the Department of Justice and Equality and TUSLA was agreed. One pilot will be located in each of four TUSLA Education Welfare Services regions — Co Wexford, North Dublin, South Dublin and Co Galway. It involves focussing extra staff resources in these areas with a view to improving pupil retention rates in education.

36. A second sub-committee has been set up to develop conflict reduction and mediation mechanisms to reduce feuding in the Traveller community. A third sub-committee has been set up to look at the implementation of an Ethnic Identifier for equality data across all state services. To date, there has been good progress in over 100 of the 149 actions contained in the Strategy.

Traveller and Roma initiatives at the local level

37. The Local Government Reform Act, 2014 saw major realignment of the Local Government Sector under the auspices of the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government and the subsequent delivery of the “Local and Community Development Programme”. This programme aimed to tackle poverty and social exclusion, including among Travellers, through partnership and constructive engagement between Government and its agencies and people in disadvantaged communities.

38. That programme was superseded by the Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP) in April 2015. The aim of SICAP is to reduce poverty and promote social inclusion and equality through local, regional and national engagement and collaboration. As with its predecessor, SICAP targets those who are marginalised in society, including Travellers and Roma, SICAP is delivered nationwide through Local Community Development Committees (LCDCs) in accordance with agreed Local Economic and Community Plans (LECP). Traveller and Roma groups are represented in local Public Participation Networks (PPNs).

39. In accordance with the Housing (Traveller Accommodation) Act 1998, housing authorities have statutory responsibility for the assessment of the accommodation needs of Travellers and the preparation, adoption and implementation of multi-annual Traveller Accommodation Programmes (TAPs) in their areas. In 2014, local authorities adopted the fourth round of Traveller Accommodation Programmes, with the five-year rolling accommodation programmes running from 2014 to 2018. They form the basis for the allocation of funding from the Department for Traveller accommodation, on foot of proposals received from local authorities and subject to approval from the Department.

40. The Housing (Traveller Accommodation) Act, 1998, directs housing authorities to review TAPs at least once in each three-year period, and to make any amendment to the programme following this review within seven months.

41. Evidence of a high level of Traveller specific accommodation delivery is apparent in the significant reduction in the number of families living on unauthorised sites. In 1999,

prior to the first Traveller Accommodation Programme, the Annual Count of Traveller families estimated that there were a total of 4,790 Traveller families in the State, 25.2% of whom were living on unauthorised sites. The 2017 Annual Count identified a total of 11,116 Traveller families in the State. In spite of the increase in families between 1999 and 2017, only 5.3% of the 11,116 families (585 families) were living on unauthorised sites in 2017. This reduction in the number of families living on unauthorised sites, despite a large increase in the overall number of families, is evidence of the results of investment in Traveller accommodation over the last decade.

42. While funding reduced substantially during the recession, as it did with all capital programmes, funding is gradually increasing to pre-recession times. In 2016, the allocation was €5.5m, increasing to €9m in 2017 and a further increase of 33% to €12m in 2018.

43. In addition to Traveller-specific accommodation, Traveller families are also accommodated in local authority social housing through the main local authority social housing programme and under the Leasing Initiative and the Rental Accommodation Scheme. The vast majority of Traveller families are accommodated in mainstream housing (standard social housing, private rented accommodation, private houses assisted by local authorities, and housing funded from their own resources) in line with preferences expressed under the housing needs assessment process.

Traveller/Roma Health

44. Health is one of the Strategic Themes within the new National Traveller and Roma Inclusion Strategy. A number of actions directly address this theme with the aim of advancing the health of service users from the Traveller and Roma communities, with particular reference to mental health, barriers preventing access to health services and initiatives to prevent/improve chronic health conditions.

45. The Health Service Executive (HSE) has a well-established, representative National Traveller Health Advisory Forum. Representation on this Forum from Traveller Health Units across Health Service areas allows for a coordinated approach to monitoring progress and identifying and addressing emerging issues.

46. The poor health outcomes of Traveller and Roma service users are acknowledged and work is being undertaken within a social determinants of health model to address this, including through targeted annual funding of approximately €10m. In this context, Healthy Ireland, a cross-Government approach, is particularly relevant as it pays special attention to addressing health inequalities. Further information is available at <http://health.gov.ie/healthy-ireland>. Approaches to improving the health of the Traveller community are underpinned by the findings of the All Ireland Traveller Health Study 2010, with priority actions agreed based on this research. The HSE funds a range of Traveller agencies and groups to deliver such agreed actions. Consultations are underway towards the development of a detailed Traveller Health Action Plan.

47. The mental health of Travellers has previously been referenced as a significant area of concern. The Department of Health has secured additional funding from the Dormant Accounts Fund 2017–2019 to support a mental health initiative for Travellers which will commence in the coming months. A once off amount of €220,000 has also been made available under the Dormant Accounts Fund towards development and implementation of a Roma Primary Healthcare Training Programme.

48. The Department of Justice and Equality is leading efforts to improve the development of indicators and recording of metrics as a means of monitoring the implementation of targeted interventions to improve Traveller health.

Traveller/Roma Education

49. The Department of Education and Skills continues to work with Traveller and Roma representative groups and other education partners to improve educational outcomes for Travellers and Roma. The Department also engages directly with the Educational Welfare Services of TUSLA — the Child and Family Agency — in order to support and consolidate

the work of schools in ensuring that the participation of Traveller and Roma children in the education system is maximised.

50. Key actions in the DEIS (Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools) Plan 2017 in relation to Travellers and Roma seek to improve collaboration between the Education Authorities and Traveller and Roma representative groups in order to tackle poor attendance, knowledge retention, and progression levels for Traveller and Roma children.

51. TUSLA (Child and Family Agency), in partnership with a number of Government Departments and Roma representative groups, is leading a two Year Pilot Programme to target attendance, participation and school completion in specific Traveller and Roma communities regionally.

52. Since 2006 it has been Government policy to phase out separate provision and to provide for the educational needs of all children within the mainstream system. This policy was developed and agreed with Traveller representative groups and other education partners. A number of Traveller and Roma-specific supports are available to assist with the transition to the mainstream system including 141 alleviation resource teacher posts for schools with significant numbers of Travellers and Roma at a cost of €8.46 million per year. Additional pupil capitation for Travellers and Roma at a rate of €70 per pupil for Primary, and €201 per pupil for Post-Primary is also provided at a cost of €1.11 million.

53. The Department of Education and Skills has embarked on a data analysis exercise in 2018 with a view to better tracking the participation and progress of Traveller and Roma children through the primary level educational system. The information gathered is used as a mechanism for planning policy, assessing outcomes and monitoring progression.

Traveller/Roma Employment

54. The Special Initiative for Travellers (SIT) is an employment and recruitment service to assist Travellers to secure and maintain a job in the open labour market. It focuses on job-ready Travellers and supports their access into employment through the provision of a range of supports to both Travellers and employers through a Job Coach. The job coach provides advice in career planning, identification of skills and support clients in accessing and applying for jobs. Job coaches engage with employers willing to employ Travellers, provide work experience and assist with integration into the workplace. The range of supports include:

- Individual Needs Assessment;
- Vocational Profiling and Career Planning;
- Individual Employment Plan;
- Job Sourcing and Job Matching;
- On-the-Job Support and Coaching;
- Advice and Support to Employers;
- Follow-up Support and Mentoring to both Employers & Employees.

55. The Traveller & Roma Inclusion Unit took over the management of this project from the Department of Social Protection from 1st January 2015, including its annual budget of €0.55m.

Re: Committee's Concluding Observations — Paragraph 14

56. The Department of Justice and Equality continues to provide core funding for Minceirs Whiden, a Traveller organisation which supports Travellers to register to vote, to promote the importance of voting and to engage with politics generally. The new National Traveller and Roma Inclusion Strategy contains actions to support Traveller participation in political processes at local and national level and to facilitate political engagement and leadership in the Traveller community. Specifically, the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government commits to supporting the work of Traveller and Roma

organisations on voter education and voter registration initiatives for the Traveller and Roma communities.

Re: Committee's Concluding Observations — Paragraph 15

The International Protection Act 2015

57. In 2014, the Government decided to fast track the “Protection” elements of the Immigration, Residence and Protection Bill to significantly reform Ireland’s international protection system. The International Protection Act 2015 was commenced on 31 December 2016. This legislation provides for a single application procedure, which has replaced the multi-layered and sequential protection application system under the repealed 1996 Refugee Act. The new single application procedure will, in time, significantly streamline the protection determination process and by extension will reduce the length of time spent in State-provided accommodation by those applicants who choose to avail of this accommodation.

58. The structural causes of delays have been removed with the commencement of the International Protection Act 2015. The main challenge now faced is the need to eradicate the substantial backlog of cases carried over from the previous system as soon as possible.

59. Considerable administrative resources were required by the International Protection Office (IPO) to get the new single procedure process up and running in the first part of 2017 and this transition process led to a shorter processing year. Nevertheless, the IPO succeeded in scheduling over 2,400 single procedure interviews (including in respect of EU relocation cases) once the process was operational in 2017. 1,780 recommendations/decisions in respect of international protection and permission to remain were made by the IPO in 2017. This included 750 recommendations in respect of the grant of international protection.

60. At the end of April 2018, there are 5,300 applications for international protection pending in the IPO, 2,200 of which were made before the commencement of the 2015 Act but not finalised by the former Office of the Refugee Applications Commissioner (ORAC) and the former Refugee Appeals Tribunal (RAT) by that date. Furthermore, there was a 30% increase in applications for international protection during 2017 which put additional pressure on the system.

61. Significant additional resources have been, and continue to be, allocated to the IPO with a view to processing the volume of cases on hand as soon as possible. Based on current predictions, the IPO is in line to make over 3,500 recommendations/decisions in 2018 which is a substantial increase on the 1,780 recommendations/decisions made in 2017.

62. Notwithstanding the increase in the volume of cases being processed by the IPO, it is recognised that currently many applicants for international protection are still waiting too long for their first instance interviews in the IPO and to have their cases decided. These challenges are being addressed by deploying increased resources and continually assessing and adapting the use of those resources, having due regard to the requirements of the 2015 Act, in order to maximise quality output. In this regard, it is planned to increase the size of the IPO Processing Panel over the coming months following public advertisement and interview.

63. Prioritisation of international protection applications is provided for in the International Protection Act 2015 subject to the need for fairness and efficiency. When the “Application for International Protection Questionnaire (IPO 2)” and other supporting documentation is returned by applicants, the IPO schedules applications for interview primarily on the basis of date of application (oldest cases first). However, certain categories of applicant are also being prioritised such as those who arrive under the Irish Refugee Protection Programme (IRPP), from refugee generating countries (such as Syria) and unaccompanied minors. The IPO’s approach to prioritisation has been agreed with the UNHCR. It has been explained to NGOs at the IPO Customer Service Liaison Panel and is available on its website: www.ipso.gov.ie.

Female Genital Mutilation

64. Legislation prohibiting Female Genital Mutilation was enacted on 2 April 2012.² The HSE funds a specialist clinic that offers free medical care and counselling to all women and girls in Ireland who have experienced Female Genital Mutilation. It continues to fund AkiDwA — a migrant women’s organisation — to deliver information and awareness raising around this practice in at-risk communities, as well as to a range of health and other workers.³

The Prohibition of Incitement to Hatred Act 1989

65. Both the general criminal law and targeted legislation (the Prohibition of Incitement to Hatred Act 1989) have application for the purpose of protection from racist attacks. The Prohibition of Incitement to Hatred Act 1989 addresses the issue of incitement. Under this Act it is an offence to use words, publish or distribute written material, or broadcast any visual images or sounds that are threatening, abusive or insulting and are intended, or, having regard to all the circumstances, are likely to stir up hatred. The word “hatred” is defined as “hatred against a group of persons in the State or elsewhere on account of their race, colour, nationality, religion, ethnic or national origins, membership of the Traveller community or sexual orientation”. Accordingly prosecutions may be brought under the Act where intention to incite hatred is proven or where the likelihood of stirring up hatred is proven regardless of intention. This approach was adopted following an analysis of difficulties in other jurisdictions in securing prosecutions solely by relying on intention. Since 2010 there have been 12 cases prosecuted under the Prohibition on Incitement to Hatred Act 1989 resulting in two sentences of imprisonment. Two further cases are awaiting a trial date.

66. Offences under the general criminal law will equally be relevant in the case of offences other than incitement within the meaning of the 1989 Act that may be racially motivated. Key relevant Acts in this regard include:

- Criminal Justice (Public Order) Act 1994;
- Non-Fatal Offences Against the Person Act 1997;
- Criminal Damage Act 1991.

67. The relevant offences under these Acts are relied on where criminal offences such as assault, criminal damage or public order offences are committed with a racist motive. In those circumstances, the trial judge can take aggravating factors, including racist motivation, into account at sentencing. While aggravating factors are taken into account at the time of sentencing in all cases, statistical information on these factors is not kept by the Courts Service, just the final sentence.

68. While Ireland is confident that it is meeting its obligations in relation to public safety and dealing effectively with hate crime, the Department of Justice and Equality is undertaking a legislative review of the law relating to hate crime and incitement to hatred in order to ensure the best possible public policy response to racism and xenophobia in the context of Ireland’s integration policy, the EU Framework Decision 2008/913/JHA on Combating Racism and Xenophobia, and legislative developments in other jurisdictions. It is anticipated that the review will be completed by the end of 2018. Formal notification of Ireland’s compliance with the EU Framework Decision was submitted with supporting documentation to the European Commission by the November 2010 deadline. A further letter was sent to the Commission in April 2016 and no further response has been received.

69. The National Migrant Integration Strategy contains a commitment that the Department of Justice and Equality will review current legislation on racially motivated crime with a view to strengthening the law against hate crime, including in the area of online hate speech.

² <http://www.oireachtas.ie/documents/bills28/acts/2012/a1112.pdf>.

³ <http://www.ifpa.ie/Sexual-Health-Services/FGM-Treatment-Service>.

70. Please also see additional material provided under Part III (Article 4) of this report and material originally provided in 2012 in the addendum to Ireland's 3rd and 4th periodic report (CERD/C/IRL/CO/3-4/Add.1).

Re: Committee's Concluding Observations — Paragraph 16

71. Ireland's position as outlined in paragraphs 19 to 21 of the addendum to the 3rd and 4th report to the Committee remains unchanged. In essence, because all of the Convention's obligations are provided for in domestic legislation, it is not necessary to incorporate the Convention into domestic law. Please see CERD/C/IRL/CO/3-4/Add.1 for more detail.

Re: Committee's Concluding Observations — Paragraph 17

72. Ireland signed the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination in 1968 and ratified it in December 2000 whereupon it became binding on Ireland in international law. At the time of ratification of the Convention, a reservation/interpretative declaration was entered in relation to Article 4 of the Convention.

73. The declaration

(i) notes that the measures described in Article 4 (a), (b) and (c) shall be undertaken with due regard to the principles embodied in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the rights set forth in Article 5 of the Convention, and states that Ireland considers that, through the measures described in Article 4, the right to freedom of opinion and expression and the right to peaceful assembly and association may not be jeopardised.

74. There are no immediate plans to propose withdrawing Ireland's reservation/interpretative declaration on Article 4 of the Convention.

Re: Committee's Concluding Observations — Paragraph 18

75. An Garda Síochána, (AGS) [Irish Police Service] has responded with a range of initiatives to the growing diversity in the communities it serves. These include approaches that are mainstreamed throughout the force as well as specialist provision.

76. All members of AGS are bound by the Garda Code of Ethics, which contains a solemn commitment to recognise and respect the dignity and equal human rights of all people, to treat everyone at all times with fairness and in a non-discriminatory fashion, and to oppose and challenge any behaviour or language that demonstrates discrimination or disrespect, in particular with regard to vulnerable individuals and minority groups.

77. The Migrant Integration Strategy contains commitments by AGS to develop greater contact with marginalised communities and encourage and support victims of racist behaviour to report offences in line with recommendations of the independent policing review body, The Policing Authority of Ireland.

78. In terms of legislation, the Garda Síochána Act of 2005 established the Garda Síochána Ombudsman Commission, an independent body which has the power to investigate any report of malpractice by members of AGS, including reports of racial profiling. The Protected Disclosures Act 2014 also provides an avenue for all employees, including Gardaí and public sector employees, to report wrongdoing in confidence to their employer, other prescribed persons or a Government Minister. Its definition of "wrongdoing" is "an act or omission by or on behalf of a public body that is oppressive, discriminatory or grossly negligent or constitutes gross mismanagement".

Human Rights Training

79. In an effort to promote and maintain best practice in the areas of equality, human rights and non-discrimination, members of AGS are provided with a range of training programmes in these areas. This aims to ensure that no element of stereotyping or prejudice consciously or unconsciously informs day-to-day policing decisions.

80. Human rights modules are threaded through the new trainee Student Education/Training Programme for Garda recruits. They form a core competency on which students are assessed.

81. AGS's comprehensive education, training and information system for the continuous professional development of all members incorporates the following human rights training:

- Two and a half day human rights and anti-racism module on the Sergeant and Inspector Development courses;
- Specialist training is provided for members on the questioning of suspects, particularly of those who may be vulnerable or have psychological issues;
- A human rights module on the course for Senior Investigating Officers is provided by the IHREC. In addition there are inputs on human rights on the Superintendent and Chief Superintendent Development Courses.

Garda National Diversity and Integration Unit (GNDIU)

82. In establishing the Garda Racial and Intercultural Office (GRIDO) in 2001 (now named the Garda National Diversity and Integration Unit "GNDIU"), AGS demonstrated its capacity to anticipate and respond to the need for appropriate policing initiatives to meet the needs of diverse cultures and religions so as to foster good community relations in a multi-ethnic environment and minimise any potential for illegal racial profiling.

83. GNDIU is part of the Garda Community Orientated Policing Bureau which designates responsibility for building partnerships with diverse populations, including migrants and ethnic minorities. Anti-Discriminatory policing techniques are rigorously applied and mainstreamed through all functions carried out at GNDIU.

84. GNDIU works to ensure the provision of a quality service by AGS to the members of minority communities and acts as necessary to meet emerging needs of groups and/or individuals. This is central to the integration, anti-discrimination and anti-profiling strategy of AGS.

85. GNDIU's role includes:

- Training and supporting specialist Garda Ethnic Liaison Officers (ELOs);
- Identifying local issues and problems;
- Assisting in informing minorities about current Garda strategy;
- Acting as an aid to promote public support and cooperation;
- Facilitating a two-way process involving ethnic minority leaders and civil society organisations to enable Garda members to learn about the customs, protocols and practices of all religious denominations that exist within the community they serve;
- Creating an environment of trust with minority communities by supporting intercultural relations building with AGS through national and local initiatives;
- Identifying and supporting innovative approaches to fostering integration in community policing.

86. GNDIU works on a national level in cooperation with other public agencies and bodies that are working to promote diversity. The unit also actively communicates with representatives of ethnic minority groups and relevant non-governmental organisations that hold a human rights/anti-discrimination mandate.

Building Relations with Representatives of Ethnic Minorities.

87. The Garda Commissioner approved the appointment of ELOs in 2002⁴ for the purpose of directly engaging with members of ethnic minorities and the Traveller Community in order to facilitate ease of access to Garda services. ELOs work to build trust

⁴ (Garda HQ Directive: 42/12).

and confidence between AGS and Ireland's minority communities, thereby eroding the potential for discriminatory profiling. There are currently 247 ELOs appointed throughout the State. All ELOs receive training on intercultural awareness and anti-discrimination from GNDIU.

Prohibition of Racial Profiling

88. An Garda Síochána prohibits discriminatory racial profiling and is acutely aware that discriminatory ethnic profiling has the potential to undermine the fundamental human rights of individuals and is never acceptable. Furthermore, AGS does not pursue data gathering/data mining based upon discriminatory profiling in respect of race, colour, language, religion, nationality, national or ethnic origin, ethnicity, including The Traveller Community.

89. In its work with members of AGS, GNDIU emphasises the importance of avoiding at all times law enforcement decisions that are based solely or mainly on race, ethnicity or religion in respect of individuals/groups. To this end, GNDIU has adopted the closest to an officially approved European description of racial profiling as described by the European Commission on Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) working definition of "racial profiling", namely:

"use by the police, with no objective and reasonable justification, of grounds such as race, colour, language, religion, nationality or national or ethnic origin, in control, surveillance or investigation activities" (ECRI, 2007: para.1).

90. On the basis of this definition, it is apparent that direct discrimination can never be legally justifiable, and the "reasonable justification" for relying on factors of race, ethnicity or religion will only exist in specific and limited circumstances.

Specialist Training — Anti-Profiling Imperative

91. Anti-profiling is a key theme that is mainstreamed throughout the two-day training programme developed by GNDIU for ELOs. Separately, a specific module within the programme is wholly dedicated to ethnic profiling. This module aims to improve ELOs' understanding of the theory and practice of "ethnic profiling" and to place it within a legal and social context. This module negotiates the intricacies directly associated with the harmful effects of discriminatory profiling, its non-effectiveness as a law enforcement tool and the application of alternative policing methods and safeguards against misuse of profiling.

92. GNDIU also delivers training on anti-profiling and anti-discriminatory policing techniques at the request of the Garda College to a wide range of other groups including:

- Specialist Garda Interviewers and Social Workers;
- Members undertaking Level 3 Detective Garda Interviewer Courses;
- Members undertaking Covert Human Intelligence Courses;
- Members embarking on duty with the OSCE and the United Nations.

Re: Committee's Concluding Observations — Paragraph 19

(A) *In line with article 4(b) of the Convention, legislation be passed to declare illegal and prohibit racist organizations;*

93. There are no plans to introduce or enact new legislation to declare illegal and prohibit racist organisations. Section 18(d) and (e) of the Offences Against the State Act 1939 provide for the declaration of any organisation as unlawful, which:

(d) Engages in, promotes, encourages, or advocates the commission of any criminal offence or the obstruction of or interference with the administration of justice or the enforcement of the law, or

(e) Engages in, promotes, encourages, or advocates the attainment of any particular object, lawful or unlawful, by violent, criminal, or other unlawful means.

94. Any organisation (racist or otherwise) that engages in any activities which would constitute an offence under the Prohibition of Incitement to Hatred Act 1989, fall under the provisions of the Act of 1939 may be declared unlawful.

(B) *That racist motivation be consistently taken into account as an aggravating factor in sentencing practice for criminal offences;*

95. As per the Irish Constitution, the judiciary is independent in the matter of sentencing and in other matters concerning the exercise of judicial functions. In accordance with this principle, the Oireachtas (the legislature) enacts criminal laws, which usually provide for maximum penalties in the form of a fine or imprisonment, or both.

96. Within Ireland's legislative framework, the determination of penalty in any individual case is largely a matter for the trial judge, taking case law, including appealed cases, into account. This allows the courts to take all the circumstances of the offence and all the relevant aggravating and mitigating factors into account. The gravity of the offence, the facts surrounding the commission of the offence, the criminal record of the accused and the impact on the victim are among the critical factors taken into account before a sentence is imposed. The judge must take into account the circumstances of the offence and the offender. The Director of Public Prosecutions can appeal against the sentence imposed if she believes it to be unduly lenient (Criminal Justice Act 1993). AGS record on the PULSE system a variety of discriminatory motivation factors for crimes at the time of recording that crime.

Judicial Training

97. Please see paragraphs 233 to 241 of Ireland's Third and Fourth Periodic Report (CERD/C/IRL/3-4). Please also see the updated material provided under Article 7 in this report.

Re: Committee's Concluding Observations — Paragraph 20

98. The commencement of the International Protection Act 2015 on 31 December 2016 represents a fundamental reform of the system for assessing the applications of those seeking international protection in Ireland. The new system requires that all aspects of a person's claim (Asylum, Subsidiary Protection and Permission to Remain) be considered together rather than sequentially, as heretofore. This more streamlined process will reduce the length of time spent in State-provided accommodation by those applicants who choose to avail of this accommodation.

99. All applications for international protection are processed under the new arrangements in the International Protection Office, (IPO) (formerly the Office of the Refugee Applications Commissioner — ORAC) and any appeals arising in relation to asylum and subsidiary protection applications are heard by the International Protection Appeals Tribunal, IPAT (formerly the Refugee Appeals Tribunal — RAT). The staff of the IPO and IPAT are independent in the performance of their international protection functions.

System of Direct Provision⁵ for Protection Applicants

100. Direct Provision is the system whereby State services are offered to protection applicants while they await a decision on their application. The system means that State services are delivered directly to protection seekers through the relevant Government Agency e.g. the Department of Education & Skills delivers education through the established school system; the HSE delivers medical services through the established GP and hospital systems etc. The Department of Justice & Equality's Reception and Integration Agency (RIA) provides accommodation to protection applicants while their application is

⁵ Direct Provision is a means of meeting the basic needs of food and shelter for asylum seekers directly while their claims for refugee status are processed rather than through full cash payments. Direct provision commenced on 10 April, 2000 from which time asylum seekers have received full board accommodation and personal allowances.

being processed. (There is no obligation to accept such offers and many chose to live in the community with the support of family and friends).

101. A Working Group on the Protection Process including Direct Provision and Supports for Asylum Seekers was established by the Minister for Justice and Equality in 2014, chaired by Bryan McMahon, Judge of the High Court and including representatives of public authorities, independent stakeholder organisations, and service users. Its report was published on 30 June 2015.

102. This was the first comprehensive review of the protection system. 173 recommendations were made by consensus in the Working Group Report including recommendations with regard to improvements to the protection determination process, living conditions in accommodation centres, and supports for persons in the system. The key recommendation of the Working Group was the introduction of a single application procedure, which was subsequently introduced under the International Protection Act 2015. The Government has published three progress reports on the implementation of the recommendations since the publication of the Working Group Report. The third and final report, published in July 2017, showed a 98% full or partial implementation rate for the 173 recommendations.

103. A Standards Advisory Group was set up in 2017 to develop a set of standards for accommodation offered by RIA. The Standards will meet the minimum standards set out in the Recast Reception Conditions Directive and EASO Guidance on Reception Conditions: Operational Standards and Indicators and take account of national developments in the provision of services to those in the protection process. The group includes members of organisations supporting refugees and staff of relevant Government Departments and will deliver a Working Document in September 2018 following widespread consultation.

Improvements to Accommodation

104. There have been significant changes to the accommodation arrangements for protection applicants, most notably the implementation of self or communal catering arrangements in a number of accommodation centres. As a result, over 1,500 residents are now able to prepare meals of their own choosing. In addition, there have been improvements to a number of outdoor playgrounds and football pitches to provide for “all-weather” facilities and the introduction of teenagers rooms in centres to provide social areas for this age group. Friends of the Centre groups have also been established in each centre. This initiative aims to bring residents, community and voluntary groups together with a view to increasing integration opportunities and providing for the development of greater community linkages with the residents and the centre.

Domestic, Sexual and Gender based violence and harassment

105. A policy on safeguarding residents of State accommodation centres against sexual, domestic and gender based violence and harassment is in place and operational in each centre.

Victims of Trafficking

106. RIA provides accommodation for potential and suspected victims of human trafficking during the 60 day recovery and reflection period. The HSE has a dedicated unit that provides wrap around supports to potential and suspected victims of trafficking.

Office of the Ombudsman and Ombudsman for Children

107. The mandate of the Ombudsman and Ombudsman for Children was extended from April 2017 to enable them to accept complaints from residents of accommodation centres regarding services and facilities provided to them by RIA and by extension, by accommodation centre management and staff.

108. The Ombudsman can examine complaints about (i) decisions a person considers to be unfair and that affect the person in a negative way, (ii) failure to give clear reasons for decisions, (iii) failure to answer, or delay in answering correspondence, (iv) providing

incorrect, inaccurate or misleading information and (v) failure to deal properly with a complaint. The Ombudsman can also examine complaints about services set out in the RIA's House Rules such as, (i) standard of accommodation, (ii) meals, (iii) cleaning and (iv) facilities.

Reception Conditions Directive

109. The decision to opt into the (Recast) Reception Conditions Directive represents another major reform of the process, subjecting services to external oversight and placing them on a common European standard. The opt-in process will allow the European Commission to assess the management and conditions pertaining to the Direct Provision system and to present findings.

Health Services for Asylum Seekers

110. Asylum seekers are entitled to access mainstream health services and many hold medical cards. Measures have been undertaken to address the health needs of persons in the Direct Provision system, including a decision by the Department of Health to waive prescription charges for asylum seekers living in the accommodation centres.

Re: Committee's Concluding Observations — Paragraph 21

111. All members of An Garda Síochána (AGS) are tasked with enforcing all legislation relating to criminal matters, including the relevant provisions relating to racist behaviour. On receipt of any complaint, the matter is the subject of a full investigation by AGS and on completion of such investigation an Investigation File is submitted to the Law Officers who, on being satisfied that there is sufficient evidence available to warrant a prosecution, will direct what charges, if any, and are to be proffered.

112. In 2014, the independent Garda Inspectorate published a wide-ranging Report on Crime Investigation which included recommendations to help improve the way racist crime is recorded and to support victims of such crimes. The Inspectorate recommended, inter-alia, that AGS implement a victim-centred policy and good investigative practices in racial, homophobic and other similar crimes to encourage victims to report offences.

113. Several steps have been taken to address these recommendations. Improvements to the PULSE (police crime information and recording) system in 2015 will help in addressing them. PULSE 6.8, released in November 2015, introduced a Victim Assessment Screen. This requires the mandatory recording of data relating to the apparent motive for a crime incident, such as whether it has been motivated discrimination on specific grounds including age, disability, race, religion, gender or sexual orientation. In addition, the Policing Plan 2018 includes commitments that AGS will produce a definition of, and procedures to record, hate crime.

114. Improvements to the PULSE system also enable the recording of all interactions with victims and facilitate the communication of information to victims on all aspects of the investigative process. These improvements will facilitate the issuing of correspondence to victims in accordance with the E.U. Directive on Victims of Crime.

115. Important steps already taken include the establishment on 16 March 2015 of Garda Victim Service Offices in each Garda Division. These Offices aim to enhance the Garda service being provided to victims of crime and traumatic events by placing victims at the centre of the Garda service and providing a respectful, reassuring, responsive and reliable service addressing the needs and expectations of all victims who require an individual response.

116. GNDIU has responsibility for coordinating, monitoring and advising on all aspects of policing Ireland's diverse communities. GNDIU monitors the reporting and recording of hate and racist crime on a continual basis.

117. 247 ELOs appointed to work with minority communities at local level, together with GNDIU, play a fundamental role in liaising with minority groups and work in partnership to encourage tolerance, respect and understanding within communities and to help prevent

hate and racist crime. They provide advice and assistance to victims of hate or racist crime where required.

118. The National Migrant Integration Strategy contains a commitment by AGS to address the under-reporting of racially motivated crime, including through the development of greater contact with marginalised communities. A campaign for raising awareness about under reporting is also under discussion.

Detailed Analysis by Central Statistics Office

119. Following the publication of the Garda Síochána Inspectorate Report on Crime Investigation in 2014, the Central Statistics Office (CSO) agreed to carry out a detailed analysis of certain issues raised by the Inspectorate in relation to the recording, classification and reclassification of crime, to see whether and to what extent there might be implications for the crime statistics which that Office produces. The CSO published its first Quality report on 30 June 2015 and the second on 28 September 2016.

120. Separately, the CSO chaired an Expert Group on Crime Statistics to examine some of the Garda Inspectorate Report recommendations directly relating to the compilation of crime statistics. The Report of the Expert Group was published on 26 July 2017 and one of the Group's recommendations was the development and publication of a new crime counting rules and detection manual.

121. Concerning nationality, the Report states that in practice members of AGS are entitled to request information from victims, witnesses or suspects, but the provision of information is voluntary other than in certain circumstances. For example, Section 6 of the Criminal Justice Act 1984 stipulates that a Garda member may demand the name and address of a person detained pursuant to Section 4 of the Act. A demand to confirm a person's nationality can only be made in certain circumstances as outlined in legislation e.g. Immigration Act 2004, Section 11 (as amended in the Civil Law (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2011, Section 34). Accordingly, it is not possible to make this field mandatory as members of AGS do not have the statutory powers to make a demand for such information in every circumstance.

122. The CSO does not produce statistics on crimes disaggregated by race. There is a "discrimination" field in PULSE where AGS can attach up to 12 types of discrimination to a crime (including race, anti-Roma, anti-Traveller, anti-Muslim etc.) but the data may not be fully comprehensive and is one of the areas for improvement. The CSO recently resumed publication of Recorded Crime Statistics but "Under Reservation" meaning that the data does not fully meet the quality expected for CSO statistics.

Re: Committee's Concluding Observations — Paragraph 22

123. Section 14 of The International Protection Act 2015 provides that, where it appears to an officer of the Minister that a person seeking to make an application for international protection has not attained the age of 18 years and is not accompanied by an adult who is taking responsibility for the care and protection of the person, the officer shall, as soon as practicable, notify TUSLA, the Child and Family Agency, of that fact. After that notification, it shall be presumed that the person concerned is a child and the Child Care Acts 1991 to 2013 relating to the care and welfare of persons who have not attained the age of 18 years shall apply accordingly. TUSLA is the statutory child welfare and protection body to which an unaccompanied minor is referred. It is a separate and independent body, and follows the principle of the best interests of the child as part of its statutory remit.

124. TUSLA receives unaccompanied minors notified under the International Protection Act 2015 into the care of the State. An application for international protection does not have to be made by the young person at this stage. An equity of care principle means that unaccompanied minors receive the same level of and access to care as any other child in the State. Each unaccompanied minor is allocated a social worker who acts as a de facto guardian for the child *in loco parentis*. Each unaccompanied minor undergoes an assessment to identify their needs. Unaccompanied minors may be accommodated, in accordance with their needs following an assessment, in community based residential houses, with foster families or other appropriate accommodation in the community. The

social worker advises the child, oversees their childcare plan, and also acts on the child's behalf, including obtaining legal or other formal advice. For example a legal advisor is available to the young person in respect of applications for international protection. TUSLA works with relevant agencies in respect of family reunification. Section 15(4) of the International Protection Act 2015 provides that TUSLA should seek legal advice in deciding whether or not to make an application for international protection on behalf of the unaccompanied minor. Where an application is made on behalf of the unaccompanied minor, TUSLA will represent and assist the child during the examination of the application.

125. The Social Work Team for Separated Children Seeking Asylum is the specialist unit within TUSLA Child and Family Agency with responsibility for managing the care of unaccompanied minors. The team develops individualised aftercare plans for unaccompanied minors who age out of statutory care when they reach 18 years of age, based on need, eligibility, vulnerability and voluntary participation of the young person.

Re: Committee's Concluding Observations — Paragraph 23

126. Ireland is firmly committed to ensuring that all instances of crime are properly investigated and that perpetrators are convicted and the appropriate sentence is handed down. Ireland is unaware of any basis for the suggestion that there is a specific problem of stabbings involving people from Sub-Saharan Africa. AGS's Policing Plan for 2018, in relation to the implementation of the EU Victims Directive, sets targets for a definition of hate crime and procedures to record hate crime (end Q.2 2018). AGS further aims to complete a nationwide campaign to encourage members of minority groups to come forward and report hate crime by the end of Q.3 2018.

Re: Committee's Concluding Observations — Paragraph 24

127. The Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act 2014 was signed into law by the President on 27 July 2014. All provisions have been commenced and IHREC came officially into being on 1 November 2014.

128. The Act imposes a positive legal duty on public bodies to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, promote equality, and protect human rights, in their daily work. This requires public bodies to take pro-active steps to address the equality and human rights issues that affect the people who use their services, people affected by their policies and people employed in the organisation. This duty has the potential to embed equality and human rights in the centre of policymaking, service provision and employment within the public service.

129. IHREC is playing an important role in assisting and supporting public bodies to comply with this new duty, including by developing practical guidance and resources for public bodies and through an awareness campaign for a wide range of public bodies and civil society organisations. In November 2017, IHREC hosted two major conferences on the duty in Dublin and Limerick to assist public servants to understand their obligations and to share good practice. It has recently undertaken pilot projects with five organisations (Cork City Council; Monaghan County Council; University College Cork; Irish Probation Service; Community Action Network) to support the development of approaches to implementing the Duty in differing contexts. IHREC allocated grant funding in 2016 and 2017 to organisations to promote human rights and equality. In 2017, awards were made under two overarching themes, one of which was to support the implementation of the Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty.

130. Several large public sector organisations, including the Department of Justice and Equality, and Revenue, have established cross-divisional working groups tasked with working collaboratively to integrate the duty into existing policies and structures.

Re: Committee's Concluding Observations — Paragraph 25

131. The legal framework for family reunification for beneficiaries of international protection is set out in Sections 56 and 57 of the International Protection Act 2015.

132. The Act defines family as the spouse or civil partner of the refugee or subsidiary protection beneficiary (i.e. the sponsor) if the sponsor is married, an unmarried child of the sponsor or if the sponsor is a child, the parents of the sponsor. The definition is in line with the definition of family in the 2003 EU Directive on Family Reunification though Ireland, unlike a number of European countries who are a party to the Directive (Ireland is not), allows subsidiary protection beneficiaries to be sponsors under the Act. 791 people were approved for family reunification in 2017.

133. In November 2017 the Government announced a new Family Reunification Humanitarian Admission Programme (FRHAP) that will address the issue of family reunification for some immediate family members coming from established conflict zones who are outside the scope of the International Protection Act 2015. The proposed FRHAP now restyled as the *Irish Humanitarian Admissions Programme (IHAP)* will form part of the Irish Refugee Protection Programme (IRPP) for 350 people approximately over 2 years. The IHAP will be operational from mid-May 2018 when the first open call for proposals for family members of refugees, subsidiary protection beneficiaries or Irish citizens to be considered by the Minister for the admission programme will be made.

134. For those outside the protection system, Ireland published, in the interests of transparency, a set of detailed administrative guidelines for family reunification cases on 31 December 2013 and these have been updated in December 2016 to take into account the introduction of new legislation. The guidelines set out the appropriate balance between the rights of the families and those of society in general, particularly as regards the economic considerations that apply. While these guidelines are not legally binding, they are referenced increasingly by the courts in determining matters relating to family reunification. Family reunification is also subject to judicial oversight, in particular, as regards ensuring that Ireland fulfils its obligations under the European Convention on Human Rights which has legal effect in Ireland.

Re: Committee's Concluding Observations — Paragraph 26

Diversity of Patronage

135. Ireland is continuing to make progress in the area of pluralism and diversity in education. Arrangements were introduced in 2011 whereby whenever a new school is needed, the Department of Education and Skills runs a separate patronage process to decide who will operate that school. It is open to all patrons and prospective patrons to apply for patronage of the new school under this process and the level of parental preference for each patron, along with parental preference for either Irish-medium or English-medium provision, are key to decisions in relation to the outcome of the process.

136. Between September 2011 and September 2017, 30 new primary schools (29 multi-denominational, one interdenominational) and 30 new post-primary schools (26 multi-denominational & 4 denominational) have been established for demographic purposes.

137. There are currently 113 multi-denominational primary schools and 38 multi-denominational post-primary schools (2017/18 school year). In addition to the above, 7 new schools (2 primary, including one school to be established under the patronage divesting process, and 5 post-primary) are due to be established in September 2018, all of which will be multi-denominational.

138. Community National Schools represent another new policy initiative to deal with increasing societal diversity and demand for greater choice in education provision at primary school level in Ireland. The model has an ethos of inclusion, equality and harmony, where each child and member of the school community is valued and treated with respect. There are currently twelve Community National Schools in operation around the country. Community National Schools are multi-denominational and welcome and respect children of all beliefs and none.

Forum on Patronage and Pluralism in the Primary Sector

139. The lack of diversity of patronage in the primary sector is also being addressed through the implementation of the recommendations of the Forum on Patronage and

Pluralism, established in 2011 and a Programme for Government commitment. The Forum was tasked to develop recommendations on steps to be taken to ensure that the education system at primary level could provide a sufficiently diverse number and range of primary schools to cater for children of all religions and none. The Forum held public sessions and consulted widely on the issues arising. The Advisory Group to the Forum published its report in 2012.

140. Work on implementing the Forum's recommendations is being advanced by the Department of Education and Skills in consultation with relevant stakeholders. A number of steps have been taken to implement these recommendations (see below).

Issues Underpinning Diversity in all Schools

141. The Forum recognised that outside urban areas, there is unlikely to be sufficient population to warrant the opening of more than one school in a given geographic area. Therefore, the existing school has to cater for the full range of traditions, religions and beliefs in the community. It produced a paper in 2014, following public consultation, entitled "*Forum on Patronage and Pluralism in the Primary Sector: Progress to Date and Future Directions*". The paper outlined good practice and options for promoting diversity in schools, in particular in relation to:

- The right to opt out of religion classes;
- Scheduling of Religion Classes and other Religious Activities;
- Options for Pupils to Religious Ceremonies of the Ethos of the School;
- Celebration of Religious Festivals;
- Display of Religious Artefacts.

142. The paper was not prescriptive on how schools should address these issues but instead it encouraged school authorities to engage in consultation with stakeholders and to review their policies and practices on an ongoing basis to ensure that they remain suitable for the school population that they serve. It recognised that each school should arrive at solutions that suit its own particular context and noted that practices may evolve over time as circumstances change.

Education about Religion and Beliefs and Ethics

143. The Forum on Patronage and Pluralism in the Primary Sector recommended that the State has a responsibility to ensure that all children have the right to receive Education about Religion and Beliefs (ERB) and Ethics. This would ensure in particular that children whose parents have chosen to withdraw them from religious instruction classes in denominational schools would have the opportunity to learn about religions and beliefs in school.

144. Religious education is one of the seven curricular areas of the Primary School Curriculum (1999) and schools are currently required to allocate thirty minutes per day for religious education. However, unlike other subject areas, the content of the religious curriculum provided by schools is not set by the Department of Education and Skills. Section 30 of the Education Act (1998) provides that time will be made available in the school day to teach curriculum that arises from the ethos of the school. This means that the content of the religious education programme in a particular primary school is determined by the patron of the school.

145. The National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) was asked to explore with the education partners and religious interests the development of ethics programmes for primary school pupils. In 2015, it produced a Consultation Paper outlining the proposed rationale, vision, aims and features of a curriculum in ERB and Ethics, to support teachers to enable children to:

- Develop self-awareness, confidence, personal beliefs and positive social identities;

- Have knowledge and understanding of how religious and non-religious worldviews have contributed to the culture in which we live, and continue to have an impact on individuals and relationships between individuals and their communities;
- Express comfort, empathy and joy with human diversity, use accurate language for human differences, and form deep, caring human connections;
- Recognise unfairness, injustice and inequality and understand the relationship between rights and responsibilities;
- Appreciate the impact of prejudice and discriminatory actions on others.

146. The final Consultation Report, which outlines the key messages arising from the consultation process and the implications for the development of a curriculum, was published by the NCCA in February 2017, and describes a way forward for the development of integrated provision for ERB and Ethics as part of the newly developing primary curriculum. As a first step in advancing the recommendations of the Forum on Patronage in this regard, the NCCA has gathered and published examples of good practice in the area of ERB and Ethics for schools to use in supporting and developing their practice in this area.

Patronage Divesting Process

147. On foot of the report of the Advisory Group to the Forum on Patronage and Pluralism in the Primary Sector, parental preferences surveys were undertaken in a number of areas of stable population in 2012 and 2013 to establish the level of parental demand for wider choice in the patronage of primary schools within these areas.

148. The surveys indicated that there was sufficient parental demand to support changes in school patronage in 28 areas. From September 2013, ten multi-denominational schools have opened under the patronage divesting process. In parallel with the Schools Reconfiguration for Diversity process below, work will continue on delivering multi-denominational schools in the remaining areas under the patronage divesting process.

Schools Reconfiguration for Diversity Process

149. The Programme for Government reflects the Government's objective of strengthening parental choice and further expanding diversity in our school system. The desire of parents for diversity in education is being pursued primarily by increasing the number of non-denominational and multi-denominational schools with a view to reaching 400 by 2030.

150. In this context and given the modest pace of progress with the Patronage Divestment process (see above), the Minister for Education & Skills announced on 30 January 2017 new plans, including the new School Reconfiguration for Diversity Process, aimed at providing more multi-denominational and non-denominational schools across the country, in line with the choices of families and school communities and the Programme for Government commitment in this area. In the initial phase it involves the Education and Training Boards (ETB's — the State's local education authorities) identifying areas where there is likely to be demand for greater diversity and working with their local City/County Childcare Committees to establish evidence of this demand among the cohort of pre-school parents.

151. As part of this process, surveys of the parents of pre-school children will commence in 16 areas across the country in latter half of 2018 — one pilot area to be identified by each of the 16 ETBs. The learning from this initial roll out will inform the further development of the survey process and associated documents prior to extending the process to additional areas. An analysis of the results will determine the extent of demand for multi-denominational or non-denominational in each area and form the basis of discussions with the majority patron concerning the transfer of patronage.

152. Each ETB will then draw up a comprehensive report on the position in relation to each of the 16 pilot areas for submission to the Department of Education and Skills, which will subsequently publish the reports. On publication of the reports, the Schools

Reconfiguration for Diversity process will move into the Implementation Phase, involving existing patrons consulting with their local school communities on accommodating the demand for diversity by transferring patronage of an existing school to a new multi- or non-denominational patron.

153. The new process supporting transfers of schools is based around principles of transparency and cooperation. It will involve very substantial levels of consultation of local communities. In that process, proposals from all prospective multi-denominational patrons that wish to be considered will be taken into account.

154. In the meantime, the “early movers” provision encourages school communities that have already decided to seek a transfer of patronage (independent of the survey process) to request their existing patron to apply to the Minister for Education and Skills for a direct transfer of patronage under section 8 of the Education Act.

School Admissions

155. The Education (Admission to Schools) Bill 2016 was published in July 2016, was passed by the Oireachtas on 4th July 2018, and was signed into law by the President on the 18th July 2018.

156. This legislation introduces a number of important changes to make enrolment policies fairer and more transparent for parents and students. The Act will create a more parent-friendly, equitable and consistent approach to how school admissions policy should operate for all primary and post-primary schools.

157. The Education (Admission to Schools) Act 2018, when commenced, will bring into operation a number of important measures, such as to:

- Ensure that where a school is not oversubscribed (approximately 80% of schools) it must admit all students applying;
- Ban waiting lists, thus ensuring that children who move to a new area are not disadvantaged;
- Ban fees relating to admissions in non-fee charging schools;
- Require all schools to publish their admissions policies, which will include details of their arrangements for pupils who decline to participate in religious instruction;
- Require all schools to consult with and inform parents where changes are being made to their admissions policies;
- Provide a power for the Minister to compel a school to open a special class or classes where the National Council for Special Education has identified a need for such provision within an area;
- Amend the Equal Status Act 2000 to remove the role of religion in school admissions for virtually all primary schools;
- Replace section 29 of the Education Act (Appeals) with a new section to align the legislation with actual practice and procedures as they have developed over the years and to increase the efficiency of the processes involved;
- Provide new powers for the National Council for Special Education and TUSLA, the Child and Family Agency, to designate a school place for those children who cannot get a school place.

Re: Committee’s Concluding Observations — Paragraph 27

158. A new National Strategy for Women and Girls 2017–2020 was adopted by Government and published on 3 May 2017. The Strategy has as its overall goal “to change attitudes and practices preventing women’s and girls’ full participation in education, employment and public life, at all levels, and to improve services for women and girls, with priority given to the needs of those experiencing or at risk of experiencing, the poorest outcomes”. This goal will be advanced through six high-level objectives as follows:

- Advance socio-economic equality for women and girls;
- Advance the physical and mental health and wellbeing of women and girls;
- Ensure the visibility in society of women and girls, and their equal and active citizenship;
- Advance women in leadership at all levels;
- Combat violence against women;
- Embed gender equality in decision-making.

159. Migrant and minority women will benefit from the implementation of these actions and are the specific focus of several planned outcomes, including:

- Increased action by businesses on equality and diversity;
- Improved access to education, training and employment opportunities for Traveller and Roma women;
- Improved healthcare support for women and girls from an intercultural perspective;
- Improved healthcare services and health outcomes for women and girls who have undergone FGM;
- Improved health outcomes for Traveller and Roma women;
- Greater levels of participation by Traveller and Roma women in public life;
- Greater participation of Traveller and Roma women in leadership positions.

160. The Government supports a range of positive action programmes, several of which have migrant and minority women as their focus, including a two-year €1,000,000 programme to provide labour market pre-activation supports to female refugees and the female family members of refugees; and a three-year € 280,000 programme to support entrepreneurship among migrant women.

Re: Committee's Concluding Observations — Paragraph 28

161. The employment protections envisaged in the Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families are already extensively incorporated into Irish employment law:

- The procedural framework set in place in respect of consideration of Employment Permit applications, a prerequisite for non-EEA nationals entering the Irish workforce, is completely non-discriminatory and the availability of Workplace Relations Commission inspectors in their capacity as Authorised Officers represents an additional protection for migrant workers;
- Non-EEA nationals are afforded the same protection as their Irish national counterparts in the workplace in terms of enforcement of employment rights. All legally employed workers in Ireland share the same legal protections, whether they are indigenous or migrant workers;
- Non-EEA nationals in particular also have recourse to treatment of grievances under the terms of the Employment Equality Acts.

162. It should be noted that the International Labour Organisation's (ILO) Convention on Decent Work for Domestic Workers (No. 189), 2011 was ratified by Ireland in July 2014.

Re: Committee's Concluding Observations — Paragraph 29

163. Combating Racism and Xenophobia is a specific theme within Ireland's National Strategy for Migrant Integration 2017–2020. Under this theme, public authorities have committed to implement a range of actions aimed at combating racial discrimination, including:

- Intercultural awareness training will be provided by all Government Departments and Agencies and reviewed at intervals to ensure that it is adequate. Front-line staff

will receive on-going cultural awareness training appropriate to their role and operational requirements;

- Local Authorities will take actions to have migrant representation on all Joint-Policing Committees;
- An Garda Síochána (AGS) will continue to implement a victim-centred policy and good investigative practices in racial and other similar crimes to encourage victims to report offences in line with recommendations of the Garda Inspectorate in this regard;
- The current legislation with regard to racially motivated crime will be reviewed by the Department of Justice and Equality with a view to strengthening the law against hate crime, including in the area of online hate speech;
- The issue of the under-reporting of racially motivated crime will continue to be addressed by AGS, including through the development of greater contact with marginalized communities;
- Public offices will display information on how to make a complaint of racist behaviour by a member of staff or other customer;
- Government arts and culture programmes and policy will assist in the promotion of the arts and culture of diverse communities across Ireland;
- Measures to combat racism and xenophobia will feature among the actions funded by OPMI.

164. Funding for a wide range of anti-racism projects and initiatives is provided by Government Departments, Agencies and Local Authorities. Examples of recent and current initiatives supported with Government funding include:

- Sport Against Racism Ireland — who organise activities and events such as anti-discrimination training workshops that further social inclusion by bringing people of different communities together through sport in primary schools aged 10–13;
- Show Racism the Red Card — who deliver a programme of activities which involves: provision of anti-racism education workshops in primary, post-primary schools, Youth outreach programmes and youth services nationwide. Coordination of activities such as the Creative Competition, Wear Red Day and FARE fortnight (Football Against Racism in Europe) all of which give young people the opportunity to demonstrate that they are opposed to racism and support a culture of inclusion.

165. See information provided as response under Article 5. Please also refer to paragraph 259 of Ireland's updated Common Core Document (HRI/CORE/IRL/2014), attached at Appendix IV.

Re: Committee's Concluding Observations — Paragraph 30

166. Irish Aid in the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade has supported Africa Day celebrations in Ireland since 2006. The celebrations provide an opportunity to highlight the diversity and potential of the African continent and its people. This support has enabled a range of cultural, community and family events to take place across the country.

167. "Africa Day Dublin" is the flagship event with an attendance of 10,000 in 2012 rising to between 27,000 and 34,000 subsequently. In the last five years, Irish Aid has also supported regional events in Limerick, Waterford, Galway and Cork. The connection between Ireland and Africa is highlighted at these events by the presence of non-governmental organisations working in Africa or with the African diaspora in Ireland and African embassies in Ireland.

168. The state is currently in dialogue with civil society organisations to develop a comprehensive programme for the UN Decade of African Descent.

Re: Committee's Concluding Observations — Paragraph 31*Consultation with Non-Governmental Organisations*

169. The preparation of this report has been informed by extensive consultation with civil society organisations. A draft of the report was prepared by the Department of Justice and Equality in consultation with relevant other Government Departments and Agencies. This draft was published for consultation on 6 December 2017. Written submissions were invited and a series of three public consultation meetings were held in Galway, Cork and Dublin. These meetings were attended by representatives of civil society organisations and local public authorities. 27 written submissions were received. [These were published on the website of the OPMI, together with a summary of the three consultation meetings. This report was revised prior to submission to the Committee in light of the issues raised during the consultation process.]

170. Dialogue with civil society organisations is an inherent part of the Government's approach to policy development and implementation in the area of human rights in general and efforts to combat racism and xenophobia in particular. The National Migrant Integration Strategy was developed using a consultative process that included civil society organisations working with migrants and minorities. The importance of dialogue is explicitly recognized in the Strategy through a number of specific commitments including:

- That Government Departments and Agencies will ensure appropriate, regular engagements with non-governmental organisations representing migrant groups;
- That the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government, together with local authorities, will undertake initiatives aimed at increasing the number of migrant representatives in local authority and other representative forums;
- The Migrant Consultative Forum operated by the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection will continue to offer the opportunity for non-governmental organisations working with migrants, to engage on migrant-related aspects of social provision services;
- Each local authority will establish a Migrant Integration Forum in its area;
- Dublin City Council will establish an Integration Network where migrant groups can engage with the Government and public bodies on issues of concern and on barriers to integration.

171. Implementation of the Strategy is overseen by a Monitoring Committee chaired by the Minister of State for Equality, Integration and Immigration, Mr. David Stanton, T.D. and includes representatives of civil society organisations and relevant public authorities.

Re: Committee's Concluding Observations — Paragraph 32

172. The report will as usual be made available to the public. A draft has already been the subject of a public consultation as described above. This report will be published on the official website of the OPMI. The concluding observations of the Committee will similarly be published when available.

Re: Committee's Concluding Observations — Paragraph 33

173. Ireland's updated common core document (HRI/CORE/IRL/2014) was received by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights on 7 February 2014. The Common Core Document will be updated in the coming months, with a view to submitting the revised version to the OHCHR in 2018.

Re: Committee's Concluding Observations — Paragraph 34

174. Information on follow-up to recommendations 11, 12, 15, and 16 was submitted to the Committee by Ireland in the addendum to the 3rd and 4th periodic report dated 3 July 2012 (CERD/C/IRL/CO/3-4/Add.1).

Re: Committee's Concluding Observations — Paragraph 35

175. Information on concrete measures taken by Ireland to implement recommendations 18, 19, 25 and 27 is detailed above.

Re: Committee's Concluding Observations — Paragraph 36

176. The Committee's recommendations have been taken into account during the preparation of this report.

III. Updated Information on the Implementation of Articles 1 to 7 of the Convention**Article 1**

177. As outlined in paragraphs 135–146 of Ireland's Third and Fourth Periodic Report (CERD/C/IRL/3-4) Ireland complies with the provisions of Article 1 via the Employment Equality Acts 1998 to 2008, the Equal Status Acts 2000 to 2015, and the Pensions Acts 1990 to 2004.

Article 2

178. Please see the response material provided in response to Paragraph No. 24 of the Committee's concluding observations.

Article 3

179. Please see paragraphs 204 to 207 of Ireland's Third and Fourth Periodic Report (CERD/C/IRL/3-4).

180. Please also see response provided to recommendation No. 13 of the Committee's Concluding Observations.

Migrant Integration Policy

181. Migrant Integration policy in Ireland has a focus on the following:

- An intercultural approach, featuring emphasis on the creation of common ground, mutual understanding and shared aspirations, encouragement of ethnic mixing in housing polices and the provision of inter-culturally competent services;
- Rights and responsibilities for both parties;
- Mutual adaptation;
- Ownership responsibilities for everyone — unions, sports groups, media, etc.;
- A “whole-of-Government” approach;
- A mainstreaming policy and approach to service delivery for migrants;
- Effective and equitable provision of core services;
- Local level integration measures.

Mainstreaming

182. Ireland adopts a policy of mainstream service provision, i.e. migrants access the same services as Irish citizens but services have to adapt to the cultural diversity of their client base. Government Departments have sought to make their services more accessible, inter alia, through translating documents into multiple languages, providing interpretation and translation services and making services more inter-culturally competent for immigrant clients.

Migrant Integration Strategy — A Blueprint for the Future

183. A new National Migrant Integration Strategy, published on 7 February 2017, sets out the Government's approach to migrant integration for 2017–2020. It envisages a whole-of-Government approach involving actions by all Departments and relevant Agencies and is targeted at all migrants, including refugees, who are legally residing in the State. It is also intended to encompass the children of migrants and people who have become naturalised Irish citizens but who were born outside Ireland.

Vision

184. The Strategy sets as its vision that migrants are facilitated to play a full role in Irish society, that integration is a core principle of Irish life and that Irish society and institutions work together to promote integration.

Integration Monitoring and Research

185. Integration monitoring is carried out on behalf of OPMI by the Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI).⁶ The most recent monitoring report (2016) is included at Appendix III. A further report, due for publication in late 2018, will include, as a special theme, the integration of Muslims in Ireland. OPMI has recently commissioned research by the ESRI on the spatial segregation of ethnic groups and on data gaps with respect to integration. Findings from this research will be used to better inform policy development and decision making in this area.

Article 4*Domestic Legislative and Policy Framework*

186. There is a comprehensive legislative framework in place to protect people from racism and discrimination and informed by relevant international Conventions and EU legislation as indicated above. Responsibility for legislation in this field rests primarily with the Minister for Justice and Equality.

Civil Law

187. Ireland has comprehensive and robust equality legislation in place, which prohibits discrimination on nine specified grounds: gender, civil status, family status, age, race, religion, disability, sexual orientation and membership of the Traveller community. The legislation is designed to promote equality, prohibit discrimination — direct, indirect and by association — and victimisation, and to allow positive measures to ensure full equality across nine grounds.

188. Discrimination on the ground of race is prohibited by law in the provision of goods and services by the Equal Status Acts 2000 to 2015 and in employment by the Employment Equality Acts 1998 to 2011. The ground of race for the purpose of both the Equal Status and Employment Equality Acts is defined as being of different race, colour, nationality or ethnic or national origins. Discrimination and harassment in relation to recruitment, conditions of employment and pay on a number of grounds, including race, are outlawed under the Employment Equality Acts 1998 to 2011. Discrimination on the same grounds in the supply of goods or services, education and housing are prohibited under the Equal Status Acts 2000 to 2015.

189. Discrimination on the ground of race is also prohibited in relation to occupational pensions under the Pensions Act 1990 and in the Unfair Dismissals Act 1977.

190. Equality legislation also provides for remedies for those who have suffered discrimination. The Workplace Relations Commission (formerly the Equality Tribunal) investigates or mediates claims of unlawful discrimination under equality legislation. Ireland's equality legislation is constantly kept under review and amended as necessary.

⁶ <https://www.esri.ie/pubs/BKMNEXT330.pdf>.

Criminal Law

191. Please see response provided under Paragraph 15 of the Concluding Observations.

192. A new issue was raised by the European Commission in April 2016 under Article 9(2) of the EU Framework Decision 2008/913/JHA concerning jurisdiction over offences committed through ICT systems that are hosted in Ireland. A full reply addressing the concerns raised by the Commission, including those relating to Article 9(2), and maintaining Ireland's position that it is full compliance with the provisions of the Framework Decision, was returned on 28 April 2016. No response has yet been received.

Law Reform Commission's proposed project on cyber bullying

193. Relevant to the further consideration of the criminal law in the field of racism is the Law Reform Commission's comprehensive 2016 report "Harmful Communications and Digital Safety¹⁴" which presents research, guiding principles and recommendations for law reform in a number of areas including cyberbullying and hate speech. Legislative proposals are being brought forward under the Council of Europe Convention on Cybercrime.

Racist Graffiti

194. Racist graffiti has not been a widespread problem in Ireland to date. The policy in relation to racist graffiti has been early removal and local authorities have been very responsive to reports of racist graffiti where they have occurred. The National Migrant Integration Strategy requires local authorities to publish their policies for the removal of racist graffiti.

Aggravated sentencing — Roundtable on Hate Crime

195. In recognition that legislation on racist crime is inextricably linked to legislation relating to other forms of intolerance, a roundtable event on hate crime was hosted by the University of Limerick on 29 October 2014. The meeting was chaired by Mr. Aodhán Ó Ríordáin TD, then Minister of State with special responsibility for Equality, New Communities and Culture. A range of non-governmental organisations attended the event, which examined possible amendments to criminal legislation with a particular focus on the penalties to be applied for hate crime offences. At the conclusion of the roundtable, the Minister invited the non-governmental organisations to make concrete proposals for new legislative measures. Legislative proposals were brought forward in the form of a Private Members Bill the Criminal Justice (Aggravation by Prejudice) Bill 2016.

196. A revised version of this Private Members Bill was proposed by Deputy O'Loughlin in April 2017, which significantly changes the scope of the original Bill and moves the focus from the aggravation of an offence for the purpose of sentencing when accompanied by prejudice, to the introduction of additional criminal offences. The amendments propose a range of new offences which mirror existing criminal offences with the additional element of being motivated by bias or prejudice, requiring bias motivation to be proven at trial. The offences include offences against the person, sexual offences, theft offences, public order offences and criminal damage. The future of the Bill is currently unclear.

197. Separate to this, the Department of Justice and Equality is undertaking a legislative review of the law relating to hate crime and incitement to hatred in order to ensure the best possible public policy response to racism and xenophobia in the context of Ireland's integration policy, the EU Framework decision 2008/913/JHA on Combating Racism and Xenophobia and legislative developments in other jurisdictions. It is anticipated that the review will be completed by the end of this year 2018.

Reporting of incidents

198. It is acknowledged by the authorities that there is an issue with the under-reporting of racially motivated crime. The non-governmental sector has made efforts to encourage those subjected to racist or xenophobic incidents to report such events to them, with the aim of both recording the incident and referring incidents to An Garda Síochána or other authorities, for action as appropriate. An example of this is the iReport reporting system

introduced by the Irish chapter of the European Network Against Racism (ENAR) intended to provide a mechanism for people to document incidents of a racist nature that occur nationwide.

Article 5

Constitutional Protection — Specified Rights

199. Please see paragraph 85 of Ireland's Common Core Document (HRI/CORE/IRL/2014).

Constitutional Protection — Unspecified Rights

200. Please see paragraphs 87 to 88 of Ireland's Common Core Document (HRI/CORE/IRL/2014).

Article 5 (a)

201. Please see paragraphs 231 to 234 of Ireland's First and Second Reports and paragraph 85 of Ireland's Common Core Document (HRI/CORE/IRL/2014).

Article 5 (b)

Victims of Human Trafficking

202. Ireland enacted the Criminal Law (Human Trafficking) Act, 2008 making human trafficking an offence with penalties of up to life imprisonment and (at the discretion of the Court) a fine. An amendment to the above Act, the Criminal Law (Human Trafficking) (Amendment) Act, 2013 was enacted in 2013, which, among other things, extends the definition of human trafficking to include trafficking for forced begging and trafficking for other criminal activities.

203. The Criminal Law (Sexual Offences) Act 2017, amending the 1993 Act, was commenced on 27 March 2017. Part 4 of the Act amends the law to target the demand for prostitution by criminalising the purchase of sex. It removes those who provide sexual services through prostitution from the existing offences of soliciting and loitering for the purpose of prostitution. Additionally, the State's focus on eliminating labour exploitation has intensified following several referrals of suspected victims of trafficking over a number of sectors. This has included reconvening a multi-stakeholder labour exploitation working group.

204. Ireland has a National Referral Mechanism which provides extensive supports for suspected victims of trafficking, including full board accommodation, advice on personal security, legal aid, a personalised physical and mental health care plan and integration supports. Non-governmental organisations working with victims are also supported through State funding.

205. A 2nd National Action Plan to prevent and Combat Trafficking in Human Beings in Ireland was published in October 2016 following extensive consultation with State Agencies, International Organisations, Civil Society and Non-Governmental Organisations.

Article 5 (c)

Eligibility to Vote

206. Subject to age and residency requirements, a registered elector's citizenship determines the polls at which he or she is entitled to vote. Irish citizens alone are entitled to vote at all elections and referendums. EU citizens may vote at European Parliament and local elections; non-EU citizens may vote at local elections. In addition, British citizens are also eligible to vote at Dáil elections.

207. Under section 8 of the Electoral Act 1992, the Minister for Housing, Planning and Local Government may, by order, provide for citizens of another EU Member State, ordinarily resident in Ireland, to be registered as Dáil electors on a reciprocal basis. No such order has been made and there are no proposals to extend voting rights at parliamentary elections to Irish citizens resident in any other EU Member State.

208. Ireland is fully compliant with Articles 6 and 7 of the Council of Europe Convention regarding non-Irish residents' right to vote in local authority elections.

The Electoral Register

209. The Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government is responsible for the various legislative codes dealing with the registration of electors and the conduct of elections and referendums and offers information on voting in Ireland on its website.

Awareness Campaign

210. Each year, the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government undertakes an awareness campaign to encourage voter registration from 1–25 November, the period coinciding with the publication of the Draft Register of Electors. This campaign involves the distribution of posters to registration authorities, elected members, youth organisations, third-level student bodies and multi-cultural groups. Advertising is also undertaken in the national newspapers and in Metro Éireann, a multicultural newspaper.

2014 European Parliament and Local elections

211. In advance of the 2014 European Parliament and local elections, the initiatives set out below were designed to assist registration authorities in compiling the register of electors:

- A Multilingual Prompt Card was translated into 17 languages to facilitate staff engaged by registration authorities in their door-to-door registration work. The Prompt Card was available in the following languages: Arabic, Czech, English, French, German, Hungarian, Irish, Italian, Latvian, Lithuanian, Mandarin, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian, Russian, Slovakian and Spanish;
- Two information leaflets were updated which are available on the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government's website and on registration authority websites:
 - "The Register of Electors" was produced in 17 languages i.e. Arabic, Chinese, Czech, English, French, German, Hungarian, Irish, Italian, Latvian, Lithuanian, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian, Russian, Slovak and Spanish;
 - "How Members of Local Authorities are Elected" was produced in 17 languages i.e. Arabic, Chinese, Czech, English, French, German, Hungarian, Irish, Italian, Latvian, Lithuanian, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian, Russian, Slovak and Spanish;
 - "How Ireland's MEPs are Elected" was produced in 14 EU languages i.e. Czech, English, French, German, Hungarian, Irish, Italian, Latvian, Lithuanian, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian, Slovak and Spanish.
- An advertising campaign urging people to check whether they were registered drew attention to the fact that the register would be used for the European and local elections in 2014. Posters were distributed to registration authorities, elected members, youth organisations, third-level student bodies and multi-cultural groups;
- Awareness of the registration process was promoted through the website and Twitter account of the Department of the Housing, Planning and Local Government as well as the use of on-line advertising (Leader board and mid page units) on the main news sites;

- Newspaper advertising was undertaken in 2014 to inform people of their entitlement to get on the register of electors via the supplement and advertisements were placed on local radio stations;
- An information leaflet on voting and standing in the European Parliament and local elections was distributed to various embassies.

Role of Political Parties

212. Information on the level of political participation by immigrants contained in the ESRI's 2016 Monitoring Report on Integration indicates that the percentage of elected local representatives of immigrant origin stood at 0.2% in 2014. Each political party is responsible for its own membership and for the selection of candidates to stand for election. The Migrant Integration Strategy commits political parties to encourage migrant participation in political life, and a successful event, attended by political parties, was co-hosted with the NGO community in March to encourage migrant political participation.

Initiatives on Voting

213. Some local authorities have developed initiatives to encourage migrants to become more involved and to register to vote, including Dublin City Council. Non-governmental organisations, including the Immigrant Council of Ireland, New Communities Partnership, AkiDWA, Forum Polonia, Doras Luimni and the Africa Centre, have been involved in the development of initiatives in this area with Government funding.

Information on Registration for voting

214. Information is provided to those receiving Irish citizenship on the process for registering to vote.

Article 5 (d)

(i) Right to freedom of movement and residence within the border of the State

215. Please see paragraphs 87 to 88 of Ireland's Common Core Document (HRI/CORE/IRL/2014).

(ii) Right to leave any country, including one's own, and to return to one's country

216. Please see paragraphs 87 to 88 of Ireland's Common Core Document (HRI/CORE/IRL/2014).

(iii) Right to nationality

EUROSTAT Statistics

217. According to Eurostat, the EU statistical agency, in 2013, Ireland had the highest rate of citizenship granted in the EU per 1000 inhabitants (5.3 citizenships per 1000 resident population) closely followed by Sweden (5.2 citizenships per 1000 resident population).

218. The top 10 nationalities of persons becoming naturalised Irish citizens since 2011 were: Nigeria, India, Philippines, Pakistan, Poland, Romania, China (including Hong Kong), Ukraine, South Africa, and Bangladesh. In total, nationals of 178 different countries became Irish citizens since 2011.

Citizenship ceremonies

219. Citizenship ceremonies were first introduced in June 2011. At these ceremonies, people complete the process of becoming Irish citizens through naturalisation and receive their Certificate of Naturalisation. The ceremonies celebrate an important milestone in the lives of new citizens and allow them to declare fidelity to the nation and loyalty to the State. The ceremonies reflect the importance that the State places upon the granting of Irish

citizenship. Citizenship ceremonies are presided over by a retired member of the Judiciary who administers the oath of fidelity to the Nation by candidates for citizenship. A Government Minister normally attends.

220. 131 such Ceremonies have been held at which 82,000 applicants received their Certificates of Naturalisation. If minors (who are not required to attend a ceremony) are included, the total granted Irish citizenship since 2011 is over 110,000. In 2016 four Citizenship Ceremony Days were held; one in Waterford for approximately 100 people and the other three in the Convention Centre Dublin, where over 7,800 people received their certificates of naturalisation in 8 ceremonies. Two Citizenship Ceremony Days (6 separate ceremonies) were held in Dublin in 2017 at which over 6,400 people became Irish citizens. At a smaller ceremony in Limerick in 2017, 300 people became citizens.

(iv) Right to marriage and choice of spouse

221. Please see paragraph 88 of Ireland's Common Core Document (HRI/CORE/IRL/2014).

222. The Domestic Violence Act 2018 aims to facilitate Ireland's ratification of the Istanbul Convention (Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence). It makes specific provision for a criminal offence of forced marriage.

(v) Right to own property alone as well as in association with others

223. Please see paragraph 85 of Ireland's Common Core Document (HRI/CORE/IRL/2014).

(vi) Right to inherit

224. Please see paragraph 85 of Ireland's Common Core Document (HRI/CORE/IRL/2014).

(vii) Right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion

225. Please see paragraph 85 of Ireland's Common Core Document (HRI/CORE/IRL/2014). Ireland's Constitution guarantees freedom of thought, conscience and religion and Ireland has robust equality legislation in place to combat discrimination on nine grounds, including religion.

Article 5 (d)

(i) Right to work, to free choice of employment, to just and favourable conditions of work, to protection against unemployment, to equal pay for equal work, to just and favourable remuneration

The Workplace Relations Commission

226. The Workplace Relations Commission (WRC) is an independent, statutory body established on 1 October 2015 under the Workplace Relations Act 2015 (No. 16 of 2015).⁷ The WRC took on the functions previously discharged by the Labour Relations Commission, the Equality Tribunal, the National Employment Rights Authority, the first instance functions of the Employment Appeals Tribunal and some of the functions of the Labour Court.

227. The appellate functions of the Employment Appeals Tribunal were incorporated into an expanded Labour Court. The WRC provides a single portal of entry for all employment and equality related information requests, and employment and equality rights complaints and referrals. It plays a key role in encouraging employers and employees to resolve issues

⁷ <https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/bills/bill/2014/79/>.

at workplace level. The Labour Court acts as a court of appeal in relation to decisions made by WRC Adjudicators.

228. The Employment Equality Acts 1998–2015 outlaw discrimination in a wide range of employment and employment-related areas. The work of adjudicating on complaints arising under the Acts falls to the WRC.

229. In 2017, 671 specific complaints were made under the Employment Equality Acts compared with 691 in 2016. While complainants must indicate at least one of the discriminatory grounds, in many instances more than one is indicated. In 2017 the WRC received 189 specific complaints made under the Employment Equality Acts on the ground of Race but only 7 specific complaints where membership of the Traveller community was indicated as a ground.

Atypical Working Scheme for Seafarers

230. In February 2016, Ireland commenced an Atypical Working Scheme for Seafarers. This provided a lawful pathway for persons, previously with no immigration or employment permission, to work in the Irish fishing fleet. This was put in place a regulatory regime for the employment of non-EEA workers in this sector of the fishing industry. It was first open to all persons employed as fishermen without the appropriate immigration permission. 152 non-EEA nationals were given a permission under the scheme, 108 renewing their permission in 2017. Thereafter, applications under the scheme could only be made from outside the State, or as a renewal of an existing permission. 5 persons have sought to renew their permission with a different employer.

231. Please also see paragraph 85 of Ireland's Common Core Document (HRI/CORE/IRL/2014).

Employment Permits

232. Employment Permits legislation affirms the importance of protecting vulnerable migrants, who often do not have the personal support networks or the familiarity with employment practices here to protect their own interests, and places emphasis on ensuring employment rights compliance:

- The foreign national receives the original employment permit and the employer gets a copy;
- A job offer must come from a bona-fide employer registered with the Revenue Commissioners and, where applicable, the Companies Registration Office/Register of Friendly Societies;
- The employment must achieve a minimum remuneration threshold;
- The Reactivation Employment Permit scheme is designed for those foreign nationals who originally entered the labour market legally on an employment permit but who fell out of the system;
- Enabling those holders of certain categories of employment permit and who have been made redundant to apply for the same job with a different employer even though the job is no longer on the Highly Skilled Occupations List or is now ineligible for an employment permit;
- Providing for the Workplace Relations Commission's powers of investigation and enforcement of the Employment Permits Acts;
- All employment in Ireland is subject to the provisions of employment law with the protections that entails for employees and, in addition to these provisions, employers are subject to fines of up to €250,000, or a prison term of up to 10 years, where they are found to be in breach of the Employment Permits Acts.

Workplace Diversity Initiatives

233. Employers in Ireland increasingly recognize the importance of managing workplace diversity successfully. As part of the wider European Diversity Charter initiative, Ireland's

Diversity Charter was launched in 2012 by organisations representing the business community and including the Irish Business and Employers Confederation (IBEC), the organisation representing Irish Businesses. The signing of this charter is a voluntary commitment by organisations to effective diversity management, preventing discrimination and promoting equality with respect to all their stakeholders and the environment in which they operate. There are 51 members in the Diversity Charter Ireland, covering an estimated 100,000 employees in Ireland. IBEC has separately produced resources and best practice guidelines on diversity and the integrated workplace for employers.

(ii) Right to form and join trade unions

234. Please see paragraphs 310 and 311 of CERD/C/IRL/3-4.

(iii) Right to housing

235. Please see paragraphs 312 to 319 of CERD/C/IRL/3-4:

(iv) Right to public health, medical care, social security and social services

236. Please see paragraphs 320 to 338 of CERD/C/IRL/3-4:

(v) Right to education and training

237. Please see paragraph 85 of Ireland's Common Core Document (HRI/CORE/IRL/2014). Ireland operates an inclusive education system in keeping with obligations under the Constitution and national and international law. Principles of equality are set out in the Education Act 1998, the Education Welfare Act, 2000 and the Education for Persons with Special Education Needs Act, 2004.

238. All immigrant children, including children of migrant workers, unaccompanied minors and children of refugees and asylum seekers, can access pre-school, first and second level education in a manner similar to Irish nationals, until they have reached the age of 18 years. Additional supports are provided on the basis of identified educational need. The Department of Education and Skills has prioritised the mainstreaming of migrant children and young people in our schools and does not support segregated provision.

239. Key education-related actions in the Migrant Integration Strategy for delivery by the Department of Education and Skills; the Education and Training Boards; SOLAS (the State Further Education and Training Authority); and schools include:

- Monitoring current school enrolment policies to assess their impact on the enrolment of migrant students;
- Monitoring the number of non-English speaking migrant children in schools annually and publishing details;
- Reviewing the adequacy of language supports in schools to cater for the language needs of children from ethnic minorities;
- Reviewing the provision of ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) classes to cater for the language needs of adults from ethnic minorities;
- Proactive efforts to attract migrants into teaching positions, including raising awareness of the Irish language aptitude test and adaptation period for primary teaching;
- Including a language component in education and training programmes for unemployed migrants with poor English proficiency;
- Other relevant actions include: Schools outside the established education system will be encouraged to network with the aim of providing information on child protection and health and safety regulation to them and of developing relationships with them.

240. Actions 15 & 16 of the Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools (DEIS) Plan 2017 note that supports for children whose first language is not English or Irish are particularly important in the context of DEIS schools as they cater for large numbers of

these children. It also notes, and includes specific action on, the need to establish current EAL (English as an Additional Language) levels of need at post primary level, and the need to improve data on EAL inputs, outputs and outcomes in all schools to inform future policy.

Access to Third Level education

241. The third National Access Plan 2015–2019 is cognisant of equality principles and sets out the goals, objectives and actions required to increase representation in higher education by members of target groups from socio-economically disadvantaged target groups, including students from ethnic minorities and the Irish Traveller community.

242. In addition to the Student Grant Scheme, a number of other funding schemes support increased equity of access to and participation in higher education including the Student Assistance Fund.

243. New measures to support access to higher education include initiatives to widen access to initial teacher education and a new bursary scheme for school leavers from communities experiencing socio-economic disadvantage, including Travellers and ethnic minority communities.

(vi) Right to equal participation in cultural activities

244. As outlined in paragraph 342 of Ireland’s combined 3rd and 4th periodic report (CERD/C/IRL/3-4) cultural activities are explicitly captured within the definition of “service” in section 2 (1) of the Equal Status Acts 2000–2015.

Article 5 (f)

245. No restrictions are permitted on access to public places or services on the basis of race in Ireland.

Article 6

Workplace Relations Reform

246. The Government decided in December 2012, as part of the Workplace Relations Reform, that responsibility for the Equality Tribunal (including dealing with cases of discrimination in the provision of goods and services) would transfer to the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation. Responsibility for equality legislation and policy remains with the Department of Justice and Equality. The Equality Tribunal was transferred from the aegis of the Department of Justice and Equality to the aegis of the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation on 1 January 2013 (S. I. No. 531 of 2012). The Workplace Relations Commission (WRC) provides the same service in terms of ease of access and independent adjudication as had been theretofore provided by the Tribunal.

247. Since its establishment the WRC has eliminated a significant backlog of legacy discrimination complaints inherited from the Equality Tribunal. The WRC has also managed to significantly reduce the waiting time for the processing of all complaints. The clear majority of new discrimination complaints are now dealt with in under six months

248. In 2017, 671 specific complaints were made under the Employment Equality Acts compared with 691 in 2016. In addition, in 2017, 668 specific complaints were made under the Equal Status Acts compared with 658 in 2016. In 2017, 408 equal status complaints indicated membership of the Traveller community as the ground for the complaint while 363 indicated the ground of race.

249. A core objective of the reform is to encourage the resolution of complaints and disputes using mediation. A dedicated Mediation Service division of the WRC was established in late 2015 and mediation is offered free of charge to all parties to discrimination complaints, where appropriate.

Other Bodies

250. There are a number of other fora in which complaints involving racism may be pursued in appropriate cases. These include the Press Council of Ireland, the Press Ombudsman and the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland in the context of the media, and the Garda Síochána Ombudsman Commission in relation to complaints concerning the conduct of members of An Garda Síochána.

251. Racist material on the internet is a matter for the Minister for Justice and Equality, An Garda Síochána and the Internet Service Providers Association (ISPA). Hotline (www.hotline.ie) was launched in 1999 to provide an anonymous reporting service to members of the public who uncover illegal content on the internet.

Article 7**A. Education and Teaching***Junior Cycle Reform*

252. The reform of the Junior Cycle curriculum has opened new opportunities for teaching and learning other languages. The second statement of learning of the Junior Cycle Programme states that a student will be able to listen, speak, read and write in Language 2 and be provided with the opportunity to do so in one other language at a level of proficiency that is appropriate to his or her ability. Schools must ensure that the statements of learning feature in the Junior Cycle Programme. The new Junior Cycle also provides for short courses which offer opportunities, inter alia, for students to study languages such as Polish and Mandarin Chinese. The National Council for Curriculum and Assessment has developed a short course in Mandarin Chinese and the Post-Primary Languages Initiative has developed a template for short courses in other non-curricular languages. Using this template, the Post-Primary Languages Initiative is currently working on “off-the-shelf” courses in Irish Sign Language, Japanese and Russian. It is also developing a short course in Polish as a heritage language in collaboration with the Polish embassy. Schools can also use these templates to develop their own short courses in other languages, for example the languages of migrant children present in the school population. Jewish studies will continue to form part of the Junior Cycle curriculum available to schools.

253. Information on Ethnic/Cultural Background is now collected, with parental consent and used to plan policy and supports for minority groups.

Holocaust Education Trust Ireland

254. The Holocaust Education Trust Ireland (HETI) aims to educate people about the Holocaust in order to combat anti-Semitism and all forms of racism and intolerance in Ireland. OPMI funds the HETI to organise the Annual Holocaust Memorial Day which takes place each year on the Sunday nearest to 27 January. In 2018, the event took place on Sunday 28 January.

255. The Memorial Day feeds into the projects that involve Holocaust survivors speaking at schools, libraries and community centres. More than 5,000 senior school students and more than 2,000 members of the Irish public hear a survivor speak each year and each person takes home a Holocaust Memorial Day booklet. The Annual Memorial Event which takes place in the Dublin City Mansion House (Mayor’s Residence) is recorded on DVD, not only as an education resource but also as a record of all those who have participated in the programme. Some Holocaust survivors who spoke at previous commemorations have since died but their testimony is recorded and available to inform future generations.

256. OPMI provided €706,340 in funding to the HETI between 2008 and 2017. In 2011 Ireland became a member of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (formerly the Taskforce for International Cooperation on Holocaust Education, Remembrance and Research). Subsequently in 2012 a Standing Committee on Holocaust Education, Research and Remembrance was established, consisting of representatives of the Department of

Foreign Affairs and Trade, the Department of Education and Skills, the Department of Justice and Equality, HETI, the Irish Jewish Museum, and academia. The Government has worked closely with HETI to promote Holocaust education and awareness through teacher education programmes, schools' initiatives such as the Crocus Project, the National Holocaust Memorial Day commemoration and other activities.

Integration of human rights education and training into school and training curricula

257. The Department of Education and Skills has continued to liaise with and support a range of stakeholders and NGOs working in the area of human rights education including the Holocaust Education Trust Ireland, Young Social Innovators, World Wise Global Schools. It has also continued to foster human rights education under the National Strategy for Education for Sustainable Development.

258. The Department of Education and Skills has consolidated citizenship education in Junior Cycle, through the provision of a new short course in Civic, Social and Political Education (CSPE) under the Framework for Junior Cycle 2015. This also included provision for CSPE to be included in a compulsory Wellbeing Programme from September 2017. In essence, this means that societal engagement and human rights education are integral parts of a student's wellbeing, just as social, personal, health and physical education can be.

259. A new Leaving Certificate subject — Politics and Society — was formally introduced in 2016 and has almost 1,000 students taking it in 41 Phase One schools at present. This subject has a significant human rights dimension, built around international human rights instruments, theory and active citizenship.

Promoting Intercultural Awareness in the Public Sector

260. **The Garda (Police) National Diversity and Integration Unit (GNDIU)** is responsible for providing training on policing multi-cultural Ireland to a number of other dedicated specialist units. All Gardaí (Police) receive extensive training in human rights issues (see paragraphs 139 to 142 of Ireland's Common Core Document).

261. **Garda Síochána (Police) Ombudsman Commission** provides training in human rights to all members of its staff including investigators and caseworkers. Such training encompasses issues relating to racism and racial discrimination.

262. **International Protection Office (IPO)** provides a comprehensive programme of training for caseworkers who are involved in investigating and determining applications for asylum. These training programmes, including in relation to interviewing vulnerable applicants such as those subjected to sexual violence or victims of trafficking and unaccompanied minors, have been developed in conjunction with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). Programmes are in line with international best practice including the European Asylum Support Office Training Curriculum.

263. **Irish Refugee Protection Programme** officers have undergone Equality and Diversity Training, Culturally Sensitive Refugee Status Determination Interviewing Skills training, and UNHCR's Resettlement training in 2018.

264. **Prison Service** — Irish Prison Service College. Since September 2007, all Recruit Prison Officers complete an accredited two year Higher Certificate in Custodial Care programme. The course includes modules on, inter alia, communications and interpersonal skills, human rights, equality and diversity awareness and ethics for custodial care.

265. The **Judiciary** — Training is organised by the Judiciary through its own Committee for Judicial Studies in keeping with the constitutional guarantee of judicial independence and the separation of powers. Training in the area of human rights is ongoing with training organised for Judges in relation to equality issues, including in the areas of racism and xenophobia. Among the topics discussed at the Committee's most recent National Conference, held on 17 November 2017, were:

- “The Administration of Justice in a Multicultural Ireland”;
- “Do immigrants understand the Court system?”;

- Issues for migrants including the swearing of the Oath and affidavits; women giving evidence in veils, use of interpreters, modes of address, common assumptions in family law etc.; misunderstandings about the legal system etc.;
- Since July 2017, all new members of the judiciary have also received a Bench Book entitled “The Equal Treatment of Persons in Court”;
- At the Superior Courts Conference in July 2017, the topic: “Ireland and the European Convention on Human Rights — a view from Strasbourg” was discussed by speakers from European Court of Human Rights and the Irish judiciary;
- The Irish judiciary was represented at Judicial Training on EU Asylum Law organised under the auspices of the European Judicial Training Network, EJTN on the 2nd & 3rd November 2017 in Sweden;
- The judiciary was also represented at the 15th Annual Human Rights Conference on 7 October 2017 organised by The Law Society Human Rights Committee in collaboration with the Probation Service and Law Society Professional Training. The theme of this year’s conference was “Inside Out: the Human Rights Implications of Imprisonment”.

266. The **Defence Forces** — Equality, Diversity and Equal Status Policies have been included in the Defence Forces’ New Entrants Information Handbook in the form of clear and simple statements and have been made available to all new entrants to the organisation. It is also the case that, for a number of years, the training curriculum for Cadets includes modules on multi-culturalism, racism and social change in Ireland.

267. **Civil Service** — A significant number of civil servants have availed of human rights training offered by the Irish Human Rights Commission (predecessor of IHREC).

B. Culture

National Framework Policy for Culture

268. In 2016 the Government published Culture 2025: Éire Ildánach, a draft Framework Policy for Culture to 2025. This policy recognizes cultural diversity as one of its key values.

OPMI Funding for integration initiatives supporting cultural diversity

269. OPMI provides funding to a range of organisations working with and alongside the migrant community. This funding is used to support a range of activities including practical advice and supports for migrants, enhancing the awareness of cultural diversity within communities, and combatting racism and xenophobia. Please see the following page under Section C for details.

Church/State Dialogue

270. In 2005, the Government indicated its intention to consult on a process of structured dialogue with the churches, faith communities and philosophical, non-confessional bodies. The structured dialogue process is based on an agreed framework between the Government and dialogue partners and comprehends plenary meetings, bilateral meetings at Ministerial level and meetings with Departmental officials.

Dublin City Interfaith Forum

271. The Dublin City Interfaith Forum, works with interested members of faith communities to provide the space and opportunity for Faith Communities to build relationships with and between Dublin City communities, statutory and voluntary organisations and the residents of Dublin City. The faiths participating in the project are Baha’i, Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, and Sikhism. In 2016, the Forum launched its Dublin City Interfaith Charter, which deals with issues including religious freedom, inter-faith dialogue and the promotion of religious diversity in the city.

Support for Mother Tongue Languages support in Education

272. There are over 180 nationalities represented in Irish schools at present. The Department of Education and Skills currently supports examinations in non-curricular European languages as part of the Leaving Certificate for heritage speakers. Further to this, as part of ongoing Junior Cycle reform, new short courses are one way in which students from migrant communities can be supported in enhancing their fluency and in developing the range of competences in their heritage/home language. The Post-Primary Languages Initiative has been working with embassies to develop short courses in students' home languages, based on the generic Foreign Language Short Course specification.

273. Many immigrant students currently learn heritage languages through voluntary initiatives outside the schools system. At present, students may take the following languages in the Leaving Certificate Examination: English, Irish, Ancient Greek, Latin, French, German, Spanish, Italian, Russian, Japanese and Arabic. To cater for the particular needs of EU migrants, students can also present for a non-curricular examination in any of the other EU languages. These non-curricular languages do not appear as part of the school curriculum but students may opt to be examined in them if they are from a Member State of the EU, speak the language as a mother tongue, are presenting for the Leaving Certificate examination and for Leaving Certificate English. This non-curricular language initiative contributes to encouraging students to maintain proficiency in their heritage language. Languages Connect — Ireland's Strategy for Foreign Languages in Education 2017–2026 was launched in December 2017. The strategy considers the position of language learners, both new and heritage languages, and sets out future considerations in regard to language learning.

C. Information*State supported projects to further intercultural understanding, positive attitudes to diversity, and community integration*

274. OPMI operates a range of funding programmes in support of integration. These are:

<i>Funding Programme</i>	<i>Amount allocated</i>	<i>Period covered</i>
National Integration Funding Programme	1 900 000 €	2017–2020
Asylum Migration and Integration Funding	4 500 000 €	2017–2019
European Social Fund	3 300 000 €	2016–2020
Communities Integration Fund	500 000 €	Annually since 2017
Dormant Accounts Fund	485 000 €	2017

275. Examples of projects supported through the EU Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF) and the National Integration Funding Programme (NIFP), whose implementation is directly relevant to the Convention, and in particular Article 7, include:

Grassroots Integration through Football €150,073 (AMIF)

276. This nationwide project is run by the Football Association of Ireland and aims to foster integration in Irish society by mobilizing football and community alliances to work together to encourage participation and integration of people from diverse backgrounds, including refugees, asylum seekers and people from non-European countries, through and in football.

Yellow Flag Programme €150,410 (AMIF)

277. This nationwide project is run by the Irish Traveller Movement and supports schools in pro-actively managing diversity and integration through awarding a yellow flag to schools that meet certain criteria in this regard.

Volunteering For All €300,000 (NIFP)

278. This nationwide project is run by Localise Youth and Community Services and aims to tackle racism and xenophobia by providing a means for school students from all backgrounds and nationalities to engage in community service projects in their local communities.

Strengthening Intercultural Education in Primary Schools €130,000 (NIFP)

279. This nationwide project is run by Dublin City University and aims to strengthen the competence and confidence of primary school teachers to integrate intercultural education in their teaching practice and wider school environment.

For a full list of projects in receipt of funding, see Appendix II

280. Since 2013, to mark International Day against Racism, OPMI has engaged in an information campaign across the Department of Justice and Equality, the Department of Social Protection and the wider network of Personnel Officers in the Civil Service, encouraging staff participation in related events.

Creative Competition for Schools and Associated Media Coverage

281. OPMI provided €229,500 funding to the annual Show Racism the Red Card Creative Competition for Schools and Youth Services between 2009 and 2015.

282. Show Racism the Red Card organises this competition which reaches into all schools in Ireland. It is covered in the teaching union magazines, in the Irish Times Education pages, on RTE (the national broadcaster) Children's TV and in other print and broadcast media. Sporting organisations and their players' associations are also fully involved. Events are held around the country to launch the call for entries.

**International Human Rights
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Contents

	<i>Page</i>
I. Introduction	4
II. General information about the reporting state.....	4
A. Demographic, economic, social and cultural characteristics of the State.....	4
1. The Economy	5
2. Demographic Trends.....	5
B. Constitutional, political and legal structure of the state	7
1. The Constitution of Ireland (Bunreacht na hÉireann).....	7
2. The Government of Ireland.....	8
3. The Electoral System	9
4. The Civil Service	9
5. Local government	10
6. The Administration of Justice.....	10
An Garda Síochána.....	10
The Policing Authority	11
7. The Irish Legal System	12
The Courts.....	12
The Judiciary	13
The Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP)	14
Entitlement to Legal Aid.....	15
III. General framework for the promotion and protection of human rights.....	15
A. Acceptance of international human rights norms.....	15
B. Legal Framework for the protection of human rights at the national level	15
1. Constitutional Protection – Specified Rights	17
2. Constitutional Protection – Unspecified Rights	17
3. Constitutionality.....	18
4. Constitutional Reform.....	18
5. Evidence.....	18
6. Judicial Review	19
7. Legislation, conventions and treaties	19
8. Institutions and national machinery	20
The Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission.....	20
The Workplace Relations Commission.....	20
Health Service Executive.....	20
Child and Family Agency	21
Health and Safety Authority	21
National Disability Authority.....	21
Mental Health (Criminal Law) Review Board.....	21
Ombudsman, Information Commissioner and the Commissioner for Environmental Information	21
Office of the Ombudsman for the Defence Forces.....	22
Garda Síochána Ombudsman Commission.....	22
Ombudsman for Children's Office	22
Data Protection Commission	22
Press Ombudsman and Council	22
Oversight Group on National Action Plan on United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325	23
An Coimisinéir Teanga (The Language Commissioner)	23
Inspector of Prisons.....	23
Health Information and Quality Authority.....	23
Financial Services Ombudsman.....	23
Mental Health Commission and Inspectorate of Mental Health Services.....	23
Citizens' Information Board	24
The Residential Tenancies Board (RTB) and the Rent Tribunal	24
The Legal Services Regulatory Authority.....	25
C. Framework within which human rights are promoted at the national level	25
1. National and Regional Parliaments and Assemblies.....	25

2.	Dissemination of Human Rights Instruments	25
3.	Raising human rights awareness among public officials	25
4.	Promotion of human rights awareness through educational programmes and Government-sponsored public information	27
	Pre-school	27
	Primary Level	27
	Post-primary level	27
	Higher Education	29
5.	Role of Civil Society and Non-Governmental Organisations	30
6.	Promotion of Human Rights Internationally and in the context of Development Cooperation and Assistance	30
D.	Reporting process at the national level	31
E.	Other human rights related information	31
1.	Information on non-discrimination and equality and effective remedies	31
	Non-discrimination and equality	31
	Legislation	31
	Equality Mainstreaming	34
	National Strategy for Women and Girls	34
	Positive Action in the Workplace and Communities	35
	Prevention of Domestic, Sexual and Gender-based Violence	35
	Support to the National Women's Council of Ireland	36
	Women's representation on State Boards	36
2.	Promotion of Migrant Integration	36
	Education Provision for Migrant Children	37
	National Intercultural Health Strategy	38
3.	General information regarding the human rights situation of persons belonging to specific vulnerable groups in the population	38
	Persons with disabilities	38
	Members of the Traveller Community	40
	International Protection System	42
	Annexes	46

I. Introduction

1. The Government of Ireland is pleased to present its Common Core Document, forming part of its reports under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), the International Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD), the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT) and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD).

2. In preparing its core document, Ireland has followed the harmonised guidelines issued by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, revised in June 2009 (HRI/GEN/2/Rev 6). Ireland last submitted a core document in 2014. The information provided is correct as of the preparation of this document, which took place over a period of months in 2018 and 2019. As a result, the data presented represents a snapshot of the situation in Ireland, as distinct from a comprehensive or fully current account.

3. The core document was prepared by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, which is responsible for coordinating Ireland's reports under the ICCPR and the ICESCR. Input has been received from the Department of Justice and Equality, which is responsible for drafting Ireland's reports under the CEDAW, the CERD and the CRPD; and the Department of Child and Youth Affairs, which is responsible for the reports under the CRC. Further input and assistance has been received from the Department of Education and Skills; the Department of Finance; the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform; the Department of Defence; the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government; the Department of the Taoiseach; the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht; the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection; the Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment; the Department of Rural and Community Development; the Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation; the Office of the Attorney General and the Central Statistics Office.

4. The Government of Ireland recognises and appreciates the important role played by non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in promoting and implementing the rights set out in the treaties.

II. General information about the reporting state

A. Demographic, economic, social and cultural characteristics of the State

5. The island of Ireland is situated in the northwest of the continent of Europe and has a total area of 84,421 square kilometres. Pursuant to Article 3 of Bunreacht na hÉireann (the Constitution of Ireland), the laws enacted by the Oireachtas (Irish Parliament) apply to 26 of the 32 counties of the island of Ireland. The remaining north-eastern counties form part of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. Article 3 further provides that a united (32 county) Ireland shall be only brought about by peaceful means with the consent of the people, democratically expressed, in both jurisdictions in the island. Pursuant to Article 4 of the Constitution, the name of the State is "Éire", or, in the English language, "Ireland".

6. In 1921, after a War of Independence, a treaty was entered into with the United Kingdom, whereby the Irish Free State (26 counties) seceded from the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, while Northern Ireland (6 counties) remained in the United Kingdom. The adoption of the Constitution of Ireland in 1937 and the Republic of Ireland Act 1948 severed Ireland's last symbolic links with the United Kingdom. Ireland does not belong to any military alliance. Ireland became a member of the United Nations in 1955 and joined the European Communities, now the European Union, in 1973.

1. The Economy

7. The Irish economy recorded GDP growth of 8.2 per cent in 2018 and Ireland continues to be one of the fastest growing economies in Europe.

8. Employment increased by 81,200 (+3.7 per cent) in the year to Q1 2019 and there are now more people working in Ireland than ever before (2.3 million).

9. Since the financial crisis period, strong employment gains have helped reduce unemployment which has fallen from a peak of 16 per cent in early 2012 to 4.6 per cent in July 2019. In addition, employment growth has been broadly balanced across sectors. The rate of long term unemployment also continues to decline, down from 2.1 per cent to 1.7 per cent over the year Q1 2019.

10. Inflation in Ireland remains below the European Central Bank's price stability measure of close to, but below, 2 per cent over the medium term. The harmonised index of consumer prices (HICP) in Ireland increased by 1.1 per cent in June 2019 compared to the same month in 2018. Euro area inflation was 1.2 per cent in June 2019. As set out in the Stability Programme Update 2019 published by the Department of Finance, the Department is currently projecting HICP inflation of 0.9 per cent for 2019 and 1.1 per cent for 2020.

11. Despite the stronger than expected momentum throughout 2018, the risks to the Irish economy have increased in 2019. First and foremost is the potential fallout from a more adverse-than-expected outcome from Brexit. Secondly, risks from disruption to world trade remain elevated as there is the potential for a further escalation of protectionist measures to cause a disruption to global supply chains worse than currently envisaged. In addition, the risk of normalisation of monetary policy may not be as smooth as projected, changes in other jurisdictions that affect the competitiveness of Ireland's corporate tax regime and rising geopolitical uncertainty all have the potential to undermine growth in the economy. Domestically, the principal risk relates to the economy reaching and exceeding its sustainable level of production in the coming years, with a positive output gap emerging. This is consistent with an economy approaching full employment.

2. Demographic Trends

12. The 2016 Census results show that Ireland's de facto population increased by 173,613 persons over the five years since April 2011, to reach 4,761,865 persons in April 2016. This represents a total increase of 3.8% over the 5 years, or 0.8% on an annual average basis. This compares with an annual average increase of 1.6% over the previous inter-censal period 2006 to 2011.

13. The fertility rate in Ireland rose from 1.86 in 2005 to 2.05 in 2010, before dropping to 1.92 in 2015. Over a third (36.5%) of all births were outside marriage in Ireland in 2015.

14. From census 2011 to census 2016, the number of children aged less than 18 years grew from 1,148,687 to 1,190,502, an increase of approximately 3.6%. Although the proportion of the Irish population aged under 18 years fell dramatically between 1981 (36.2%) and 2002 (25.9%), it has since remained stable, and by 2016, children represented 25% of the total population. The youth dependency ratio (the proportion of those aged from birth to fourteen years to the total working-age population) was 32.3% in 2016, up from 31.9% in 2011. Furthermore, the population of Ireland is ageing. According to the Central Statistics Office's (CSO) the population aged 65 years and over increased by 102,174 to 637,567 (19.1%) in Census 2016. Older people now comprise 13.4% of the population, compared to 11.7% in 2011. The dependency rate of older people in 2016 was 20.4%, compared to 17.4% in 2011.

15. There were 30,667 deaths in Ireland in 2016 of which 15,620 were males and 15,047 were females. This is equivalent to a rate of 6.5 deaths per 1,000 total population, an increase of 0.1 from 2015 and of 0.2 from 2014. The most recent available figures on life expectancy in Ireland at age 0 are: 78.4 for males, 82.8 for females.

16. Ireland had significant net inward migration between the years 2005 and 2009, with the number of immigrants arriving to live in Ireland exceeding emigrants departing to live abroad by 297,600 over this period. This positive trend reversed in 2010 and Ireland

experienced net outward migration for each year 2010 to 2014 inclusive. Total net outward migration over the period 2010 to 2014 was estimated to be 107,800. Positive net inward migration returned to Ireland in 2015.

17. Between the census of 2002 and that of 2006, the non-Irish national population increased from 224,261 to 419,733 persons (an 87% increase). Between the 2006 and 2011 census, the non-Irish national population increased from 419,733 to 544,357 persons (a 29.7% increase). However, from 2011 to 2016 the non-Irish national population decreased by 1.6% to 535,475. Persons with dual-Irish nationality increased by 87.4% to 104,784 persons in 2016.

18. The proportion of the population who were Catholics continued to decline in 2016, to reach its lowest point at 78.3% while its congregation, at 3.73 million had decreased from 3.86 million in 2011. Of the 3.7 million Catholics in Ireland in 2016, 7.5% were non-Irish. Of the non-Irish, Polish nationals were the largest group with 105,269 persons, followed by the United Kingdom with 39,207. These two groups accounted for over half of all non-Irish Catholics.

<i>Religion</i>	<i>Census 2016</i>	<i>Census 2011</i>	<i>% change</i>
Roman Catholic	3,729,115	3,860,000	-3.4%
No religion/atheist/agnostic	481,388	277,237	73.6%
Church of Ireland	126,414	129,039	-2.0%
Muslim (Islamic)	63,443	49,204	28.9%
Orthodox(Greek, Coptic, Russian)	62,187	45,223	37.5%
Presbyterian	24,211	24,600	-1.6%
Apostolic & Pentecostal members	13,350	14,043	-4.9%
Hindu	14,332	10,688	34.1%
Buddhist	9,758	8,703	12.1%
Methodist	6,471	6,842	-5.4%
Jehovah's Witness	6,417	6,149	4.4%
Lutheran	5,329	5,683	-6.2%
Evangelical	9,724	4,188	132.2%
Baptist	3,957	3,531	12.1%
Jewish	2,557	1,984	28.9%

19. The total number of those with no religion (including atheists and agnostics), stood at 481,388 in 2016, an increase of 73.6% on the 2011 total of 277,237. There has been a seven-fold increase in this category since 1991, when the total stood at just 67,413. The pattern of more males than females in this category has persisted in 2016 and stood at 55.6%, though this is down from 60.7% in 1991.

20. From the perspective of age profiles, the highest proportion of those with no religion was among those aged 30 to 34 (12.1%), while the lowest was for those aged 85 and over where just 0.2% indicated they had no religion.

21. In 2016, persons that indicated 'No Religion' accounted for 9.8% of the population, up from 5.9% in 2011. This was an increase of 198,610 persons over the period, bringing the total to 468,421 and making 'No Religion' the second largest group in 2016.

22. There were 126,414 members of the Church of Ireland in April 2016, a decrease of 2.0% on 2011. The average age of Church of Ireland members in 2016 was 40.3, older than the general population whose average age was 37.4 years, and up 1.1 years since 2011.

23. There were 63,443 Muslims in Ireland in April 2016, representing 1.3% of the population and signalling a continued growth in the number of Muslims in Ireland. Ireland's Muslim community has grown from 3,875 persons in 1991, to 19,147 in 2002, 32,539 in 2006 and 49,204 in 2011. The number of Muslims has nearly doubled since 2006, increasing by 95%.

24. Orthodox Christians have been the fastest growing religion in Ireland since 1991. There were 62,187 Orthodox Christians in Ireland in April 2016, up 37.5% on 2011 (45,223) and over three times the number recorded in 2006 (20,798).

25. Between 2011 and 2016 the number of Presbyterians in Ireland fell marginally from 24,600 to 24,211, however, this remained higher than the 2006 total of 23,546.

26. The Apostolic and Pentecostal population in Ireland has increased substantially over the past 14 years, rising from just 3,152 persons in 2002 to 13,350 by 2016. This represents an annualised growth rate of over 10.9%. The average age for this group stood at just 25.3 years in 2016, significantly lower than the general population and heavily affected by the large proportion of under 20 year olds.

27. There was a 135.6% increase in the number of Hindus between 2006 and 2016, from 6,082 to 14,332 persons over the period.

28. There were 427,128 students aged 15 and over in April 2016, an increase of 4.5% on the 2011 figure. Males comprised 49.4% of this student population, up from 49.2% in 2011. Among those aged 19 to 22, females continue to have a higher participation in education with 59.5%, while the rate for males was 52.8%. In 2017, 53% of the population aged 30 to 34 had completed third level education. The proportion of those aged 18 to 24 who left school with, at most, lower secondary education was 5% in 2017.

29. Adults in Ireland have an adjusted mean score of 266 on the literacy scale (1 to 500) compared to the study average of 270. Literacy proficiency was split into five levels and adults in Ireland proportioned as follows:

- (a) At or below level 1 (1-225) = 17.9%;
- (b) Level 2 (226-275) = 37.6%;
- (c) Level 3 (276-325) = 36%;
- (d) Level 4 (326-375) = 8.1%;
- (e) Level 5 (376-500) = 0.4%.

30. The number of new dwellings built declined to 4,575 in 2013 however, over the following five years the number of new dwellings built has increased steadily each year to stand at 18,072 in 2018.

31. For a fuller range of statistical materials on demographic, economic, social, and cultural trends in Ireland, please refer to the statistical annexes to this document and further to the material compiled by the CSO, which is publicly available on its website, www.cso.ie.

B. Constitutional, political and legal structure of the state

1. The Constitution of Ireland (Bunreacht na hÉireann)

32. The Constitution of Ireland (or, in the Irish language, Bunreacht na hÉireann) is the basic law of the State. It was adopted by referendum in 1937, and is the successor to the 1919 Constitution of Dáil Éireann (the House of Representatives) and the 1922 Constitution of the Irish Free State. It establishes the institutions and apparatus of the State and provides for the separation of powers into three branches; executive, legislative and judicial. The Constitution defines the powers of the President, the Oireachtas (Irish Parliament) and the Government, as well as the structure and powers of the courts. It states that all legislative, executive and judicial powers of Government are derived from the people and also guarantees citizens fundamental rights which have been subjected to rigorous interpretation and enumeration by the courts.

33. The Constitution provides that the Oireachtas shall not enact any law which is in any respect repugnant to its provisions. Any legislation which is enacted and which is found to be repugnant to the Constitution shall be invalid to the extent of such inconsistency. Only the High Court, the Court of Appeal and Supreme Court have jurisdiction to consider the question of the validity of any law with regard to the provisions of the Constitution. Judicial

review is one mechanism whereby an individual can challenge the constitutionality of legislation and this remedy is explained in greater detail below (see paras 96 - 98).

34. The Constitution of Ireland can only be amended following the passage of a Bill to amend the Constitution by a simple majority of both Houses of the Oireachtas, and the subsequent approval of the proposal by a majority of those voting in a referendum. Up to 2019, the Constitution has been amended on thirty occasions by means of referendum. Since Ireland last submitted a Common Core Document in 2014, the electorate has voted by referendum to amend the Constitution four times: to provide for marriage equality; to legislate for the regulation of the termination of pregnancies; to remove the reference to blasphemy in the Constitution; and, to amend the Constitutional provisions providing for the dissolution of marriage. In May 2015, a proposal to amend the Constitution and change the age of eligibility for election to office of President was rejected by the electorate.

2. The Government of Ireland

35. Ireland is a sovereign, independent parliamentary democracy. The national Parliament, the Oireachtas, consists of the President and two Houses: a House of Representatives (Dáil Éireann) and a Senate (Seanad Éireann). The functions and powers of the President, Dáil and Seanad derive from the Constitution of Ireland and law. The Oireachtas may not enact any law which is in any respect repugnant to the Constitution.

36. The President is Head of State. In that capacity s/he signs Bills into law and has the power to decline to sign a Bill; the Office does not have executive functions. The President must generally act on the advice and authority of the Government. On the nomination of Dáil Éireann the President appoints the Taoiseach (Prime Minister) and, on the advice of the Taoiseach and with the prior approval of Dáil Éireann, the President appoints members of the Government. Government policy and administration may be examined and criticised in both Houses, but under the Constitution the Government is responsible to the Dáil alone. The President is directly elected by the people and holds office for a term of seven years. The President may not serve more than two terms.

37. Dáil Éireann (House of Representatives) has 158 members called Teachtaí Dála (“T.D.s”). Members are returned by the 40 constituencies into which the State is at present divided and no constituency may return fewer than three members. The total number of members of the Dáil may not be fixed at less than one member for each 30,000 of the population or more than one member for each 20,000 of the population. *The Electoral (Amendment) (Dáil Constituencies) Act 2017* provides for an increase in the number of members of the Dáil to 160. The new arrangements will take effect from the next General Election.

38. *The Electoral (Amendment) (Political Funding) Act 2012* provides that State funding to political parties is reduced by 50% unless at least 30% of candidates in a general election are women and 30% are men. The threshold will rise to 40% from the next general election held after 26 February 2023. Payments made to political parties under the Electoral Acts are linked to performance at a general election.

39. The Government consists of not more than 15 members and not fewer than seven, *i.e.* Taoiseach (Prime Minister), Tánaiste (Deputy Prime Minister) and between five and 13 Ministers. The Taoiseach, Tánaiste and Minister for Finance must be members of the Dáil and the other Ministers must be members of the Dáil or Seanad, with no more than two being members of the Seanad. The Government acts as a collective authority and is collectively *responsible* for the Departments of State administered by its members. It generally meets once a week. Discussions at meetings of the Government are subject to cabinet confidentiality. At the time of a general election, the Government remains in place until a new Taoiseach has been appointed.

40. Seanad Éireann (Senate) has 60 members. Eleven are nominated directly to the House by the Taoiseach. 43 are elected by members of Dáil Éireann, by outgoing members of the Seanad and by local authority members, from five panels of candidates: the Cultural and Educational Panel, the Agricultural Panel, the Labour Panel, the Industrial and Commercial Panel and the Administrative Panel. Each panel contains the names of persons with knowledge and practical experience of the interests represented by the panel. The remaining

six are elected by the graduates of universities - three by the National University of Ireland and three by the University of Dublin. The powers of the Seanad, as defined by the Constitution are, in general, less than those of the Dáil. Its powers are complementary to those of the Dáil in broad areas such as the removal from office of a President or a judge; the declaration and termination of a state of emergency; the initiation of Bills other than Money Bills; and the annulment of statutory instruments. Seanad Éireann has no power to initiate Money Bills although it can make recommendations to Dáil Éireann in respect of such Bills.

41. A system of Parliamentary Committees is in operation within the Oireachtas. Under standing orders four committees must be appointed, on Selection, on Public Accounts, on Procedure and Privileges and on Consolidation Bills. Other committees may be established by a resolution of one or both of the Houses of the Oireachtas. They are empowered to request official papers and to hear evidence from individuals. Their findings are not binding. The reports of the Committees are laid before the Oireachtas which decides what action, if any, is necessary. It is a matter for the Oireachtas to decide upon the number and range of Committees which should be established, together with their terms of reference.

3. The Electoral System

42. Citizens have the opportunity to take part in the political process by casting a vote in five decision-making procedures:

- (a) The election of the President every seven years, where there is more than one candidate;
- (b) Referendums on proposed constitutional amendments;
- (c) Elections to local authorities, every five years;
- (d) Parliamentary elections, which occur under present legislation at least every five years;
- (e) Elections to the European Parliament, every five years.

43. The minimum voting age in Ireland is 18 years. The electoral system in elections to the Dáil is proportional representation by means of the single transferable vote in multi-seat constituencies. The single transferable vote is also used for the election of the President, Members of the European Parliament, Local Authorities, and 49 of the 60 members of the Seanad.

4. The Civil Service

44. The legal basis for the present Irish system of public administration is contained in the Irish Constitution and in the *Ministers and Secretaries Act 1924* (The 1924 Act). In accordance with Article 28 of the Constitution, Ministers are in charge of their Departments. The 1924 Act, and its subsequent amendments, provides a statutory classification of the functions of Government under the various Departments of State. Ministers are responsible for all the actions of their Departments. However, the Supreme Court of Ireland has confirmed that the *Carltona doctrine* applies to the Irish civil service i.e. the official acts of a civil servant are identified as acts of the Minister of the relevant department even where no express act of delegation has taken place. The day-to-day administration of a Department's functions is overseen by its Secretary General, who is a civil servant. The *Public Service Management Act 1997* (the 1997 Act) gives a statutory framework for the allocation of authority, responsibility and accountability within and across Government Departments.

45. The Civil Service is impartial vis-à-vis political parties in the performance of its functions and senior and middle ranking civil servants are precluded from involvement in party political activity. Recruitment to the Civil Service is by open public competition administered by an independent State commission. The Civil Service comprises a number of grades with different functions. The principal grade categories are: administrative, responsible for policy formulation; technical and scientific, providing specialist advice within the Civil Service; executive, involved in the implementation of policy; and clerical, responsible for general duties. At present there are approximately 37,000 people employed

in the Civil Service. In addition, Ministers may appoint Special Advisors in accordance with provisions set out in the 1997 Act.

5. Local government

46. Local government is administered by 31 local authorities (26 County Councils, 3 City Councils and 2 City and County Councils) funded through a combination of State grants, commercial rates, charges for goods and services and by a local tax on residential properties. Local authorities are multi-purpose bodies responsible for an extensive range of services including land use (zoning) and development, fire safety and fire and emergency services, the provision of public housing, road maintenance, supports for local economic and community development, libraries, and certain other services. The *Local Government Reform Act 2014* reduced the number of local authorities from 114 to 31, and provides for a wide-ranging programme of local government reform involving action to strengthen and improve the structures, functions, resources, operations and governance of the local system. There was a particular focus on: strengthening structures at regional, county and sub-county levels; expanding the role of local government; maximising operational and organisational efficiency; improving governance, oversight, local political and executive leadership; leading economic, social and community development; and representing citizens and local communities effectively and accountably. Each county council has been configured into Municipal Districts (totalling 95) based around principal towns and their hinterlands. There is now a single county-wide executive or operational structure with resources at the disposal of both county and district levels and a significant range of functions are being performed by elected members at district level, with strategic matters dealt with at county level.

47. Ireland's Regional Authorities were streamlined into three Regional Assemblies in 2015, representing the Northern and Western, Eastern and Midlands, and the Southern regions. They have a range of powers in relation to spatial planning and economic development.

48. Local Community Development Committees (LCDCs) have been established on a statutory basis in all 31 local authorities for the purpose of bringing a more coordinated and joined-up approach to local/community development at local level. Membership includes local authority elected members and officials; State and non-State local development agencies; community and voluntary organisations; and other representatives of civil society, for example business and farming interests. LCDCs draw on the expertise and experience of public and private actors within the relevant local authority area to provide effective and efficient services to citizens, and particularly those more in need of those services. Public Participation Networks have also been established in each local authority area for the purposes of securing greater community participation and input into local authority decision-making processes. The Networks serve as a link through which the local authority and its associated structures connect and engage with community and voluntary, social inclusion and environmental interests in the local area and through which community representation is sourced for appropriate committees of the local authority, including LCDCs.

6. The Administration of Justice

An Garda Síochána

49. Ireland has a single national police service, An Garda Síochána. As of 31 July 2019, the strength of An Garda Síochána is 14,251. In addition, there are 478 Garda Reserves.

50. The manner in which the resources of An Garda Síochána are deployed is a matter for the Garda Commissioner and his management team. Garda management keeps this distribution of resources under continual review in the context of crime trends and policing priorities so as to ensure that the optimum use is made of these resources.

51. Policing levels are determined by a number of variables including demographics, policing plans/models, the needs of the service and the security of the State. As such the minimum numbers required in future years will remain an indeterminate variable. The Government has set a target of an overall Garda Workforce of 21,000, including 15,000 Garda personnel to be achieved by 2021. Garda personnel assigned throughout the country,

together with overall policing arrangements and operational strategy, are continually monitored and reviewed to optimise Garda resources, and produce the best possible Garda service to the general public.

52. An Garda Síochána is established by legislation and its internal management is subject to Regulations made by the Minister for Justice and Equality. An Garda Síochána has operational independence subject to the general financial and regulatory framework established by the Minister. The Commissioner must report to the Minister as required. The Minister is in turn politically accountable to Dáil Éireann for An Garda Síochána.

53. Section 7 of the *Garda Síochána Act 2005* sets out the functional objectives of An Garda Síochána as:

- (a) Preserving peace and public order;
- (b) Protecting life and property;
- (c) Vindicating the human rights of each individual;
- (d) Protecting the security of the State;
- (e) Preventing crime;
- (f) Bringing criminals to justice, including by detecting and investigating crime;
- (g) Regulating and controlling road traffic and improving road safety; and
- (h) Other functions conferred by law including those relating to immigration.

The Policing Authority

54. The Policing Authority was established as an independent body to oversee the performance of An Garda Síochána in relation to policing services in Ireland. Its key objective is to promote trust and confidence in policing and to help shape policing services for Ireland in the future. The Authority was established by the enactment of the *Garda Síochána (Policing Authority and Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2015*.

55. The Act provides for an extensive range of functions for the Authority, some of which were previously the responsibility of Government or the Minister for Justice and Equality. The overarching role of the Authority is to oversee the performance by An Garda Síochána of its functions relating to policing services. The Authority's functions include:

- (a) Overseeing how the Garda Síochána performs its policing functions and ensuring that they use their resources in a way that achieves the highest levels of efficiency and effectiveness;
- (b) Putting a Code of Ethics in place to set standards of conduct and practice for members of the Garda Síochána;
- (c) Approving the Garda Síochána Strategy Statements and Policing Plans and setting priorities and levels of performance;
- (d) Making nominations for appointment by the Government to the posts of Garda Commissioner and Deputy Garda Commissioner, following a selection processes undertaken by the Public Appointments Service;
- (e) Appointing persons to the ranks of Garda Superintendent, Chief Superintendent and Assistant Commissioner;
- (f) Removing persons from ranks at and above Superintendent as provided for by law;
- (g) Reviewing arrangements for the recruitment, training and development of Garda members and civilian staff.

56. Provision has also been made for local accountability of An Garda Síochána through Joint Policing Committees, which have been established in each local authority area under the provisions of the *Garda Síochána Act 2005*. The Committees provide a forum for consultation and cooperation between An Garda Síochána, the local authority, elected

representatives for the area and other community representatives in relation to local policing issues. The Committees can make recommendations on matters concerning the policing of areas, including measures to address the levels and patterns of anti-social behaviour.

57. The powers of the police are set out in statute and all their actions are subject to review by an active and *constitutionally* independent judiciary. There is also an independent police complaints authority, the Garda Síochána Ombudsman Commission (see para 115).

58. The authority to prosecute a person for a criminal offence rests with an independent officer, the Director of Public Prosecutions (see para 74).

59. According to the Irish Prison Service Annual Report, in 2018 there were 4,812 committals to prison under sentence, which was a 20.3% decrease (1,225) in the number compared to 2017. This reduction was due to the decrease in the number of committals for the non-payment of fines. When fines committals are excluded from these figures, the numbers committed under sentence increased by 581 or 15.4% from 3,776 in 2017 to 4,357 in 2018. On 30 November 2018, there were 3,171 prisoners in custody under sentence. Of these, males comprised 3,051 and females 120. Of these prisoners, 363 were serving sentences of life, while an additional 237 were serving determinate sentences of 10+ years. The largest offence group for those in custody was Group 8 Theft and Related Offences.

60. Information on crime figures in Ireland and other statistical indicators can be found in Appendix I.

7. The Irish Legal System

61. Ireland has a common law legal system. The Constitution of Ireland is the basic law of the State and it takes precedence over other subordinate sources of law. Therefore, a common law or legislative provision which conflicts with a provision of the Constitution is void and will have no legal effect. Other important sources of law include European Union law, which operates at a supra-Constitutional level, and legislation enacted by the Oireachtas. In addition, since Ireland has a common law legal system, judge-made law is also an important source of law. Under the doctrine of precedent, or *stare decisis*, a court is expected to follow previous judgments, particularly those of higher courts, although this rule may be deviated from in certain circumstances.

The Courts

62. The Courts are structured on five levels, in ascending order: the District Court, the Circuit Court, the High Court, the Court of Appeal and the Supreme Court. The District and Circuit Courts are courts of limited and local jurisdiction. The Supreme Court, the Court of Appeal and the High Court are referred to as the Superior Courts. Where the High Court sits as a criminal court it is referred to as the Central Criminal Court.

63. The Court of Appeal was established in 2014 following a referendum to amend the Constitution. It deals with civil appeals from the High Court. Under the Court of Appeal Act 2014, the Court of Appeal was also given the appellate jurisdiction previously exercised by the Court of Criminal Appeal.

64. Appeals from the Court of Appeal to the Supreme Court are subject to obtaining leave from the Supreme Court. Such leave may only be granted where the decision involves a matter of general public importance or where, in the interests of justice, it is necessary that there is an appeal to the Supreme Court. The Supreme Court is the court of final appeal in civil and criminal matters in limited circumstances. The Supreme Court also has jurisdiction to decide on the constitutionality of a statute, prior to enactment, in the event of the President of Ireland referring the statute to the Court.

65. In addition to the Court structure outlined above there are also two Special Criminal Courts, established pursuant to Article 38.3 of the Constitution for the trial of offences in cases where it is determined that the ordinary courts are inadequate to secure the effective administration of justice and the preservation of public peace and order. The Special Criminal Court was established in 1972 and sits without a jury. The Government is satisfied that there is a continuing need for this Court to deal with a range of offences arising from terrorism and organised crime and, due to the volume of cases, a Second Special Criminal Court was

established in 2016. The establishment of the Second Special Criminal Court significantly reduced waiting times from 24 months to circa 10 months. The need for the Special Criminal Courts is kept under review.

66. Waiting times in the Circuit and District Courts vary from venue to venue based on the number and complexity of cases.

67. The President of the High Court also keeps waiting times under continuous review and has introduced a number of initiatives such as reorganising sittings of the High Court outside Dublin and arranging for additional court sittings during court recesses to reduce waiting times. To assist with the management of waiting times before the Central Criminal Court, where a scheduled hearing is not proceeding in the Special Criminal Court, the High Court judge assigned to that court will sit as a judge of the Central Criminal Court to deal with any available trials. In addition, the delegation to court officials of administrative functions previously dealt with by High Court judges has increased judicial availability for trial work. These initiatives continue to be reviewed and expanded upon. Despite significant pressure, the waiting times in the High Court lists have generally reduced considerably.

68. Following the establishment of the Court of Appeal waiting times for appeal cases have reduced significantly as a result of active case management regimes implemented by the President for both the civil and criminal case lists. A Fast Tracked Short Appeals system has been introduced for civil appeals with waiting times of approximately 9 months, and other appeals taking 20 months. This compares very favourably with waiting times of in excess of 48 months prior to the establishment of the Court. Urgent appeals such as Hague Convention/Child abduction appeals are accommodated without delay and appeals involving a custody/criminal element, such as Habeas Corpus Appeals, are heard within 1 month. European Arrest Warrant cases are heard within 3 months or less where all the necessary papers are in order. Waiting times for criminal appeals have reduced to 6 months from 15 months prior to the establishment of the Court. It is open to parties in both civil and criminal cases to seek a priority hearing.

69. Waiting times in the Supreme Court, following the establishment of the Court of Appeal decreased from in excess of 4 years to an average of 8 months for appeal hearings. Average waiting times for application for leave to appeal is 5.5 weeks.

70. A Group to review the administration of civil justice in the State, chaired by the President of the High Court, was established in 2017. It will make recommendations for changes with a view to improving access to civil justice in the State, promoting early resolution of disputes, reducing the cost of litigation, creating a more responsive and proportionate system and ensuring better outcomes for court users.

The Judiciary

71. Judges in Ireland are independent both of the executive and the legislature and this independence is given full protection by the Constitution. Judges are appointed by the President on the advice of the Government, which makes its decisions with reference to recommendations from the Judicial Appointments Advisory Board. Article 35.2 of the Constitution provides that all judges shall be independent in the exercise of their functions and subject only to the Constitution and the law. They may not be members of the Oireachtas or hold any other office or position of emolument (Art. 35.3). They may not be removed from office except for stated misbehaviour or incapacity and then only upon resolutions passed by both Houses of the Oireachtas calling for their removal (Art. 35.4). This power has yet to be exercised. With the exception of the power of the Oireachtas to remove a judge, questions of discipline in relation to judges are regulated by the judiciary.

72. The Judicial Council Act 2019 provides for the establishment of a Judicial Council. The primary function of the Council, which will consist of all members of the judiciary, will be to promote and maintain excellence in the exercise by judges of their judicial functions and high standards of conduct among judges. The Board of the Council will be responsible for carrying out the functions of the Council on a day-to-day basis. A key element of the Act relates to the establishment of a Judicial Conduct Committee which will consider complaints in relation to judicial misconduct, prepare draft guidelines concerning judicial conduct and ethics for adoption by the Council and provide advice and recommendations to an individual

judge or to judges generally on judicial conduct and ethics. The membership of this Committee will include persons who are not judges. The Judicial Council will be assisted in its work by a Judicial Studies Committee which will have a role in facilitating the continuing education and training of judges. Provision is also made for a Sentencing Guidelines and Information Committee and for a Personal Injuries Guidelines Committee, both of which will be responsible for drawing up guidelines relevant to their functional area for adoption by the Council. It is envisaged that the Council will be established before the end of 2019.

73. Section 5 of the Courts (Supplemental Provisions) Act, 1961, as amended by the Courts and Court Officers Act, 1995, the Courts and Court Officers Act, 2002 and the Court of Appeal Act, 2014, provides that the following persons shall be qualified for appointment as a Judge of the Superior Courts:

(a) A person who—

(i) Is or was at any time during the period of 2 years immediately before the appointment concerned—

- A judge of the Court of Justice of the European Communities ;
- A judge of the Court of First Instance attached to that Court;
- An Advocate-General of the Court of Justice of the European Communities;
- A judge of the European Court of Human Rights established under the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms done at Rome on the 4th day of November, 1950;
- A judge of the International Court of Justice established under the Charter of the United Nations;
- A judge of the International Criminal Court established under the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court done at Rome on the 17th day of July, 1998, upon the entry into force of that Statute;
- A judge of an international tribunal within the meaning of section 2 of the International War Crimes Tribunals Act, 1998.

And

(ii) Was a practising barrister or a practising solicitor before appointment to any of the offices referred to in subparagraph (i) of this paragraph.

(b) A judge of the Circuit Court who has served as such a judge for a period of not less than 2 years shall be qualified for appointment as a judge of the Supreme Court, the Court of Appeal or the High Court;

(c) The President of the Court of Appeal shall be qualified for appointment as an ordinary judge of the Supreme Court;

(d) An ordinary judge of the Court of Appeal shall be qualified for appointment as an ordinary judge of the Supreme Court;

(e) The President of the High Court shall be qualified for appointment as an ordinary judge of the Court of Appeal or of the Supreme Court;

(f) An ordinary judge of the High Court shall be qualified for appointment as an ordinary judge of the Court of Appeal or of the Supreme Court.

The Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP)

74. The Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions was established by the *Prosecution of Offences Act 1974*, which conferred on the Director “all functions capable of being performed in relation to the criminal matters” by the Attorney General immediately before the passing of the Act. The principal such function is the power to prosecute criminal offences. The Director is independent in the performance of his/her functions. Only the Director may prosecute indictable offences, but summary offences may also be prosecuted by relevant Ministers, other prosecution agencies and by individuals acting as “common

informers”. As part of his/her function in ensuring the proper conduct of criminal prosecutions the Director has the responsibility for the nomination and instruction of Counsel. The Office also determines and discharges the fees of Counsel who are instructed to act on behalf of the Director.

Entitlement to Legal Aid

75. The *Criminal Justice (Legal Aid) Act 1962* and a series of regulations made thereunder provides that an applicant for criminal legal aid must establish to the satisfaction of the court that his/her means are insufficient to enable him/her to pay for legal representation. The Court must also be satisfied that, by reason of the gravity of the charge or exceptional circumstances, it is essential in the interests of justice that the applicant should have legal aid. The constitutional right to legal aid was established in 1976 in the *State (Healy) v. Donoghue* [1976] I.R. 325. In addition, Article 6(3) (c) of the European Convention on Human Rights provides that every person charged with a criminal offence is entitled to defend him/herself in person or through legal assistance of his/her own choosing or, if he/she has insufficient means to pay for legal assistance, to be given it free when the interests of justice so require. The grant of legal aid entitles the applicant to the services of a solicitor and, in certain circumstances, up to two counsel, in the preparation and conduct of his/her defence or appeal. The Courts, through the judiciary, are responsible for the granting of legal aid.

76. The Legal Aid Board was established to administer a scheme of civil legal advice and aid to persons of modest means in Ireland. The scheme of Civil Legal Aid and Advice was introduced in 1979 following the judgment of the European Court of Human Rights in the case of *Airey v. Ireland* and the recommendations made by the Pringle Committee which had been set up by the Minister for Justice to advise him on the introduction of such a Scheme. It operated on an administrative basis until the introduction of the *Civil Legal Aid Act 1995*. The primary model of service delivery is the law centre model, although it is complemented by the use of private *solicitors* for certain matters. Most civil matters come within the scope of the scheme and there are relatively few exclusions. While the Legal Aid Board is responsible for administering most civil law matters it does not administer the scheme of legal aid for representation before Mental Health Tribunals. This scheme is administered by the Mental Health Commission. Legal aid for criminal matters is provided under the *Criminal Justice (Legal Aid) Act 1962*. The main criminal legal aid scheme is currently administered by the Department of Justice and Equality, although responsibility is due to transfer to the Legal Aid Board.

III. General framework for the promotion and protection of human rights

A. Acceptance of international human rights norms

77. Ireland has signed and ratified most of the core United Nations human rights conventions. The table below outlines the signature and ratification dates of the major United Nations human rights treaties.

<i>Signed</i>	<i>Ratified</i>	<i>Reservations/ Declarations</i>	<i>Reports</i>
International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights			
1 October 1973	8 December 1989	Reservations: Article 10, para. 2; Article 20, para. 1.	First report: 1992; Second report: 1998; Third report: 2007; Fourth report: 2012. Fifth report: due in 2019
Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights			
	8 December 1989	Reservations:	N/A

Article 5, para. 2

Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, aiming at the abolition of the Death Penalty

18 June 1993	None	N/A
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International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

1 October 1973	8 December 1989	Reservations: Article 2, para. 2 Article 13, para. 2 (a)	First report: Second report: 2000 Third report: 2012 Fourth report: due in 2020
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Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women

23 December 1985	Reservations: Article 11 (1); Article 13 (a); Article 16, 1 (d) & (f).	First report: 1987; Combined second and third report: 1997; Combined fourth and fifth report 2003; Combined sixth and seventh report: 2016
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Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women

7 September 2000	7 September 2000	None	N/A
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International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination

21 March 1968	29 December 2000	Reservation: Article 4	Combined first and second report: 2004; Combined third and fourth report: 2009; Combined fifth, sixth and seventh report: submitted 2018 (not yet considered)
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Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment

28 September 1992	11 April 2002	Declarations: Article 21; Article 22.	First report: 2009; Second report: 2017
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78. Ireland has not signed or ratified the Convention on the Rights of Migrant Workers and their Families. Nevertheless, the rights of migrant workers and their families are extensively protected under existing Irish legislation and under the Irish Constitution, as well as under EU law. In addition, the rights of migrant workers and their families are addressed by Ireland's commitments under the international human rights instruments to which the State is a party. These international instruments include the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

79. At present, there are no plans to sign or ratify the Convention. However as with all outstanding ratifications of international human rights instruments, the position regarding the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of all Migrant Workers and Members of their Families will be kept under review.

80. Ireland signed the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities when it opened for signature on 30 March 2007 and ratified it on 20 March 2018. The Convention came into force for Ireland on 19 April 2018. Ongoing progress and implementation is monitored internally through the structures in place to support the implementation of the National Disability Inclusion Strategy (NDIS), which was published on 14 July 2017. The Civil Justice and Equality Policy Unit in the Department of Justice and Equality has been designated as the focal point under Article 33 of the Convention. The monitoring framework

includes both the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission (IHREC) and the National Disability Authority (NDA).

81. Ireland signed the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearances (ICED) on 29 March 2007. Ireland intends to ratify the ICED as soon as practicable; it is likely that legislation will be required to fully ratify this convention. The position in this regard is currently under examination. Any necessary legislation will be advanced as legislative priorities generally permit.

82. The Irish Government has a policy of keeping existing reservations to human rights treaties actively under review, consistent with the Vienna Declaration and Program of Action. At present all of the reservations under these articles are considered necessary.

83. Ireland is fully committed to ratification of the Optional Protocol to the United Nations Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment and a relevant Bill is being prepared with a view to enabling the ratification of OPCAT as soon as possible. It is intended that a legislative Scheme of the Bill will be finalised and submitted for Government approval before the end of the year.

84. Ireland signed the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights on 23 March 2012. The question of ratification of the Optional Protocol remains under consideration by the Government.

85. Ireland has issued a standing invitation to all UN human rights special procedures. The UN Special Rapporteur on the sale and sexual exploitation of children, Ms Maud de Boer-Buquicchio made a country visit to Ireland from 14 – 21 May 2018. Legal Framework for the protection of human rights at the national level.

B. Legal Framework for the protection of human rights at the national level

1. Constitutional Protection – Specified Rights

86. A large number of rights are specifically provided for in the Constitution. They are principally, although not exclusively, to be found in Articles 40-44, under the heading Fundamental Rights. These include: (a) equality before the law (Art. 40.1); (b) the right to life (Arts. 40.3.2 and 3); (c) the right to protection of one's person (Art. 40.3.2); (d) the right to one's good name (Art. 40.3.2); (e) property rights, including the right to own, transfer, bequeath and inherit property (Art. 40.3.2 in conjunction with Art. 43); (f) personal liberty (Art. 40.4); (g) the inviolability of the dwelling (Art. 40.5); (h) freedom of expression (Art. 40.6.1 (i)); (i) freedom of assembly (Art. 40.6.1 (ii)); (j) freedom of association (Art. 40.6.1 (iii)); (k) family rights (Art. 41); (l) the right of parents to provide for children's education (Art. 42.1); (m) the right of children to receive a certain minimum education (Art. 42.3.2); (n) freedom of conscience and the free profession and practice of religion (Art.44); (o) the right to vote (Arts. 12.2.2, 16.1 and 47.3); (p) the right to seek election (Arts. 12.4.1 and 16.1); (q) the right to have votes treated as being of equal weight (Art. 16); (r) the right to have justice administered in public by judges who are independent (Arts. 34 and 35); (s) the right to criminal trial in Courts of law (Art. 38.1); (t) the right to trial by jury (Art. 38.5); and (u) the right not to have one's acts retrospectively declared to be unlawful (Art. 15.5.1), (v) the rights of children and the duty of the State to protect and vindicate those rights (Article 42A); and (w) the recognition of same sex marriage (Article 41.4).

2. Constitutional Protection – Unspecified Rights

87. The Constitution addresses the issue of personal rights as follows:

Article 40.3.1

“The State guarantees in its laws to respect, and, as far as practicable, by its laws to defend and vindicate the personal rights of the citizen”

Article 40.3.2

“The State shall, in particular, by its laws protect as best it may from unjust attack and, in the case of injustice done, vindicate the life, person, good name, and property rights of every citizen”

88. In interpreting the provisions of the Constitution, the Courts have identified a number of rights which, although not expressly referred to in the Constitution, are nonetheless provided for by it. The most notable of these unspecified constitutional rights are:

- (a) The right to bodily integrity;
- (b) The right to travel within the State;
- (c) The right to travel outside the State;
- (d) The right not to have health endangered by the State and freedom from torture and from inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment;
- (e) The right to litigate and have access to the Courts;
- (f) The right to legal counsel;
- (g) The right to communicate;
- (h) The right to marry;
- (i) The right to marital privacy;
- (j) The right to procreate;
- (k) The rights of an unmarried mother concerning her child;
- (l) The right to legal representation in certain criminal cases; and
- (m) The right to fair procedure.

3. Constitutionality

89. Under Article 34 of the Constitution, the High Court, the Court of Appeal and the Supreme Court each have the power to assess and determine the validity of any law in terms of its constitutionality.

90. In the event that a Court concludes that a particular law is unconstitutional, that law ceases to have any legal validity *ab initio*.

4. Constitutional Reform

91. Following a Constitutional referendum on 22 May 2015, Article 41 of the Constitution was amended to provide that marriage may be contracted in accordance with law by two persons without distinction as to their sex. The constitutional amendment was given legislative effect by the Marriage Act 2015 which came into operation on 16 November 2015.

92. In a referendum held on 25 May 2018, the citizens of Ireland voted to amend the Constitution to provide for the regulation of the termination of pregnancy. The *Health (Regulation of Termination of Pregnancy) Bill 2018* was passed by the Houses of the Oireachtas on 13 December 2018 and enacted on 21 December 2018 to give effect to this vote. Services for termination of pregnancy commenced on 1 January 2019.

93. In a referendum held on 26 October 2018, a majority voted to remove the reference to blasphemy in the Constitution.

94. Following a Constitutional referendum on 24 May 2019, the citizens of Ireland voted to amend the Constitution in Article 41.3 to reduce the term people must be living apart before applying for a divorce and to replace the text of Article 41.3.3 which deals with the recognition of foreign divorces.

5. Evidence

95. The general rule in Ireland is that evidence obtained as a result of a deliberate breach of a person’s constitutional rights is inadmissible.

6. Judicial Review

96. Judicial review is a remedy which lies against persons or bodies exercising public functions (including the lower courts) to restrain them from acting contrary to law or to compel them to act in accordance with law and to comply with basic rules of natural justice and fair procedures. It encompasses the old common law remedies of *certiorari*, *mandamus* and prohibition. The modern system of judicial review is an expeditious means by which an order may be sought to set aside a decision or action of such a body, or to compel it to act or prevent it from acting contrary to law.

97. A person seeking to challenge the constitutionality of legislation may do so by way of judicial review. The procedure is not, however, confined to cases where constitutional irregularity is involved. While an Act of the Oireachtas may be found invalid only for constitutional irregularity, subordinate legislation may also be set aside where the powers conferred by the enabling legislation are exceeded, i.e. on the grounds that the subordinate legislation is *ultra vires* the enabling Act. Furthermore, the decisions of state bodies and other bodies exercising public functions may be challenged by way of judicial review. Such bodies are obliged to act within their powers and to comply with the basic rules of natural justice and fair procedures. Any failure to do so may be challenged by way of judicial review on grounds of, *inter alia*, unlawfulness, procedural irregularity and/or breaches of fair procedure and natural justice.

98. The following remedies exist in Irish law for breaches of human rights protected by the Constitution of Ireland: judicial review of legislation, or proposed legislation, for constitutional infirmity, where the legislation is, or would involve, the breach of a constitutionally protected right; judicial review of delegated legislation for constitutional infirmity or incompatibility with the statutory provision which authorises the delegated legislation; judicial review of administrative action for constitutional infirmity or other non-compliance with law, including a failure to observe the rules of natural justice; with regard to the European Convention on Human Rights Act 2003, where it is not possible to interpret the statute, statutory instrument, rule of common law etc., concerned in a manner which is compatible with the Convention, provision is made in Section 5 of the Act of 2003 for the Superior courts to make a Declaration of Incompatibility which will be laid before both Houses of the Oireachtas. Provision is also made in Section 5 (4) for a system of *ex gratia* compensation from the State in circumstances where the party to the proceedings concerned makes an application in writing to the Attorney General, in respect of an injury, or loss, or damage suffered by him or her as a result of the incompatibility concerned.

7. Legislation, conventions and treaties

99. Article 29.3 of the Constitution states that, “Ireland accepts the generally recognised principles of international law as its rule of conduct in its relations with other States”. These principles include international human rights law insofar as it forms part of customary international law. Ireland has a dualist system under which international agreements to which Ireland becomes a party do not become part of domestic law unless so determined by the Oireachtas through legislation.

100. Ireland is party to human rights treaties adopted under the auspices of the Council of Europe, including the European Convention on Human Rights. Further effect was given to the Convention in domestic law by way of the European Convention on Human Rights Act 2003. The Act provides for rights under the Convention to be pleaded directly before Irish Courts and tribunals.

101. As a State party to the European Convention on Human Rights, Ireland is obliged to abide by the judgments of the Court in cases to which it is party. Judgments against Ireland have, in a number of cases, required the payment of just satisfaction to applicants as ordered by the Courts. Under the supervision of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe, the Government will continue to take all necessary steps for the execution of the Court’s judgments.

102. As a Member State of the European Union, Ireland is bound by the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union. The Charter recognises specific rights, freedoms and principles (economic and social as well as civil and political), to which EU citizens are

entitled when the institutions of the Union and the Member States are implementing Union law. In December 2009, with the entry into force of the treaty of Lisbon, the Charter was given binding legal effect equal to that of the EU Treaties.

8. Institutions and national machinery

103. The Government recognises the importance of independent complaints, monitoring and inspection bodies and has established the following such bodies.

The Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission

104. The Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission (IHREC) was established on 1 November 2014 from a merger of the Human Rights Commission and Equality Authority. It is Ireland's national human rights and equality institution. It is an independent public body that accounts to the Oireachtas, with a mandate established under the *Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act 2014* (IHREC Act 2014). The Commission has a broad statutory remit in relation to the protection and promotion of human rights and equality under the Act. The work of the Commission ranges from working at the policy level to review the effectiveness of human rights and equality law, policy and practice in the State and within public bodies, to working with communities and civil society to monitor and report on people's real life experiences of human rights and equality on the ground. Its legal powers include giving practical help, including legal assistance to help people defend their rights, and contributing to legal cases (*amicus curiae*) that deal with an individual's equality or human rights.

The Workplace Relations Commission

105. The Workplace Relations Commission (WRC), was established under the *Workplace Relations Act 2015* on 1 October 2015 and brought together the functions of the Labour Relations Commission (LRC), the National Employment Rights Authority (NERA), the Equality Tribunal, and the first instance functions of the Employment Appeals Tribunal (EAT). The WRC's core services include the provision of conciliation, mediation facilitation and advisory services, adjudication on employment, equality, pension and equal status complaints, the monitoring via a dedicated inspectorate of employment conditions to ensure the compliance and enforcement of employment rights legislation and the provision of information to the public in relation to employment legislation (other than the Employment Equality Act)¹.

106. The WRC provides the means by which first instance complaints under employment rights, employment equality and industrial relations legislation can be investigated, resolved by early intervention or adjudicated as appropriate. The WRC deals with complaints of discrimination in employment and access to goods and services under the Employment Equality Acts 1998 - 2015 and the Equal Status Acts 2000 - 2015. The Employment Equality Acts outlaw discrimination at work including as regards: recruitment and promotion; equal pay; working conditions; training or experience; dismissal; and harassment, including sexual harassment. They cover the nine grounds of gender, marital status, family status, age, disability, sexual orientation, race, religion, and membership of the Traveller community. The Equal Status Acts also cover the nine grounds and prohibit discrimination in the provision of goods and services, accommodation and education. In addition, the Acts prohibit discrimination in the provision of accommodation services against people who are in receipt of rent supplement, housing assistance, or social welfare payments.

Health Service Executive

107. Statutory responsibility for the provision of health services is vested in the Health Service Executive under the *Health Act 2004* which provides that the Health Service Executive has the responsibility to manage and deliver, or arrange to be delivered on its behalf, health and personal social services. Prior to the establishment of the Health Service Executive, responsibility for such services was vested in the regional health boards under the

¹ Employment Equality Act information provided by the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission

Health Act 1970 and the Eastern Regional Health Authority under the Health (Eastern Regional Health Authority) Act 1999.

Child and Family Agency

108. Statutory responsibility for the provision of specified child and family services is vested in the Child and Family Agency, Tusla, under the *Child and Family Agency Act 2013* which provides that the Agency has responsibility, *inter alia*, to manage and deliver or arrange to have delivered on its behalf, services to support and promote the development, welfare and protection of children; to support and encourage the effective functioning of families; and to support the promotion of school attendance, participation and retention; and to provide care and protection for victims of domestic, sexual or gender-based violence. The Agency also supervises and inspects early years services in respect of pre-school and school age childcare provided by the community/voluntary and commercial sectors.

Health and Safety Authority

109. The Health and Safety Authority is the national statutory body with responsibility for regulating occupational safety and health as well as chemicals and market surveillance. The Irish National Accreditation Body (INAB) is also part of the Authority. The mandates of the Authority are:

- (a) to regulate the safety, health and welfare of people at work and those affected by work activities;
- (b) to promote improvement in the safety, health and welfare of people at work and those affected by work activities;
- (c) to regulate and promote the safe manufacture, use, placing on the market, trade and transport of chemicals;
- (d) to act as a surveillance authority in relation to relevant single European market legislation; and
- (e) to act as the national accreditation body for Ireland.

National Disability Authority

110. The National Disability Authority provides expert advice on disability policy and practice to the Minister for Justice and Equality. Public sector organisations are obliged to promote and support the employment of people with disabilities, and achieve a statutory minimum 3% target of staff with disabilities. The Authority monitors compliance by public bodies and can recommend specific action where a public body is in breach of these obligations.

Mental Health (Criminal Law) Review Board

111. The Mental Health (Criminal Law) Review Board was established under the *Criminal Law (Insanity) Act 2006*, as amended by the *Criminal Law (Insanity) Act 2010*. The function of the Board is to review the detention of persons detained in designated centres who have been referred there by a Court having been found unfit to stand trial or not guilty of an offence by reason of insanity. The Board also reviews the detention of persons who are transferred to a designated centre from prison for care or treatment. Currently the only designated centre in the State is the Central Mental Hospital.

Ombudsman, Information Commissioner and the Commissioner for Environmental Information

112. The Office of the Ombudsman was established by legislation in 1980 to provide for the examination of complaints concerning the administrative actions of Government Departments, the Health Service Executive, public hospitals and local authorities. The Ombudsman (Amendment) Act 2012 strengthens the Ombudsman's powers and extends the Act to at least another 150 public bodies including, for example, all third level institutions. More recently the Ombudsman's jurisdiction has been extended to cover the private nursing

home sector, and since early 2017 the Ombudsman has been formally allowed to accept complaints from residents living in direct provision centres. The Ombudsman plays a critical role in vindicating the rights of citizens in their dealings with public bodies.

113. While they are in law separate entities, the Offices of the Ombudsman and the Information Commissioner have been held by the same person and the two offices have operated together since the Office of Information Commissioner was established in 1997. The function of Commissioner for Environmental Information was also added to the role in 2007 as part of Ireland's implementation of the Aarhus Convention. The Commissioner is responsible for reviewing (on application) decisions of public bodies in relation to Freedom of Information and Access to Information on the Environment requests and, where necessary, making binding new decisions; reviewing the operation of the Freedom of Information Acts to ensure that public bodies comply with the provisions of the legislation; and preparing and publishing commentaries on the practical operation of the Acts. The Commissioner for Environmental Information may also refer any question of law arising in an appeal under that code to the High Court for determination.

Office of the Ombudsman for the Defence Forces

114. The Office of the Ombudsman for the Defence Forces was established under the Ombudsman (Defence Forces) Act 2004 to provide a complaints procedure for members and former members of the Defence Forces in situations where internal complaints procedures have been exhausted. The Ombudsman may also consider complaints made by members of the Defence Forces in relation to penalisation following the making of a protected disclosure.

Garda Síochána Ombudsman Commission

115. The independent police complaints authority, the Garda Síochána Ombudsman Commission, is empowered to directly and independently investigate complaints against members of An Garda Síochána, or any matter where it appears that a Garda may have committed an offence or behaved in a manner that would justify disciplinary proceedings.

Ombudsman for Children's Office

116. The main areas of work of the Ombudsman for Children's Office include independent handling of complaints by young people or by adults on young people's behalf; communication and participation, including supporting people in finding out about children's and young people's rights; and research and policy, including advising the Government on children's rights issues.

Data Protection Commission

117. The Data Protection Commission is responsible for upholding the rights of data subjects and enforcing the obligations of data controllers and processors, in particular the rights and obligations set out in the *General Data Protection Regulation (Regulation (EU) 2016/679)* and the *Data Protection Act 2018*. The Commission is completely independent in the performance of its functions and exercise of its powers. An individual who feels that his or her data protection rights have been, or are being, infringed can complain to the Commission. The Commission has a range of investigative tools and sanctions at its disposal under both the Regulation and the 2018 Act.

Press Ombudsman and Council

118. The Press Council of Ireland and the Office of the Press Ombudsman safeguard and promote professional and ethical standards in Irish newspapers and magazines. The Office of the Press Ombudsman ensures *that* everybody now has access to an independent press complaints mechanism that is quick, fair and free. These structures are designed to ensure that the freedom of the press is never abused, and that the public interest is served.

Oversight Group on National Action Plan on United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325

119. An Oversight Group on the implementation of Ireland's National Action Plans (NAP) on United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 and eight subsequent related resolutions on Women Peace and Security, made up of 50% Academic and Civil Society Organisation representatives and 50% Government representatives, with an independent Chair, oversees the regular and systematic review of progress in achieving the objectives, actions and targets of the current National Action Plan.

An Coimisinéir Teanga (The Language Commissioner)

120. The Office of An Coimisinéir Teanga is a fully independent Office as set out in the *Official Languages Act 2003*. The functions and powers of the Commissioner are specified in the 2003 Act and essentially are to monitor compliance with the Act by public bodies and investigate complaints from the public.

Inspector of Prisons

121. The Inspector carries out regular inspections of the 12 prisons and places of detention, and reports on each institution inspected. These reports, together with an Annual Report, are published.

Health Information and Quality Authority

122. The Health Information and Quality Authority (HIQA) is the independent Authority established to drive continuous improvement in Ireland's health and personal social care services, monitor the safety and quality of these services and promote person-centred care for the benefit of the public. The Authority's mandate extends across the quality and safety of the public, private (within its social care function) and voluntary sectors. Reporting to the Minister for Health and the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs, the Health Information and Quality Authority has statutory responsibility for:

- (a) Setting Standards for Health and Social Services;
- (b) Registering and inspecting residential centres for older people and residential disability centres;
- (c) Monitoring the quality and safety of health and personal social care services; and
- (d) Investigating as necessary serious concerns about the health and welfare of people who use these services.

123. The role of the Health Information and Quality Authority also includes developing standards and inspection in respect of children's services. HIQA inspects protection and welfare services; foster care provision children's residential centres including secure units which provide intensive support for children in a secure facility provided by the Child and Family Agency (formerly the HSE). It also inspects children's detention schools.

Financial Services Ombudsman

124. The Financial Services and Pensions Ombudsman deals independently with unresolved complaints from customers about their individual dealings with financial services and pensions providers, including in relation to mortgage and other consumer credit matters.

Mental Health Commission and Inspectorate of Mental Health Services

125. The functions of the Mental Health Commission are to promote, encourage, and foster the maintenance of high standards and good practices in the delivery of mental health services and to take all reasonable steps to protect the interests of detained patients.

126. The Inspectorate of Mental Health Services is required by law to visit and inspect every approved centre annually and, as the Inspectorate thinks appropriate, to visit and inspect any other premises where mental health services are being provided. As part of the

inspection process, the functions of the Inspectorate include ascertaining the degree of compliance by approved centres with any applicable Code of Practice or statutory regulations.

Citizens' Information Board

127. The Citizens' Information Board supports the provision of free information, advice, advocacy, money advice and budgetary services on a broad range of public and social services. It supports the regional network of Citizens' Information Services and Money Advice and Budgeting Services which deliver services, at local level, around the country. It also supports the Citizens' Information Phone Services, the Sign Language Interpreting Service and the National Advocacy Service.

The Residential Tenancies Board (RTB) and the Rent Tribunal

128. The Residential Tenancies Board (RTB) was established as an independent statutory body under the *Residential Tenancies Act 2004* to operate a national tenancy registration system and to facilitate the resolution of disputes between landlords and tenants.

129. The *Residential Tenancies (Amendment) Act 2015* amended section 3 of the Residential Tenancies Act 2004 to bring dwellings let by approved housing bodies (AHBs) to social housing tenants within the remit of the Residential Tenancies Act 2004. This means that the same rights and obligations that are afforded to landlords and tenants in the private rented sector are now afforded to those residing under tenancy in the Approved Housing Body Sector.

130. The position of AHB tenants is significantly improved by this change, which commenced on 7 April 2016, as they now benefit from:

- (a) Increased security of tenure;
- (b) Access to Residential Tenancies Board (RTB) dispute resolution procedures, including free mediation; and
- (c) Binding obligations on AHBs, as landlords, to inter alia, register all tenancies, keep dwellings in good repair and allow peaceful occupation.

131. Security of tenure provisions are included in Part 4 of the Residential Tenancies Act 2004 and were originally based on rolling four-year tenancy cycles (six-year tenancy cycles since 2016). Where a tenant has been in occupation of a dwelling under tenancy for a continuous period of 6 months and a valid notice of termination has not been served in respect of that tenancy during that period, the tenancy is legally secured to continue in being for a period of 6 years from the commencement of the tenancy. In accordance with Part 5 of the *Residential Tenancies Act 2004*, a tenant or a landlord can serve a notice of tenancy termination prior to the expiry of the 6 years. Section 34 of the Act prescribes the limited grounds required for a landlord to terminate a tenancy. A tenant can benefit from tenancy rights under a private tenancy contract that are more beneficial than the statutory tenancy rights.

132. More recently, the Residential Tenancies (Amendment) Act 2019 brought licensed student accommodation under the remit of the RTB. It implemented a number of measures contained in *Rebuilding Ireland - Action Plan for Housing and Homelessness* and commitments made in September 2017 to provide the RTB with additional powers and resources to deliver enhanced protections to both tenants and landlords. The Act also extended the operation of Rent Pressure Zones (RPZs) out to the end of 2021 thus continuing rent protection for those renting in RPZs.

133. The Rent Tribunal was established under the *Housing (Private Rented Dwellings (Amendment) Act 1983* and is the arbitrating body in the determination of rent and other terms of tenancy of dwellings which were formerly rent controlled under the *Rent Restrictions Acts 1960 – 1981*. The Tribunal may determine new cases or may review cases previously determined by the District Court or by the Tribunal itself. On 7 January 2016, the Rent Tribunal was dissolved by the Minister for Housing, Planning and Local Government and its functions were undertaken by the Residential Tenancies Board (RTB).

The Legal Services Regulatory Authority

134. The Government established an independent Legal Services Regulatory Authority on 1 October 2016 as part of the package of legal services and legal costs reforms introduced under the *Legal Services Regulation Act 2015*. This includes the setting-up by the Authority of an independent complaints framework dealing with allegations of legal professional misconduct that will replace those complaints procedures historically operated through the legal professional bodies. This is supported by the establishment of a new and independent Legal Practitioners' Disciplinary Tribunal to adjudicate on matters of serious misconduct in relation to both solicitors and barristers. The Act also places greater obligations on legal practitioners to keep clients informed in relation to legal costs and provides separately for a new Office of the Legal Costs Adjudicators, replacing that of the Taxing-Master, to adjudicate disputed legal costs and to maintain a public register of its determinations. The Legal Services Regulatory Authority has completed a series of statutory public consultations and reports since its establishment, including on the introduction of new and more competitive legal services models, and has set out a schedule for the roll-out of its remaining functions and capacities in its published Strategic Plan 2018-2020.

Civil Society

135. Ireland is fully committed to a pluralistic and open democracy and values the role played by a diverse and inclusive civil society in this regard. Government recognises the contribution that social dialogue can make to maximising common understanding across all sectors of society. Ministers and their Departments continue to have regular interaction with representatives of all sectors of society. Successive Governments have attached much importance to the role of the NGO community in the area of human rights. In order to provide a formal framework for a regular exchange of views between the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and representatives of the NGO community, the DFAT Committee on Human Rights (formerly, the NGO Standing Committee) was established, comprising representatives of NGOs and experts, as well as officers of the Department. In addition to the Committee, a Forum on Human Rights, to which all interested are invited, is held annually.

C. Framework within which human rights are promoted at the national level

1. National and Regional Parliaments and Assemblies

136. A number of Joint Oireachtas Committees consider issues relevant to human rights and public affairs. These include, *inter alia*, the Joint Committee on Employment Affairs and Social Protection, the Joint Committee on Health, the Joint Committee on Children and Youth Affairs, the Joint Committee on Justice and Equality and the Joint Committee on Foreign Affairs, Trade, and Defence..

2. Dissemination of Human Rights Instruments

137. Information relating to the main human rights conventions ratified by Ireland and the national reports submitted to the United Nations on the implementation of these conventions is available on the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade website (www.dfa.ie). The individual government departments responsible for implementation and compliance with UN human rights instruments are also responsible for dissemination.

138. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights has been printed in both national languages and has been widely distributed. Copies of international human rights instruments ratified by Ireland have also been made available to the general public and circulated to members of Dáil Éireann.

3. Raising human rights awareness among public officials

139. The Government of Ireland aims to ensure that all public officials are aware of their obligations under various human rights instruments. Human rights training is provided to

public officials including members of An Garda Síochána, members of the Defence Forces and custodial personnel working in the Irish Prison Service.

140. The Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission (IHREC) is mandated under the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act 2014 to promote and protect human rights and equality. One of its specific functions is to promote human rights education and training and awareness of human rights. In its previous guise, the Irish Human Rights Commission (IHRC) developed a Human Rights Education and Training Project (HRETP) specifically for the Irish civil and public service.

141. The Irish Defence Forces provide on-going human rights training at United Nations Training School Ireland (UNTSI) in the Defence Forces Training Centre both for members of the Defence Forces and for participants from armed forces abroad. Training is also provided through UNTSI to Gardaí, civil servants, humanitarian actors, students and academics. The overall training package is based on the programme provided by the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR).

142. Since 2007, all Recruit Prison Officers (RPO) in the Irish Prison Service undertake the Higher Certificate of Arts in Custodial Care (HCCC) which is a bespoke 2-year Level 6 qualification designed, developed and delivered by the Irish Prison Service and its academic partner, currently Waterford Institute of Technology. There are currently over 900 staff who have completed or are undertaking the HCCC. The HCCC places significant emphasis on the place of human rights in the custodial environment. Human rights is the frame through which the programme is developed: during semester 1 RPOs are introduced to the human rights framework.

143. The Irish Prison Service College is working in partnership with the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission and has developed a tailored and revised “Train the Trainer” human rights and equality training package, based on participative methodology for training tutors in the Irish Prison Service College. The revised training programme includes the relevant human rights framework along with the practical application of principles of human rights, such as dignity, respect, equality, proportionality and transparency. This will allow the trainers to deliver a two-hour training course to all prison personnel across Ireland and concentrate on the principles of dignity, respect and equality in the daily interaction of Prison officers and prisoners. The programme is to be delivered throughout 2019 as part of a 2-day continuous professional development programme for all staff.

144. The function of An Garda Síochána under Section 7 of the Garda Síochána Act 2005 is to provide policing and security services for the State, with specific objectives including vindicating the human rights of each individual. In doing so, it is bound by obligations including Section 3 of the European Convention on Human Rights Act 2003 and Section 42 of the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act 2014.

145. The Policing Plan 2017 and the Garda Síochána Strategy Statement 2016 - 2018 reflect the importance of human rights. A Code of Ethics was launched in January 2017, in which human rights is a key element. Further, each Garda member is required on appointment to make a solemn declaration to discharge his/her duties with “fairness, integrity, regard for human rights, diligence and impartiality, upholding the Constitution and the laws and according equal respect to all people”.

146. An Garda Síochána has taken and is currently undertaking a number of measures to ensure it provides a human rights-based policing and security service. For example, a Human Rights Section has been established and is proposed to be expanded in the near future in light of the requirements of Section 42 of the Irish Human Rights and Equality Act 2014. The Strategic Human Rights Advisory Committee (SHRAC) is being re-established with the membership proposed to expand to include external experts in this area. SHRAC is chaired by the Deputy Commissioner, Policing & Security, and is examining how to ensure that human rights is a central focus of policing. A draft Human Rights Framework document has been prepared to support the embedding of a human rights-based approach in the development of policy, training and operations. Human rights is a key element of the training provided to Garda trainees, probationers, members and staff. All Garda policies are human rights screened. An Garda Síochána has a dedicated office to engage with minority

communities and there are currently over 200 Ethnic Liaison/LGBT Officers across the country.

147. An Garda Síochána and the Law Society of Ireland are in the process of developing joint training for Solicitors and members of An Garda Síochána in the context of Garda interviews. This initiative aims to further support and vindicate the rights of all persons detained for interview in Garda custody.

148. Gardaí attached to the Garda National Immigration Bureau receive additional training appropriate to their role as immigration officers. Likewise, civilian immigration officers of the Irish Naturalisation and Immigration Service assigned to frontline immigration control duties also receive appropriate training in human rights. The training programmes cover areas such as international human rights mechanisms, human trafficking and developing cultural competence.

149. Ireland's overseas aid programme – Irish Aid – has a significant focus on public engagement around development and human rights. Much of this comes in the form of work at primary and secondary school level but also with the informal education sector. In addition, Irish Aid engages in a variety of outreach and communications activities through the Irish Aid Information and Volunteering Centre located in the heart of Dublin city.

4. Promotion of human rights awareness through educational programmes and Government-sponsored public information

150. Human rights issues are addressed at pre-school, primary and post-primary levels and there are Human Rights programmes in a number of third-level education institutions.

Pre-school

151. At pre-school level, Aistear: the Early Childhood Curriculum Framework, and Siolta, the National Quality Framework for Early Childhood Education implemented in state-funded early years education services settings, emphasise the importance of nurturing equality and diversity in early childhood. Promoting equality is seen to be about creating a fairer society in which everyone can participate equally with the opportunity to fulfil his/her potential. Diversity is about welcoming and valuing individual and group differences, and understanding and celebrating difference as part of life.

Primary Level

152. At Primary level, human rights can feature in a range of contexts across the curriculum which is taught in an integrated way. At this level the strongest emphasis is on Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE). “Developing Citizenship” is a core element of this mandatory subject, from infant classes through to completion of primary education.

Post-primary level

153. At post-primary level knowledge of human rights can also be developed in a range of contexts across the curriculum. Most commonly it features in SPHE, History, Geography, Business Studies and Civic, Social and Political Education (CSPE). CSPE and SPHE are part of the core curriculum in lower secondary post primary schools (junior cycle). They are studied as part of the Wellbeing area of learning. CSPE aims to inform, inspire, empower and enable young people to participate as active citizens in contemporary society at local, national and global levels, based on an understanding of human rights and social responsibilities. A new short course in CSPE was made available to schools in September 2014. A new optional subject for senior cycle, Politics and Society, was introduced in 2016. Politics and Society aims to develop the learner's capacity to engage in reflective and active citizenship, informed by the insights and skills of social and political sciences.

154. In the Framework for Junior Cycle, published in August 2015, the learning at the core of junior cycle is described in 24 Statements of Learning. One of these provides that all students in the end of Junior Cycle should “value what it means to be an active citizen, with rights and responsibilities in local and wider contexts”. In addition, one of the principles of the Framework is Inclusive Education, whilst the key skill of Working With Others will

address conflict, co-operation, respecting difference and contributing to make the world a better place. All these elements are key skills in the context of our understanding and awareness of human rights.

155. In addition, the Department of Education and Skills works with HETI (Holocaust Education Trust Ireland) and has provided funding over a number of years. In 2019 funding totalling €156,829 was provided for courses which are designed to give a personal grasp to teachers of the enormity of, and create a greater awareness of the Holocaust. The understanding of the Holocaust and the reflection of its consequences assists teachers in the teaching of History in the classroom and prompts discussions on combating racism and intolerance all of which are pertinent subjects to which students can easily relate. The funding received by HETI contributes to a number of school programmes, outreach initiatives and also includes a certificate qualification.

156. An Action Plan on Bullying was launched in January 2013, setting out the approach of the Department of Education and Skill to tackle bullying and promote an anti-bullying culture in schools. The plan sets out 12 actions that focus on support for schools, teacher training, research and awareness raising and aim to ensure that all forms of bullying are addressed. A number of these actions have been implemented in full, while others by their nature involve continuous action and are the subject of ongoing implementation. The Action Plan also aims to promote respect for diversity and inclusiveness in Irish schools and communities.

157. Arising from the Action Plan on Bullying, national Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post Primary schools were published in September 2013 and are currently being implemented by all 4,000 primary and post primary schools in the country.

158. The procedures, which have been published on the Department's website, are designed to give direction and guidance to school authorities and school personnel in preventing and tackling bullying behaviour amongst their pupils. They require that the prevention of bullying must be an integral part of a school's anti-bullying policy. All Boards of Management are required to adopt and implement an anti-bullying policy that fully complies with the requirements of the procedures. They include specific requirements in relation to the use of prevention and education strategies and the consistent investigation, follow up and recording of bullying behaviour. The strategies that schools implement must be documented in the anti-bullying policy and must explicitly deal with the issue of identity-based bullying. Schools' actions to create a positive school culture and to prevent and tackle bullying are included in the whole school evaluation process carried out by the Department's Inspectorate.

159. Other actions included in the Action Plan on Bullying are support for anti-bullying awareness raising initiatives and the development and roll out of anti-bullying training materials for parents, teachers and Boards of Management. The Department funds anti-bullying training sessions for parents, which are provided nationwide by the National Parent's Council, providing supports to parents to enable them to assist their children when issues of bullying arise. The Department also funds the national anti-bullying website www.tacklebullying.ie launched in 2015 as a single point of information and support for young people, parents and teachers affected by bullying.

160. In relation to online safety, there are extensive training and curricular supports and resources available to assist schools in the development of policies and practices on the safe use of the internet and on the prevention of bullying and harassment using the internet. In particular, Webwise.ie an internet safety initiative funded by the Department and the European Union, promotes the autonomous, effective, and safer use of the internet by young people through a sustained information and awareness strategy targeting teachers and schools, parents, and children themselves with consistent and relevant messages. The Webwise team develops and disseminates resources that help teachers integrate internet safety into teaching and learning in their schools. The team works closely with the Health and Wellbeing team in the Department-funded teachers support service (PDST) to ensure internet safety messages, including tackling cyber-bullying, are considered in the mediation of strands of the Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) curriculum/syllabus.

Information, advice, and tools are also provided to parents to support their engagement in their children's online lives.

161. DEIS – Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools is the main policy initiative of the Department of Education and Skills to address educational disadvantage at school level. DEIS Plan 2017 sets out the vision for future interventions in the critical area of educational disadvantage policy and builds on what has already been achieved by schools who have benefitted from the additional supports available under the initial DEIS programme introduced in 2005.

Higher Education

162. Within higher education, a wide range of programmes that pertain to human rights are provided. While the study of human rights forms an important component of courses in law, politics, and international relations, it also features in courses across a wide range of disciplines, including sociology, psychology, health sciences, education, and gender studies. There are two dedicated research centres for human rights in Ireland: the Centre for Criminal Justice and Human Rights at University College Cork (UCC), and the Irish Centre for Human Rights at the National University of Ireland, Galway (NUIG), in addition to which a number of centres in Irish higher education institutions have a strong human rights focus, including Trinity College Dublin (TCD)'s Centre for Post-Conflict Justice and University College Dublin (UCD)'s Equality Studies Centre.

163. It is incumbent on higher education institutions to uphold and protect the human rights of students and staff. Under the Equality Act 2004, the Equal Status Act 2000, and the Disability Act 2005, higher education providers are required to prevent discrimination against students and staff and to accommodate the needs of those with disabilities. All institutions have in place policies and procedures for addressing complaints about bullying and harassment, as well as codes of conduct and ethics policies. Support services in higher education institutions include disability, counselling, and health services, as well as online information services and pastoral care provided to students by personal tutors.

164. There is a range of initiatives and supports that aim to ensure equity of access to higher education for all citizens, including those from disadvantaged backgrounds and minority groups. The third National Access Plan for Equity of Access to Higher Education (2015-2019) was launched in December 2015. A Progress Review of this National Access Plan was published in 2018 which also sets out National Access Plan Priorities to 2021. The vision of the National Access Plan is to ensure that the student body entering into, participating in and completing higher education reflects the diversity and social mix of Ireland's population. The Plan identifies the target groups that are currently being under-represented in Higher Education, which includes entrants from socio-economic groups that have low participation in higher education, Irish Travellers, Students with disabilities, First time, mature student entrants, Part-time/flexible learners and further education award holders. Lone Parents and ethnic minorities are also included within these groupings.

165. In support of this national commitment the HEA has funded a wealth of access initiatives through the Strategic Innovation Fund (SIF), including the reform and mainstreaming of the Higher Education Access Route (HEAR)²; and the Disability Access Route to Education (DARE)³; which offer access to higher education courses with a reduced point-score in the Leaving Certificate examination for students from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds and for those with a disability, respectively. Many higher education institutions have established programmes to widen access, including for example Dublin Institute of Technology (DIT)'s 'Community Links Programme', which supports educationally disadvantaged children and adults to access higher education; Dublin City University's 'DCU in the Community' initiative, which provides a drop-in centre to promote educational opportunities to the local community; and TCD's Trinity Access Programmes (TAP).

² <http://www.accesscollege.ie/hear/>.

³ <http://www.accesscollege.ie/dare/>.

166. Higher education institutions in Ireland are active in promoting active citizenship among students and staff. NUIG is a leader in this regard, with civic engagement embedded into its Strategic Plan 2009–2014. Since its establishment in 2001, NUIG’s Community Knowledge Initiative (CKI) has actively promoted civic engagement, hosting the ALIVE student volunteering programme, embedding service-learning into degree programmes, and supporting collaborative research and knowledge-exchange with community partners. DCU’s annual President’s Award for Engagement celebrates the engagement of staff and students in the life of the wider community; and TCD’s Voluntary Tuition Programme (VTP) enables Trinity students to mentor children and teenagers in the local communities of Pearse Street and Ringsend. The NUIG-led, SIF-funded Campus Engage Network has enhanced the provision of service-learning, community-based learning, and volunteering opportunities for students, as well as the promotion of active citizenship across Irish universities.

167. While acknowledging the achievements of the sector to date in supporting civic engagement, the *National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030* calls for ‘higher education institutions to become more firmly embedded in the social and economic contexts of the communities they live in and serve’, and to this end the HEA is supporting the broadening of the Campus Engage Network into a national platform for civic engagement. In addition, the performance evaluation framework for the sector that the HEA is developing will support the strategic development of higher education institution’s engagement missions.

5. Role of Civil Society and Non-Governmental Organisations

168. Ireland has a strong and active NGO community who play a central role in human rights education. They provide vital information to Government about human rights issues which affect people at the grassroots level, through specific Government forums with NGOs as well as on a more general level. At the same time, they serve to educate the public about the human rights programmes and protection available to them. Consultation with NGOs forms a central part of the human rights reporting mechanism.

6. Promotion of Human Rights Internationally and in the context of Development Cooperation and Assistance

169. The promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms has always been a cornerstone of Irish foreign policy. Ireland has a strong record of providing assistance to developing countries to address poverty, vulnerability and marginalisation. Ireland’s official aid programme, Irish Aid, is an integral part of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. It continues to rank among the best in the world due to its poverty focus. In 2019, Ireland increased its ODA budget by 16% or approximately €110 million, bringing Ireland’s ODA to over €817 million in 2019. In addition, in 2018, the Government reaffirmed its commitment to making progress on delivering the United Nations target of allocating 0.7% of Gross National Income (GNI) to official development assistance by 2030.

170. Ireland’s new Policy for International Development, A Better World, was launched in 2019. A Better World is framed by Ireland’s commitment to the transformative ambition of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and in particular to the rallying call to reach ‘the furthest behind first’. Ireland will increase its resources and capacity to influence and engage globally across four policy priorities: gender equality, reducing humanitarian need, climate action and strengthening governance. Ireland recognises that the enjoyment of all human rights – civil, cultural, economic, political and social – is essential for development. Equally, development is essential to enable the full enjoyment of those rights. The United Nations Charter, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the United Nations’ core Human Rights Treaties set the framework for Ireland’s international relations including development cooperation. The Irish Government, through its international development cooperation programme provides funding to a wide range of human rights programmes in a number of developing countries. Support to civil society amounted to around 22% of our total budget in 2017, much higher than the OECD average. In 2017, approximately 8% of Ireland’s ODA budget (€61 million) was provided to governance, human rights and gender equality work. In addition, Ireland provides core support to the UN system, including the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights.

D. Reporting process at the national level

171. The following table shows the lead Government department with responsibility for coordinating the reporting process under the principal UN human rights instruments.

<i>UN Instrument</i>	<i>Lead Government Department</i>
ICCPR	Human Rights Unit, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
ICESCR	Human Rights Unit, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
CAT	Criminal Justice Policy Unit, Department of Justice and Equality
CEDAW	Gender Equality Unit, Department of Justice and Equality
CRC	Child Care Legislation and Children's Rights Policy Unit, Department of Children and Youth Affairs
CERD	Civil Justice and Equality Policy Unit, Department of Justice and Equality
CRPD	Civil Justice and Equality Policy Unit, Department of Justice and Equality

172. The initial drafting process for all of Ireland's human rights reports involves inter-departmental meetings with all relevant Government Departments. Extensive consultation with civil society is carried out at various stages of the drafting process. The Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission is also invited to consult on the reports.

173. The Government of Ireland recognizes the important role played by non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in promoting and implementing the rights set out in the treaties, and usual practice in the preparation of national reports includes consultations with a broad range of relevant NGOs.

E. Other human rights related information

174. Ireland underwent its first review under the United Nations Universal Periodic Review (UPR) process in October 2011 and submitted an Addendum to the Report of the Working Group to the UN in March 2012. Of the 127 recommendations made by UN member states, Ireland accepted 91, partially accepted 17 and declined 19.

175. Ireland's Cycle 2 National Report was submitted to the UN in February 2016 and Ireland's last review took place on 11 May 2016. 262 recommendations were made to Ireland by other UN Member States, and of these, 152 were accepted immediately, 13 were not accepted, and 97 recommendations were retained for further consideration. Our responses to the outstanding 97 recommendations are set out in the Addendum to the Report of the Working Group, which was submitted to the UN on 5 September 2016. Overall, of the 262 recommendations made to Ireland, 176 have been accepted, 45 have been partially accepted and 41 have not been accepted.

1. Information on non-discrimination and equality and effective remedies

Non-discrimination and equality

Legislation

176. Ireland is advanced in its promotion and protection of the principles of equality and freedom from discrimination. A set of equality laws is in place to ensure equality for all. The primary legislation is set out in the table below:

Bunreacht na hÉireann (Constitution of Ireland) - Article 40.1, Article 40.3.1, Article 40.3.2, and Article 44.2.3

- Unfair Dismissals Acts 1977–2007.
- Ombudsman Act 1980.

- Prohibition of Incitement to Hatred Act 1989.
- Pensions Act 1990.
- Maternity Protection Act 1994.
- Adoptive Leave Act 1995.
- Civil Legal Aid Act 1995.
- Parental Leave Act 1998.
- Employment Equality Act 1998.
- Education Act 1998.
- Equality (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2015.
- Equal Status Act 2000.
- Human Rights Commission Act 2000.
- Intoxicating Liquor Act 2003.
- Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act 2014.
- Redundancy Payments Act 2003.
- Equality Act 2004.
- Residential Tenancies Act 2004.
- Social Welfare (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2004.
- Public Service Management (Recruitment and Appointments) Act 2004.
- Protection of Employment (Exceptional Collective Redundancies and Related Matters) Act 2007.
- Civil Law (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2008 Part 16.
- Merchant Shipping Act 2010.
- Civil Partnership and Certain Rights and Obligations of Cohabitants Act 2010.
- Civil Law (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2011.
- Ministers and Secretaries (Amendment) Act 2011.
- Protection of Employees (Temporary Agency Work) Act 2012.
- Equal Status (Amendment) Act 2012.
- Code of Practice on harassment and sexual harassment in the workplace, Statutory Instrument No. 208 of 2012.

177. The major pieces of legislation enacted include the Employment Equality Acts 1998 to 2011 and the Equal Status Acts 2000 to 2012. These Acts prohibit both direct and indirect discrimination in the areas of employment and access to goods and services, including housing, healthcare and education, on nine grounds; gender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race and membership of the Traveller community. The Acts also outlaw victimisation, i.e. discrimination against an individual because he or she has taken a case or is giving evidence under the equality legislation, or has opposed by lawful means discrimination which is prohibited under this legislation. These Acts established the necessary institutional structures to ensure effective implementation of the legislation. Developments in this infrastructure are set out in paragraphs 104 to 106 above.

178. Recent enhancements to equality legislation include the following

(a) Following the introduction of registered civil partnership for same-sex couples, the protection from discrimination on the basis of marital status was extended to cover registered partnership, and the ground was renamed as ‘civil status’;

(b) The maximum compensation that may be awarded in cases of discrimination in the field of employment was increased, to provide for enhanced redress for workers on low pay;

(c) The *Education (Admission to Schools) Act 2018*, which was signed into law on the 18th July 2018, introduces a more parent-friendly, equitable and consistent approach to how school admissions policy operates for the almost 4,000 primary and post-primary schools in Ireland, and a fair and balanced school admission process for all pupils. The provisions of the Act aim to make it easier for parents to more easily access local schools and to enrol their children in a school that meets their needs. The Act requires schools to be fair and transparent in deciding how to prioritise children for admission to the school. When commenced, the Act will require that where schools are not oversubscribed they must accept all applicants. The Act will abolish waiting lists, thus removing discrimination against parents moving to a new area. Certain sections of the Act were commenced in 2018. The Act amends the *Equal Status Act 2000* to prohibit the use of religion as a selection criterion in primary school admissions, with certain protections provided to ensure that a child of a minority religion can access a school providing a religious instruction or religious education programme consistent with his or her religious beliefs. The Act prohibits admission fees in non-fee paying schools. The Act also provides the Minister with a power to compel a school to make additional provision in respect of children with special educational needs i.e. open a special class or classes, where the National Council for Special Education (NCSE) has identified a need for such provision within an area;

(d) Section 19 of the *Technological University Act 2018* provides for the preparation by a technological university of equality statements to cover periods of 3-5 years, which shall specify its policies relating to the promotion of access to the TU and the education it provides, by economically or socially disadvantaged persons, by persons who have a disability and by persons from sections of society significantly underrepresented in the student body and the policy of the TU relating to equality, including gender equality, in all activities of the TU. Section 9 of the Act sets out the general functions of a technology university, which include promoting gender balance and equality of opportunity among the students and staff of the technological university;

(e) As EU Directive 2005/36 applies to the *Teaching Council Acts 2001-2015*, Statutory Instrument 8 of 2017 gives further effect to the recognition of professional qualifications by a competent authority in the State and entitles the beneficiary to gain access in the State to the same profession as that for which he or she is qualified in his or her home Member State and to pursue it in the State under the same conditions as nationals of the State (i.e. precludes discrimination in admission to the teaching profession (among others) in Ireland, on the basis of EU nationality other than Irish);

(f) The *Equality (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2015* amended sections 2 and 6 of the *Equal Status Act 2000*, so a person cannot be discriminated against when renting because they are getting Rent Supplement, HAP or any other social welfare payment. This means that landlords can no longer state, when advertising accommodation, that Rent Supplement (or HAP) is not accepted and they cannot refuse to rent accommodation to a person because he or she is in receipt of a social welfare payment;

(g) The *Equality (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 2015*, made it illegal for religious-run schools and medical institutions to discriminate against LGBT staff over their sexuality.

179. These Acts also give effect in domestic law to Ireland's obligations as a member of the European Union to implement Community initiatives provided for under Council Directives 2000/43/EC, 2000/78/EC, and 2004/113/EC adopted under Article 13 of the EC Treaty, and Council Directives 2002/73/EC and 2006/54/EC adopted under Article 141 of the Treaty. The directives, commonly known as the equality directives, provide for equal treatment on the grounds of gender, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age and sexual orientation.

180. The overall effect of these directives is to require member states to prohibit direct discrimination, indirect discrimination and harassment on grounds of gender, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age, and sexual orientation in regard to employment, self-

employment or occupational and vocational training. Sexual harassment and victimisation are also prohibited. Discrimination on the race and gender grounds in access to the supply of goods and services is prohibited under directives 2000/43/EC and 2004/113/EC, while directive 2000/43/EC also prohibits race discrimination in the areas of social protection, social advantages and education.

Equality Mainstreaming

181. Government procedures require all substantive proposals submitted to Cabinet to take account of the impact on gender equality, on persons with disabilities, and on vulnerable groups.

182. The Programme for a Partnership Government (2016) set out a commitment to “develop the process of budget and policy proofing as a means of advancing equality, reducing poverty and strengthening economic and social rights.” The Programme further committed to drawing directly on the expertise of the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission (IHREC) to support the proofing process.

183. The Department of Public Expenditure and Reform has undertaken significant work on equality budgeting. A pilot initiative for Equality Budgeting was announced as part of Budget 2018. Six equality objectives were identified in the pilot, and performance measurements for them were then included in the Revised Estimates 2018. Five of the objectives related to gender equality, whilst the sixth related to socio-economic equality. An update on the pilot programme was included in the Public Service Performance Report 2017 (published in April 2018).

184. Following the achievements of the pilot programme, Equality Budgeting is being further developed to build on the momentum achieved and broaden its scope to other dimensions of equality including poverty, socioeconomic inequality and disability. The Revised Estimates 2019 includes further objectives and an Appendix with performance indicators. This year’s Performance Report again contained an update on this work.

185. An Equality Budgeting Expert Advisory Group has been set up to support this process and bring expert knowledge on how best to progress this important work. The introduction of Equality Budgeting is bringing greater awareness to the impacts of budgetary decisions and greater transparency to the areas which need attention.

186. Section 42 of the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act 2014 places a positive duty on public sector bodies to have regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, promote equality, and protect human rights, in their daily work.

187. This Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty aims to embed equality and human rights in the centre of policy making, service provision and employment within the public sector in Ireland. In 2018, IHREC continued to support the implementation of the Duty through the development of practical guidance and resources for public bodies, and ongoing external awareness-raising across a wide range of public bodies and civil society organisations. The Commission undertook five pilot projects to support the development of an approach to implementing the Duty in different contexts. These pilot projects were put in place to bring forward sectorial learning on the Duty in practice, across diverse public sector organisations. The pilot projects have informed further practical guidance on the Duty, and the learning is captured through case studies to support other organisations during the early stage of implementation.

National Strategy for Women and Girls

188. The successor to the National Women's Strategy 2007-2016, the National Strategy for Women and Girls 2017-2020 (NSWG), was approved by Government and launched on 3 May 2017. It provides a whole-of-Government framework through which women’s empowerment continues to be advanced, reflecting a key theme running through the Programme for a Partnership Government and the Government's commitments under the Beijing Platform for Action and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Preparation of the NSWG involved extensive public consultation, with women’s groups, civil society

actors, the trade union movement and business representatives among the stakeholders across Irish society who contributed to its development.

189. The vision of “An Ireland where all women enjoy equality with men and can achieve their full potential, while enjoying a safe and fulfilling life” continues to underpin the Strategy, while its overall goal is “to change attitudes and practices preventing women’s and girls’ full participation in education, employment and public life, at all levels, and to improve services for women and girls, with priority given to the needs of those experiencing or at risk of experiencing, the poorest outcomes.”

190. For the purpose of advancing this goal, the NSWG sets out 139 separate actions, which are being undertaken by Government Departments and agencies in cooperation with social partners and civil society as appropriate, under six high-level objectives as follows:

- (a) Advance socio-economic equality for women and girls;
- (b) Advance the physical and mental health and well-being of women and girls;
- (c) Ensure the visibility in society of women and girls, and their equal and active citizenship;
- (d) Advance women in leadership at all levels;
- (e) Combat violence against women; and
- (f) Embed gender equality in decision-making.

191. Stakeholders, including women’s groups and civil society groups, continue to be closely involved in the Committee overseeing implementation of the NSWG. The Committee is chaired by the Minister of State with responsibility for equality, immigration and integration and its membership also includes representatives of Government Departments. It is supported in its work by a secretariat in the Department of Justice and Equality.

Positive Action in the Workplace and Communities

192. The Women Returning to the Workforce and Women’s Entrepreneurship Programme is a positive action programme for women, co-funded by the Government and the European Social Fund as part of the Programme for Employability, Inclusion and Learning (PEIL) 2014-2020. It aims to support a cohort of those women who are currently detached from the labour market (neither employed nor unemployed) in order to assist their return to the labour market.

193. €11m has been allocated for the funding of this programme over the period 2016-2022. Funds are distributed to operations following Open Calls for Proposals. The first projects under the two strands of this programme were selected following a Call for Proposals issued in 2016, and will run for three years.

194. Under the Women’s Entrepreneurship Strand €1.2 million has been allocated, with 4 projects being funded.

195. The Government also provides funding support to the National Collective of Community-based Women’s Networks (NCCWN) to deliver a Women’s Equality and Development Programme to enhance the inclusion of women in communities. This funding has been provided since 2016 by the Department of Justice and Equality and amounted to €1.385m in 2016 and 2017, €1.405m in 2018 and €1.439m in 2019. The NCCWN was established as a national organisation in 2002 focusing on women’s community development.

Prevention of Domestic, Sexual and Gender-based Violence

196. The Department of Justice and Equality is mandated by Government since June 2007 to provide the State’s response to domestic, sexual, and gender-based violence, all of which affect women disproportionately. The Second National Strategy on Domestic, Sexual and Gender-based Violence 2016-2021 sets out a comprehensive range of actions to address both the primary interventions of prevention, recognizing and understanding of this violence and also secondary interventions in the areas of reporting, referring and ensuring the appropriate responses to acts of violence.

Support to the National Women's Council of Ireland

197. The Government provides core funding to the National Women's Council of Ireland (NWC), in recognition of its roles as a representative body which puts forward women's concerns and perspectives. In 2018, this funding amounted to €500,000 and in 2019 it is €525,000.

198. While it is independent of Government on policy issues, answerable only to its own elected executive committee and members, the NWC's Government funding stems from the recommendation made in 1992 to the then Government: that the NWC would provide women's organizations at local regional and national level with a forum in which women's views, opinions, experience and perspectives can be shared and developed; that through its work at national level, the NWC would bring such views and perspectives to bear on policy and decision-making, while at the same time encourage and support the work of its affiliates and other women's groups to work locally and regionally; and develop leadership and developmental programmes for women's groups around the country. In addition to its developmental role, the NWC is recognized as an informed and constructive contributor to the implementation and review of policy initiatives and its leaders interact frequently with senior politicians and policymakers.

Women's representation on State Boards

199. The 2016 Programme for a Partnership Government restates the Government commitment to increasing representation on State Boards to 40% of each gender. The commitment is reflected in the National Strategy for Women and Girls 2017-2020.

200. Between 2011 and 2014, significant changes were made to the system for State Board appointments with a view to promoting wider access to opportunities on State Boards and greater transparency in appointments. The Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform issued Guidelines on Appointments to State Boards in 2014. Under the new arrangements, appointments to State Boards are advertised openly on the State Boards portal, www.stateboards.ie, operated by the Public Appointments Service (PAS). Applications are assessed against the advertised specification for the board member roles by the PAS, which submits a shortlist of potential board members for consideration by the relevant Minister. In keeping with Government policy on gender balance on State Boards, PAS consistently monitors the gender balance throughout the appointments process. In 2017, women accounted for 35% of applications received, 38% of applicants assessed as suitable, and 52% of board members appointed through this process.

201. The following are the key statistics in relation to membership of State Boards serving in December 2018:

- (a) Almost half (47.6%) of all State Boards had at least 40% of each gender among their membership;
- (b) The average gender balance on State Boards was 41.5% female and 58.5% male; and
- (c) The gender breakdown of chairpersons of State Boards was 29.8% female and 70.2% male.

2. Promotion of Migrant Integration

202. The Civil Justice and Equality Policy Unit is the focal point for the Government's commitment on anti-racism as a key aspect of integration, diversity management and broader national social policy. It provides funding to a number of local authorities, community and voluntary organisations to support local programmes that educate the public on issues such as immigration, integration and anti-racism. This Unit has also provided funding to key NGOs such as Show Racism the Red Card, who have run a creative competition for school children in the past number of years. Funding is also provided to the Holocaust Educational Trust Ireland for educational initiatives that teach children the dangers of racism and the importance of integration and tolerance. The Civil Justice and Equality Policy Unit is also the National Liaison point for international reporting on racism to the United Nations,

Council of Europe, and is represented on the European Union's High Level Working Group on Combatting Racism and Xenophobia.

203. The Government of Ireland is committed to promoting policies which integrate minority ethnic groups in Ireland, and which promote social inclusion, equality, diversity and the participation of immigrants in the economic, social, political and cultural life of their communities. A significant level of activity is taking place in pursuit of this commitment.

204. Ireland is currently operating under a comprehensive Migrant Integration Strategy, which was launched in February of 2017. This is a Whole-of-Government Strategy. At its heart is the vision that migrants are facilitated to play a full role in Irish society, that integration is a core principle of Irish life, and that Irish society and institutions work together to promote integration. The Strategy will be implemented over four years through a series of initiatives across all branches of Government. Focus areas include access to citizenship and public services; employment and education; political participation and the promotion of intercultural awareness. Government Departments, agencies, cities and local communities all have their part to play in delivering on the commitments in the Strategy. The National Strategy is also the main vehicle to promote intercultural awareness and to combat racism and xenophobia. It includes an action to review the current legislation on racially motivated crime with a view to strengthening the law. It also intends to address the issue of under-reporting of racially motivated crime.

205. From 2017-2019 the Civil Justice and Equality Policy Unit allocated over €4.5 million to national and community projects to support integration over three to four years with Irish Government funding. Projects are aimed at promoting integration, combating racism and xenophobia, and increasing mutual understanding between migrants and their host communities. In addition, €12.3m from EU (Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund & European Social Fund) funding has been allocated to these measures over the period 2017-2022. Government Departments and agencies can also finance integration activities from their own resources.

206. The Civil Justice and Equality Policy Unit also redeveloped its website in 2018 to be more user friendly and to focus more on raising public awareness about government integration policy, the funding available for integration projects and highlight integration and anti-racism activities taking place across the State. This website provides migrants with access to information on a wide range of relevant topics including developments in the area of integration/diversity management, practical information for new migrants and advice on dealing with racist incidents or racial discrimination.

Education Provision for Migrant Children

207. The education system in Ireland operates on an inclusive basis in keeping with our obligations under the Constitution, national and international law. Legislation relevant to the education sector such as the Education Act 1998, the Education Welfare Act 2000 and the Education for Persons with Special Education Needs Act 2004 clearly set out principles of equality. Additional supports, where required, are allocated on the basis of identified individual educational need. All immigrant children, including children of asylum seekers, refugees, migrant workers and unaccompanied minors can access pre-school, first and second level education in a manner similar to Irish nationals, until they have reached the age of 18 years. Boys and girls can access the education system on the same basis.

208. The Education and Training Boards nationally provide ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) training for migrant and new community members in Ireland. This programme is available for unemployed migrants and asylum seekers and priority is given to those in need of basic English language skills to a level of functional competency. SOLAS and ETBI published its report on English language provision and language assessment for low-skilled and unemployed migrants in ETB provision at levels 1-3: Recommendations for good practice, in March 2018. This was developed following a comprehensive stakeholder consultation and research process and highlights existing good practice in ESOL and the strong commitment across ETBs to provide flexible and responsive learning options to migrants whose first language is not English. The report focusses on low-skilled and unemployed migrants, and together with its recommendations, provides a solid foundation to

inform decision making on ESOL provision at levels 1-3 on the National Framework of Qualifications.

National Intercultural Health Strategy

209. The HSE National Intercultural Health Strategy 2007 – 2012 provided a framework within which the health and care needs of people from diverse cultures and ethnic backgrounds should be addressed, with staff supported in delivering responsive, culturally competent services. A second HSE Intercultural Health Strategy 2018-2023 was launched in January 2019. This second strategy will provide a framework within which the health and care needs of service users from diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds such as refugees, Roma, migrants, foreign students and asylum seekers are addressed.

210. A comprehensive whole of government strategy, “Healthy Ireland”, was launched in 2013 which aims to improve the health and well-being of all people in Ireland and contains a strong commitment to getting better health outcomes for those people from disadvantaged communities. It aims to do this by improving cross-government and inter-agency working and by working in partnership with key stakeholders, and by improving the monitoring of health outcomes. A programme of more detailed work to achieve this is now in the process of being developed.

211. Implementation of the recommendations of the strategy took place on a phased basis over a five-year time frame. Priorities that have been addressed are translation of information, work around developing standardised models of interpretation and staff learning and support. Within these areas, the approach taken is one of mainstreaming, where actions are aimed at enhancing access for all service users on an equal basis.

3. General information regarding the human rights situation of persons belonging to specific vulnerable groups in the population

Persons with disabilities

212. There have been significant developments in the disability sector in Ireland, informed by the recommendations of the report of the Commission on the Status of People with Disabilities.

213. In June 2000, the Government launched the mainstreaming initiative which required public bodies, where possible, to integrate services as far as possible for people with disabilities with those for other citizens.

214. The National Disability Authority (NDA) was established by statute in June 2000 to develop and monitor standards in services for people with disabilities and to advise on disability policy and practice. The NDA is funded by the Government.

215. The Comhairle Act 2000 established Comhairle as a mainstream information provider funded by the then Department of Social and Family Affairs. The agency has a statutory commitment to assist and support people, particularly those with disabilities, in identifying and understanding their needs and options and in accessing their entitlements to social services. The Citizens Information Act 2007 amended the Comhairle Act 2000 to change the name of Comhairle to the Citizens’ Information Board. The Social Welfare (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2008 further extended the remit of the Citizens’ Information Board to include the Money Advice and Budgeting Service. The total funding provided to the Citizens’ Information Board was €54,775 million in 2018.

216. In 2015 the Department of Justice and Equality, with the assistance of the National Disability Authority (NDA), commenced a broad and comprehensive consultation process with a view to the development of a new National Disability Inclusion Strategy. Following the conclusion of the final phase, the Department of Justice and Equality prepared a new Disability Inclusion Strategy for the period 2017 – 2021. The Strategy was launched on 14 July 2017. Implementation of the Strategy is being overseen by a steering group, which comprises representatives of the key government departments and agencies and of disability stakeholders. The steering group is supported by independent analysis and advice from the NDA and by periodic review and oversight by the Cabinet Committee on Social Policy as

appropriate. Government Departments are tasked with progressing the advancement and monitoring of relevant actions under the Strategy at local level through their Departmental Consultative Committees.

217. The key elements of the Strategy are:

- (a) The Disability Act, 2005;
- (b) The Citizens Information Act 2007, which equips the Citizens' Information Board (formerly Comhairle) to provide a personal advocacy service for people with disabilities;
- (c) The Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act, 2004;
- (d) Sectoral plans prepared by six Government Departments.

218. The Disability Act 2005 is a cross-cutting piece of legislation and is a positive action measure designed to support the provision of disability-specific services to people with disabilities and to improve access to mainstream public services for people with disabilities. In drafting this legislation, the Government facilitated extensive consultation nationally. Compliance with the Disability Act is a statutory requirement for all Government Departments.

219. The Disability Act 2005 puts on a statutory footing a wide variety of positive action measures to improve the position of persons with disabilities in Irish society including:

- a) An independent assessment of individual health service needs (and education where appropriate) and a related Service Statement outlining services to be provided with access to independent complaints, appeals and enforcement;
- b) A duty to make public buildings and services accessible, a requirement for six key Government Departments to publish sectoral service delivery plans and a related complaints mechanism with access to the Ombudsman;
- c) An obligation on public bodies to be proactive in employing persons with disabilities. Part 5 of the Act provides for a statutory target, currently set at 3%, for the recruitment and employment of people with disabilities in the public sector. Public bodies are required to submit annual reports to monitoring committees on their compliance with the target;
- d) Restriction in the use of genetic testing information for employment and insurance purposes; and
- e) The establishment of a Centre of Excellence in Universal Design (CEUD). The CEUD was established in the NDA in early 2007 under Part 6 of the Act. 'Universal design' refers to the design and composition of an environment so that it can be accessed, understood and used to the greatest extent possible by people regardless of their age, size or disability. The mission of the CEUD is to promote the development of that environment.

220. A significant number of sections of the Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs (EPSEN) Act have been commenced, principally those establishing the National Council for Special Education (NCSE) and those promoting an inclusive approach to the education of children with special educational needs. The remaining sections of the Act have yet to be commenced. The Government will develop a plan to implement the objectives of the EPSEN Act so as to deliver improved educational outcomes for students with special needs.

221. Ireland ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities on 20 March 2018. The Convention came into force for Ireland on 19 April 2018. Ongoing progress and implementation will be internally monitored through the structures in place to support the implementation of the National Disability Inclusion Strategy (NDIS). The ongoing implementation of Ireland's National Disability Strategy in many respects comprehends many of the provisions of the Convention.

222. The *Assisted Decision-Making (Capacity) Act 2015* provides a modern statutory framework to support decision-making by adults with capacity difficulties. The Act was signed into law on 30 December 2015. Work is underway to put in place as soon as possible

the new administrative processes and support measures that must be established before the substantive provisions of the Act can be brought into operation.

Members of the Traveller Community

223. As defined in the *Equal Status Act 2000*, “Traveller community” means... “the community of people who are commonly called Travellers and who are identified (both by themselves and others) as people with a shared history, culture and traditions including, historically, a nomadic way of life on the island of Ireland.”

224. On 1 March 2017, the Taoiseach informed Dáil Eireann of the Government’s decision to recognise Travellers as an ethnic minority. The Government has recognised the special position of Ireland’s Traveller community in a range of legislative, administrative and institutional provisions. In addition to equality legislation, these include laws to provide for Traveller accommodation by local authorities and specific Traveller strategies, developed with the input of Traveller organisations, in relation to Health, Education and Accommodation. Travellers in Ireland have the same civil and political rights as other citizens under the Constitution. The key anti-discrimination measures, the *Prohibition of Incitement to Hatred Act 1989*, the *Unfair Dismissals Acts 1977*, the *Employment Equality Acts 1998 – 2015* and the *Equal Status Acts 2000 – 2018* specifically identify Travellers by name as a protected group. The *Equality Act 2004*, which transposed the EU Racial Equality Directive, applied all the protections of that Directive across all of the nine grounds contained in the legislation, including the Traveller community ground. All the protections afforded to ethnic minorities in EU directives and international conventions apply to Travellers because the Irish legislation giving effect to those international instruments explicitly protects Travellers.

225. The Government is committed to challenging discrimination against Travellers and has defined membership of the Traveller community as a separate ground on which it is unlawful to discriminate under equality legislation. This was not meant to provide a lesser level of protection to Travellers compared to that afforded to members of ethnic minorities. On the contrary, the separate identification of Travellers in equality legislation guarantees that they are explicitly protected.

226. The *National Traveller and Roma Inclusion Strategy* (NTRIS) was launched in June 2017. It contains 149 actions, grouped under ten themes: cultural identity; education; employment and the Traveller economy, children and youth, health, gender equality, anti-discrimination and equality; accommodation; Traveller and Roma communities and Public Services.

227. A steering group meets on a quarterly basis to consider the progress being made on the actions. Four sub-committees have been established to focus on priority actions, namely the retention of Traveller and Roma children in education; mediation to end feuding in the Traveller community; development of an ethnic identifier for equality purposes; and development of employment proposals to counteract the high unemployment rate among these communities.

228. Levels of education have been increasing over time for both Travellers and non-Travellers. While the majority of non-Travellers aged 25 to 34 have completed second level education (86%), less than one in ten Travellers in this age group have done so (9%). This suggests that Travellers benefited less from the general improvement in education since the 1960s.

229. Key education-related actions proposed in the National Strategy include:

- (a) Traveller and Roma should be supported in key areas including education, employment and economic development;
- (b) The development of education resources on Traveller and Roma culture and history for use in primary, post primary and adult education settings;
- (c) Improved access, participation and outcomes for Travellers and Roma in education to achieve outcomes that are equal to those for the majority population;

(d) SOLAS and ETBs to consider the needs of disadvantaged groups including Travellers and Roma in the planning of FET provision;

(e) Strengthening of cooperation between formal education and non-formal learning sectors to address the high rate of early school-leaving in the Traveller and Roma communities;

(f) A positive culture of respect and protection for the cultural identity of Travellers and Roma across the education system.

230. The *Housing (Traveller Accommodation) Act 1998* is the principal statutory basis for the provision of Traveller accommodation in Ireland. The Act requires each local authority, following a consultation process with all relevant stakeholders, to prepare, adopt and implement 5 year rolling Traveller Accommodation Programmes to meet the existing and projected accommodation needs of Travellers in their areas. The Programmes have been operating since 2000 with the current Programmes adopted in 2014 and running until the end of 2018. Preparations are underway for the next Programme which will run from 2019-2024.

231. In adopting Programmes, local authorities are required to identify the accommodation needs of Travellers over the period of the programme across a range of accommodation options including standard and group housing, permanent residential sites for caravans and transient sites. To identify need, they must ensure that they consult widely with all stakeholders, including the Traveller community, Traveller representative groups, relevant public bodies and the general public. The Programmes must contain annual targets which are monitored by the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government on an ongoing basis. These Programmes provide a road map for local authority investment priorities over the period of the Programme and form the basis for the allocation of funding from the Department of Housing, Planning, and Local Government.

232. The Act also provides for the establishment on a statutory basis of the National Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee (NTACC). The Committee comprises representatives of statutory authorities dealing with the provision of Traveller accommodation and National Traveller organisations. The main function of the Committee is to advise the Minister for Housing, Planning and Local Government on matters relating to Traveller accommodation nationally. In addition, local authorities are also required to ensure that Local Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committees (LTACCs) are in place. The role of the LTACC is to advise on local matters relating to Traveller accommodation and to liaise between the Traveller community and the local authority on accommodation issues. Membership consists of Travellers and Traveller representative groups, elected members of the local authority and local authority officials.

233. Accommodation for Travellers is provided across a range of options and it is open to Travellers to opt for any form of accommodation. These include standard local authority housing, which is financed from the Department's capital allocations for social housing, private rented accommodation or private housing assisted by local authorities or voluntary organisations and Traveller-specific accommodation which receives 100% capital funding from the Department. Traveller-specific accommodation includes group housing schemes and halting sites.

234. Significant funding has been made available for the provision of Traveller-specific accommodation over the past 10 years. In that period, €156.8m has been made available to local authorities for the delivery of Traveller accommodation however, only 67% of that funding was drawn down by local authorities. It has become apparent that the delivery of Traveller accommodation in many local authorities has become challenging in recent years to the extent that available funding is not being fully expended.

235. Following on from a commitment in "*Rebuilding Ireland*", the *Government's Action Plan on Housing and Homelessness*, a review of capital and current funding for Traveller Accommodation Programmes (TAPs) for the period 2000 to 2017 was undertaken. The review took account of targets contained in the housing authority TAPs and actual units delivered. Where targets had not been met, the review identified issues constraining the implementation and management of the TAPs. On foot of this review the National Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee recommended that an independent expert review

group be established to review the existing legislation around the provision of the Traveller Accommodation including the *Housing (Traveller Accommodation) Act 1998* and all other legislation that impacts on the delivery of Traveller accommodation.

236. The Independent Expert Review Group was established in September 2018, comprising three members with expertise in the areas of social policy, law and planning with a mandate to examine the effectiveness, implementation and operation of legislation and to put forward proposals to improve delivery. The Expert Group's report was completed in July 2019 and its recommendations will be considered by the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government with a view to improving the delivery of traveller accommodation nationally and ensuring that full use is made of the increasing level of funding available for investment in Traveller accommodation.

237. Traveller health and the provision of health services for Travellers is a priority for the Department of Health in partnership with the Health Service Executive, and considerable work has been undertaken in this area. A wide range of specific Traveller dedicated health services, such as Traveller Health Units and Primary Health Care for Travellers Projects, have been developed.

238. A key element of the approach taken to provide targeted health services to Travellers was the development of a model for Traveller participation in the development of health services. This was achieved through the Primary Healthcare for Travellers Projects which play a key role in the delivery of health services to Travellers. The Projects are peer led initiatives and play an invaluable role in delivering measures aimed at improving the health status of the Traveller community.

239. Travellers, mostly Traveller women, are recruited from the Traveller community and trained to work as Community Health Workers in the Projects. This allows primary health care to be developed based on the Traveller community's own values and perceptions so that positive, long term outcomes can be achieved by enabling individuals to improve their health through informed health care, self-help and mutual aid. The Projects are credited with bringing real and substantial benefits to the Traveller communities where they are located.

240. A key health action in NTRIS is #73, to develop and implement a detailed action plan to address the health needs of Travellers, using a social determinants approach. The lead role in developing the action plan rests with the HSE, which is committed to completing the action plan in consultation with all stakeholders by quarter 4, 2019.

International Protection System

241. Ireland's international protection system is based on a number of key principles:

(a) Meeting our obligations under international law, including the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees;

(b) Ensuring that persons who are found, after a fair and efficient determination process, not to be in need of protection are returned to their countries of origin as quickly as this can be arranged;

(c) Ensuring that robust systems are in place to prevent abuse in the protection system by persons who are entering the State for purposes other than seeking protection from persecution.

242. The processing of international protection applications takes place within a well-defined national and international (1951 Refugee Convention, EU Directives and Regulations) legal framework which must be complied with. Accordingly, all applications for international protection status are examined in accordance with the statutory requirements set out in the International Protection Act, 2015. Where it is established that a well-founded fear of persecution exists or a real risk of suffering serious harm if returned to their country of origin, the applicant will be granted refugee status, or subsidiary protection status, as appropriate.

243. The *International Protection Act 2015* was commenced in full on 31 December 2016. The Act introduced a single procedure for international protection applicants, replacing the *Refugee Act 1996*. The Act simplifies and streamlines existing international protection

arrangements in Ireland. The Act introduced a single application procedure, which enables all grounds for examining and deciding on all applications for international protection (refugee status and subsidiary protection) or permission to remain in the State for other humanitarian reasons to be determined in one process, rather than sequentially as before.

244. The *International Protection Act 2015* put in place two offices, which make recommendations to the Minister for Justice and Equality on whether international protection status should be granted. These offices are:

- (a) The International Protection Office to deal with applications at first instance;
- (b) The International Protection Appeals Tribunal, an independent statutory body that reviews appeals against negative recommendations of the International Protection Office.

245. Based on the recommendation of the International Protection Office or the International Protection Appeals Tribunal, the Minister for Justice and Equality decides whether to give a refugee declaration; a subsidiary protection declaration; or refuse the application.

246. In 2017 the International Protection Office put the new procedures in place, including transitional arrangements. The Chief International Protection Officer accorded priority to certain classes of applications under Section 73 of the *International Protection Act 2015*, which established a two-stream system to prioritise the scheduling of interviews for applications on the basis of the age of applicants, the likelihood that the application is well founded, and health aspects.

247. The scope of the Act is wide-ranging and, as well as dealing with first instance decisions and appeals, also covers the right to legal representation and interpretation and provides specifically for a direct contribution to be made by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to the international protection determination process.

248. The Legal Aid Board operates a specialised service which provides independent, confidential legal advice and assistance at all stages of the international protection process to persons applying for asylum in Ireland. Applicants may register with the Board at any stage of the international protection process – initial application, appeal stage and, post-appeal, in relation to matters such as applications for humanitarian permission to remain.

249. The number of asylum applications received for each year since 2003 are shown below. Application volumes dropped year on year since 2002 when volumes peaked at 11,634, reaching a low of 946 in 2013, before increasing thereafter. From 2014 the number of applications received began to increase again. Some 324 applications received during 2018 and some 524 received in 2017 were from protection applicants transferred to Ireland under the EU Relocation Decisions. When EU relocation cases are excluded, there was an increase of just over 39% in 2018 when compared to 2017.

2003	7,900	2008	3,866	2013	946
2004	4,766	2009	2,689	2014	1,444
2005	4,323	2010	1,939	2015	3,276
2006	4,314	2011	1,290	2016	2,244
2007	3,985	2012	956		

Applications received for International Protection

	<i>Single procedure, so includes refugee status and subsidiary protection status claims, and separately, permission to remain</i>
2017	2,926
2018	3,673
2019 (to end July)	2,680

250. In terms of reception conditions of international protection applicants, the Irish Supreme Court ruled in May 2017 where there is no temporal limit on the processing of international protection applications, an absolute ban for asylum seekers to access the labour market was unconstitutional. Following this ruling, the Government established an Inter-Departmental Taskforce in July 2017 with a mandate to examine the implications of the judgment and to propose solutions. The Government decided that the State exercise its discretion to participate in the Directive 2013/33/EU on reception conditions under Protocol 21 of the Treaty of Lisbon on 22 November 2017. Since June 2018, asylum seekers who have been in the system for longer than nine months, and are still awaiting their first instance decision, are eligible to apply for a letter of permission to work in Ireland by the Labour Market Access unit in the Department of Justice and Equality. There is no fee or charge for applying. This permission to work is for six months, and is renewable until a final decision on their international protection claim is given. As of 5th June 2019, 2,583 International Protection applicants have been granted a Labour Market Access Permission from a total of 3,814 applications. 1,913 applicants who reside in RIA Accommodation centres have received a Labour Market Access Permission.

251. The Irish Refugee Protection Programme (IRPP) was established by Government Decision on 10 September 2015 as a direct response to the humanitarian crisis that developed in Southern Europe because of mass migration from areas of conflict in the Middle East and Africa. Under this programme, the Government pledged to accept up to 4,000 persons into the State primarily under two European Union Council Decisions on Relocation and an expanded commitment to the UNHCR Resettlement Programme. Relocations did not take place from Italy as An Garda Síochána did not receive permission from Italian Authorities to conduct security screening in Italy. The IRPP has utilised other mechanisms to meet the commitment:

(a) Relocation Strand: Ireland's EU relocation programme concluded in March 2018. Overall, 1,022 people, including 6 unaccompanied minors, arrived safely from Greece. Ireland committed to accept 1,040 programme refugees by the end of 2017 under the Resettlement strand of the programme. . Approximately 255 of this group formed part of the 2018/19 pledge to the EU, as it was not possible to resettle these refugees in 2017. The Minister pledged to take 1,200 programme refugees from Lebanon between 2018 (255 as per above plus 345) and 2019 (600), bringing the total Resettlement commitment under the IRPP to 1,985. To date, 1,383 people have arrived under the Resettlement strand of the programme;

(b) The balance of the 4,000 is being met through a variety of different mechanisms. As part of the IRPP, the Minister launched the IRPP Humanitarian Admission Programme 2 (IHAP). Operating under discretionary Ministerial powers, IHAP provides an opportunity for Irish citizens and people with Convention Refugee status, Subsidiary Protection status, and Programme Refugee status, who have immediate eligible family members from the top ten major source countries of refugees, to propose to the Minister for these family members to join them in Ireland. Given the volume of proposals received to date, it is expected that those now received will be sufficient to enable 740 places under the Programme to be filled;

(c) In support of those EU countries most affected by migration in the Mediterranean, Ireland agreed to accept 58 people from Sicily and Malta in 2018 from search and rescue missions in the Mediterranean. 22 adults and 4 unaccompanied minors have

arrived in the country from Malta and 32 adults have arrived from Sicily. The Minister has also agreed to accept a further 5 unaccompanied minors from Malta in 2019 as part of burden sharing arrangements with the EU. On foot of requests from the European Commission, Ireland will take two persons from each vessel docking in the Mediterranean subject to a maximum of 100 persons in total for the remainder of 2019;

(d) A total of 41 unaccompanied minors arrived in the State from the Calais Special Project. This project has now concluded. Of those 41 individuals, 3 were reunited with family in Ireland and Tusla assumed responsibility for the care of the remaining 38. In December 2018 the Minister for Justice and Equality along with the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs agreed to take 36 additional unaccompanied minors from Greece in 2019.

252. At the end of June 2019, there were 6,050 persons living in accommodation centres provided by the Reception and Integration Agency. A further 988 persons are currently accommodated in emergency accommodation in hotels and guesthouses. Not all of these people were awaiting decisions on their applications for international protection. Almost 700 have been granted some form of status, but they continue to live in State-provided accommodation while they look for private accommodation. 51 RIA residents who are living in Direct Provision over 5 years, as of end May 2019, have deportation orders requiring that they remove themselves from the State. The Report of the Working Group on improvements to the protection process, including direct provision and supports to asylum seekers, had a significant impact, as improvements to accommodation centres continue to be made. The average length of time spent in State-provided accommodation centres has gone down from 38 months in 2015 to 24 months at the end of 2018.

253. At the end of May 2019, the number of cases awaiting processing by the International Protection Office was 5,729. Some 1,200 (est.) of these are not cooperating with the protection process. Under the transitional measures of the 2015 Act, the International Protection Office was required to take responsibility for some 3,500 cases, which had not been finalised by the former Office of the Refugee Applications Commissioner or the Refugee Appeals Tribunal, with a further 500 cases transitioned afterwards. This added significantly to the caseload of the International Protection Office. These processing challenges are being addressed by deploying increased resources and a continual assessment of procedures to maximise quality outputs. It should be noted that further cases may be added into this category if legacy cases previously closed through the Dublin process time out and are reactivated or if a case is reopened following judicial review proceedings.

254. Under the single application procedure, an applicant makes one application and has all grounds for seeking international protection (refugee status and subsidiary protection status) and to be permitted to remain in the State on humanitarian grounds examined and determined in one process. The processing of such cases is complex and extremely resource intensive and must be done in strict compliance with the Constitution, together with relevant international treaties, such as the European Convention on Human Rights.

255. Decisions to Grant or Refuse Refugee Status at first instance and Appeal Stage (2013–2018):

Year	<i>Decisions to Grant Refugee Status</i>	<i>Decisions to Refuse Refugee Status</i>	<i>Decision to Grant Subsidiary Protection</i>	<i>Decision to Refuse Subsidiary Protection</i>	<i>Total Decisions</i>	<i>Grant Rate</i>
2013	192	766	-	-	958	20.04%
2014	207	458	262	731	1658	28.28%
2015	325	732	228	634	1919	28.82%
2016	579	1099	146	502	2326	31.16%
2017*	669	74	98	327	1168	34.33%
2018*	818	490	223	55	1586	34.36%

* The figures include decisions made under the Refugee Act, Subsidiary Protection Regulations and the International Protection Act.

Note: Figures in respect of those granted or refused refugee status in any given year do not necessarily relate to those who applied in that year.

Note: 2017 and 2018 figures are not directly comparable due to the comprehensive transitional arrangements necessitated following the commencement of the International Protection Act 2015 on 31 December 2016.

Annexes

Statistical annexes

Table 1

Recorded crime incidents¹ classified by offence group, annualised² total to Q2 2017 and 2018

Annualised total to Q2

	ICCSq offence group		<i>Change</i>	<i>Change</i>
	<i>2017</i>	<i>2018</i>		
Homicide offences	77	77	0	0.0
Sexual offences	2,675	2,947	+272	+10.2
Attempts or threats to murder, assaults, harassments and related offences	17,728	19,200	+1,472	+8.3
Dangerous or negligent acts	8,182	8,284	+102	+1.2
Kidnapping and related offences	127	104	-23	-18.1
Robbery, extortion and hijacking offences	2,032	2,339	+307	+15.1
Burglary and related offences	18,509	18,368	-141	-0.8
Theft and related Offences	66,901	68,248	+1,347	+2.0
Fraud, deception and related offences	5,476	5,339	-138	-2.5
Controlled drug offences	16,771	17,375	+604	+3.6
Weapons and explosives offences	2,194	2,428	+234	+10.7
Damage to property and to the environment	22,875	22,184	-691	-3.0
Public order and other social code offences	30,042	31,320	+1,278	+4.3
Offences against Government, justice procedures and organisation of crime	12,565	14,205	+1,640	+13.1

¹ These statistics are categorised as Under Reservation. This categorisation indicates that the quality of these statistics do not meet the standards required of official statistics published by CSO.

² The annualised figure for a given quarter is the total number of crimes recorded in the 12 months prior to end of that quarter.

Table 2 –*Indicators of income inequality by year*

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Gini coefficient (%)	31.7	30.7	29.3	31.6	31.1	31.8	32.0	32.0	30.8	30.6
At risk of poverty threshold	€	€	€	€	€	€	€	€	€	€
60% of median income	11,890	12,455	12,064	11,155	10,889	10,966	10,957	11,318	12,000	12,358

Table 3*Share of (household) consumption expenditures on food, housing, health and education*

	<i>Food</i>	<i>Housing</i>	<i>Health</i>
<i>Sex of Household Reference Person</i>			
Male	14.7	19.3	2.2
Female	14.7	20.2	2.2
<i>Age Category of Household Reference Person</i>			
Under 25 years	14.2	32.3	1.2
25 to 34 years	13.5	25.7	1.4
35 to 44 years	13.8	24.2	1.7
45 to 54 years	14.3	18.0	1.9
55 to 64 years	15.0	14.1	2.8
65 years & over	17.9	13.3	3.8
<i>Location</i>			
Urban	14.4	21.6	2.1
Rural	15.5	14.9	2.4
<i>Gross Household Income Decile</i>			
1st Decile	17.8	22.7	2.1
2nd Decile	17.8	23.0	2.0
3rd Decile	18.7	19.5	2.7
4th Decile	17.1	20.8	2.2
5th Decile	16.0	21.5	2.1
6th Decile	15.5	18.7	2.1
7th Decile	15.1	19.0	2.2
8th Decile	14.5	18.2	2.3
9th Decile	13.1	19.2	2.4
10th Decile	11.7	19.2	2.0
<i>Region</i>			
Border	15.6	17.3	1.9
Dublin	13.8	23.8	2.2
Mid East	14.0	19.8	2.2
Mid West	14.7	17.1	2.3
Midlands	15.9	15.8	2.1
South East	16.1	16.1	2.2
South West	15.5	17.8	2.1

West	14.9	18.2	2.7
<i>Tenure status</i>			
Owned outright	16.7	10.2	3.1
Owned with mortgage	13.1	22.7	1.9
Rented from local authority	20.1	19.0	1.5
Rented from private owner	13.9	28.3	1.6
Rent free	19.4	10.8	2.2
<i>Livelihood Status of Reference Person</i>			
Self employed	14.4	17.5	2.2
Employee	13.7	21.0	1.9
Unemployed	17.8	23.3	1.5
Retired	16.9	13.7	4.0
Other	17.6	20.5	1.9
<i>Household Composition</i>			
1 adult	13.3	24.7	2.4
1 adult with children	16.2	27.1	1.7
2 adults	15.0	17.4	2.8
2 adults with 1-3 children	13.8	23.5	1.7
3 + adults	15.0	17.4	2.8
Other households with children	15.8	19.9	1.7
<i>Household Size</i>			
1 Person	13.3	24.7	2.4
2 Persons	15.0	17.7	2.8
3 Persons	14.8	19.4	2.2
4 Persons	14.6	19.9	1.9
5 Persons	14.9	19.1	1.7
6 + Persons	15.7	18.8	1.8
<i>State</i>	14.7	19.6	2.2

Table 4

Population, estimated number of households and estimated number of persons per house

<i>Total population</i>	Q3 16	Q4 16	Q1 17	Q2 17	Q3 17	Q4 17	Q1 18	Q2 18
<i>Total population (thousands)</i>	4,757.6	4,772.5	4,784.4	4,792.5	4,805.9	4,826.4	4,830.4	4,857.0
<i>Number of households (thousands)</i>	1,754.7	1,752.9	1,751.8	1,764.5	1,813.2	1,830.2	1,829.6	1,846.1
<i>Average number of persons per household</i>	2.71	2.72	2.73	2.72	2.65	2.64	2.64	2.63

Source: Labour Force Survey (LFS), Central Statistics Office, Ireland. Reference period: q1=Jan-Mar, q2=Apr-Jun, q3=Jul-Sep, q4=Oct-Dec.

Note: The average grossing factor of all members of a household is used to calculate the number of households. The number of households should be treated as indicative only.

Note: A new Labour Force Survey (LFS) replaced the Quarterly National Household Survey (QNHS) in Q3 2017 and, as a result, care should be taken when comparing data from before and after this period.

Table 5
**Estimated adult members of family units classified by composition of family unit, ILO
 Economic Status and sex**

	Q4 16	Q1 17	Q2 17	Q3 17	Q4 17	Q1 18	Q2 18
<i>Family unit type/ILO Economic Status/Sex</i>							
Couple without children							
<i>In employment</i>							
Male	209.4	204.1	208.4	215.9	226.9	226.8	228.9
Female	179.2	178.4	184.2	184.8	197.8	190.2	192.1
Total	388.6	382.5	392.6	400.7	424.7	416.9	421.0
<i>Unemployed</i>							
Male	9.2	11.0	7.7	9.7	9.7	8.5	[7.6]
Female	9.3	8.3	[7.5]	[8.6]	9.3	10.6	8.9
Total	18.5	19.2	15.2	18.4	19.0	19.0	16.5
<i>Not in the labour force</i>							
Male	179.4	182.8	183.1	179.0	181.9	180.0	183.4
Female	201.1	203.7	205.9	213.1	214.9	215.7	218.0
Total	380.5	386.5	389.0	392.1	396.7	395.8	401.4
Total							
Male	397.9	397.8	399.2	404.6	418.6	415.3	419.8
Female	389.5	390.4	397.6	406.5	421.9	416.5	419.1
Total	7787.5	788.2	796.8	811.1	840.5	831.8	838.9
Couple with children							
<i>In employment</i>							
Male	573.8	573.6	573.4	565.3	560.0	568.7	568.8
Female	420.1	428.4	423.3	427.8	427.8	432.2	431.1
Total	993.9	1,002.0	996.7	993.1	987.8	1,000.9	999.9
<i>Unemployed</i>							
Male	26.3	28.7	27.4	24.9	24.3	19.8	20.4
Female	20.7	21.3	14.2	19.4	16.6	16.4	16.9
Total	47.0	50.0	41.6	44.4	40.8	36.2	37.2
<i>Not in the labour force</i>							
Male	90.1	86.4	88.9	83.9	80.9	80.5	81.5
Female	231.5	229.1	231.0	206.6	206.4	208.0	200.3
Total	321.6	315.5	319.9	290.5	287.2	288.6	281.7
Male	690.2	688.6	689.7	674.2	665.2	669.1	670.6
Female	672.2	678.9	668.5	653.8	650.7	656.6	648.3
Total	1,362.4	1,367.5	1,358.2	1,328.0	1,315.8	1,325.7	1,318.9
Lone parent							
<i>In employment</i>							
Male	11.1	13.3	14.5	20.5	19.8	20.7	24.4
Female	95.2	91.9	96.9	102.4	102.8	102.4	107.3
Total	106.3	105.2	111.4	123.0	122.6	123.0	131.7
<i>Unemployed</i>							
Male	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Female	13.3	14.2	13.2	11.7	12.1	9.1	10.6
Total	14.8	15.4	14.5	14.0	13.4	12.0	11.7
<i>Not in the labour force</i>							
Male	10.6	10.3	10.6	12.8	9.2	9.6	9.7
Female	87.8	86.1	87.9	80.6	78.9	75.6	78.0
Total	98.5	96.5	98.5	93.5	88.1	85.2	87.7

Total							
Male	23.3	24.8	26.3	35.7	30.3	33.2	35.1
Female	196.3	192.3	198.0	194.8	193.8	187.1	195.9
Total	219.6	217.1	224.3	230.4	224.0	220.2	231.0
All family units							
<i>In employment</i>							
Male	794.2	790.9	796.3	801.8	806.7	816.2	822.0
Female	694.5	698.8	704.5	715.0	728.4	724.7	730.6
Total	1,488.8	1,489.7	1,500.7	1,516.8	1,535.1	1,540.9	1,552.6
<i>Unemployed</i>							
Male	37.0	40.8	36.4	37.0	35.3	31.2	29.0
Female	43.3	43.8	34.9	39.7	37.9	36.1	36.4
Total	80.2	84.7	71.3	76.7	73.2	67.3	65.4
<i>Not in the labour force</i>							
Male	280.2	279.5	282.7	275.7	271.9	270.2	274.5
Female	520.3	519.0	524.7	500.4	500.1	499.4	496.3
Total	800.5	798.5	807.4	776.0	772.1	769.5	770.8
Total							
Male	1,111.4	1,111.2	1,115.3	1,114.5	1,114.0	1,117.6	1,125.6
Female	1,258.1	1,261.6	1,264.1	1,255.1	1,266.4	1,260.2	1,263.3
Total	2,369.5	2,372.8	2,379.4	2,369.5	2,380.4	2,377.7	2,388.8

Source: Labour Force Survey (LFS), Central Statistics Office, Ireland.

Note: For the purpose of this table, an adult is either a lone parent or a member of a couple. Never married persons (regardless of age), living with a parent or parents are defined as children provided those persons are themselves not part of a separate family unit. In addition, users should note that the adjustment factors assigned to each spouse within a family unit may differ.

Note: A new Labour Force Survey (LFS) replaced the Quarterly National Household Survey (QNHS) in Q3 2017 and, as a result, care should be taken when comparing data from before and after this period.

* Estimates for numbers of persons or averages where there are less than 30 persons in a cell are not produced as estimates are too small to be considered reliable.

Parentheses [] indicate where there are 30-50 persons in a cell, estimates are considered to have a wider margin of error and should be treated with caution.

Reference period: q1=Jan-Mar, q2=Apr-Jun, q3=Jul-Sep, q4=Oct-Dec.

Table 6
Persons aged 18-64 classified by ILO Economic Status, age, highest level of educational attainment and sex

Age group/Highest education level attained/Sex/IL O Economic Status	Q4 16	Q1 17	Q2 17	Q3 17	Q4 17	Q1 18	Q2 18
Persons aged 18-24							
Early leavers from education and training aged 18-24							
Male							
In employment	50.1	39.2	39.7	30.0	31.3	23.1	33.9
Unemployed	21.6	25.0	30.1	16.6	21.1	14.6	19.4
Not in the labour force	28.2	35.8	30.3	53.4	47.6	62.2	46.6
Female							
In employment	29.3	23.0	23.5	[21.8]	[14.2]	[30.5]	[16.3]
Unemployed	24.5	10.2	12.4	[13.8]	[22.9]	[6.8]	[14.2]

HRI/CORE/IRL/2019

Not in the labour force	46.2	66.8	64.0	[64.4]	[62.9]	[62.7]	[69.5]
All persons							
In employment	42.7	33.4	33.7	26.6	25.4	26.5	28.0
Unemployed	22.7	19.7	23.5	15.4	21.7	11.1	17.7
Not in the labour force	34.6	46.9	42.8	58.0	52.9	62.5	54.3
Other persons aged 18-24							
Male							
In employment	56.1	53.6	54.5	56.6	56.0	54.7	56.5
Unemployed	10.8	8.0	10.9	11.0	7.9	7.2	9.7
Not in the labour force	33.1	38.4	34.6	32.4	36.1	38.1	33.8
Female							
In employment	59.6	56.0	57.2	53.9	54.8	51.1	55.7
Unemployed	6.8	6.8	8.0	8.7	4.8	6.1	8.1
Not in the labour force	33.6	37.2	34.8	37.5	40.4	42.8	36.2
All persons							
In employment	57.8	54.8	55.9	55.3	55.4	53.0	56.1
Unemployed	8.8	7.4	9.4	9.8	6.4	6.7	8.9
Not in the labour force	33.3	37.8	34.7	34.9	38.2	40.3	34.9
Persons aged 25-64							
Persons aged 25-64 with lower secondary or below as highest level of education							
Male							
In employment	62.3	62.4	61.8	63.5	63.9	63.0	64.9
Unemployed	9.1	8.5	8.4	7.6	7.4	7.0	5.8
Not in the labour force	28.6	29.0	29.8	28.9	28.7	30.0	29.3
Female							
In employment	34.1	34.0	34.3	37.5	35.2	35.5	35.7
Unemployed	4.8	4.9	3.5	2.9	3.4	2.9	3.4
Not in the labour force	61.0	61.1	62.2	59.6	61.4	61.5	60.8
All persons							
In employment	50.3	50.4	50.1	52.3	52.2	51.3	52.9
Unemployed	7.3	7.0	6.3	5.6	5.8	5.3	4.9
Not in the labour force	42.4	42.6	43.6	42.1	42.0	43.4	42.3
Other persons aged 25-64							
Male							
In employment	84.9	85.1	85.1	86.3	86.0	87.0	86.2
Unemployed	4.6	4.8	4.5	4.6	4.3	3.8	3.9
Not in the labour force	10.5	10.0	10.4	9.0	9.7	9.2	9.9
Female							
In employment	71.8	72.2	72.5	73.2	74.0	74.1	74.4
Unemployed	4.2	4.3	3.6	4.2	3.7	3.6	3.5
Not in the labour force	24.0	23.5	23.9	22.6	22.3	22.3	22.1
All persons							
In employment	78.0	78.3	78.4	79.4	79.6	80.2	80.0
Unemployed	4.4	4.5	4.0	4.4	4.0	3.7	3.7
Not in the labour force	17.6	17.2	17.5	16.2	16.4	16.1	16.3

Source: Central Statistics Office, Ireland.

Note: The definition of Early School leavers (ESL) has been updated to take account of persons on holidays from education or training in the previous 4 weeks. This primarily affects estimates for quarter

3 of each year. Revisions have been made to data of Percentage unemployed is shown as persons unemployed as percentage of all persons in population - not comparable to unemployment rate.

Persons whose educational situation is unknown or not stated are not included.

Early leavers from education and training are defined as persons aged 18 to 24 whose highest level of education attained is lower secondary or below and who have not received education (either formal or non-formal) in the four weeks prior to the survey. The definition applied corresponds to that applied by the European statistical office (Eurostat) since Q1 2010 and for comparison purposes this definition has also been used to derive the indicator for periods prior to this.

* Estimates for numbers of persons or averages where there are less than 30 persons in a cell are not produced as estimates are too small to be considered reliable.

Parentheses [] indicate where there are 30-50 persons in a cell, estimates are considered to have a wider margin of error and should be treated with caution.



Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland

Report of Stakeholder Consultation Event

Held on 19 November 2024 to inform Ireland's
Combined tenth to twelfth periodic state reports
to UNCERD

Table of Contents

Introduction	4
Purpose of consultation	4
Key emerging themes and topics	5
Summary of issues raised by Article	6
General context	6
COVID-19	6
Article 1: Definition of racial discrimination and special measures	7
Definitions and language	7
Definition of racism	7
Definition of antisemitism	8
Distinction between citizens and non-citizens	8
Language and discourse	8
Data	9
National Equality Data Strategy	9
Data collection	9
Administrative data	10
Census data	11
Overrepresentation of minority ethnic groups in the criminal justice system	11
Article 2: Legislative and institutional measures	12
Incorporation of ICERD into the domestic legal order	12
Structural racism	12
Implementation and review of effectiveness	12
Particular measures	13
Review of the Equality Acts	13
Public Sector Duty – implementation and enforcement	13
The care system	14
The labour market	14
International Decade for People of African Descent	14
Government strategies and action plans	14
NAPAR	15
Migrant Integration Strategy	15
National Plan on Business and Human Rights	16
Article 3: Condemnation of racial segregation and apartheid	16
Occupied Territories Bill	16
Article 4: Condemnation of all racist propaganda and organisations	17

Reservation to Article 4 of ICERD	17
Condemnation of racist propaganda and organisations	17
Hate speech and hate crime	17
Role of social media	17
Hate groups	18
Hate speech by politicians during elections	19
Article 5: Equality before the law and enjoyment of particular rights	19
Mother and baby homes	19
Participation and representation in political and public life	20
Racial profiling	20
Barriers to accessing public services	21
People of African descent	21
Refugees, asylum seekers and stateless persons	21
Travellers and Roma	22
Housing	22
Healthcare	23
Employment	23
Access to education	23
Data on schools admissions	23
Impact of habitual residency condition on marginalised groups	24
Article 6: Effective protection and remedies	24
Access to justice	24
Barriers to access	24
Availability of information	24
Legal aid	24
Article 7: Measures in education, culture and information	25
Education	25
Diversifying the teaching profession	25
Inclusive school curriculum	25
Yellow Flag Programme	26
Report by the Institute for Monitoring Peace and Cultural Tolerance in School Education	26

Introduction

The International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD), which was adopted in 1965, places an onus on United Nations (UN) Member States that are party to the Convention “to pursue by all appropriate means and without delay a policy of eliminating racial discrimination in all its forms and promoting understanding among all races”. ICERD covers the legislative, judicial, administrative and other measures that need to be implemented to give effect to its provisions. Ireland signed ICERD in 1968. Following the enactment of the Employment Equality Act, 1998 and the Equal Status Act, 2000, ICERD was ratified by Dáil resolution in December 2000 and entered into force in January 2001.

The Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY) coordinates the whole-of-Government response and has responsibility for updating the oversight committee of Ireland’s progress since the submission of the last periodic report in 2018.

Purpose of consultation

To help inform the Government’s response, a targeted stakeholder consultation was held in person on 19 November 2024 at Miesian Plaza, Baggot Street, Dublin 2. Dialogue with civil society organisations is an inherent part of the Government’s approach to policy development and implementation in the area of human rights in general and efforts to combat racism and xenophobia in particular. This consultation builds on recent consultations undertaken as part of the development of the successor to the Migrant Integration Strategy, including both the broad public consultations that concluded in November 2023 and the targeted consultations that concluded in November 2024.

The targeted consultation held on 19 November 2024 brought together representatives from civil society groups and experts in anti-racism and issues related to Ireland’s combined tenth to twelfth Periodic State Reports (the ‘State Report’), to gather their views and input. An online survey was opened in tandem with the in-person consultation, and it received six written submissions.

A Draft State Report was shared with attendees prior to the consultation. This Draft State Report was based on a range of inputs from relevant Government Departments and public bodies (see Appendix 1 for a list of contributing organisations) and sought to respond to recommendations made by the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) in its Concluding observations on the combined fifth to ninth reports of Ireland (CERD/C/IRL/CO/5-9). Each recommendation was mapped to the relevant Article of ICERD and organised thematically where appropriate.

A guidance document (see Appendix 2) was also shared with attendees, which set out the scope and purpose of the consultation and included the text of ICERD to assist with

race/ethnicity/membership of a minoritised group, and the need for the State to address this.

While attendees welcomed the introduction of the Criminal Justice (Hate Offences) Act 2024, many strongly expressed the view that the updating and introduction of hate speech/incitement to hatred legislation was absolutely necessary and should be done as quickly as possible. There was consensus among attendees that the Prohibition of Incitement to Hatred Act, 1989 is insufficient to address hate speech, particularly online hate speech.

Regulation of social media and online spaces was another key theme, closely linked with concerns around hate speech and the use of social media platforms to promote and disseminate 'racist ideologies'. The growing prevalence of 'hate groups', 'racist hate groups' and 'far-right groups' was also a key area of concern expressed during the consultation process.

In the area of education, themes arose such as the lack of diversity in the teaching profession, the need to diversify the school curriculum, the teaching of religion in schools and the positive work carried out under the Yellow Flag Programme.

Finally, attendees identified some gaps in the Draft State Report in relation to positive developments in some areas, for example the introduction of Local Authority Integration Teams and Community Integration Forums and improvements in publication of data related to International Protection Accommodation Services (IPAS). Attendees flagged research and studies that could be referenced in the report.

Summary of issues raised by Article

Discussions were opened to the floor and facilitated by DCEDIY officials, with attendees invited to provide commentary relevant to each Article of ICERD. This structure was utilised to both encourage and facilitate discussions in a structured way. However, some issues raised were relevant to multiple Articles. For clarity, inputs and views from attendees have been summarised below, organised according to the most relevant Article.

General context

COVID-19

A written submission to the consultation flagged research by the Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI)¹ that highlighted communal establishments as predicting infection

¹ [COVID-19 infection rates and social disadvantage in Ireland: An area-level analysis | ESRI](#)

rates during the COVID-19 pandemic, and it recommended that difficulties faced by Travellers and Roma in relation to COVID-19 be specifically mentioned in the Draft State Report. The submission also noted that there was also some evidence of high COVID-19 infection and death rates among ethnic minority groups and Eastern Europeans in Ireland, as explored in the report *Unequal chances? Inequalities in mortality in Ireland*.²

Article 1: Definition of racial discrimination and special measures

Definitions and language

Definition of racism

Several attendees highlighted the need to include a definition of racism in the Irish context, and cited the definition included in ICERD:

the term 'racial discrimination' shall mean any distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference based on race, colour, descent, or national or ethnic origin which has the purpose or effect of nullifying or impairing the recognition, enjoyment or exercise, on an equal footing, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural or any other field of public life. (ICERD, Article 1)

It was highlighted that the State has adopted a definition of racism, which was included in the interim report of the Antiracism Committee that was approved by Government in 2020. A somewhat expanded definition was included in the National Action Plan Against Racism (NAPAR), which was adopted by Government in 2023. During the consultation it was stated that this definition is in alignment with the ICERD definition, and that it was devised to be broad and inclusive: -

"In this plan, the term 'racism' refers to a form of domination which manifests through those power dynamics present in structural and institutional arrangements, practices, policies and cultural norms, which have the effect of excluding or discriminating against individuals or groups, based on race, colour, descent, or national or ethnic origin. (NAPAR, p. 8)

Supporting this broad approach, one attendee stated:

I think it is important in the CERD report, the State report, that we do acknowledge the very specific experience of racism by Travellers, by Roma, by Black Irish and indeed other ethnic groups, but to do that and frame that in a way without, as I say, setting up a hierarchy of oppressions.

² [Unequal chances? Inequalities in mortality in Ireland | ESRI](#)

An attendee flagged that the definitions above both include an explicit reference to 'descent', but that "descent is not included within our legal definition domestically".

A written submission emphasised the need to consider intersectionality when defining racism, and it highlighted that "there are discussions internationally on expanding human rights instruments to explicitly account for intersectional discrimination". The submission welcomed the guiding principle of intersectionality that is included in NAPAR, which:

acknowledges the intersection of oppression based on gender and oppression based on race and that, because of this intersectionality, women and men can experience racism differently.

Definition of antisemitism

Ireland has not recognised the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) definition of antisemitism, and when flagging this an attendee highlighted that this is the working definition for the UN, European Union (EU) and some countries. An attendee expressed the view that not recognising this definition meant that:

it is allowing the state to ignore and deny the growth in antisemitism, including within governmental bodies, it is hindering our ability to educate people, and to reduce the amount of hate, and it is again eliminating Jewish people from the public space and discourse.

Distinction between citizens and non-citizens

Several attendees agreed that racism experienced by residents, i.e. those who are not citizens, needs to be explicitly addressed under the Article 1 section of the Draft State Report. This was highlighted particularly in the context of refugees and asylum seekers, and moreover that the State needs to address significant disparities in their living conditions compared to other residents.

Issues relating to housing with regard to EU citizens versus non-citizens were also raised, where non-EU citizens who made housing applications to local authorities were asked for documentation that was considered to be irrelevant to the application:

You know, for example, when people are saying "we are cohabiting", they were asking for a marriage certificate, and refused the housing application based on the marriage certificate.

Attendees viewed this as a discriminatory practice.

Language and discourse

A range of views were expressed on what terminology should be used when discussing issues related to racism. Attendees raised the need for dialogue, education and awareness in relation to terminology, particularly in such sectors as education and health.

An attendee stated that, in Ireland, consideration of terminology in this area is relatively new, but that the experience of racism by affected communities, such as the Traveller community, is not. One attendee questioned the use of the term 'race' at all, expressing their view that the use of this term is linked with perpetuating the myth of white superiority.

More generally, some attendees preferred the use of the language of inclusion, as opposed to integration, because they viewed integration as time bound and applicable to migrants who have recently arrived in the State. The need to emphasise the links between inclusion and integration was also highlighted. Attendees also raised the need to use the language of inclusion, participation and representation in this context.

An attendee raised the use of the term 'tolerance' in the context of the need for the State to address hate speech online through informal education. They stated that 'respect' would be a more suitable term, as 'tolerance' has negative connotations:

I think we should seriously question the use of the word 'tolerance' in this context. Tolerance in itself is a negative, it suggests a negative, and personally I would suggest a word along the lines of 'respect', which would fit better between understanding and friendship.

Data

National Equality Data Strategy

Attendees acknowledged the progress on the development of the National Equality Data Strategy, and that it seeks to provide a general approach to equality data collection. A written submission to the consultation flagged the need for a more definitive timeline on implementation of the Strategy.

Data collection

A prominent theme discussed under Article 1 was the collection of relevant data that are disaggregated by ethnicity. Attendees agreed that in Ireland there are significant gaps in data collection in this area, with one written submission highlighting that the CSO's Equality Data Audit 2020 found that data on ethnicity are rarely collected in Ireland. Attendees also agreed that comprehensive collection of these data is very important:

we need to be able to measure and be able to assess the experience of ethnic groups and others in accessing services, employment, healthcare, accommodation, because that would give us really important evidence in terms of inequality and exclusion and would allow us to look at more informed and targeted policies in addressing these issues.

One attendee expressed the view that "the absence of official data does not mean the absence of a problem". Other attendees echoed this view, drawing a link between this and, in a legal context, the burden of proof needed to substantiate where discrimination has occurred.

A particular area of concern was that data on ethnicity are, for the most part, not collected within the area of policing. It was also highlighted that CERD's Concluding observations on the combined fifth to ninth reports of Ireland had expressed the need for data on racial profiling in policing, which was absent from the Draft State Report. A written submission to the consultation recommended that ethnic equality monitoring should be implemented throughout the criminal justice system, including at sentencing. With regard to hate crime data, an attendee noted that the criminal justice system does not consider migration status as a motive for discrimination.

One attendee noted that some data on ethnicity are collected, in respect of police complaints:

There is data on ethnicity collected only in relation to satisfaction surveys after those complaints have been made, not in relation to the complaints themselves. We also do not have data on ethnicity or racialised identity in relation to deaths or serious harm in police custody.

A serious concern was raised in relation to the inclusion of a Traveller identifier in the social housing application form:

This is actually in contra to the Convention and contra to any human rights-based approach to data collection. So, it's just to flag that from your end, that one ethnic group can't be asked their ethnicity, it should be universal.

One written submission welcomed improvements in the collection and publication of data in relation to statistics on the international protection process and accommodation. However, it raised concerns in relation to the format of the published data, as PDFs are difficult to analyse in a systematic way. It recommended that more sophisticated data are needed in order to enable the understanding of outcomes, treatment and integration.

Attendees welcomed the introduction of a third-party referral system to An Garda Síochána, where a group representing a victim can report an incident on the victim's behalf.

Administrative data

The term 'administrative data' refers to information collected by various Government Departments for their own purposes, which the CSO then uses to accomplish its own mandated objectives. The CSO uses administrative data in its statistical programmes to complement or replace survey data, to make its statistical operations more efficient and to create new insights or products.

A written submission emphasised that the measurement of ethnicity via surveys and data collected by Government Departments and public services in Ireland should be an urgent priority. It was suggested that a booster sample of migrants and ethnic minorities should be targeted in the regular household surveys, in order to enable the identification of vulnerable groups through administrative data.

Census data

A number of issues were flagged in relation to questions included in the Census form. One attendee pointed out that the Jewish faith is not explicitly included in the questions on ethnic group/background and religion, and they asserted that this has,

coupled with fear for repercussions, caused a significant amount of people to not identify themselves as Jewish, which in turn leads to wrong numbers in official reports such as this. The elimination of a major religion from the Census is in itself a form of discrimination and might be seen as erasing Jewish people from the public space in Ireland.

A concern was also raised in relation to the question on ethnic group/background:

I think in the 2016 Census, and then from there they put a question of every city in the cultural background. But then in categorising, you also categorised people in terms of race. So, there is white and Black. So, we have a bit of a problem there because, you know, that, you know, those, that category is not ethnic, it is not a cultural background. And also, as people have said, we think the use of the term 'Black' for us is kind of demeaning because it has all sorts of connotations, so that is something that we, you know, we feel, we missed the opportunity to put the correction of that question, but it is something that we will be addressing in the coming years.

Overrepresentation of minority ethnic groups in the criminal justice system

One written submission highlighted that research has found that there is systemic racism embedded in the penal system, and there are inadequate special measures for marginalised groups. The following was also noted:

Travellers represent just 1 per cent of the general population but, based on limited available data, account for 8 per cent of the prison population as of September 2024, with a higher proportion of women (16 per cent) and youth (up to 21 per cent of those detained at Oberstown [Children Detention Campus] in 2023). Migrants also make up 17.1 per cent of the prison population as of October 2024, reflecting significant overrepresentation. These disparities call for targeted policies to address systemic disadvantages, any potential over-policing, issues with access to legal representation, or any other contact points with the justice system that result in disproportionate impact for these groups.

It was recommended that there should be sector-specific anti-racism training led by individuals from minority groups, and a specific strategy developed to address Traveller overrepresentation in the criminal justice system.

Article 2: Legislative and institutional measures

Incorporation of ICERD into the domestic legal order

It was flagged by attendees that the CERD has consistently recommended that Ireland fully incorporate ICERD into its domestic legal order. Attendees expressed the need for information on the State's plan to comply with this recommendation, noting that there was no justification provided for not doing so.

Structural racism

Structural or systemic racism was a common theme raised during the consultation, and attendees expressed the need for more information on what steps the State was taking to identify and address structural racism in the Irish context.

The issue of systemic discrimination in the criminal justice system was raised, in particular "amongst the refugee/asylum seeker community based on ethnicity", and more broadly in terms of creating inequality of access, challenges and barriers for minority groups in housing, education and employment. A written submission further stated that "these barriers perpetuate cycles of poverty and exclusion".

A written submission raised the issue of structural racism by the State against Jews, stating:

We are seeing media as well as local & national government, political parties and 'human rights' organisation[s] which are constantly and disproportionately speak[ing] out publicly against Jewish people (sometimes under the guise of Zionism or Israel), with no repercussions.

Implementation and review of effectiveness

Several attendees, as well as written submissions, raised the need for implementation of legislative and institutional measures. They agreed that there are a range of measures in place, but that they are not being implemented, or not implemented fully or effectively. One written submission also suggested that commentary should be included in the Draft State Report as follows:

It would be helpful to provide commentary on the concrete measures that have been carried out in the past 5 years to reduce racism and how racism has improved as a consequence. While insightful, the plans and appointments the State has made during the period are not concrete achievements in themselves. What would be helpful would be to see how plans are actually implemented and the positive effects they made at reducing racism. While it is useful to know what you are planning to do, it would be far greater to know what has not been achieved so we can all work towards improving the situation if there are shortfalls.

Particular measures

Review of the Equality Acts

The CERD has raised the limited scope of the Equality Acts, as they cover supply of services and goods as well as education. Attendees requested more information on plans to expand the scope of the Acts, and more detail on how comprehensive the changes will be.

A written submission included the following:

Noting para. 45 [of the Draft State Report] submits that legislative proposals will be brought forward in Q4 2024, and the subsequent disbanding of the government due to the election, an updated timeline could be provided for 1) the completion of the review, and 2) the legislative proposals to enact any changes, including the explicit reference to intersectional discrimination.

An attendee stated that the review took the perspective of an individual taking a claim under the Acts, but that there was no reference to claims that might be taken on behalf of a group against the State:

So, it is very much about the individual taking a case against another individual, but there is no reference around the State, about State legislation and discrimination. And I mean in the context of Travellers, trespass legislation is a perfect example of that.

It was highlighted that, as part of the review of the Acts, “equality infrastructure and access to effective remedies where you experience discrimination” should also be reviewed. This was raised in the context of access to licenced premises (i.e. hotels/pubs) where discrimination occurs, as cases currently need to go before the District Courts. This issue was the subject of a number of submissions to the public written consultation to the review of Equality Acts, as it is preferable for such cases to be heard at the Workplace Relations Commission.

One written submission highlighted the need to reform Ireland’s equality legislation to better address intersecting forms of discrimination, including the need to address:

the compounded effects of racism and sexism on migrant and ethnic minority women and the cumulative impacts of multiple inequalities.

Public Sector Duty – implementation and enforcement

Several attendees shared the view that the Public Sector Duty (as set out in Section 42 of the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act 2014) has not been fully implemented across all institutions, while acknowledging that there has been some good progress in some cases, such as in the Irish Prison Service, as is highlighted in the Draft State Report. Several attendees also raised the issue of enforcement of the Public Sector Duty, and that in parts of the public sector poor awareness of the Public Sector Duty has led to discrimination being perpetuated.

The care system

Attendees expressed the need for information on plans to enhance protection for children from ethnic minority communities who face racial discrimination in the current care system, with a written submission stating:

We believe the current Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty is not adequate, and that children and anyone who suffers racial discrimination by any State bodies should have the right (individually or in common with others) to take their cases to domestic courts to seek just remedies.

The labour market

In relation to measures to combat racial discrimination in the labour market, a written submission suggested that the Draft State Report should refer to ESRI research:

The report could also refer to some insights from the review of measures to combat racial discrimination in the labour market, funded by DCEDIY to inform the work of the anti-racism committee, for example, about changing recruitment and workplace practices; minority internships and traineeships; cross-group mentoring within organisations.

International Decade for People of African Descent

Attendees sought information on how Ireland has implemented the International Decade for People of African Descent, what it achieved by doing so and whether it is planning to support a second decade. It was noted that the marking of the decade didn’t commence in Ireland until 2019, so it was requested that the decade be extended until 2028.

Government strategies and action plans

At the in-person consultation, an attendee expressed the view that there is a lack of integration and coordination between anti-racism policy, anti-discrimination policy and gender equality policy, and that a gender lens should be used in developing policies and strategies in this area, and an intersectional approach applied in general. In particular, a written submission noted that “migrant women are notably absent from the Migration [Integration] Strategy 2017–2021 and the National Strategy for Women and Girls (NSWG)”.

An attendee stated that the Draft State Report should also include information on what the State is and will be doing to address the unique experiences and needs of women and girls, and that the State should be

addressing that intersection between racism discrimination and sexism, and ensuring that with policy solutions that address the particular needs of women and girls, but really incorporating that gender lens and that gender impact assessment of our national policies and ensuring that integration and coordination across various strategies as well, whether that’s Traveller and Roma Strategy, Migration Strategy, the National Action Plan Against Racism and our Gender and Equality Policies as well.

Several attendees also highlighted the need to link local and national responses, as good national policies can be developed but then fail to be integrated with work underway at local implementation level. An attendee observed that the CERD is increasingly seeking evidence of links between initiatives at a local and national level, and the integration of local government responses, so how this operates in the Irish context should be reflected in the report.

NAPAR

The publication of the NAPAR was welcomed, as was the appointment of Dr Eburn Joseph as Special Rapporteur on Racism. As mentioned previously in this report, particular actions and objectives such as the disaggregation of data by ethnicity were emphasised during the consultation, along with the definition of racism included in the NAPAR, which is in alignment with the ICERD definition. With regard to the latter, one attendee expressed the view that the State should respond to the Concluding observations on the combined fifth to ninth reports of Ireland on the basis of how racism is framed in the NAPAR:

As has been pointed out, that [definition of racism] is reinforced by the National Action Plan Against Racism. And I think it would be really important that you give plenty of voice to how you are actually responding to that reinforcement, you know, and how in particular you are responding to the sort of variety of forms of racism that exist in this country at this point in time.

An attendee suggested that the NAPAR be extended until 2028, as it was their view that work was not fully underway until 2024, and the lifetime of the plan is 2023-2027.

Migrant Integration Strategy

More detailed information on the development of the successor to *The Migrant Integration Strategy 2017-2021* was requested in the Draft State Report, in both the in-person consultation and via written submission. One written submission expressed the view that

there have been significant delays with the development of a new strategy. This has been at a time of increasing salience of immigration in Ireland, and attacks on asylum seeker centres, as well as some drops in positivity towards immigration in Ireland, according to ESRI research.

It was suggested that findings from recent research, funded by DCEDIY and carried out by the ESRI, on the drivers of negative attitudes towards immigration could be taken into account in developing the new strategy.

More generally, participants suggested that a “strategic and proactive approach to the provision of integration services to reduce racial tension could be an alternative approach and could take into account ESRI research on the factors relating to negative attitudes”. They also suggested that the successor strategy should take account of intersectional issues.

National Plan on Business and Human Rights

The Draft State Report provided information on the development of the Second National Plan on Business and Human Rights, but a written submission highlighted the fact that the first plan had expired in 2020, and there was a need for a clear timeline on the publication of a successor plan.

Article 3: Condemnation of racial segregation and apartheid

While the CERD provided no particular recommendations for Ireland under Article 3 of ICERD, comments were invited from attendees and as part of written submissions.

There was some debate as to whether or not the Draft State Report should make reference to the Israel–Palestine conflict, with opposing views being strongly expressed: that a key principle of ICERD is that it is an international convention, and as such participating States should condemn all segregation, versus that the Draft State Report should be an expression of how Ireland is addressing issues within its jurisdiction.

One written submission stated that:

In light of the paragraph 10 of the Preamble to ICERD and Article 2 Obligation to condemn racial discrimination in all its forms, we would be pleased if the State can include, within its Report to the Committee, an outline of the steps taken to support the ICJ [International Court of Justice] opinion that Israel is in breach of Article 3 [of the] ICERD.

Another written submission also noted the stance of the ICJ mentioned above, in the context that

The State must outline its commitment to standing in solidarity with women and girls in countries where their civil and democratic rights are under severe attack.

This submission related to “the humanitarian crisis in Gaza and the systematic violation of international law by the Israeli State”, as well as circumstances for women in Afghanistan, where “more than 50 decrees have stripped women of basic freedoms”.

A separate written submission highlighted that Article 3 relates to the condemnation of segregation in territories under a State’s own jurisdiction, that Israel is not under the jurisdiction of Ireland and that “nowhere in the report does it touch on Ireland’s stand on any other country’s situation”. This written submission also reiterated the call for the adoption of the IHRA’s definition of antisemitism.

Occupied Territories Bill

Participants in the consultation also requested an update on the status of the Occupied Territories Bill, stating that this should be included in the Draft State Report and that the State should clarify how it “intends to meet its obligations to the Palestinian people, as a member of the international community”.

Article 4: Condemnation of all racist propaganda and organisations

Reservation to Article 4 of ICERD

Ireland has a Reservation/Interpretative declaration to Article 4 of ICERD:

Article 4 of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination provides that the measures specifically described in sub-paragraphs (a), (b) and (c) shall be undertaken with due regard to the principles embodied in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the rights expressly set forth in Article 5 of the Convention. Ireland therefore considers that through such measures, the right to freedom of opinion and expression and the right to peaceful assembly and association may not be jeopardised.

These rights are laid down in Articles 19 and 20 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights; they were reaffirmed by the General Assembly of the United Nations when it adopted Articles 19 and 21 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and are referred to in Article 5 (d)(viii) and (ix) of the present Convention.

Several attendees wanted to know why this reservation is still in place, stating that the State is “delinquent in its obligation” and that it is “particularly relevant in the context of there being no provision for prohibiting extreme hate speech”. One contributor went on to state that “I think there is a moral obligation on us to incorporate Article 4 and make provision for tackling hate groups.”

Condemnation of racist propaganda and organisations

Hate speech and hate crime

Attendees welcomed the introduction of the Criminal Justice (Hate Offences) Act 2024, however many expressed strong views that the updating and introduction of hate speech/incitement to hatred legislation was absolutely necessary and should be done as quickly as possible.

Attendees agreed that the Prohibition of Incitement to Hatred Act, 1989 is insufficient in addressing hate speech, particularly online hate speech. One written submission stated, “We welcome the recent hate crime legislation, but like many have a particular concern as to how on-line spaces has been used to promote racist ideologies.”

One attendee shared the view that hate crime training in An Garda Síochána is framed from the perspective of responding to hate crime, as opposed to “the need for ... diversity or cultural awareness training”.

Role of social media

Participants raised the role of social media, and how these platforms are used to disseminate hate speech online. Many expressed views regarding “regulating the enhancement and enforcement of standards online”.

Participants welcomed recent developments in this space, which is presumably in reference to the establishment of Coimisiún na Meán and the work programme that it is undertaking. However, several attendees raised as particular issues the lack of accountability on social media platforms, the lack of regulation of the platforms and how ‘far-right groups’ use these platforms:

So, we have these far-right groups who are rallying via social media, and the causes of that are things like riots, there is things like migrants being attacked, there are Muslim women’s scarfs being pulled off and all of those kinds of attacks.

So, I think the thing that needs to be done the most is social media regulation. There is a huge, huge lack of social media regulation in terms of things like TikTok, social media, fake accounts and things like that. So, in terms of accountability it looks great, but that accountability is lacking the connection between social media.

Hate groups

The promotion by particular groups of, for example, “racist propaganda”, “the most egregious antisemitic conspiracy theories”, “racist hatred” and activities that were considered to be “inciting hatred, spreading fear and division” (according to comments from various attendees) was broadly condemned during the consultation. How these groups use misinformation and disinformation as a technique when “targeting minority communities, including asylum seekers, migrants and members of the LGBT plus communities” was also criticised. Similar views were included in written submissions.

These groups were referred to interchangeably as “hate groups”, “racist hate groups” and “far-right groups”, but were also characterised as

sometimes ... very complex in terms of their organisation that they could be quite loose networks rather than, you know, affiliations or in any ways kind of organised entities so to speak.

A written submission to the consultation stated that

the State should outline its plans to address the intersectional nature of racism and discrimination (with specific reference to gender) and in recognition of the deeply anti-women sentiment of the far-right movement.

An attendee noted that “our legislation at the moment is really organised around addressing groups engaging [in] terrorist activities” and asked if the State intends to publish a list of proscribed groups in terms of the provisions of Article 4:

Does the State consider that publishing a list of proscribed groups could actually have a really important communicative, declarative and educative function for people who could potentially be recruited into these groups?

How these groups are funded, and what the State is doing to track this, was raised as an issue for consideration. One participant stated that intra-group communication happens both nationally and internationally, “which undoubtedly involves the transfer of funds”.

Some emphasised the need for the State to take an immediate proactive approach through “informal education” and by “funding initiatives that will engage in counter speech online addressing these issues where they are occurring”. The Canadian organisation Moonshot³ was cited in this context as a good example:

you can also divert people from recruitment into hate groups by signposting the things that are driving them, the supports that will drive them away from those hate groups, that will address what is driving them towards those hate groups, like supports that address social isolation and mental health difficulties.

Hate speech by politicians during elections

The concluding observations of CERD included recommendations relating to the prosecution and punishment of acts of hate speech – including those committed by politicians during election campaigns – and separately on the role of the Electoral Commission in the area of combatting hate speech. The Draft State Report included the statement that hate speech is not within the mandate of the Electoral Commission, and an attendee asked where the jurisdiction for hate speech falls during a campaign if not with the Electoral Commission.

Article 5: Equality before the law and enjoyment of particular rights

Mother and baby homes

Participants expressed strong views in relation to the section of the Draft State Report responding to the concluding observation on mother and baby homes, that no reference was made to “children of African descent” or “mixed race Irish” in the State response. Participants pointed out that this context is missing from the report and that there is no reference to the victims cited in the Concluding observations on the combined fifth to ninth reports of Ireland.

One attendee highlighted a September 2022 statement by the Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent,⁴ which recommended that “the State provide just and adequate remedies to children of African Irish Descent (mixed race Irish) who were subjected to systemic racism in childcare institutions”. The attendee asked that a State response to this statement be included in the Draft State Report.

³ [Moonshot \(moonshotteam.com\)](https://moonshotteam.com)

⁴ [Ireland: UN experts call for adequate redress for systemic racism and racial discrimination in childcare institutions | OHCHR](#)

Participation and representation in political and public life

With regard to political life, an attendee noted research on the participation of migrants in elections but flagged the lack of reference to similar research carried out regarding the participation of Travellers. They recommended that the Draft State Report reference this latter research. The research, carried out in 2022 and funded by DCEDIY under the Dormant Accounts Fund, examined

the barriers that Traveller and ethnic minority women face engaging with local politics ... It looks at the financial challenges and it names the need for targeted measures, including reserved seats or ethnic quotas.

Participants also raised the need for culturally appropriate voter education campaigns by the Electoral Commission, in order to address “gaps in knowledge about voting rights and the electoral processes” in the Traveller community.

A written submission highlighted the ESRI’s *Monitoring Report on Integration 2022*, which included the statistic that just 3% of all candidates in local elections were of a migrant background. The Immigrant Council of Ireland has also published research on the local elections in both 2019 and 2024.

On the participation of migrants in public life, attendees raised a variety of issues, including a lack of diversity within the gardaí, as well as the lack of representation among the staff of publicly funded services, such as domestic, sexual and gender-based violence (DSGBV) services. One attendee identified the latter as a particular problem, stating that

most of the people who are employed working there are white Irish people. And so, we have Black women who are trafficked, we have Roma women who are trafficked and there is nobody from their community who understands them, who can relate with them.

Following on from the above statement, a similar issue was raised in relation to conferences on DSGBV/human trafficking, and in the business sector, that “those places are white spaces”, and there will therefore be less of a focus on issues facing minority communities.

Racial profiling

As noted above, the Concluding observations on the combined fifth to ninth reports of Ireland sought data on racial profiling in policing. It also called for the introduction of legislation to prohibit racial profiling, which many attendees supported, noting that such legislation has not been introduced in Ireland. One written submission also raised racial profiling in the context of systemic discrimination in the criminal justice system:

Ethnic minorities, particularly Travellers and Black people, report facing systemic discrimination in the criminal justice system. This includes racial profiling, unequal access to legal representation, and data indicate that harsher sentencing outcomes are

experienced for foreign nationals for certain offences although further research is necessary.

Barriers to accessing public services

In the context of the penal system, one participant expressed a view that ethnic minorities face significant barriers to accessing essential services in prison, such as healthcare, due to language barriers.

People of African descent

In relation to employment, a written submission noted that there have been substantial improvements in employment rates of African nationals in Ireland:

In the past, African nationals had substantially higher unemployment rates and lower employment and activity rates than Irish nationals. However, differences between African nationals and Irish nationals on these indicators have disappeared over the period 2017-2024. In 2024, there were no significant differences between African-born and Irish-born residents on these indicators (McGinnity *et al.*, forthcoming⁵).

One possible explanation is that the demographic composition of the African group has changed. However, this trend is observed across gender, age group, presence of children in the household, and level of education (Sprong, McGinnity and Laurence, 2023⁶). This indicates that the labour market conditions for Africans have improved over this period. Mention could also be made of changes to labour market access for asylum seekers, as well as other improvements in rights for this group (e.g. access to bank accounts, driving licences) which may also impact labour market outcomes for this group.

Refugees, asylum seekers and stateless persons

A written submission to the consultation flagged positive developments in supports and conditions for international protection applicants (IPAs) under the 'integration from day one' principle, including:

access to bank accounts and driving licences, vulnerability assessments, access to the labour market, and integration supports furthered under the White Paper on Ending Direct Provision, which are likely to have significant impacts on racial minorities.

⁵ McGinnity, F., Carron-Kee, E., Alamir, A., Dalton, C., Darmody, M., Hingre, G., Murphy, K., & Quinn, E., Forthcoming. Monitoring Report on Integration 2024. Economic and Social Research Institute.

⁶ Sprong, S., McGinnity, F., & Laurence, J. (2023). Case Study: Employment Levels Among African Nationals in Ireland and Recent Developments. In M. Polakowski & E. Cunniffe, Labour market integration of international protection applicants in Ireland. ESRI Research Series 160, Dublin: ESRI. <https://doi.org/10.26504/rs160>

It recommended that the report should mention innovations such as Local Authority Integration Teams and Community Integration Forums, the Regularisation of Long Term Undocumented Migrant scheme and in the education sector the Student Support Scheme for IPAs and the exemption of IPAs with permission to work from Post Leaving Certificate (PLC) fees.

The submission noted that the Draft State Report could also mention DCEDIY-commissioned supports for beneficiaries of international protection (BOTPs) in transitioning into autonomous housing and enrolling in available Irish language classes. The Draft State Report could also mention changes to the general employment permit which would allow permit holders' spouses to work.

A participant also recommended that the Draft State Report make further mention of the economic, social and cultural rights of IPAs, in the context of the High Court judgment that the State breached the right to dignity of IPAs without accommodation. The State's plans in relation to the EU Pact on Migration and Asylum and improving living conditions for IPAs should be included in the report; for the latter, *A White Paper to End Direct Provision and to Establish a New International Protection Support Service* and the subsequent *Comprehensive Accommodation Strategy for International Protection Applicants* should be referenced.

A number of attendees raised concerns in relation to access to housing, conditions in and inspections of IPAS centres, the quality of care facilities provided for unaccompanied minors entering the State as found by the Health Information and Quality Authority (HIQA), issues finding accommodation in cases of family reunification and access to Housing Assistance Payment for BOTPs. A concern was raised on the safety of women in IPAS accommodation and their vulnerability to exploitation. The view was expressed that the issues raised in relation to IPAs are also relevant to BOTPs.

An attendee at the in-person consultation event raised the issue of the right to work for IPAs:

And the other one is actually the right to work for people seeking international protection. When this right is given at six months, some people are staying up to a year or over a year because the employers do not understand the permit itself. So, this issue that they are not enjoying their right or they won't be enjoying their right. But just to recommend that it could be automatic from when they get into the country but also to make that awareness of this right to work.

Travellers and Roma

Housing

Attendees flagged what they identified as gaps in the Draft State Report in a range of areas, including housing – for example, private landlords refusing to rent to Travellers, on which the Residential Tenancies Board conducted a study in 2017 – and they requested data on numbers of new-build housing units completed for Travellers. Another attendee

supported the view in relation to private landlords, and stated that similar experiences occur among the Roma community.

More generally, an attendee noted that "Travellers and Roma disparities in housing and accommodation persists" and that there are high levels of homelessness among the Roma community in Co Tipperary despite high levels of employment in the region.

A written submission to the consultation noted that

A recurring issue in housing policy for Travellers in Ireland is local authorities (city or county councils) not drawing down the national allocation of allocation of [sic] funds for Traveller accommodation. In 2019, for example, only two-thirds of allocated funding was drawn down for Traveller-specific accommodation, and in some local authority areas, none of the allocation was spent.

Healthcare

An attendee stated that persistent disparities remain in healthcare for members of the Traveller and Roma communities "despite many targeted programmes", and another attendee flagged the issue of poor mental health among Travellers, and that no additional funding was allocated for the implementation of the National Traveller Health Action Plan.

Employment

In relation to employment, the precarious working conditions for members of the Roma community were raised as a particular issue. It was likened to a form of modern slavery, where people are "working, being paid very little, like, extremely long hours, no holidays paid, no sick pay leave" and "trapped in a vicious circle" of being completely dependent on their employers for accommodation and unable to afford alternative accommodation.

An attendee suggested that the Draft State Report should refer to the role of the advisory group in developing the Civil Service Traveller Internship programme, the resulting full-time employment for some participants and further information on career progression after the internships are completed.

Access to education

A number of attendees agreed that Traveller and Roma children still experience educational disadvantage, including "high dropout rate, limited access to higher education and discriminatory practices in schools". It was suggested that the State should take a holistic approach by considering in tandem socioeconomic factors that impact children and young people who leave school sooner than their peers.

Data on schools admissions

An attendee sought information on how many Section 29 (of the Education Act, 1998) appeals have there been, and how many have been resolved, in order to examine how

the appeals process is functioning in cases where a child has been refused a school place. They noted that in some cases appeals are not resolved for a number of years, resulting in the child being “denied that right of, you know, second-level education”.

Impact of habitual residency condition on marginalised groups

One attendee raised the issue of the habitual residency condition in relation to eligibility for State supports in a broad sense, while another highlighted it in terms of the impact on the Roma community, particularly Roma women.

Article 6: Effective protection and remedies

Access to justice

Barriers to access

A written submission noted that, in the justice system:

Ethnic minorities, especially Travellers and foreign nationals, face significant barriers in accessing justice, including language barriers, lack of legal representation, and cultural insensitivity within the justice system. Expanding legal aid and providing interpreting services are essential to ensuring equal access to justice for all, regardless of ethnicity or nationality.

Several attendees highlighted how the provision of interpretation services in the justice system is very limited, or in some cases (such as DSGBV cases) not suitable:

I was sitting in a court the last two weeks with a woman, she was fleeing from domestic violence, and they had a ... man interpreting for the woman, which is not correctly [sic], and when I mentioned that they say, “well, we don’t have interpreter at all, she is lucky that she has someone.”

Availability of information

Both written submissions and attendees of the in-person consultation shared views that there is limited awareness of legal protections among those from minority groups, including those in the criminal justice system. There is not enough information available, nor is it translated into enough languages. It was recommended that an information campaign be introduced to address this problem.

Legal aid

Participants made calls for the expansion of the legal aid system, highlighting the difficulties people find in accessing aid. An attendee emphasised the need to consider the changes regarding online crime in the last 5–10 years.

An update on the review of the legal aid scheme was included in the Draft State Report. A written submission to the consultation sought:

a clear and precise timeline for 1) the publication of the Independent Review Group's report, and 2) implementation of recommendations and amendments to the scheme based on the consultation process.

In relation to access to legal aid for asylum seekers who will be subject to a deportation order, an attendee shared the view that the role of the Legal Aid Board should be expanded to include these cases as it was stated that the following currently occurs:

So, we are seeing cases that usually when they [asylum seekers] receive such a decision, there is no imminent legal assistance, and when they receive the deportation order, the legal aid will usually, it is like the answer is that unless there is any new evidence, which is understandable, we cannot provide any legal assistance.

Article 7: Measures in education, culture and information

Education

Diversifying the teaching profession

An attendee acknowledged the low numbers of teachers from minority backgrounds in Ireland, which was found during research carried out by Trinity College. The attendee stated:

So, I think we need to look at what is happening in the profession that even when people come in, they don't see us as a viable role for them or a long-standing career, and so what are the issues within that, and they do seem to be based on race.

A written submission highlighted the need for diversity, inclusion and anti-racism training for school staff. Some such training is carried out by teacher trade unions, but the submission included the view that "it needs to be on a system-wide basis".

Inclusive school curriculum

One written submission advocated for the creation of a more inclusive curriculum, "because it directly challenges stereotypes, fosters empathy, and promotes diversity". Another suggested that civic education in schools could be reviewed, while another stressed how education is key to combatting systemic racism:

Please can the State mention what concrete measures it is taking to incorporate histories of Irish people of African descent within the national curriculum. It may be helpful to look at what Wales has recently done in terms of giving legislative footing to teaching black history

The introduction of Traveller history into the school curriculum was welcomed, although it was suggested that the introduction of Roma history should be considered as well.

Yellow Flag Programme

One attendee raised the issue of the continuation of the Yellow Flag Programme. The programme has been in place in schools throughout Ireland for 14–15 years and seeks to address “all racisms, all forms of racism, marginalisation and exclusion and it drives and sets goals and standards for the schools”. It was highlighted that the programme did not receive funding under the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund, or the Ireland Against Racism Fund, but that it had received emergency funding from the Department of Education. One participant expressed the view that

This is something that should have been mainstreamed a decade ago. The Yellow Flag Programme could be something, should be something that we are all proud of. It’s really an example of best practice.

Report by the Institute for Monitoring Peace and Cultural Tolerance in School Education

A report by the Institute for Monitoring Peace and Cultural Tolerance in School Education, which is an Israeli non-profit organisation, was raised both during the in-person consultation and via written submission:

There is no oversight by the Dept of Education (or any other professional body) on what is being taught in schools, especially when it comes to religion. A recent report by the Institute for Monitoring Peace and Cultural Tolerance in School Education found a troubling pattern of trivialization and minimization of the Holocaust, many narratives that question the legitimacy of the state of Israel and undermine Jewish claims to indignity [sic] in the land. No historical and political context in discussions on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, a one-sided view that frames Israel as the sole aggressor, portraying Judaism as lacking in values like compassion and justice, and inaccurately depicting [it] as advocating violence to achieve justice, in contrast with other religions that are portrayed as inherently peaceful.

These misrepresentations promote negative stereotypes and biases against Jews.

Appendix 1 – Organisations represented at stakeholder event

AkiDwa (Akina Dada wa Africa)
The Association of Mixed Race Irish
Black & Irish
Cultúr Migrants Centre
Doras
ESRI/European Migration Network Ireland
European Centre for the Study of Hate
Immigrant Council of Ireland
International Organization for Migration
Irish Congress of Trade Unions
Irish Council for Civil Liberties
Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission
Irish Network Against Racism
Irish Penal Reform Trust
Islamic Cultural Centre of Ireland
Jewish Representative Council of Ireland
Muslim Sisters of Éire
Nasc Ireland
National Traveller Women’s Forum
National Women’s Council of Ireland
National Youth Council of Ireland
Open Doors Initiative
Pavee Point
Sport Against Racism Ireland
Technological University Dublin Institutional Working Group for Interculturalism and Race Equity
The Wheel
Volunteer Ireland



Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland

**CERD Stakeholder Consultation
Attendee Information Document
19th November 2024**

Introduction

This consultation will inform the drafting of the combined 10th to 12th periodic State Report (the 'State Report'), to be submitted by Ireland under article 9 of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, to the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD). A draft State Report has already been shared with you in advance of this consultation event. To ease response process, each relevant Article is listed in this document.

Format

- We will work through the draft response to the List of Articles giving 15 minutes to each of the CERD Articles under discussion outlined below. We will need to be strict on the 15 - minute window to make sure we cover every question fairly – an announcement will be made after each fifteen-minute slot, and we will move on to the next question.
- Breaks: we will have a 10-minute coffee break at 11:30
- We will take a note of all the main points made under each area today. In the coming weeks, we will put together a report of the main points made today, which we will circulate to participants and publish on our website so that people who could not attend can see what was discussed.
- The Open Forum session will be recorded for transcription purposes to fully capture attendee contributions.
- Don't worry if an important point occurs to you after we have moved on from any given topic. We have circulated an EU Survey of the same topical questions to you all and you can have an opportunity to record your input there.

Context

- It is important to remember that our response under CERD is a State Report which will go through the memo for Government process. We will be reporting the State's position and policies as set out in the Programme for Government. **However**, issues raised, and points made **WILL** inform the editing process and final draft. The Stakeholder Consultation Report, emanating from this event will be included in that Memo and in the CERD Report. In addition, the points made will be passed on to the policy division developing the new Migrant Integration Strategy, and will be of immense value in that regard,
- Please note that as a consultative process the purpose is to gather your input to inform the draft State Report. If you have any queries or policy questions requiring a response from the Department, please email antiracism@equality.gov.ie following the event.

Ground Rules

- All interventions should be concise, as we will have a lot to cover, and we want to give everyone a chance to express their views and share their comments.
- Please make all interventions through the Facilitator and start off by stating your name and organisation (if relevant).
- Please be respectful of other views. It is important that everyone has the opportunity to provide their input without interruption.

Article 1, CERD: Definition of Racial Discrimination

1. In this Convention, the term "racial discrimination" shall mean any distinction, exclusion, restriction, or preference based on race, colour, descent, or national or ethnic origin which has the purpose or effect of nullifying or impairing the recognition, enjoyment, or exercise, on an equal footing, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural or any other field of public life.
2. This Convention shall not apply to distinctions, exclusions, restrictions, or preferences made by a State Party to this Convention between citizens and non-citizens.
3. Nothing in this Convention may be interpreted as affecting in any way the legal provisions of States Parties concerning nationality, citizenship, or naturalization, provided that such provisions do not discriminate against any particular nationality.
4. Special measures taken for the sole purpose of securing adequate advancement of certain racial or ethnic groups or individuals requiring such protection as may be necessary in order to ensure such groups or individuals equal enjoyment or exercise of human rights and fundamental freedoms shall not be deemed racial discrimination, provided, however, that such measures do not, as a consequence, lead to the maintenance of separate rights for different racial groups and that they shall not be continued after the objectives for which they were taken have been achieved.

In the context of the draft State Report, under Article 1 of the Convention, what are the most salient issues that are being addressed, or need to be addressed by the State?

Article 2, CERD: Legislative and Institutional Measures to Eliminate Racial Discrimination

1. States Parties condemn racial discrimination and undertake to pursue by all appropriate means and without delay a policy of eliminating racial discrimination in all its forms and promoting understanding among all races, and, to this end:
 - (a) Each State Party undertakes to engage in no act or practice of racial discrimination against persons, groups of persons or institutions and to ensure that all public authorities and public institutions, national and local, shall act in conformity with this obligation;
 - (b) Each State Party undertakes not to sponsor, defend or support racial discrimination by any persons or organizations;
 - (c) Each State Party shall take effective measures to review governmental, national and local policies, and to amend, rescind or nullify any laws and regulations which have the effect of creating or perpetuating racial discrimination wherever it exists;
 - (d) Each State Party shall prohibit and bring to an end, by all appropriate means, including legislation as required by circumstances, racial discrimination by any persons, group or organization;
 - (e) Each State Party undertakes to encourage, where appropriate, integrationist multiracial organizations and movements and other means of eliminating barriers between races, and to discourage anything which tends to strengthen racial division.

2. States Parties shall, when the circumstances so warrant, take, in the social, economic, cultural, and other fields, special and concrete measures to ensure the adequate development and protection of certain racial groups or individuals belonging to them, for the purpose of guaranteeing them the full and equal enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms. These measures shall in no case entail as a consequence the maintenance of unequal or separate rights for different racial groups after the objectives for which they were taken have been achieved.

In the context of the draft State Report, under Article 2 of the Convention, what are the most salient issues that are being addressed, or need to be addressed by the State?

Article 3, CERD: N/A to Ireland

States Parties particularly condemn racial segregation and apartheid and undertake to prevent, prohibit, and eradicate all practices of this nature in territories under their jurisdiction.

The CERD made no specific recommendations in relation to Article 3 in the concluding observations on the combined 5th – 9th reports of Ireland so we shall move on to question 4 for the purpose of this consultation event.

Article 4, CERD: Condemnation of all Racist Propaganda and Organisations

States Parties condemn all propaganda and all organizations which are based on ideas or theories of superiority of one race or group of persons of one colour or ethnic origin, or which attempt to justify or promote racial hatred and discrimination in any form, and undertake to adopt immediate and positive measures designed to eradicate all incitement to, or acts of, such discrimination and, to this end, with due regard to the principles embodied in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the rights expressly set forth in article 5 of this Convention, inter alia:

(a) Shall declare an offence punishable by law all dissemination of ideas based on racial superiority or hatred, incitement to racial discrimination, as well as all acts of violence or incitement to such acts against any race or group of persons of another colour or ethnic origin, and also the provision of any assistance to racist activities, including the financing thereof;

(b) Shall declare illegal and prohibit organizations, and also organized and all other propaganda activities, which promote and incite racial discrimination, and shall recognize participation in such organizations or activities as an offence punishable by law;

(c) Shall not permit public authorities or public institutions, national or local, to promote or incite racial discrimination.

In the context of the draft State Report, under Article 4 of the Convention, what are the most salient issues that are being addressed, or need to be addressed by the State?

Article 5, CERD: Equality Before the Law and Enjoyment of Particular Rights

In compliance with the fundamental obligations laid down in article 2 of this Convention, States Parties undertake to prohibit and to eliminate racial discrimination in all its forms and to guarantee the right of everyone, without distinction as to race, colour, or national or ethnic origin, to equality before the law, notably in the enjoyment of the following rights:

(a) The right to equal treatment before the tribunals and all other organs administering justice;

(b) The right to security of person and protection by the State against violence or bodily harm, whether inflicted by government officials or by any individual group or institution;

(c) Political rights, in particular the right to participate in elections-to vote and to stand for election-on the basis of universal and equal suffrage, to take part in the Government as well as in the conduct of public affairs at any level and to have equal access to public service;

(d) Other civil rights, in particular:

(i) The right to freedom of movement and residence within the border of the State;

(ii) The right to leave any country, including one's own, and to return to one's country;

(iii) The right to nationality;

(iv) The right to marriage and choice of spouse;

(v) The right to own property alone as well as in association with others;

(vi) The right to inherit;

(vii) The right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion;

(viii) The right to freedom of opinion and expression;

(ix) The right to freedom of peaceful assembly and association;

(e) Economic, social, and cultural rights, in particular:

(i) The rights to work, to free choice of employment, to just and favourable conditions of work, to protection against unemployment, to equal pay for equal work, to just and favourable remuneration;

(ii) The right to form and join trade unions;

(iii) The right to housing;

(iv) The right to public health, medical care, social security and social services;

(v) The right to education and training;

(vi) The right to equal participation in cultural activities;

(f) The right of access to any place or service intended for use by the general public, such as transport hotels, restaurants, cafes, theatres and parks.

In the context of the draft State Report, under Article 5 of the Convention, what are the most salient issues that are being addressed, or need to be addressed by the State?

Article 6, CERD: Effective Protection and Remedies

States Parties shall assure to everyone within their jurisdiction effective protection and remedies, through the competent national tribunals and other State institutions, against any acts of racial discrimination which violate his human rights and fundamental freedoms contrary to this Convention, as well as the right to seek from such tribunals just and adequate reparation or satisfaction for any damage suffered as a result of such discrimination.

In the context of the draft State Report, under Article 6 of the Convention, what are the most salient issues that are being addressed, or need to be addressed by the State?

Article 7: Measures in the fields of Teaching, Education, Culture, and Information

States Parties undertake to adopt immediate and effective measures, particularly in the fields of teaching, education, culture and information, with a view to combating prejudices which lead to racial discrimination and to promoting understanding, tolerance and friendship among nations and racial or ethnical groups, as well as to propagating the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, and this Convention.

In the context of the draft State Report, under Article 7 of the Convention, what are the most salient issues that are being addressed, or need to be addressed by the State?



Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland

National Action Plan Against Racism

Prepared by the Department of
Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth
gov.ie

Contents

Foreword from An Taoiseach.....	3
Foreword from the Minister for Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth.....	4
Foreword from the Minister of State for Community Development, Integration and Charities.....	5
Foreword from the Chair of the Anti-Racism Committee	6
Introduction	7
Vision and Objectives.....	14
Priority Actions.....	16
Recommendations.....	30
Implementation.....	38
Monitoring, Oversight and Review	39
Annex 1 Indicators for measuring progress towards the objectives of the National Action Plan Against Racism	41
Annex 2 How the National Action Plan Against Racism was developed.....	46
Annex 3 References.....	53

Foreword from An Taoiseach

As a society, we are becoming more diverse, and with this, our attitudes and actions towards differences must also change. Most Irish people recognise the benefits which this diversity has brought, enriching our communities, growing our economy by filling gaps in the labour force and helping to staff our health service. However, combating racism is a responsibility we all share. The actions under the National Plan will further help us to do so.

We can all relate to the goals set out in the plan, and many of us take them for granted in our daily lives: being safe, being seen and being counted are aspects of life which everyone should enjoy. Unfortunately, overt, or covert racism means that some people are treated differently. The aim of this Plan is to ensure that everyone can expect to be treated the same.

This Plan also acknowledges that racism can be experienced differently by different groups. It can overlap with other forms of discrimination and oppression, like gender-based or ethnic-based oppression. The actions that the Committee feels would make the most difference to those affected by racism are prioritised. These actions are designed to be flexible, ensuring that they are as effective as possible in targeting and rooting out racism wherever it arises. They are designed to apply to all individuals and groups in Ireland who are experiencing racism.

Applying the proposals under the Plan will not always be easy, and some will take longer than others. We must take a stand against discrimination, to ensure that minority ethnic groups have equal opportunities and are respected and esteemed in all parts of their lives. There is a moral obligation to do so. Acknowledging the existence and consequences of racism is the first step towards eliminating it in all its forms. I believe that with this Plan, we can help to build a better society for us all.

Leo Varadkar, Taoiseach

Foreword from Minister for Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth

I am delighted to launch Ireland's National Action Plan Against Racism. Ireland is a multi-ethnic and multi-cultural nation, and everyone who lives here has a right to live free of racial discrimination. Despite this, there is clear evidence that racism exists in Ireland, and that many of us who live here feel its impact on our day-to-day lives.

This National Plan proposes actions to help make Ireland a place where the impacts of racism are acknowledged and actively addressed. It is rooted in a commitment to human rights values, democracy and the rule of law. It recognises the State's obligation to respect and protect human rights, and the roles of private actors. The plan applies to everyone in Ireland, as we all have a shared responsibility to address racism in our daily lives.

The understanding of racism adopted for this plan is a living one, building on international legal concepts and obligations as well as relevant EU and Irish legislation. It underscores the importance of intersectionality, a concept that offers a framework for understanding how different forms of discrimination interact to create further marginalisation and exclusion.

Racism often intersects with other forms of oppression, including oppression experienced by people based on gender, socio-economic circumstances, disability, sexuality and gender identity. It is therefore vital that care is taken to ensure that these actions meet the needs of those who might be doubly oppressed. For this reason, the focus on intersectionality is a core principle underpinning the plan.

I would like to thank the independent Anti-Racism Committee for all its hard work in creating this plan. The expertise of committee members, as well as a significant contribution from the wider public, has been crucial in creating concrete actions that can effect real change in Ireland. This is an important step towards a country where everyone feels welcome, and can live their lives without fear or oppression.

Minister Roderic O'Gorman

Foreword from the Minister of State for Community Development, Integration and Charities

As the Minister of State for Community Development, Integration and Charities, it is a real honour for me to launch the National Action Plan Against Racism. Fighting racism intersects with all aspects of my portfolio, so I am particularly invested in the action plan laid out by the independent Anti-Racism Committee.

Inclusive communities are vital to ensure that minority ethnic groups feel a sense of safety, connection and belonging. Society as a whole is a healthier place where a culture of challenging racism is not just embedded at a national policy level but also at a community level. I encourage everyone in Ireland to consider what they can do in this respect - whether it is standing as an ally to someone who has been subjected to racism, acknowledging and acting on one's own role in perpetuating attitudes driven by racism, getting involved in anti-racism initiatives in your area or reaching out to people from a minority ethnic group in your locality. Community action can be the bedrock of a societal shift in how we respond to racism.

The actions in the plan are ambitious, but a society that is determined to be inclusive should be ambitious in tackling racism. The Committee's Plan reflects the huge response to the public consultation process. This shows a real desire for change among the people of Ireland. I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to everyone who contributed. Best practice and direct personal experience are key to forming robust policy.

The perspectives of the public must be present in the design, implementation and review of decisions that impact on all of our lives - inclusive consultation and meaningful engagement are key to this. I believe that through strong engagement with marginalised groups by decision-making bodies, we can build a society based on equality, where everyone, regardless of their background, can feel safe, seen and heard.

Minister Joe O'Brien

Foreword from the Chair of the Anti-Racism Committee

The appointment of the independent Anti-Racism Committee in 2020 was an important moment, an indicator of the renewed commitment of Government to address racism in Ireland. The Committee in its *Interim Report* (submitted November 2020) identified the main task as the development and drafting of a National Action Plan Against Racism. The UN has noted that ‘A national action plan against racial discrimination is both an outcome and a process...and the involvement of groups that are or could be affected by racial discrimination in each stage of the plan is key to its realisation.’¹

Hence the Committee embarked on a wide-ranging process of consultation with stakeholders, experts, civil society organisations and the business sector; inviting submissions from the public, and holding a series of bilateral meetings with government departments and other duty bearers. The willingness and generosity of individuals with lived experience of racism, and of civil and community organisations to engage with the Committee’s work was remarkable. There was evident, however, a degree of fatigue and frustration that effective action has not yet been taken to address the systemic racism and discrimination faced by minority ethnic communities in Ireland.

In developing and drafting this plan, the Committee listened closely to those who engaged with us, benchmarked against best practice and experience in other jurisdictions, and took account of Ireland’s international obligations. The process was one of working in partnership with affected communities and those with lived experience of racism. Committee members themselves come from a wide variety of perspectives, knowledge and expertise, which informed and contributed to the richness and complexity of our discussions and decision-making process. The process was an iterative one – important for the robust and rigorous nature of choices ultimately made. The resultant National Action Plan Against Racism will render Ireland a better society for all, where every person has an opportunity to reach their full potential and live a fulfilled life in safety and health. The plan’s actions to counter racial discrimination require political will however, and the resources to implement the broad range of measures which complement and reinforce each other. To achieve this, the plan contains a robust and effective process for implementation, monitoring and review.

As the period of the Anti-Racism Committee’s work paralleled the Covid-19 pandemic, all meetings were held online. Despite this challenge, the engagement, collegiality and commitment of Committee members – who all have busy lives – remained constant and undimmed. I am grateful to colleagues for their hard work and enthusiasm for what was a complex process. The Secretariat provided by the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth also deserve special thanks, as they were hugely supportive of the work of the Committee, providing research, expert advice, essential drafting skills and occasional wise counsel.

Professor Emerita Caroline Fennell

¹ *Developing National Action Plans Against Racial Discrimination. A Practical Guide HR/PUB/13/3 2014 United Nations*

Introduction

Ireland is a multi-ethnic and multi-cultural nation. Everyone has a right to live free of racial discrimination. And yet, there is clear evidence that racism exists in Ireland and that some of us who live here feel its impact on our day-to-day lives in a variety of ways. This National Action Plan Against Racism proposes actions to help Ireland to become a place where the impacts of racism are acknowledged and actively addressed.

The plan was developed by an independent committee appointed by the Government in 2020. It follows the committee's [Interim Report](#), published in 2021, which sets out the overall approach, the guiding principles and understandings of racism the committee employed in developing the plan². The committee consulted widely and received a large number of submissions. Information on the committee and the process used to develop the plan is provided at Annex 2.

Structure of Plan

This introductory section describes the social and policy context for the development of the plan and explains some of the terms used in it. The second section contains the overall vision and objectives for the plan. The third section proposes a set of priority actions that need to be taken for these objectives to be met. The fourth section makes more detailed recommendations on what will be required to achieve and maintain racial equality in Ireland. The fifth section describes how the plan is to be implemented, while the final section proposes arrangements for its monitoring and review. A set of indicators to measure progress towards the objectives of the plan is supplied at Annex 1.

Scope

This plan is Ireland's national level, state-led, co-ordinated approach to eliminating racism in all its forms in Ireland. This includes, but is not limited to, racism that impacts on Travellers, as well as anti-Muslim prejudice and antisemitism. The development of the plan has also been informed by particular experiences of racism, including racism experienced by People of African Descent, Asians and Roma, as well as migrants, refugees and asylum seekers. Individual actions in the plan do not make reference to specific minority ethnic groups. Each action should be understood to encompass all individuals and groups experiencing racism. The plan is part of Ireland's response to the UN's call for global action to eliminate racism and part of a wider effort to tackle racism and its impacts across the European Union.

The plan is intended to be implemented over a five-year period, from the beginning of 2023 to the end of 2027.

² *This plan constitutes part of Ireland's efforts to fulfil its obligations under the UN International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, and the UN Durban Declaration and Programme of Action which Ireland signed up to in 2001. It follows the guiding principles set out in Developing National Action Plans Against Racial Discrimination: A Practical Guide, UN OHCHR, 2014 and A Union of Equality: EU anti-racism action plan 2020-2025.*

Terminology

In this plan, the term ‘racism’ refers to a form of domination which manifests through those power dynamics present in structural and institutional arrangements, practices, policies and cultural norms, which have the effect of excluding or discriminating against individuals or groups, based on race, colour, descent, or national or ethnic origin.

This understanding of racism is closely aligned with the [International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination \(ICERD\)](#), which Ireland is party to. Under the ICERD:

“...the term “racial discrimination” shall mean any distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference based on race, colour, descent, or national or ethnic origin which has the purpose or effect of nullifying or impairing the recognition, enjoyment or exercise, on an equal footing, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural or any other field of public life.” (Article 1, ICERD)

Racism occurs in many areas of society and affects many aspects of people’s lives. As recognised in the [UN Durban Declaration on Racism and Programme of Action \(DDPA\)](#), the principles of which have informed the development of this plan, racism is a structurally embedded phenomenon of domination and power, which is reflected through and reproduced by institutional arrangements, and is experienced by groups and individuals. This interplay between structure and institutions in the reproduction of racism, is referred to as ‘systemic racism’. Systemic racism is manifest in the ways that it prevents people from enjoying their rights across many domains, including their economic, social and cultural rights, as well as their civil and political rights. Racism is present whether the exclusion is intentional or not. For many people living in Ireland, racism, in one form or another, is part of everyday life. Racial discrimination interacts with other forms of discrimination.

In this document, individuals and groups who experience racism are referred to interchangeably as “minority ethnic”, “racialised” or simply “experiencing racism”, unless more specific terminology is required.

Principles Underpinning the Plan

This plan is rooted in a commitment to human rights, democracy and the rule of law. It recognises the State’s obligation to respect and protect human rights. It also recognises the roles of private actors – organisations and individuals – in our collective journey towards racial equality. These values characterise the approach and inform the actions proposed. The plan applies to everyone in Ireland, including citizens and residents, migrant workers (documented or undocumented), refugees and asylum seekers, and, where relevant, visitors.

The plan is informed by [A Union of Equality: EU anti-racism action plan 2020-2025](#) which acknowledges the prevalence and impact of racism across the EU, and states:

“Racism comes in different forms. Overt expressions of individual racism and racial discrimination are the most obvious. All too often, racial or ethnic origin is used as a

ground to discriminate. People of Asian and African descent, Muslims, Jewish and Roma people have all suffered from intolerance. But other, less explicit forms of racism and racial discrimination, such as those based on unconscious bias, can be equally damaging.”³

Participation of Groups Affected by Racism

A key principle underpinning this plan is that affected groups should participate in the development of and oversight of all government policy initiatives and targeted measures to address racism. This refers in particular to the development, implementation and oversight of the actions and initiatives contained in this plan.

The understanding of racism adopted for this plan is a living one, building on international legal concepts and obligations as well as relevant EU and Irish legislation. It underscores the importance of intersectionality, a concept that offers a framework for understanding how different forms of discrimination interact to create further marginalisation and exclusion.

The plan acknowledges the intersectionality between racism and all other forms of oppression, including the oppressions experienced by people based on gender, socio-economic circumstances, disability, sexuality, religious belief and gender identity. It recognises poverty as a primary driver for racist marginalisation. It further acknowledges that women, children and men experience dimensions of racism differently. Therefore, while all priority actions in the plan are broadly applicable, it is important to bear in mind that the best way to implement any given action will vary for different individuals and groups. Care must be taken in implementing the actions in this plan to pay attention to the intersectionality between race and gender.

Women and Racism

This plan acknowledges the intersection of oppression based on gender and oppression based on race and that, because of this intersectionality, women and men can experience racism differently. This means that the remedies and responses proposed need to take account of this. With very few exceptions, the plan does not propose specific actions that relate only to women, as this was felt to increase the risk of reinforcing marginalisation. Rather, and in line with mainstreaming approaches, all actions in the plan are to be read as applying to everyone. However – and this is critically important – because racism has a differential impact on women and men, implementing partners must assess this differential impact when devising implementation plans and actions and must tailor those plans and actions accordingly. All implementation and monitoring data for the plan must be disaggregated by gender.

It is also important to bear in mind that many of the actions in the plan will need to be carried out across all sectors. For example, the actions relating to anti-racism workforce training and ethnic equality monitoring must be implemented widely, though they are specified only once in order to avoid repetition in the plan. It is therefore important to read the plan as a whole.

³ *A Union of Equality : EU anti-racism action plan 2020-2025*

National and local government and agencies are responsible for the plan's implementation. This role is challenging but essential for realising the transformative objectives in the plan in partnership with individuals and groups affected by racism. Communities in all their diversity at national and local levels throughout Ireland are crucial to the implementation of the plan. They are essential for naming the systemic racism embedded in their areas and in national and local institutions; in developing and taking autonomous actions to address it; and in monitoring national and local implementation of the plan's actions and recommendations.

Implementation and monitoring of this plan will depend on access to good quality data that provides insight into the experience and outcomes of minority ethnic groups. Care must be taken to ensure that survey data used has a sufficient sample size to ensure adequate representation of all minority groups. Where this is not possible, alternative methods of gathering evidence on the experience and outcomes of under-represented groups should be employed.

Following the understanding of racism as a dynamic phenomenon, the plan has been developed to be able to counteract new manifestations of racism that may emerge.

Ethnic Diversity in Ireland

Ireland's population is ethnically diverse, with various minority ethnic groups accounting for approximately 15 per cent of the population in [Census 2016](#). Census 2016 also saw large increases in the number and proportion of Irish citizens from a minority ethnic background. People with a nationality other than Irish now account for an estimated 13 per cent of the population (CSO estimate 2021). This estimate does not include the number of dual nationalities, those who have naturalised, and second or third generation Irish with one or more parents or grandparents with migrant backgrounds. The number of Irish Travellers enumerated in Census 2016 was 30,987⁴. This community has a distinct demographic profile, with nearly 40% under the age of 14 (compared to 21% of the general population) and 3% aged 65 and over (compared to 13% of the general population).

Legal Protections from Racial Discrimination

There are several different laws in Ireland that protect people from racism.

- The [Equal Status Acts 2000-2018](#) prohibit discrimination in the provision of goods and services, accommodation and education on the nine grounds of gender, marital status, family status, age, disability, sexual orientation, race, religion, and membership of the Traveller community.
- [The Employment Equality Acts 1998-2015](#) prohibit discrimination in employment on the same grounds.
- [The Prohibition of Incitement to Hatred Act 1989](#) (now under review as part of the Criminal Justice (Incitement to Violence or Hatred and Hate Offences) Bill 2022) has provisions against racist hate speech."

⁴ Concern has been expressed by Traveller organisations and others that this figure significantly underestimates the population, which may be in excess of 40,000.

- Under the [Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty](#), all public bodies in Ireland have responsibility to promote equality, prevent discrimination and protect the human rights of their employees, customers, service users and everyone affected by their policies and plans.
- [Article 40.1](#) of the Constitution provides that ‘all citizens shall, as human persons, be held equal before the law.’
- Ireland is bound by the obligations of the International Convention for the Elimination of all forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD). This legally binding international human rights treaty requires all parties to it to pursue active policies to eliminate all forms of racial discrimination. CERD General Recommendation 30, made in 2004, underlines that the protections of the Convention apply to non-citizens.
- [The Good Friday Agreement](#) has concrete non-discrimination and human rights provisions North and South, including in the areas of policing and justice.

European Union law, which applies in Ireland, also protects people from racism. The Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union enshrines in primary EU law a wide spectrum of fundamental rights enjoyed by EU citizens and residents, in particular [Article 20: Equality before the law](#) and [Article 21: Non-discrimination](#). Relevant EU instruments include:

- [The EU Racial Equality Directive \(2000\)](#), which outlaws discrimination on the basis of a person’s racial or ethnic origin in the areas of employment, education, social security, health care and access to goods and services. The Directive establishes a framework for combating discrimination and gives effect to the principle of equal treatment in EU Member States. It operates alongside the Employment Equality Directive, which prohibits discrimination in employment on a number of grounds, including religion or belief. Both are given effect in Irish law by the Equality Acts outlined above.
- [The Victims’ Rights Directive](#), which provides for a number of supports to victims, and is given effect in Ireland through the [Criminal Justice \(Victims of Crime\) Act 2017](#).
- [Council Framework Decision of 28 November 2008 on combating certain forms and expressions of racism and xenophobia by means of criminal law](#), which requires Member States to criminalise public incitement to violence or hatred, on grounds of race, colour, religion, descent or national or ethnic origin (including online).

Legislation in development to strengthen legal protections from racial discrimination

The government is developing further legislation to strengthen protections from hate crime and hate speech, including online.

The [Online Safety and Media Regulation Bill](#) proposes to establish a new regulator for online media, and will transpose the revised [EU Audiovisual Media Services Directive](#) into Irish law, including providing for online safety through the regulation of video-sharing platform services.

Ireland is taking action to strengthen legal provisions to address hate crime. [The Criminal Justice \(Incitement to Violence or Hatred and Hate Offences\) Bill 2022](#) was published on 27 October 2022 and has completed Committee Stage in the Dáil.

The government is undertaking a review of existing equality legislation to consider whether or not the legislation remains effective in protecting people against discrimination in employment, accommodation and access to goods and services.

Public policies addressing racial discrimination

Notwithstanding the legal protections described above, evidence of the persistence of racial discrimination across many spheres of life exists, while integration and equality monitoring consistently shows that people from minority groups have higher probabilities of poorer outcomes across a range of measures.

Strategies to address minority ethnic disadvantage have been adopted in many domains of public policy. In particular, two recent whole-of-government strategies – the [Migrant Integration Strategy 2017-2021](#) and the [National Traveller and Roma Inclusion Strategy \(NTRIS\) 2017-2021](#) – have sought to address this area through a series of both mainstreamed and targeted initiatives. More broadly, the [National Strategy for Women and Girls 2017-2021](#) has sought to address gender based inequalities and as such has provided a vehicle for addressing the intersectional impacts of gender and raced based discrimination. This plan draws on lessons learned from the implementation of these three strategies.

The success of this plan will be supported by the continued implementation of related policy commitments, in particular those directly relevant to minority ethnic groups. These include [A White Paper to End Direct Provision and to Establish a New International Protection Support Service](#) (2021) which commits to put in place a new human rights based model for the integration of asylum seekers; implementation of the [Expert Review of Traveller Accommodation](#) (2019); publication and implementation of the National Traveller Health Action Plan; development and implementation of a National Traveller Education Strategy, a National Traveller and Roma Mental Health Action Plan and of a Junior Cycle level two Irish Cultural Studies course, which is to include Traveller culture and history. Meeting these Programme for Government commitments will support the achievement of the objectives of this plan.

To ensure a coordinated approach to the elimination of systemic racism, this plan should be regarded as relevant to other national policy initiatives, including the [Resilience and Recovery Plan](#), the [Climate Action Plan](#) and future zero-carbon sustainable infrastructure plans. Its objectives and actions are also of relevance to North/South peacebuilding initiatives, including those under the Good Friday Agreement, the implementation of the [Future of Policing in Ireland Report](#), the [Sustainable Inclusive and Empowered Communities: A five-year strategy to support the community and voluntary sector in Ireland 2019-2024](#), and the ongoing whole-of-society response to the war in Ukraine.

Vision and Objectives

This plan recognises the historical contributions of minority ethnic groups to Ireland's development, culture, way of life and economy. It also recognises the benefits of diversity in Ireland today. Recognising that racism has its roots in colonialism, oppression and domination, this plan rejects the divisions it fosters and sets a vision of an inclusive and purposefully anti-racist republic, which cherishes all who live here equally. This vision is of a fair, equal and inclusive society, where minority ethnic groups share full parity of esteem and respect, where everyone is able to enjoy their fundamental rights and freedoms and has equal opportunities in all aspects of life, irrespective of their racial background; a society in which the existence and impacts of racism are acknowledged and all sectors work to eliminate racial discrimination in all its forms.

To support progress towards this vision, this plan sets the following objectives:

Being Safe and Being Heard - Supporting people who experience racism and protecting people from racist incidents and crimes

Objective One:

To strengthen protections from racist incidents and crimes and to make it easier for people experiencing racism to access effective remedies.

New measures to facilitate reporting of racism both by victims and witnesses and to provide a victim-centred, easy-to-navigate process for victims of racist incidents and crimes will play a part in achieving this objective.

Being Equal - Addressing ethnic inequalities

Objective Two:

To address inequality of outcomes for people experiencing racism, including in employment, education, health and housing.

Positive measures, including those to tackle persistent socio-economic inequality among minority ethnic communities, will play a part in achieving this objective.

Being Seen and Taking Part - Enabling minority participation

Objective Three:

To support the representation and participation of minority ethnic people in all aspects of life in Ireland, in particular where they are currently under-represented.

Addressing racism in media representation and removing barriers to minority ethnic people accessing leadership roles, including through positive measures, will play a part in achieving this objective.

Being Counted – Measuring the impacts of racism

Objective Four:

To build a better understanding in Ireland of the experiences and outcomes of minority ethnic groups and those experiencing racism, as well as of the causes of and remedies for racism.

Improved gathering and use of data, as well as specific research, will be essential to achieving this objective.

Being Together – A shared journey to racial equality

Objective Five:

To work together to understand the prevalence and impact of racism, both throughout our history and today, and make a collective effort to eliminate it.

Addressing racism embedded in educational curricula and building public understanding of everyone's role in fostering racial equality will play a part in achieving this objective.

The next two sections of this plan set out the actions to be taken to support the achievement of these objectives. These are arranged as 'Priority Actions' and 'Recommendations'.

Priority Actions

We can only achieve the objectives set out in this plan by working together. We need to take action in many areas. Some actions have been identified as fundamental to the achievement of the plan's objectives and work should begin on these straight away. These priority actions are set out below. The priority actions are by necessity presented at a high level – further detail on steps needed to implement them is provided in the subsequent recommendations section.

Priority Actions under the five objectives

Objective One: Being Safe and Being Heard – Supporting people who experience racism and protecting people from racist incidents and crimes

Objective Two: Being Equal – Addressing ethnic inequalities

Objective Three: Being Seen and Taking Part – Enabling minority participation

Objective Four: Being Counted – Measuring the impacts of racism

Objective Five: Being Together – A shared journey to racial equality

Priority Actions to achieve Objective One

Being Safe and Being Heard - Supporting people who experience racism and protecting people from racist incidents and crimes

Everyone has a right to feel safe and to live free from harm. The priority actions under this objective aim to protect people from racist crimes, as well as from incidents of racist abuse and discrimination that do not reach a criminal threshold under the law. Everyone also has a right to be heard and to have their concerns taken seriously and followed-up appropriately. The priority actions under this objective aim to make it easier for people who have experienced or witnessed racism to report this and to receive the support they need, both within the justice system and beyond.

Reporting and Responding to Racist Incidents and Crimes

Action 1.1	Put in place new mechanisms to facilitate third-party and online reporting of racist incidents. This to include development of a standard civil society national framework to monitor and respond appropriately to racist incidents and hate crimes.
<i>Implementing Bodies (indicative)</i>	<i>Department of Justice, An Garda Síochána, Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth, Department of Rural and Community Development, Local Authorities, Community and Voluntary Organisations</i>
<i>Target Completion Date (by end year)</i>	2027

Action 1.2	Introduce and publicise safeguards so that all victims of and witnesses to racist incidents and crimes can feel safe in reporting to An Garda Síochána, irrespective of their immigration status.
<i>Implementing Bodies (indicative)</i>	<i>An Garda Síochána</i>
<i>Target Completion Date (by end year)</i>	2024

Action 1.3	Establish a specialist unit within each Garda Division for the purpose of developing and disseminating expertise and best practice in dealing with hate crime and racist incidents.
<i>Implementing Body indicative</i>	<i>An Garda Síochána</i>
<i>Target Completion Date (by end year)</i>	2024

Accessing Legal Advice

Action 1.4	Improve access to legal advice and representation for groups experiencing racism. This to include creating links between community organisations and Legal Aid Board Law Centres; extending the remit of the Legal Aid Board to provide legal representation; and giving advocacy organisations standing to initiate proceedings on behalf of those affected by racism.
<i>Implementing Bodies (indicative)</i>	<i>Department of Justice, Legal Aid Board, Civil Society Organisations</i>
<i>Target Completion Date (by end year)</i>	2027

Policing

Action 1.5	Identify and eliminate any policing practices that target specific groups experiencing racism, including through racial or ethnic profiling. Measures to carry out this action, including training for An Garda Síochána, will need to ensure sensitivity to victims of human trafficking.
<i>Implementing Bodies (indicative)</i>	<i>An Garda Síochána, Representative organisations of communities affected by these practices.</i>
<i>Target Completion Date (by end year)</i>	2025

Supporting Victims of Racism

Action 1.6	Develop and strengthen mechanisms to address harms caused to individuals by racist actions.
<i>Implementing Bodies (indicative)</i>	<i>Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth, Department of Justice.</i>
<i>Target Completion Date (by end year)</i>	2024

Priority Actions to achieve Objective Two

Being Equal – Addressing ethnic inequalities

Systemic racism is evident in the persistence of poorer outcomes for minority ethnic groups in comparison to the majority population across a range of domains. A purposefully anti-racist society recognises these differentials as racism and works to eliminate them. The priority actions under this objective centre on key socio-economic areas in which measures are required to address persistent disadvantage among many communities experiencing racism. Employment and education in particular are powerful enablers of equality, but can also reproduce systemic racism and exacerbate inequalities, and these priority actions have been selected with this in mind.

Employment

Action 2.1	Introduce measures to combat racism in employment. This to include specific measures for sectors and workplaces where minority ethnic groups are under-represented, and for sectors and workplaces where they are over-represented. Expand access for people from minority ethnic groups to management and senior executive positions.
<i>Implementing Bodies (indicative)</i>	<i>Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth, Professional Governing Bodies, Public Appointments Service</i>
<i>Target Completion Date (by end year)</i>	2027
Action 2.2	Introduce timely, accessible and transparent mechanisms by which qualifications earned outside Ireland can be recognised for use within Ireland.
<i>Implementing Bodies (indicative)</i>	<i>Professional Bodies, Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science, Quality and Qualifications Ireland</i>
<i>Target Completion Date (by end year)</i>	2027
Action 2.3	Develop and adopt a training, enterprise and employment strategy to increase the employment of groups experiencing racism.
<i>Implementing Bodies (indicative)</i>	<i>Department of Social Protection, Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science.</i>
<i>Target Completion Date (by end year)</i>	2024

Education

Action 2.4	Introduce measures to address ethnic differentials in education and achieve equality of enrolment, retention, attendance, progression and outcomes for groups experiencing racism. This to include actions to address the recognised differentials for the education of minorities caused by Covid-19 and its outcomes.
<i>Implementing Bodies (indicative)</i>	<i>Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth, Department of Education, Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science, Educational Institutions, Education Governing and Regulatory Bodies.</i>
<i>Target Completion Date (by end year)</i>	2027

Action 2.5	Take steps to strengthen inclusion and anti-racism at all levels of the education system, including through addressing any bias embedded in the curriculum, and to support approaches that are fully intersectional and intercultural.
<i>Implementing Bodies (indicative)</i>	<i>Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth, Department of Education, Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science, Educational Institutions, Education Governing and Regulatory Bodies.</i>
<i>Target Completion Date (by end year)</i>	2025

Action 2.6	Include specific measures to target minority ethnic researchers in all national research funding programmes.
<i>Implementing Bodies (indicative)</i>	<i>Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science, Department of Health, Irish Research Council, Science Foundation Ireland, Health Research Board, Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth</i>
<i>Target Completion Date (by end year)</i>	2024

Housing and Accommodation

Action 2.7	Introduce special measures for groups experiencing racism who are most at risk of homelessness or are unable to access appropriate housing or accommodation.
<i>Implementing Bodies (indicative)</i>	<i>Local Authorities, Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage</i>
<i>Target Completion Date (by end year)</i>	<i>2027</i>

Action 2.8	Address discrimination against racialised groups in accessing the private rented sector, including differentials in access to and acceptance of the Housing Assistance Payment (HAP), which can impact on minority ethnic groups accessing accommodation.
<i>Implementing Bodies (indicative)</i>	<i>Local Authorities, Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage</i>
<i>Target Completion Date (by end year)</i>	<i>2025</i>

Health

Action 2.9	Put in place measures to address ethnic differentials in health and mental health outcomes, acknowledging the social determinants of health. This to include culturally appropriate targeted measures in mainstream services and reinforcement of autonomous peer led targeted initiatives.
<i>Implementing Bodies (indicative)</i>	<i>Department of Health, Health Service Executive</i>
<i>Target Completion Date (by end year)</i>	<i>2025</i>

Children and Young People

Action 2.10	Make changes to oversight mechanisms with the aim of ensuring that child and family services are provided in a non-biased and culturally sensitive manner; and establish an advisory group where service users of child welfare organisations who have experience of racism can share their lived experiences to inform future practice improvements.
<i>Implementing Bodies (indicative)</i>	<i>Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth, Tusla</i>
<i>Target Completion Date (by end year)</i>	2025

Action 2.11	Take measures to ensure the inclusion of minority ethnic young people in mainstream youth work and other state funded youth initiatives, reinforce support for targeted minority ethnic group youth initiatives, and resource initiatives aimed at empowering young people to understand and challenge racism.
<i>Implementing Bodies (indicative)</i>	<i>Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth, National Youth Council of Ireland</i>
<i>Target Completion Date (by end year)</i>	2025

Cultural and Community Participation

Action 2.12	Establish the position of racial equality officer in all arts, culture and sports funding bodies. This role to include working with funding recipients to support local, collaborative anti-racism programmes across the arts, culture and sports sectors.
<i>Implementing Bodies (indicative)</i>	<i>Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media, Sport Ireland, Local Sports Partnerships, Arts Council, Funding Bodies</i>
<i>Target Completion Date (by end year)</i>	2027

Action 2.13	Take steps to increase the participation of minority ethnic groups in arts, culture and sports activities and establish information-sharing and peer-networking channels for young athletes and artists from racialised backgrounds to enable them to develop their careers.
<i>Implementing Bodies (indicative)</i>	<i>Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media, Sport Ireland, Local Sports Partnerships, Arts Council, Funding Bodies</i>
<i>Target Completion Date (by end year)</i>	2024

Action 2.14	Provide funding for national and local initiatives that aim to combat racism and foster racial equality and community cohesion, in order to support the implementation of this plan and the achievement of its objectives.
<i>Implementing Bodies (indicative)</i>	<i>Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth, Community and Voluntary Organisations</i>
<i>Target Completion Date (by end year)</i>	2023

Interpretation Services

Action 2.15	Professionalise and regulate interpreting services used by public bodies, including through the development of a system of accreditation and training, and address barriers faced by groups experiencing racism in accessing these careers.
<i>Implementing Bodies (indicative)</i>	<i>Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth, Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science, Quality and Qualifications Ireland, all public authorities</i>
<i>Target Completion Date (by end year)</i>	2027

Priority Actions to achieve Objective Three

Being Seen and Taking Part - Enabling minority participation

Balanced representation of minority ethnic groups throughout community initiatives, across the political spectrum, and across all forms of media is an important marker of a society that aspires to racial equality. Priority actions under this objective seek to support this balanced representation, and also to strengthen efforts to counteract the spread of racist hate content online. This objective concerns the representation and participation of minority ethnic people in all aspects of life in Ireland, in particular where they are currently under-represented, and also where they can become local leaders in the community. While this is a broad objective that will require effort across many sectors, increasing the ethnic diversity of our democratic institutions is essential to its achievement, and this is reflected in the selection of priority actions.

Community and Media Participation and Representation

Action 3.1	Consider ethnic and racial equality and diversity in all media programming, and make this a criterion for funding.
<i>Implementing Bodies (indicative)</i>	<i>Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media, Coimisiún na Meán</i>
<i>Target Completion Date (by end year)</i>	2024

Action 3.2	Develop a code of ethics for media practices to address the representation in media of minority ethnic and racialised communities, and make adherence to the code a condition for public funding of media.
<i>Implementing Body</i>	<i>Coimisiún na Meán</i>
<i>Target Completion Date (by end year)</i>	2025

Action 3.3	Take steps to ensure that measures to eliminate the dissemination of hate speech online are effective and have regard to the local context in Ireland.
<i>Implementing Bodies (indicative)</i>	<i>Coimisiún na Meán, Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media, Online Service Providers</i>
<i>Target Completion Date (by end year)</i>	2024

Action 3.4	Develop pathways for media training for members of communities experiencing racism, and encourage and support minority ethnic media professionals.
<i>Implementing Bodies (indicative)</i>	<i>Coimisiún na Meán, Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media, Online Service Providers</i>
<i>Target Completion Date (by end year)</i>	2024

Action 3.5	Support community development projects and initiatives that work with minority ethnic communities to address racism, promote inclusion and have a say in the decisions that affect their lives.
<i>Implementing Bodies (indicative)</i>	<i>Department of Rural and Community Development, Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth, Local Authorities</i>
<i>Target Completion Date (by end year)</i>	2024

Political Representation and Participation

Action 3.6	Establish public office mentoring programmes for members of minority ethnic communities and introduce positive measures to support the selection of minority ethnic candidates, based on the model in use to increase the numbers of women in politics.
<i>Implementing Bodies (indicative)</i>	<i>Political Parties, Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, Local Authorities</i>
<i>Target Completion Date (by end year)</i>	2025

Priority Actions to achieve Objective Four

Being Counted – Measuring the impacts of racism

We cannot hope to understand the prevalence and impact of racism in our society without access to ethnically disaggregated data across all policy domains. Both quantitative and qualitative data are essential to informing our understanding of and responses to racism in all its forms. Designing and implementing effective programmes to eliminate systemic racism relies on the availability of such data. The priority actions under this objective are aimed at addressing the significant shortcomings in our ethnic equality monitoring, data collection and use, enabling us to tackle racism from a position of knowledge and insight.

Ethnic Equality Data

Action 4.1	Determine data sources that can be used to monitor racial equality according to the outcome indicators set out in the Monitoring section of this plan.
<i>Implementing Bodies (indicative)</i>	<i>Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth, Central Statistics Office, Department of Public Expenditure, NDP Delivery and Reform, Data Protection Commission</i>
<i>Target Completion Date (by end year)</i>	2024

Action 4.2	Create legal safeguards for the collection of ethnicity data by recognising ethnic equality monitoring as a legitimate basis for gathering special category data.
<i>Implementing Bodies (indicative)</i>	<i>Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth, Central Statistics Office, Department of Public Expenditure, NDP Delivery and Reform, Data Protection Commission</i>
<i>Target Completion Date (by end year)</i>	2025

Action 4.3	Introduce a standardised ethnic classification (based on the Census) across all routine administrative systems, state agencies and surveys in line with human rights standards, to enable ethnic equality proofing and monitoring of state policies, budgets and programming. This to be supported by the development and use of standard ethnic equality data monitoring tools and guidelines, and to link in with the forthcoming Equality Data Strategy.
<i>Implementing Bodies (indicative)</i>	<i>Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth, Central Statistics Office, Department of Public Expenditure, NDP Delivery and Reform</i>
<i>Target Completion Date (by end year)</i>	2025

Action 4.4	Carry out a comparison of Census 2016 and Census 2022 to provide data to inform action on the intersectionalities of ethnicity and other protected characteristics.
<i>Implementing Body (indicative)</i>	<i>Central Statistics Office</i>
<i>Target Completion Date (by end year)</i>	2025

Priority Actions to achieve Objective Five

Being Together – A shared journey to racial equality

Racism affects all of us. It is a part of our past and our present. This objective is about working together so that it need not be a part of our shared future. To achieve this we need to accept that we all have a role to play in building a society free of racism. The priority actions under this objective seek to build a broad base of support for and engagement with the work we need to do to achieve racial equality in Ireland.

Combating Racism through Mainstream Policies, Programmes and Legislation

Action 5.1	Include objectives and actions to address racism, including systemic racism, in all relevant public policy programmes, publicly funded community and voluntary sector programmes, and private sector state commissioned and resourced services.
<i>Implementing Bodies (indicative)</i>	<i>All public authorities and relevant community and voluntary organisations, Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth, Department of Rural and Community Development</i>
<i>Target Completion Date (by end year)</i>	2024
Action 5.2	Carry out reviews of existing and proposed legislation that impacts on minority ethnic groups, in order to determine the extent to which it supports the achievement of the objectives of this plan, and where necessary propose changes.
<i>Implementing Bodies (indicative)</i>	<i>All government bodies</i>
<i>Target Completion Date (by end year)</i>	2027

Understanding and Preventing Racism

Action 5.3	Carry out a public education and awareness raising programme in support of the objectives of this plan.
<i>Implementing Bodies (indicative)</i>	<i>Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth</i>
<i>Target Completion Date (by end year)</i>	2023
Action 5.4	Introduce a workers and employers guide for combating racism and promoting racial equality in the workplace across all sectors, with an associated awareness campaign.
<i>Implementing Bodies (indicative)</i>	<i>Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment, ICTU, Ibec, Employer and Professional Bodies</i>
<i>Target Completion Date (by end year)</i>	2025
Action 5.5	Introduce mandatory and continuing anti-racism education, including cultural competency and unconscious-bias training for all staff at all levels throughout the public sector, as part of the fulfilment of the Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty.
<i>Implementing Bodies (indicative)</i>	<i>Department of Public Expenditure, NDP Delivery and Reform, all public sector employers</i>
<i>Target Completion Date (by end year)</i>	2027
Action 5.6	National research funding programmes to include objectives on racial equality and racist extremism in research prioritisation.
<i>Implementing Bodies (indicative)</i>	<i>Department of Public Expenditure, NDP Delivery and Reform, Research, Innovation and Science, Irish Research Council, Science Foundation Ireland, Health Research Board, Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth</i>
<i>Target Completion Date (by end year)</i>	2024

Recommendations

This section of the plan presents further recommended actions to support the achievement of the plan's objectives. In many cases, these recommendations relate directly to the priority actions set out in the previous section, and contain information critical to the effective implementation of the priority actions. As before, this section is structured on the plan's five objectives.

Objective One

Being Safe and Being Heard - Supporting people who experience racism and protecting people from racist incidents and crimes

People experiencing racism need stronger protections from racist incidents and crimes, while victims need remedies that are both accessible and effective. Eliminating systemic racism in the justice system is essential to ensuring equal access to justice. This involves putting in place robust structures, practices and, where required, special measures to build and maintain trust between the justice system and groups experiencing racism. Greater diversity in all roles and professions in the legal system, with representation of minority ethnic groups, in all aspects and at all levels of the justice system will support this goal.

Recommendations

Enhancing legal protections and remedies for victims of racism

- Structures to enable dialogue and confidence building with groups subject to racial discrimination should be integrated into the work of An Garda Síochána; this should include work to develop national standards for dealing with hate crime and racist incidents.
- A monitoring and rapid response system or network should be developed at the local level to respond to acts of racism, hate crimes and incidents in the area, including bringing such incidents to the attention of the appropriate authorities. This should be a collaborative initiative of local authorities and community organisations.
- Right of access to legal representation in a Garda station should be provided for, including the right to have a suitable interpreter present, with the role of the interpreter to be covered specifically within the terms of legal professional privilege.
- The capacity of the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions to take an active role in the prosecution of hate crime should be strengthened.
- The scope of the Equal Status Acts should be extended to cover the investigation and prosecution of crime.
- The Equal Status Acts should be amended to remove limits on compensation to victims of discrimination.

- The capacity of the Workplace Relations Commission labour inspectorate to identify and flag cases of labour exploitation, including human trafficking, should be strengthened.
- Independent external review processes of the complaints mechanisms for those experiencing racism within the justice system (including in prison) should be put in place, with members of minority ethnic communities as part of the review processes.

Objective Two

Being Equal – Addressing ethnic inequalities

The impacts of systemic racism can most clearly be seen in inequalities of outcome for minority ethnic groups across a range of socio-economic indicators. This plan seeks to address inequality of outcomes, including in employment, education, health and housing. Positive measures to tackle persistent socio-economic inequality among minority ethnic groups will play a part in this. The racism experienced by children and young people is also a focus of this section of the plan.

Recommendations

Employment

- Guidelines should be developed for employers and employees regarding the employment permits and visa schemes in place for migrant workers and their families.
- The reviews of existing legislation that impacts on minorities (Priority Action 5.2) should encompass a review of the employment permits system from an ethnic and racial equality perspective.
- An Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Officer role should be created in the National Apprenticeship Office with the aim of increasing the enrolment of minority ethnic groups in the Apprenticeship Programme.
- A programme of actions should be developed to measure and reduce the ethnicity pay gap, building on recent initiatives with respect to the gender pay gap.
- An independent review should be carried out of barriers to recruitment for minority ethnic groups in the public sector.

Education

- A new intercultural education strategy should be developed and implemented, with full involvement of all cultures in Ireland, building on and reinforcing the previous intercultural education strategy.
- The capacity of the Education and Training Boards to offer intensive English language provision to migrants should be strengthened, including with respect to the provision of professional and technical ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) programmes and bridging programmes to support migrant workers seeking to access specialist and skilled employment.
- Steps should be taken to ensure that employment across the education sector reflects the ethnic diversity of Ireland, including through the use of recruitment and promotion practices aimed at increasing ethnic diversity.
- Partnerships should be established between educators and front-line community organisations to reach out to young people from racialised backgrounds.

- In light of ethnic differentials in education, the availability of language and literacy supports and of education financial supports should be reviewed in order to address differentials in minority participation and outcomes in education.
- Schools should be supported, including through staff training at all career stages, to develop effective policies and procedures for mitigating racism in the school environment, in consultation with expert bodies and affected groups.
- Research should be conducted to assess and recommend mitigation of any inherent bias in curricula.

Children and Young People

- Mentoring, career progression and leadership programmes should be provided for young people from groups experiencing racism.
- Targeted initiatives should be developed to provide inclusive and diverse spaces of belonging for young people of both majority and minority ethnic backgrounds.
- Safe spaces and appropriate support should be provided to young victims of racist attacks.
- Resources for youth, including advocacy, 'know your rights' and skills development training should be provided for young people of both majority and minority ethnic backgrounds.

Housing and Accommodation

- Policies should be developed to mitigate the vulnerability of minority ethnic groups to being excluded from accommodation or to living in substandard or overcrowded accommodation, especially women and their dependent children.
- Stakeholders from minority ethnic groups, irrespective of residency status, should be enabled to participate in the accommodation dimensions of the National Planning and Development Framework.
- Policies should be developed to mitigate the vulnerability of minority ethnic groups to facing discrimination accessing the private rental market.
- Application of the Social Housing Assessment Regulations should be reviewed to assess their implications for minority ethnic groups, in particular regarding the requirement to be residing in the area or have a local connection with it.

Health

- The [Second National Intercultural Health Strategy](#) should be reviewed in light of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on minority ethnic groups.
- The urgent need for targeted mental health supports, suicide prevention, and bereavement supports for minority ethnic groups should be addressed.
- Action should be taken to develop, publish and implement specific policies to address ethnic health differentials, acknowledging the social determinants of health, and the inequalities affecting groups experiencing racism.

Equal Access to Services

- As part of broader efforts to address the digital divide, differential digital access by minority ethnic communities should be measured and mitigated.
- An independent review should be carried out of banking practices and regulations with respect to mortgages, and steps taken to address barriers faced by minority ethnic groups in accessing these services.
- Section 19 of the Intoxicating Liquor Act 2003 should be amended to give jurisdiction to the Workplace Relations Commission in relation to discrimination regarding use of licensed premises.

Objective Three

Being Seen and Taking Part - Enabling minority participation

A society that is purposefully against racism enables minority ethnic people to be fully visible and active participants in all aspects of life. Our professions, our leadership and decision-making roles, our media representation, our community actors – all these should reflect the diversity of our society. The following recommendations are intended to support fair and equitable representation and participation of minority ethnic groups in the community and voluntary sector, in local and national politics, and in the media. Recommendations are also made in relation to the prevention of and remedies for media harms.

Recommendations

Community and Media Participation and Representation

- The new Coimisiún na Meán should carry out research into media harms and should undertake educational and informational initiatives relating to media harms as part of its functions.
- Media literacy should be strengthened so that media audiences from all communities understand how media operate and can meaningfully engage with media works.
- An online educational portal should be developed to promote understanding of the nature and impact of the media representation of minority ethnic groups.
- Open and accessible channels of communication should be created and sustained, with the support of local authorities, between media outlets and representatives of groups experiencing racism.
- Companies should be required to calibrate algorithms in ways that capture slurs and expressions that apply to the Irish context.
- Steps should be taken to promote diversity and interculturalism, including linguistic diversity, in local services, for example the libraries.

Political Representation and Participation

- The role of the proposed Electoral Commission should be expanded to:
 - develop a more detailed regulatory framework for electoral advertising with the aim of ensuring that equality and non-discrimination standards in political discourse during election and referendum campaigns are upheld;
 - research barriers to minority ethnic electoral participation;
 - promote the Council of Europe Convention on political participation by minority ethnic groups and to promote voting by minority ethnic groups.
- A programme of voter education initiatives should be developed with the aim of increasing voter registration and voting rates among minority ethnic communities.

Objective Four

Being Counted – Measuring the impacts of racism

Ethnic equality monitoring requires taking a human rights based approach to the collection and use of ethnically disaggregated data. This data is necessary for meaningful monitoring of the Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty. Improved gathering and use of data, as well as specific research, will play a part in building a better understanding of the experiences and outcomes of minority ethnic groups in Ireland, as well as of the causes of and remedies for racism. Data gathering should capture the multiple dimensions of discrimination and relate them to outcomes. With the help of such data, public policy design can take account of the extent to which people from minority ethnic and migrant backgrounds experience differential outcomes from the majority population and put in place measures to address these differentials.

Recommendations

Ethnic Equality Data

- Legislative provision should be made to facilitate the collection of ethnically disaggregated data across the justice system, including with respect to the recording of racist incidents and racially motivated crimes; the composition of the prison population; policing activities short of arrest (including stop and search); and complaints made about any aspect of the justice system.
- Regular surveys should be carried out to determine minority ethnic communities' experience of and satisfaction levels with policing services.
- Updated data on the ethnic composition of the population, based on self-identification, should be collected and published.
- Equality monitoring data should be collected and published on how minority ethnic groups interact with public services and how their outcomes compare to those of the majority population and to those of minority ethnic groups in comparable jurisdictions.
- In developing the evidence base for public policymaking, care should be taken to ensure that survey data used has a sufficient sample size to ensure adequate representation of all minority groups. Where this is not possible, alternative methods of gathering evidence on the experience and outcomes of under-represented groups should be employed.

Objective Five

Being Together – A shared journey to racial equality

Combating racism in all its forms is a collective endeavour that will be most successful with broad participation and support. Embedding positive racial equality goals and actions in mainstream public policies and programmes is an important means of achieving the objectives of this plan. We also need to build our understanding of the nature, causes, prevalence and impact of racism, both throughout our history and today, so that we can work together effectively to eliminate it.

Recommendations

Combating Racism through Mainstream Policies, Programmes and Legislation

The impact on minority ethnic groups of *A Just Transition* and all climate action initiatives should be assessed and steps taken to ensure that the design and implementation of all such initiatives take into account the need to promote equality, inclusion and non-discrimination.

- Existing national strategies should be reviewed with the aim of equality proofing them and identifying and eliminating any exclusion that exists, including unintentional exclusion.
- The capacity of the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission to monitor compliance with the Public Sector Human Rights and Equality Duty should be strengthened.
- The scope of the Public Sector Human Rights and Equality Duty should be clarified and steps taken to provide assurance that where public money is being spent, there is adherence to the Duty.
- National and local social policy programmes and structures such as the Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP) and Local Economic and Community Plans (LECPs) should explicitly name and address racism, including systemic racism, and should be developed with the participation of minority ethnic groups.

Understanding and Preventing Racism

- Sectoral guidelines should be developed for public servants to equip them to consider the intersectionality of racism with other forms of oppression, including poverty, and to ensure it is encompassed in equality impact assessments.
- Qualitative research should be carried out to enhance knowledge and understanding of the development of racist attitudes and behaviours and how they can best be prevented and addressed.

Implementation

The actions in this plan will be implemented by organisations across the public, private and voluntary sectors. As this is a state-led initiative, the plan places an emphasis on actions to be performed or enabled by public sector organisations, particularly central and local government.

In order to be effectively implemented, the plan will require dedicated financial and human resources. Organisations responsible for carrying out actions under the plan will make specific provision for these actions in their regular strategic, business and financial planning processes.

For each action, the plan names one or more bodies responsible for implementing that action and sets a timeframe for its implementation.

A NAPAR Co-ordination Committee will be convened to co-ordinate activity under the plan and gather the data necessary for monitoring the implementation of the actions. The Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth will Chair the Committee, which will comprise representatives of government departments responsible for actions under the plan. Local authorities will also be represented.

Monitoring, Oversight and Review

Monitoring the implementation of the National Action Plan Against Racism

Monitoring Activity

As the implementation period for the plan commences, organisations with responsibility for implementing actions will provide a detailed timeline setting out what they intend to do and when in order to implement each action in the plan. These organisations will provide regular updates against these activity targets via the NAPAR Co-ordination Committee (see previous section).

The Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth, working in consultation with the Co-ordination Committee, will prepare a twice yearly implementation report capturing the implementation status of each action under the plan. Given the importance of ensuring that sufficient data is available to monitor progress under the plan, the first of these implementation reports will pay particular attention to the subject of ethnic equality data gathering and use. These reports will be made to the Minister for Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth and to the Special Rapporteur on Racial Equality and Racism (see below).

Monitoring Progress

There are multiple dimensions on which progress towards eliminating racism might be measured. Some of the actions in this plan have the aim of enabling better measurement and understanding of racial discrimination and effective means of tackling it. Therefore, as the implementation of the plan progresses, new tools, methods and data for measuring progress towards its objectives will become available. However, as a starting point, the following indicators, which are largely drawn from the [Well-being Framework for Ireland](#) initiative, will be used to help measure progress towards the objectives of this plan. Where possible, existing data sources, including those cited on the [CSO Well-being Information Hub](#) will be used to assess progress against the indicators.

Indicators of progress towards the objectives of this plan:

- Income and Wealth
- Education
- Employment
- Housing
- Health
- Public Representation and Visibility
- Safety and Security
- Experience and Perception of Racism
- Attitudes towards minority ethnic groups
- Cultural Expression and Participation

Further information on these indicators and data currently available for them is included at Annex 1. The majority of existing relevant data sources are not yet disaggregated by ethnicity and addressing this, as part of broader efforts to advance equality data gathering, has been included as a priority action under this plan.

Special Rapporteur on Racial Equality and Racism

An independent Special Rapporteur on Racial Equality and Racism will be appointed by the Minister for Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth. The Special Rapporteur will monitor the implementation of this plan against the detailed activity targets that will be set, will receive data from the NAPAR Co-ordination Committee for this purpose, and may attend meetings of that Committee. The Rapporteur will also monitor progress towards the objectives of the plan, including by reference to the outcome indicators listed above. They may also consider matters pertaining to racial equality more broadly and will have the authority to request information and data from public bodies to support them in carrying out their role. The Special Rapporteur will make an annual report to the Minister for Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth. This Report shall be made available to the Oireachtas Committee on Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth, who may invite the Rapporteur to discuss the Report.

Advisory Committee on Racial Equality and Racism

An Advisory Committee on Racial Equality and Racism will be appointed by the Minister for Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth. The Special Rapporteur on Racial Equality and Racism will Chair this Committee. The Committee will comprise not more than eight individuals who have knowledge and expertise in matters related to racial equality and racism. Its membership will include individuals with lived experience of racism and representative organisations. The Special Rapporteur will consult with the Advisory Committee in the preparation of their annual report.

Review

On receipt of each annual report of the Special Rapporteur on Racial Equality and Racism, the Minister for Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth will consider, in light of the findings of the Special Rapporteur, and in consultation with the NAPAR Co-ordination Committee, whether amendments need to be made to the National Action Plan Against Racism.

Annex 1 – Indicators for measuring progress towards the objectives of the National Action Plan Against Racism

Progress towards the objectives of this plan will be measured through the use of both quantitative and qualitative data and research. Actions under Objective Four of the plan will improve the availability of data for measuring ethnic inequalities over the lifetime of the plan. All monitoring data should also be disaggregated by gender.

As a starting point, several possible data sources are listed below for each indicator. These are drawn from data sources included in the Wellbeing Information Hub⁵. Very few of these are currently disaggregated by ethnicity. Addressing this will be essential to measuring progress towards the objectives of the plan and has been included as a priority action.

Some of the data sources refer to non-routine, once-off surveys for which the data was not disaggregated by ethnicity. These are included for illustrative purposes.

Indicator	Data Source and Measure	Publication frequency	Disaggregated by ethnicity?
Income and Wealth	Survey of Income and Living Conditions (SILC), (Central Statistics Office): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Households making ends meet with great difficulty (%); - Median real household disposable income; 	Annual	No
	Household Finance and Consumption Survey (HFCS), (Central Statistics Office): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Median household net wealth 	Ad hoc, most recently 2020	No

⁵ <https://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/ep/p-wbhub/well-beinginformationhub/>

Indicator	Data Source and Measure	Publication frequency	Disaggregated by ethnicity?
Education	Labour Force Survey (LFS), (Central Statistics Office): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lifelong learning rate 	Quarterly	No
	Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), (Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Performance in reading/ maths of 15-year olds 	Annual	Yes
	The Research and Development Budget 2020-2021, (Central Statistics Office and Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Headcount of Research and Development personnel in Business Sector, Higher Education Sector and Public Service 	Annual	No
Employment	Labour Force Survey (LFS), (Central Statistics Office): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Employment rate (20-64 years) (%) - Labour market underutilisation rate (share of underemployed, unemployed or potential additional labour force) (%) 	Quarterly	No
	Earnings Analysis Using Administrative Data Sources, (Central Statistics Office): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mean weekly earnings 	Ad hoc, most recently 2020	No - Nationality

Indicator	Data Source and Measure	Publication frequency	Disaggregated by ethnicity?
Housing	Survey of Income and Living Conditions (SILC), (Central Statistics Office): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Population spending 40% of disposable income on housing; 	Annual	No
	New Dwelling Completions, (Central Statistics Office);	Quarterly	No
	Domestic Building Energy Ratings Survey, (Central Statistics Office): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A and B ratings (BER); 	Quarterly	No
	Measuring Distance to Everyday Services in Ireland, (Central Statistics Office): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Average distance to everyday services 	Once off, 2019	No
Health	Healthy Life Years statistics, (Eurostat)	Annual	No
	Irish Health Survey, (Central Statistics Office): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - People with mild, moderate, moderately severe or severe levels of depression in previous 2 weeks - Unmet need for medical examination due to financial, geographic or waiting time reasons 	Every 3 years	No

Indicator	Data Source and Measure	Publication frequency	Disaggregated by ethnicity?
Public Representation and Visibility	Eurobarometer report, (European Commission): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Population satisfied with the way democracy works in Ireland 	Annual	No
Safety and Security	Crime and Victimization survey, (Central Statistics Office): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of homicide victims - Perception of crime among Irish and non-Irish nationals - Population who worry they could be a victim of a crime causing physical injury often or all the time 	Ad hoc, most recent 2020	Yes
Experience and Perception of Racism	Survey of Income and Living Conditions (SILC), (Central Statistics Office): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Perceived social inclusion 	Annual	No
Attitudes towards minority ethnic groups	Attitudes to Diversity in Ireland report, conducted for Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission by the Economic and Social Research Institute	Once off, 2018	No

Indicator	Data Source and Measure	Publication frequency	Disaggregated by ethnicity?
Cultural Expression and Participation	Survey of Income and Living Conditions (SILC), (Central Statistics Office): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Population who feel lonely at least some of the time - Population rating their overall life satisfaction as high - Population who did not feel depressed or downhearted in the last 4 weeks 	Annual	No
	Irish Health Survey, (Central Statistics Office): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Population with more than two people they are close enough to that they could count on, if they had a serious problem 	Every 3 years	No
	Health Behaviour in School Aged Children (HBSC), (World Health Organisation and HBSC Ireland): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Children aged 10-17 who report being happy with their lives at present 	Every 4 years	No

Annex 2 - How this plan was developed

Anti-Racism Committee

The Anti-Racism Committee was appointed by the Government in 2020 with the following Terms of Reference:

Terms of Reference of Anti-Racism Committee

- To review the current evidence and outcomes, including identifying data gaps, in relation to racial discrimination in Ireland;
- To examine and benchmark against international best practice in combating racism;
- To hold stakeholder dialogue and consultation to identify the views of wider civil society; members of the public; members of the Oireachtas; the business sector; media and other relevant parties; relating to the development of a society where institutional and individual racism are not tolerated;
- To develop a blueprint for a draft national strategy against racism;
- To produce an interim report to Government not more than three months after its first meeting identifying priority issues and a programme of work for the Committee;
- Having regard to the review of evidence, including state responses to UN and European commitments; international practice; the outcome of stakeholder dialogues; and taking account of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action; to provide a draft anti-racism strategy, containing a clear action plan, at the end of one year that:
 - identifies priority issues to be addressed;
 - makes recommendations on strengthening the Government's approach to combating racism, building on the actions currently included in the Migrant Integration Strategy and the National Traveller and Roma Inclusion Strategy;
 - generates ideas and make recommendations for reducing racist abuse in the public space including online.

The members of the Anti-Racism Committee are:

Caroline Fennell (Chair), Meadhbh Costello, Anastasia Crickley, Michelle Cullen, Tom Enright, Sindy Joyce, Úna-Minh Kavanagh, Shamsun Nahar Khan, Patricia King, Nana Nubi, Ciarán Ó Catháin, Shane O'Curry, Bashir Otukoya, Linus (Boidu) Sayeh, Eugenia Siapera, Kathleen Sherlock (replaced by Bernard Joyce, May 2022), Owen Ward.

The Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth provided a secretariat to the Committee.

The process for developing the National Action Plan Against Racism involved three stages:

1. Scoping, Interim Report, pre-Consultation

The Committee carried out planning, reviewed evidence and held initial consultations with stakeholders including the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission, leading minority ethnic representative organisations, and academic experts. The Committee submitted its Interim Report to the Minister for Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth on 30 November 2020, and this was subsequently noted by the Government and published.

2. Public Consultation

The Committee held a public and stakeholder consultation from April to July 2021. This included inviting written submissions, conducting an open online survey, and holding a series of online thematic consultation sessions with stakeholders and human rights organisations, in order better to understand the nature and different forms of racism that are present in Ireland today. Over 250 people attended the online events, and over 100 written submissions were received. Having reviewed the material from the public consultation, the Committee held a series of bilateral meetings with government departments, public authorities and other organisations. A full list of organisations who participated in these multilateral and bilateral consultations is provided below.

3. Drafting and agreeing the Plan

The third and final phase of the Committee's work was to prepare the content of the National Action Plan Against Racism. Informed by its extensive consultations, and working through a series of thematic sub-groups, the Committee agreed a vision, a set of objectives, priority actions and recommendations, and arrangements for monitoring and review. Throughout this process, consultation continued with key authorities to help build support for a whole-of-Government approach to implementing the plan.

Meetings of the Anti-Racism Committee

Since its appointment in June 2020, the Anti-Racism Committee has met 27 times in plenary session, and held more than 100 other meetings, including multilateral and bilateral consultation sessions, and thematic sub-group meetings. A list of the Committee's plenary and consultation meetings is below.

Anti-Racism Committee Plenary Meetings

Date	Details of briefing/consultation ⁶
18-Jun-2020	Ministers Flanagan and Stanton attended.
28-Aug-2020	
16-Sep-2020	
08-Oct-2020	
5-Nov-2020	Briefing on the Online Safety and Media Regulation Bill (2019) from the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media
19-Nov-2020	Minister O’Gorman attended. Briefing on proposed new Legislation for Hate Speech and Hate Crime in Ireland from the Department of Justice.
26-Nov-2020	Interim Report agreed.
10-Dec-2020	
14-Jan-2021	Minister O’ Gorman attended. Presentation by the Economic and Social Research Institute of findings of new research - Covid-19 and Non-Irish Nationals in Ireland Briefing on the National Traveller and Roma Inclusion Strategy by the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth
28-Jan-2021	Briefing on the Migrant Integration Strategy from the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth The Norwegian Ministry of Culture presented the Norwegian Action Plan against Racism and Discrimination
11-Feb-2021	Briefing from the European Commission Directorate-General for Justice and Consumers on the EU Anti-Racism Action Plan Briefing from the European Network Against Racism
25-Feb-2021	Presentation on the legal framework for ethnic equality monitoring from the School of Law, Trinity College Dublin Presentation from the Research and Data Unit of the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights Briefing on equality budgeting from the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform

⁶ Where blank, this indicates internal Committee business only.

11-Mar-2021	Briefing on the Census and the Labour Force Survey from the Central Statistics Office Briefing on Ethnic Equality Monitoring: European and National Policy and Practice from Pavee Point Traveller and Roma Centre
15-Apr-2021	
27-May-2021	
01-Jul-2021	Preliminary presentation of consultation event outcomes by Seán Ó Riordáin, Consultation Facilitator
15-Jul-2021	Presentation on Potential Implications of AI for Racial Inequalities, by Dr Bethany Waterhouse-Bradly, Ulster University. Engagement with the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission Presentation on the use of indicators to measure actions by the Economic and Social Research Institute
16-Sep-2021	Presentation of the written consultation submissions by Catherine Lynch, consultation analyst Engagement with the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Engagement with the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland
30-Sep-2021	Presentation of consultation event outcomes by Seán Ó Riordáin, Consultation Facilitator
11-Nov-2021	Presentation by Catherine Lynch, consultation analyst, of further analysis of the written submissions to the consultation.
25-Nov-2021	Presentation of research on Measures to Combat Discrimination in Employment by the Economic and Social Research Institute Presentation of draft content arising from consultation submissions by Catherine Lynch, consultation analyst.
09-Dec-2021	
27-Jan-2022	
28-Apr-2022	
26-May-2022	
09-Jun-2022	
20-Jul-2022	Formal closure of the Anti-Racism Committee

In addition to the above plenary meetings, the Committee held a series of bilateral and multilateral engagements with stakeholders.

Anti-Racism Committee Bilateral Consultation Meetings with Duty-Bearing Organisations

Date	Organisation
15-Nov-2021	Policing Authority
16-Nov-2021	Public Appointments Service
16-Nov-2021	Department of Education
17-Nov-2021	An Garda Síochána
22-Nov-2021	The Judicial Council
22-Nov-2021	Central Statistics Office
23-Nov-2021	Department of Rural and Community Development
24-Nov-2021	The Courts Service
24-Nov-2021	County and City Management Association
25-Nov-2021	Department of Justice
26-Nov-2021	Tusla
26-Nov-2021	Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science
30-Nov-2021	The Broadcasting Authority of Ireland
02-Dec-2021	Garda Síochána Ombudsman Commission
02-Dec-2021	The Garda Inspectorate
02-Dec-2021	The Irish Prison Service
03-Dec-2021	The Law Society of Ireland
07-Dec-2021	The Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media
07-Dec-2021	Google
13-Jan-2022	Ibec
25-Jan-2022	Meta
02-Feb-2022	Department of Social Protection

Anti-Racism Committee Thematic Stakeholder Consultation Events

Date	Theme of Consultation Event
20-May-2021	Access to Justice
25-May-2021	Media and Communications, including New Technologies
01-June-2021	Employment
01-June-2021	Racism and Intersectionality Relating to Socio-Economic Status
03-June-2021	Social Rights: Accommodation, Health and Education
08-June-2021	Inclusion and Participation
15-June-2021	Community Sector
24-June-2021	Access to Justice (supplementary)
24-June-2021	Arts and Cultural Inclusion
25-June-2021	Intersectionality – Gender and Young People

List of Organisations that made written submissions to the consultation⁷

Africa Centre Ireland	Immigrant Council of Ireland
AkiDwA	Independent Law Centres
All Ireland Endorsement body for Community Work Education and Training	Irish Association of Social Workers
Association of Mixed Race Irish	Irish Congress of Trade Unions
ASTI	Irish Council for Civil Liberties
Atheist Ireland	Irish Development Education Association
Black and Irish	Irish Film Institute
Bray For Love	Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission (IHREC)
BRIDGE, Galway City Partnership	Irish Network Against Racism
Cairde	Irish Penal Reform Trust
CaliberAI	Irish Traveller Movement
Canal Communities against Racism	Kildare County Council Community Work team
Citizens Information Board	Kilkenny Public Participation Network
Clare Public Participation Network	Labour Party
Co. Wicklow Public Participation Network	Law Society Human Rights and Equality Committee
Community Work Ireland	Longford Community Resources CLG
COPE Galway	Migrant Rights Council of Ireland (MRCI)
Cork Children and Young People's Services Committee (CYPSC)	Movement, Herstory

⁷ A number of individuals also made written submissions.

Cork Migrant Centre Youth Initiative Against Racism	Nasc
Cork Traveller Women's Network and Traveller Visibility Group	National Traveller MABS
Crosscare	National Traveller Women's Forum
Cultúr Migrants Centre	National Women's Council of Ireland
Department of Applied Social Studies, Maynooth University	National Youth Council of Ireland (NYCI)
Department of Foreign Affairs	Ombudsman for Children's Office (OCO)
Department of Public Health East, Health Service Executive	Open Doors Initiative
DICE (Development and Intercultural Education) Project	Pavee Point Traveller and Roma Centre
Donegal Intercultural Platform	Plé (Irish Association of Academics in Early Childhood Education and Care in Higher Education)
Doras	Psychological Society of Ireland's Science and Public Policy Committee
Early Childhood Ireland	Public Appointment Service
Early Childhood Research Centre, Dublin City University	Royal College of Physicians of Ireland
Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI)	Sport Against Racism Ireland (SARI)
Equality and Diversity Early Childhood National Network (EDenN)	Sport Ireland
Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Unit, University College Cork	Tipperary Public Participation Network
European Centre for the Study of Hate	Traveller Equality and Justice Project, University College Cork
Facebook	TU Dublin Institutional Working Group for Interculturalism and Race Equity
Football Association of Ireland	UN International Decade for People of African Descent Steering Committee
Free Legal Advice Centres (FLAC)	University College Cork International Office
Galway City Community Network	Wexford Local Development
Galway Traveller Movement	World Wise Global Schools
Glencree Centre for Peace and Reconciliation	Yellow Flag Programme
Ibec	Youth Against Racism Ireland (YARI)
IMMERSE (Integration Mapping of Refugee and Migrant Children in Schools and other Experiential Environments in Europe), University College Cork	

Annex 3 - References

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Appendix V – Statistical Annex

Census of Population 2022 Profile 5 - Diversity,
Migration, Ethnicity, Irish Travellers & Religion

Table of Contents

Key Findings	4
Country of Citizenship	4
Immigration	5
Ethnic Group/Background	5
Irish Travellers	5
Religion	5
1. Citizenship	6
Non-Irish Citizens	6
Citizenship by County of Usual Residence	7
Citizenship by Town of Usual Residence	7
Non-Irish Citizens by Age and Sex	8
Languages Other than English or Irish Spoken at Home	9
2. Immigration	10
Age Profile of Recent Immigrants	13
Home Ownership and Rent	14
Long-term Migration Flows into the State	15
3. Ethnic Group/Background	16
Ethnic Group by Age and Sex	17
Ethnic Group by Citizenship	17
4. Irish Travellers	18
Marital Status of Irish Travellers	25
Long-Lasting Conditions and Difficulties	29
General Health	31
Irish Traveller Households	33
Household Size	34
5. Religion	35
Religion by Age	36
Religion and Citizenship	38
Datasets related to this release	39

Statistical Annex - Census of Population 2022 Profile 5 - Diversity, Migration, Ethnicity, Irish Travellers & Religion

Census 2022 Results	39
Background	39
Coverage of the Census	40
Conduct of the Census	40
De Facto versus Usual Residence	40
Definitions and Additional Notes	41
Reference Person	41
Private Household	41
Non-private Household (Communal Establishment)	41
Disability	41
Comparability of Data with Previous Censuses	42

Statistical Annex - Census of Population 2022 Profile 5 - Diversity, Migration, Ethnicity, Irish Travellers & Religion

Note on tables and charts used in this document:

Additional interactive tables, charts and visualizations are available that utilize the data cited in this annex, but were not included in this document. There are on the website of the Central Statistics Office and are available here - [Census of Population 2022 Profile 5 - Diversity, Migration, Ethnicity, Irish Travellers & Religion - Central Statistics Office](#).

Key Findings

- There were almost 632,000 non-Irish citizens living in Ireland in Census 2022, which was 12% of the population.
- Almost 313,000, or nearly half, were citizens of European Union (EU) countries, and over 83,000 were UK citizens.
- In the year preceding the census, over 89,500 people moved to Ireland.
- Almost 10,000 of the people who moved to Ireland in the year preceding Census 2022 came from India while over 5,000 came from Brazil.
- Just under 3.9 million or 77% of people identified their ethnic group or background as White Irish.
- The next largest ethnic group was Any Other White background at 10%, followed by Indian/Pakistani/Bangladeshi at 2%, and Black or Black Irish at 1%.
- The number of usually resident Irish Travellers increased by 6% to 32,949. Looking at the overall population, 15% were aged 65 years and over compared with just 5% of Irish Travellers.
- Over 736,000 people or 14% of the population living in Ireland reported they had no religion, an increase of 63% from Census 2016.

Country of Citizenship

In April 2022, there were 631,785 non-Irish citizens living in Ireland, accounting for 12% of the usually resident and present population. This was an increase from 11% of the population in Census 2016. Census 2022 results show that the number of UK citizens residing in the State continued to decline, down by more than 19% from 103,113 in 2016, following a fall of 8% between 2011 and 2016. Table F5061 also shows that a noticeable growth was recorded in the number of citizens from European countries outside of the EU (131%) to more than 25,000, but this was largely driven by the Ukrainian crisis. Citizens of Asian countries made up some 16% of the non-Irish population, up 98% since 2016.

Statistical Annex - Census of Population 2022 Profile 5 - Diversity, Migration, Ethnicity, Irish Travellers & Religion

Immigration

Of the 89,512 people who immigrated in the year leading up to the 2022 census, more than 22,000 were Irish citizens. This was a decrease of 21% from Census 2016 despite an increase of 9% in the number of people who came to live in the State in the year prior to Census 2022. The most common countries of origin for Irish citizens were the UK, Australia, and USA, while India, Brazil, and Spain were the top three countries of origin for non-Irish citizens coming to live in the State in the year to Census 2022. Regarding home ownership and rent for immigrating people, Tables [F5062](#) and [F5063](#) show that 80% of households headed by a non-Irish citizen who came to live in the State in the year prior to the census were renting their home from a private landlord. The average weekly rent was €372. This compares with under 42% of private rentals with an average weekly rent of €360 where the head of the household was Irish.

Ethnic Group/Background

The question on ethnic group/background was updated for Census 2022 with new categories added including Roma, Indian/Pakistani/Bangladeshi, and Arab. The results show that 94,434 people resident in the State identified as Indian/Pakistani/Bangladeshi, 20,115 identified as Arab, and 16,059 as Roma. Between 2016 and 2022, there was a 17% increase in the number of people who identified as Black or Black Irish – African and a 28% growth in the number of people who identified as Black or Black Irish – any other Black background. Looking at the data in [Table F5066](#), it is apparent that the most common country of citizenship of the Roma population was Ireland at 28%, followed by Romania, 22%. People in the Arab ethnic group were mainly citizens of Ireland (43%), or countries in Other – Asia (29%) and Africa (19%).

Irish Travellers

The number of Irish Travellers living in the State and counted in Census 2022 was 32,949, up 6% from 30,987 in Census 2016. The average age of Irish Travellers was 27 years compared with 39 years for the total population. Children under the age of 15 made up 36% of this ethnic group/background compared with 20% of the total population. At a national level, 15% of the population was aged 65 years and over while for Irish Travellers, this was just 5%. The data in [Table F5067](#) shows that 26% of all Irish Travellers reported experiencing at least one long-lasting condition or difficulty to any extent. The equivalent proportion for the total population living in the State was 22%. The Irish Traveller population increased in most counties, the largest rise being recorded in Offaly (30%). The largest drop was in Longford (13%).

Religion

Census 2022 results show that the percentage of the population who identified as Roman Catholic fell from 79% in 2016 to 69% in 2022, while the number of people with no religion increased by 284,269 and stood at 736,210, or more than 14% of the total population. Looking at age groups in [Table F5071](#), among pre-school aged children (0 to 4 years), 65% were Roman Catholic, 16% had no religion and 3% were Muslim. People aged 25 to 29 years were less likely to be Roman Catholic (53%) than other age groups. This is also the age cohort with the highest proportion of people with no religion (26%) and the highest proportion of Hindus (over 2%).

Statistical Annex - Census of Population 2022 Profile 5 - Diversity, Migration, Ethnicity, Irish Travellers & Religion

Religions varied by citizenship, with 70% of Polish citizens being Roman Catholic, more than 41% of UK citizens having no religion, almost half of Indian citizens were Hindu and nearly 66% of Romanians were Orthodox.

1. Citizenship

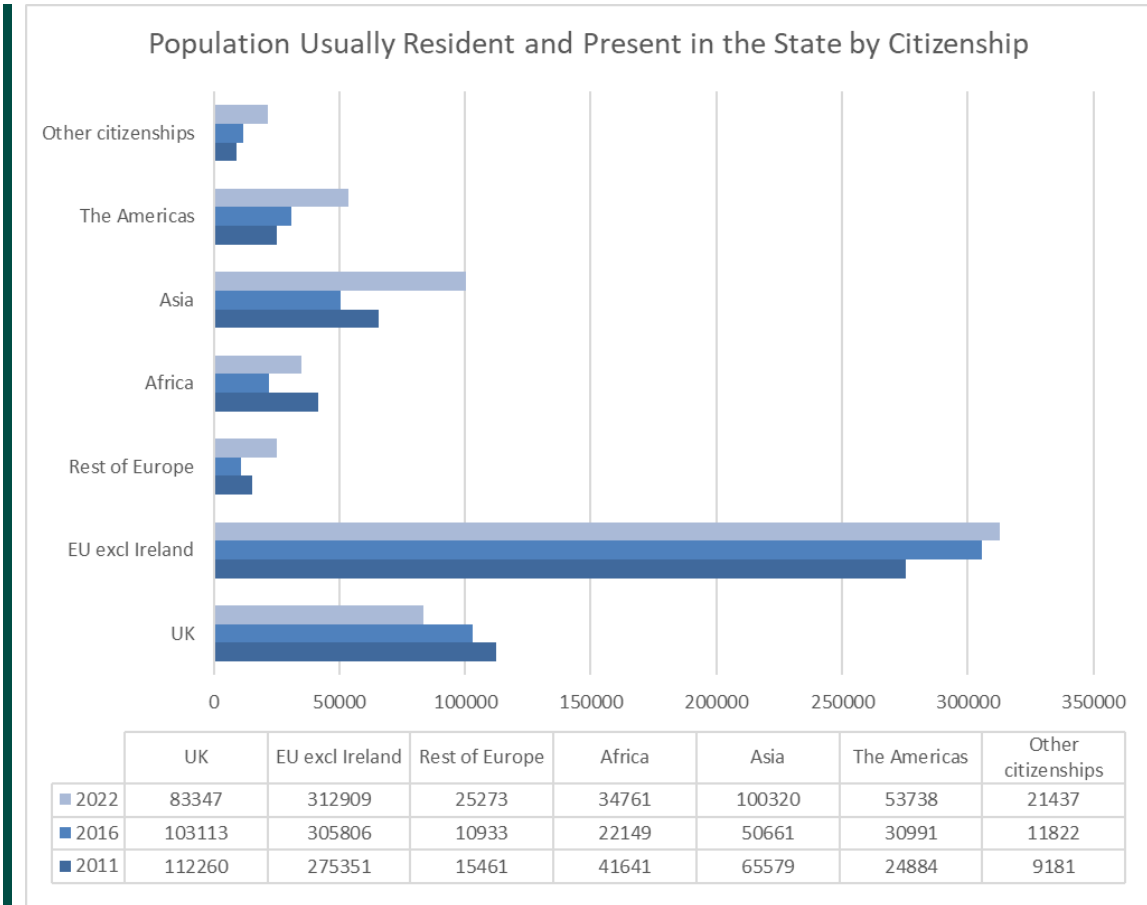


Figure 1.1 Non-Irish citizens usually resident and present in the State by citizenship, 2011 – 2022

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<https://data.cso.ie/table/F5061>

Non-Irish Citizens

In Census 2016, people were asked to indicate their nationality. In Census 2022 the question was changed to ‘What is your country of citizenship?’. This question is used to collect data on the number of people with Irish, non-Irish citizenship and dual citizenship (both Irish and non-Irish).

- In April 2022, there were 631,785 non-Irish citizens living in Ireland, accounting for 12% of the usually resident and present population, up from 11% of the population in 2016.

Statistical Annex - Census of Population 2022 Profile 5 - Diversity, Migration, Ethnicity, Irish Travellers & Religion

- Almost half of people with non-Irish citizenship (312,909) were citizens of other European Union (EU) countries, an increase of 2% in the six years since Census 2016.
- The number of citizens from European countries outside of the EU increased by 131% to over 25,000. This increase was largely driven by immigration from Ukraine.
- There were 83,347 UK citizens, 13% of the non-Irish population resident in Ireland. The number of UK citizens living in Ireland fell over the last two censuses, down by over 19% from 103,113 in 2016 after a fall of 8% between 2011 and 2016.
- There were just over 100,000 citizens of Asian countries living in Ireland, 16% of the non-Irish population.
- The inward migration of Indian citizens between 2016 and 2022 was the major contributor to the 98% increase in Asian citizens living in Ireland.

There were 18,566 people present in the State on Census Night who indicated that their country of citizenship was Ukraine. Many of these people indicated that their country of usual residence was not Ireland, so they are not included in the main figures on country of citizenship which are based on people who were usually resident in Ireland at the time of the census.

Citizenship by County of Usual Residence

The proportion of the usually resident population which had non-Irish citizenship was highest in Dublin City at 21% followed by Galway City at 18% and Fingal at 17%.

- Polish citizens made up 28% of all non-Irish citizens in Carlow and 25% in Laois compared with just 6% in Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown and Dublin City.
- In Donegal, 36% of the non-Irish population were citizens of the United Kingdom in contrast with Dublin City where just 6% were UK citizens.
- The highest number of Indian citizens were resident in Dublin City (10,308), Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown (4,958) and South Dublin (4,450).

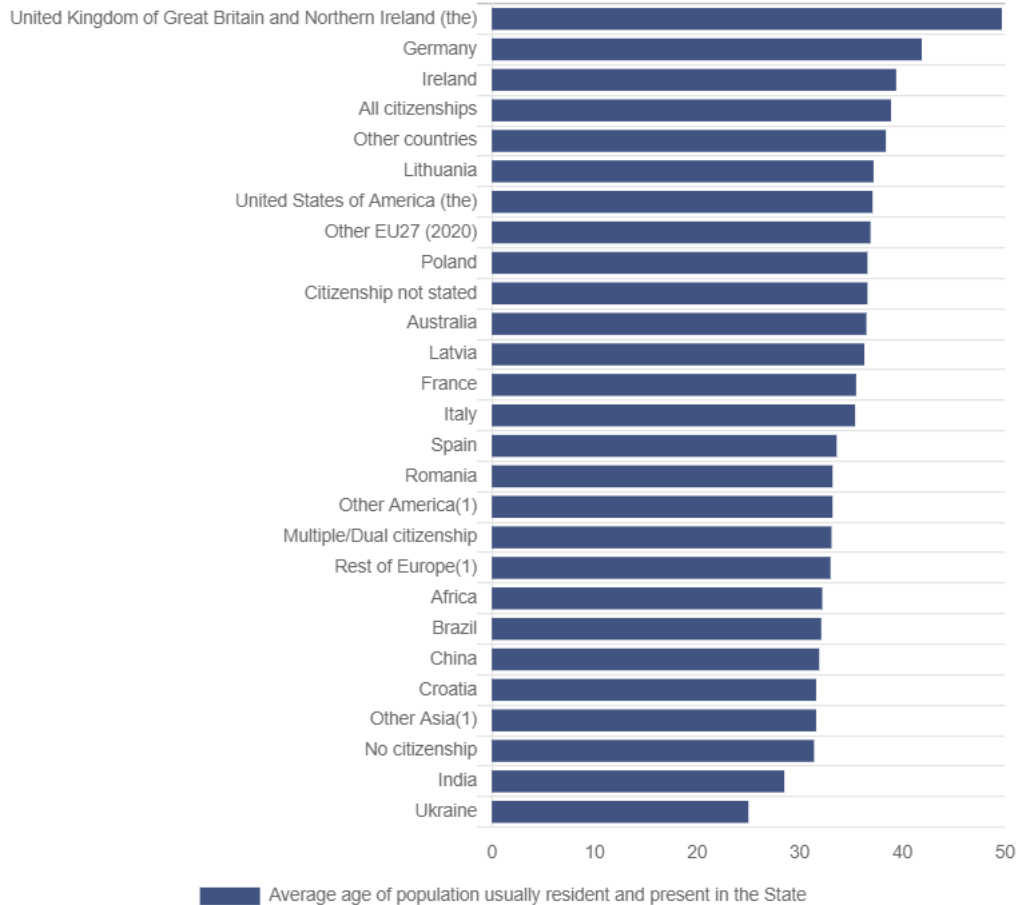
Citizenship by Town of Usual Residence

Ballyhaunis (37%), Ballymahon (33%) and Edgeworthstown (31%) were the towns with the largest proportions of non-Irish citizens.

- In Ballyhaunis, 5% of the population were Brazilian citizens, 4% were Polish and 3% were Croatian while in Ballymahon, Polish citizens accounted for 10% of the population, with Brazilian citizens making up a further 8%.
- The towns of Skibbereen (5%) in Co. Cork and Kenmare (5%) and Killorglin (4%) in Co. Kerry had the highest share of UK citizens.
- In Gort Co. Galway, 13% of the population were Brazilian citizens.

Statistical Annex - Census of Population 2022 Profile 5 - Diversity, Migration, Ethnicity, Irish Travellers & Religion

Non-Irish Citizens by Age and Sex



Figure

1.2 Average age of the population usually resident and present in the State by citizenship, 2022

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The population of non-Irish citizens was split almost evenly by sex, but there was variation among the citizens of different countries.

- Nearly 61% of Ukrainian and US citizens were female as were 57% of Spanish and German citizens. Citizens of Croatia (55%) and Romania, India and the UK (54%) were more likely to be male than female.
- In 2022, non-Irish citizens had an average age of 36 years compared with an average age of over 39 years for Irish citizens. The average age of both non-Irish and Irish citizens increased over recent censuses.
- UK citizens were something of an outlier with an average age of nearly 50 years. German citizens were also on average older than Irish citizens with an average age of 42 years.
- Ukrainian citizens had an average age of 25 years.

Statistical Annex - Census of Population 2022 Profile 5 - Diversity, Migration, Ethnicity, Irish Travellers & Religion

Languages Other than English or Irish Spoken at Home

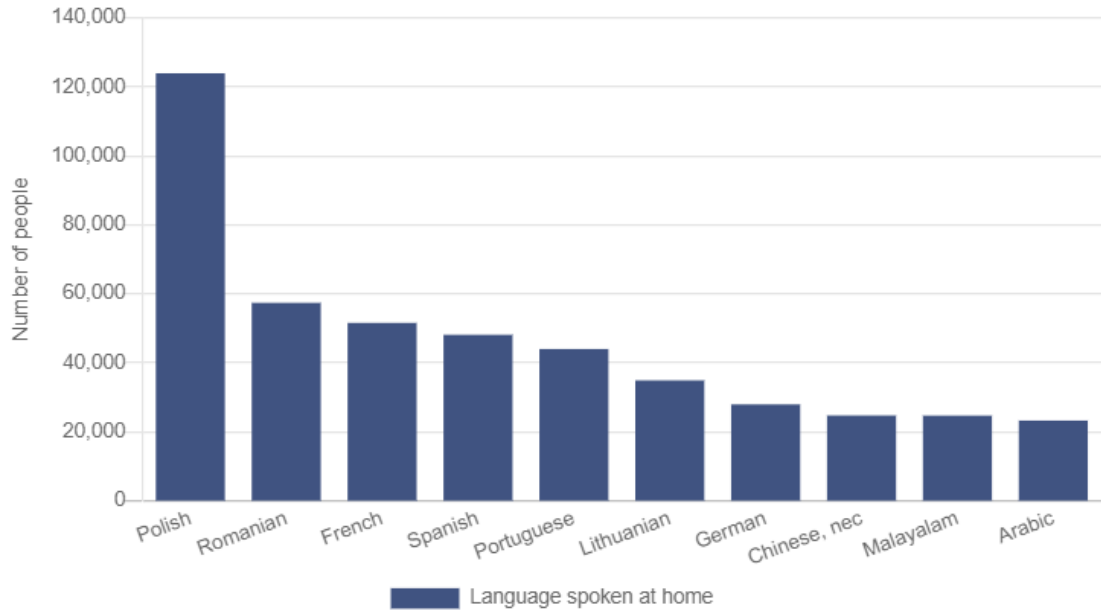


Figure 1.3 Top 10 most common languages spoken at home other than English or Irish, 2022

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<https://data.cso.ie/table/F5004>

- The most common language spoken at home other than English or Irish was Polish with nearly 124,000 speakers.
- Over 50% of Polish speakers could speak English very well, 31% could speak it well, 12% could not speak English well and 2% could not speak it at all.
- Romanian was the second most common language spoken at home with over 57,000 speakers.
- One in five people who spoke Romanian at home could either not speak English well or could not speak it at all.
- There were over 51,500 French speakers and 13% of these did not speak English well or at all.
- People who spoke Polish at home were nearly all either Polish (63%) or Irish (35%) citizens.
- French speakers were mostly Irish (73%) and French (18%) citizens with a further 3% being citizens of African countries.
- Just under half of Spanish speakers were Irish citizens, 27% were Spanish citizens and 15% were citizens of countries in the Other America category (excluding Brazil and the USA).

Statistical Annex - Census of Population 2022 Profile 5 - Diversity, Migration, Ethnicity, Irish Travellers & Religion

2. Immigration

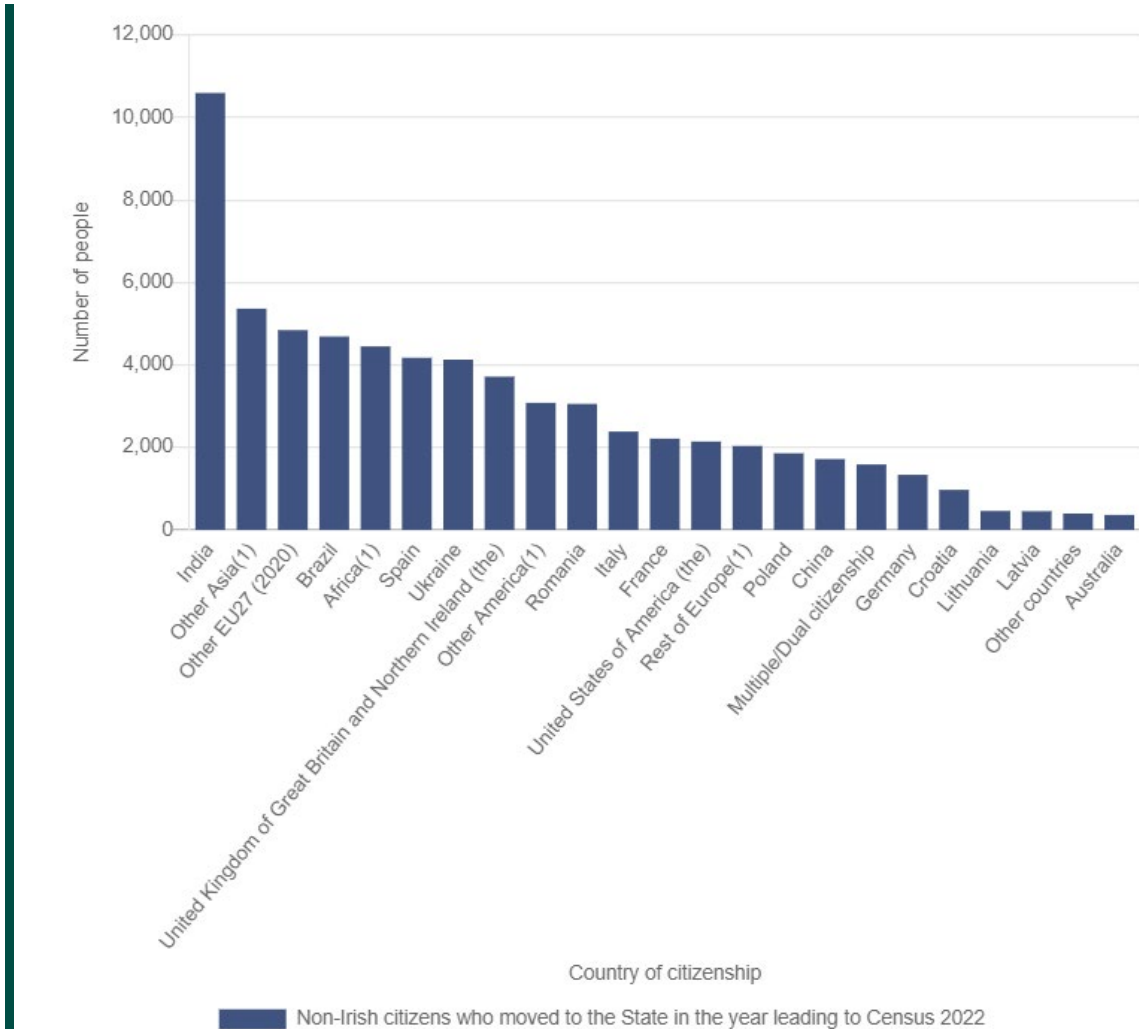


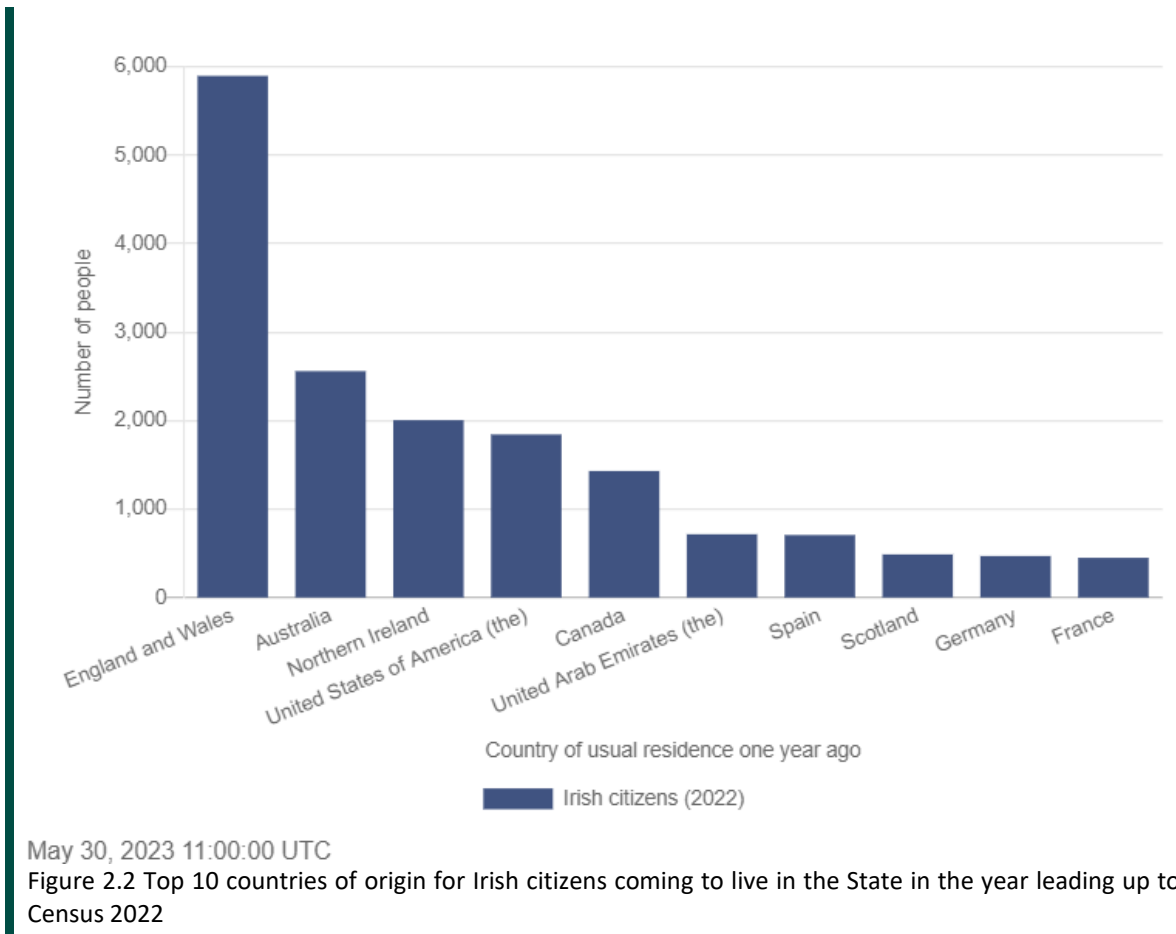
Figure 2.1 Non-Irish citizens aged one year and over usually resident and present in the State who came to live in the State in the year leading up to Census 2022 by citizenship

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<https://data.cso.ie/table/F5019>

The census collects data on people aged one year and over who have moved to live in the State in the year leading up to the census. This data gives a breakdown of immigration patterns and characteristics of the people who arrived. Most of the statistics in this publication are reported on a usually resident and present basis and, unless stated otherwise, exclude visitors and people absent abroad on the night of the census.

- There were 89,512 people who immigrated into the State in the year leading up to the 2022 census, up 9% from the equivalent period in Census 2016.
- Approximately one in four immigrants were Irish citizens and three in four were citizens of countries other than Ireland.

Statistical Annex - Census of Population 2022 Profile 5 - Diversity, Migration, Ethnicity, Irish Travellers & Religion

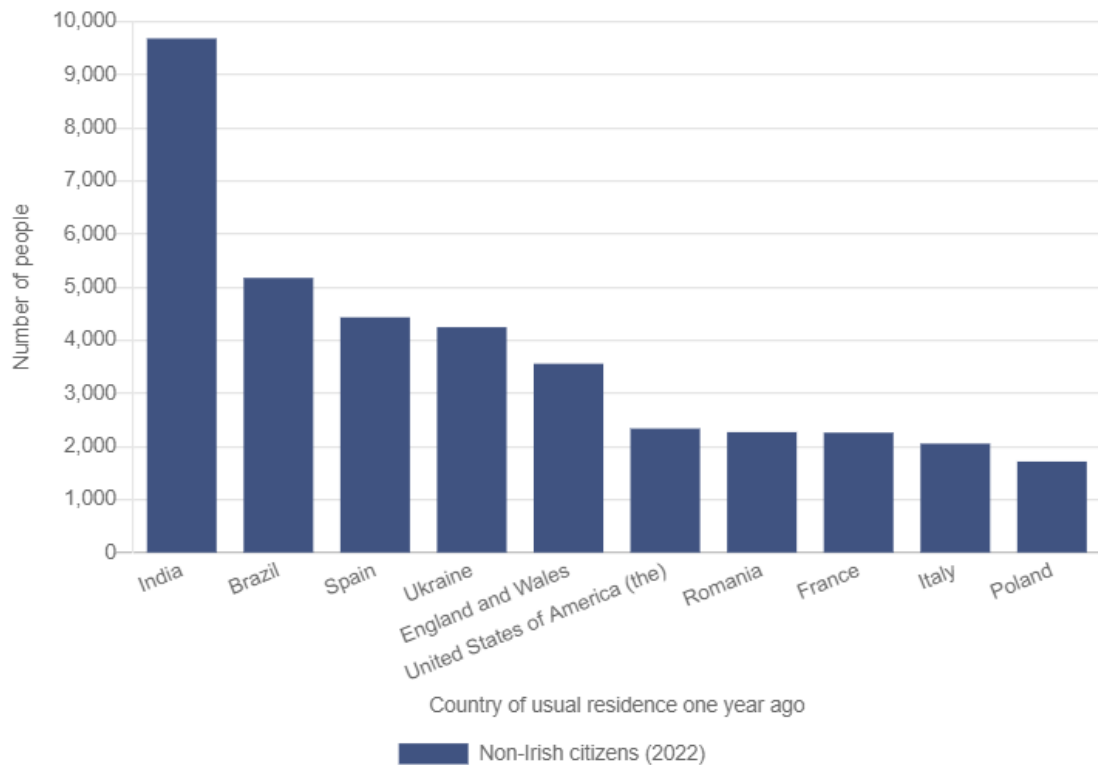


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<https://data.cso.ie/table/FY019>

The number of Irish citizens coming to live in the State in the year before the census fell by 21% to 22,137 compared with the same period leading up to Census 2016.

- Irish immigrants were most likely to come from the UK, with nearly 6,000 Irish citizens moving from England and Wales, a further 2,006 people moving from Northern Ireland and nearly 500 from Scotland.
- Australia was the next most common country of origin for Irish citizens with more than 2,500 arrivals in the year before Census 2022.
- Other common countries of origin for Irish citizens were USA, Canada and the United Arab Emirates as well as European Union countries including Spain, Germany and France.

Statistical Annex - Census of Population 2022 Profile 5 - Diversity, Migration, Ethnicity, Irish Travellers & Religion



May 30, 2023 11:00:00 UTC

Figure 2.3 Top 10 countries of origin for non-Irish citizens coming to live in the State in the year leading up to Census 2022

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<https://data.cso.ie/table/FY019>

- India was by far the most common country of origin of non-Irish citizens who came to live in the State in the year before the census with almost 10,000 arrivals.
- Brazil was the second most common country of origin with 5,175 arrivals.
- There were five European Union countries in the top 10, including Spain, Romania, France, Italy and Poland.
- There were 4,247 non-Irish citizens who were living in Ukraine in the year prior to Census 2022 reflecting the impact of the Ukrainian crisis. This number may appear lower than expected because many Ukrainians did not identify as usual residents of the State and would therefore be excluded from this figure.

Statistical Annex - Census of Population 2022 Profile 5 - Diversity, Migration, Ethnicity, Irish Travellers & Religion

Age Profile of Recent Immigrants

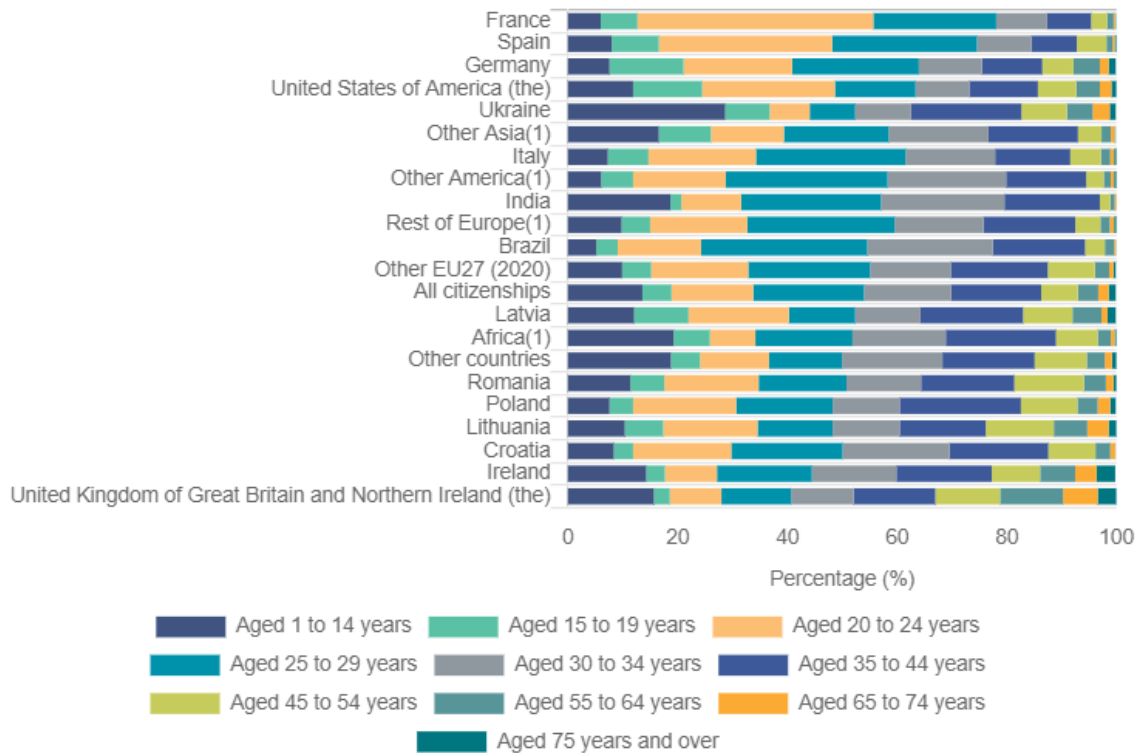


Figure 2.4 Population aged one year and over usually resident and present in the State who came to live in the State in the year leading up to Census 2022 by age group and citizenship

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<https://data.cso.ie/table/F5020>

The age profile of recent migrants varied by country of citizenship.

- UK citizens who came to live in the State were generally older, with 21% aged 55 years or over.
- Irish citizens who immigrated in the year before the census were also older, with 23% aged 45 or older.
- Nearly two-thirds of French citizens who came to live in the State in the year before Census 2022 were in their twenties.
- Spanish immigrants were mostly aged between 20 and 29 years as well.

Statistical Annex - Census of Population 2022 Profile 5 - Diversity, Migration, Ethnicity, Irish Travellers & Religion

Home Ownership and Rent

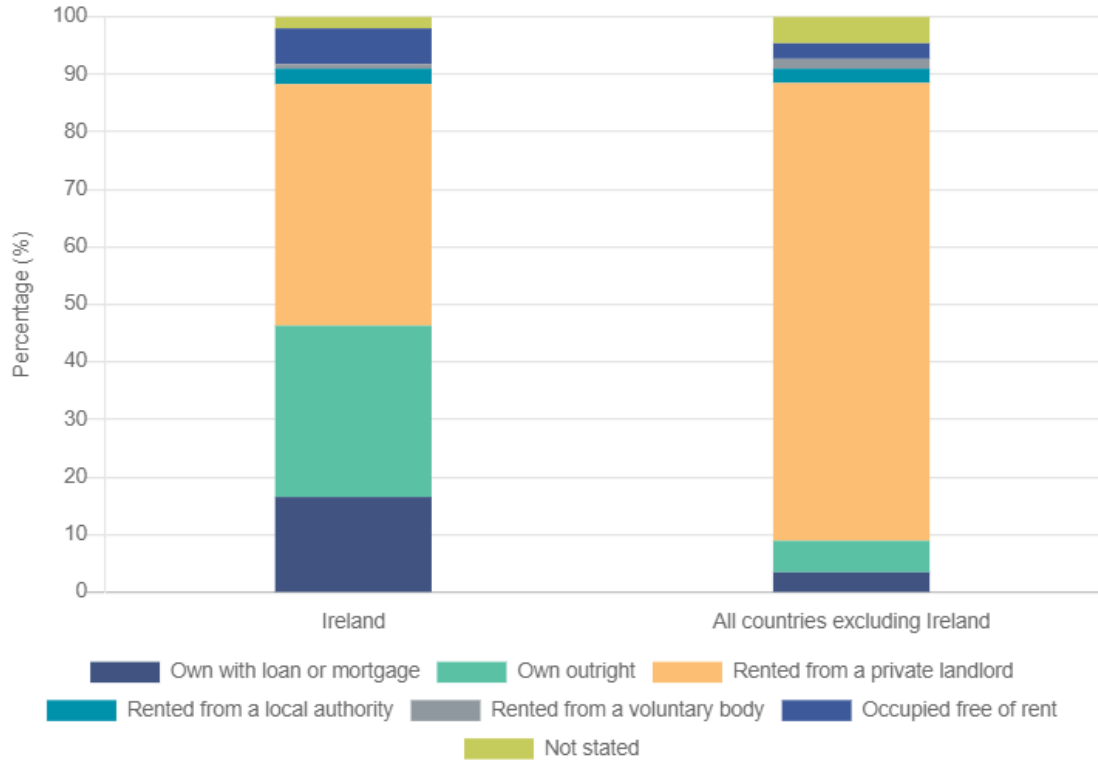


Figure 2.5 Private households where the head of the household moved to the State in the year leading up to the census by nature of occupancy and citizenship of the head of the household, 2022

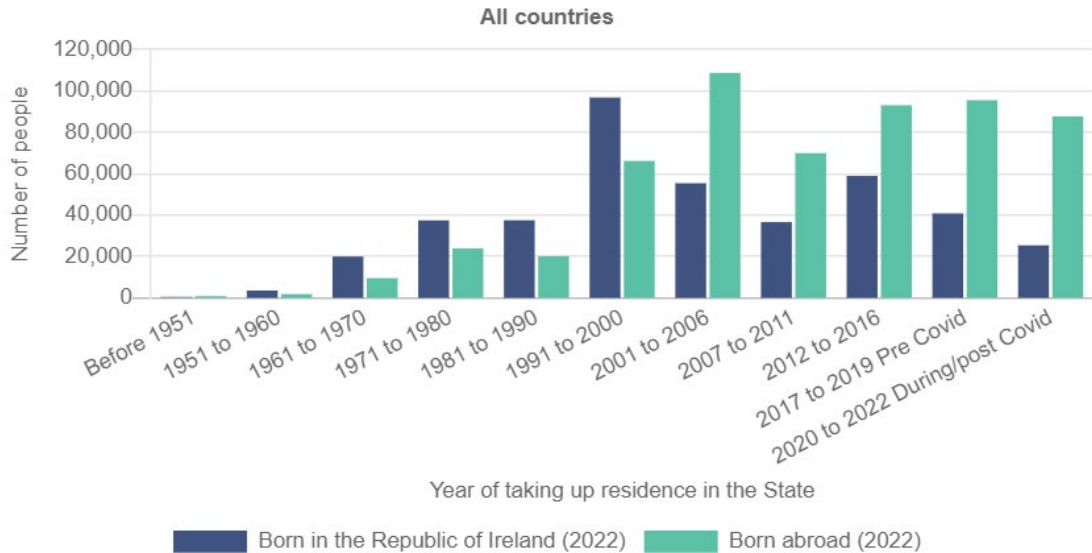
© Central Statistics Office, Ireland
<https://data.cso.ie/table/F5062>

This section looks at home ownership status and average rent in households headed by migrants who arrived in the State in the year prior to the census.

- Home ownership was 46% for households headed by Irish citizens who immigrated and 9% for non-Irish households.
- In total, over 13,000 (80%) of households headed by a non-Irish citizen who migrated in the year leading to the census rented their home from a private landlord with an average weekly rent of €372.
- In contrast, there were fewer than 2,800 (42%) private rentals with an average weekly rent of €360 where the head of the household was a recent Irish immigrant.
- In both cases, the average weekly rent was much higher than the national average of €273.

Statistical Annex - Census of Population 2022 Profile 5 - Diversity, Migration, Ethnicity, Irish Travellers & Religion

Long-term Migration Flows into the State



May 30, 2023 11:00:00 UTC

Figure 2.6 Population aged one year and over usually resident and present in the State who ever lived abroad by place of birth, year of arrival and country of origin, 2022

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<https://data.cso.ie/table/FY018>

The census asked if people had ever lived outside the Republic of Ireland for a period of one year or more. The question also asked the year of arrival in the State and the country of previous residence. This data can be broken down by place of birth to differentiate between people who left the State previously and have since returned and people who were born abroad and have come to live in the State.

- People who moved to the Republic of Ireland in the 1960s through to the 1990s were mostly born in the State whereas since 2000, people who were born abroad make up a larger share of incoming migrants.
- Changing migration trends show that up until 2000, people returning to the State from abroad were mostly coming back after a period living in the UK, with the USA the second most common country of origin.
- More recent arrivals were people returning from a wider range of countries, with Australia featuring prominently since 2000.
- About three-quarters of people who moved to the State up until 1990 and were born abroad moved here from the UK. In comparison, just one-quarter of people born abroad who moved to the State between 2001 and 2011 were coming from the UK and half were coming from other European countries.

Statistical Annex - Census of Population 2022 Profile 5 - Diversity, Migration, Ethnicity, Irish Travellers & Religion

3. Ethnic Group/Background

Table 3.1 Population usually resident and present in the State by sex and ethnic group/background, 2022

Ethnicity	Both sexes	Male	Female
All ethnic or cultural backgrounds	5,084,879	2,515,954	2,568,925
White Irish	3,893,056	1,921,947	1,971,109
White Irish Traveller	32,949	16,172	16,777
Roma	16,059	8,548	7,511
Any other White background	502,081	245,378	256,703
Black or Black Irish - African	67,546	32,811	34,735
Black or Black Irish - any other Black background	8,699	4,382	4,317
Asian or Asian Irish - Chinese	26,828	12,370	14,458
Asian or Asian Irish - Indian/Pakistani/Bangladeshi	94,434	50,766	43,668
Asian or Asian Irish - any other Asian background	44,944	19,396	25,548
Arab	20,115	10,968	9,147
Other including mixed background	64,992	31,602	33,390
Not stated	313,176	161,614	151,562

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<https://data.cso.ie/table/F5085>

The question on ethnic group or background was updated for Census 2022 with new response categories added including Roma, Indian/Pakistani/Bangladeshi and Arab. The change to the question means that some categories are not directly comparable with the previous census results.

- Census 2022 shows that, in the new categories, 94,434 people resident in Ireland identified as Indian/Pakistani/Bangladeshi, 20,115 identified as Arab and 16,059 as Roma.
- In total 3,893,056 people recorded their ethnicity as White Irish, 32,949 people identified as White Irish Traveller and 502,081 indicated that they were of Any other White background.
- The number of people who identified as Black or Black Irish – African was 67,546, up 17% from 57,850 in 2016.
- A further 8,699 people identified as Black or Black Irish – any other Black background, up 28% since the previous census.
- An Asian or Asian Irish – Chinese ethnicity was recorded by 26,828 people, up 38%.
- There were 44,944 people who identified as Asian or Asian Irish – any other Asian background.

Statistical Annex - Census of Population 2022 Profile 5 - Diversity, Migration, Ethnicity, Irish Travellers & Religion

- The number of people who selected the Mixed or Other categories was 64,992, but this figure is not directly comparable with previous results due to the changes to the question.

Ethnic Group by Age and Sex

The profile of people usually resident in the State varied by age and sex composition for different ethnic groups/backgrounds.

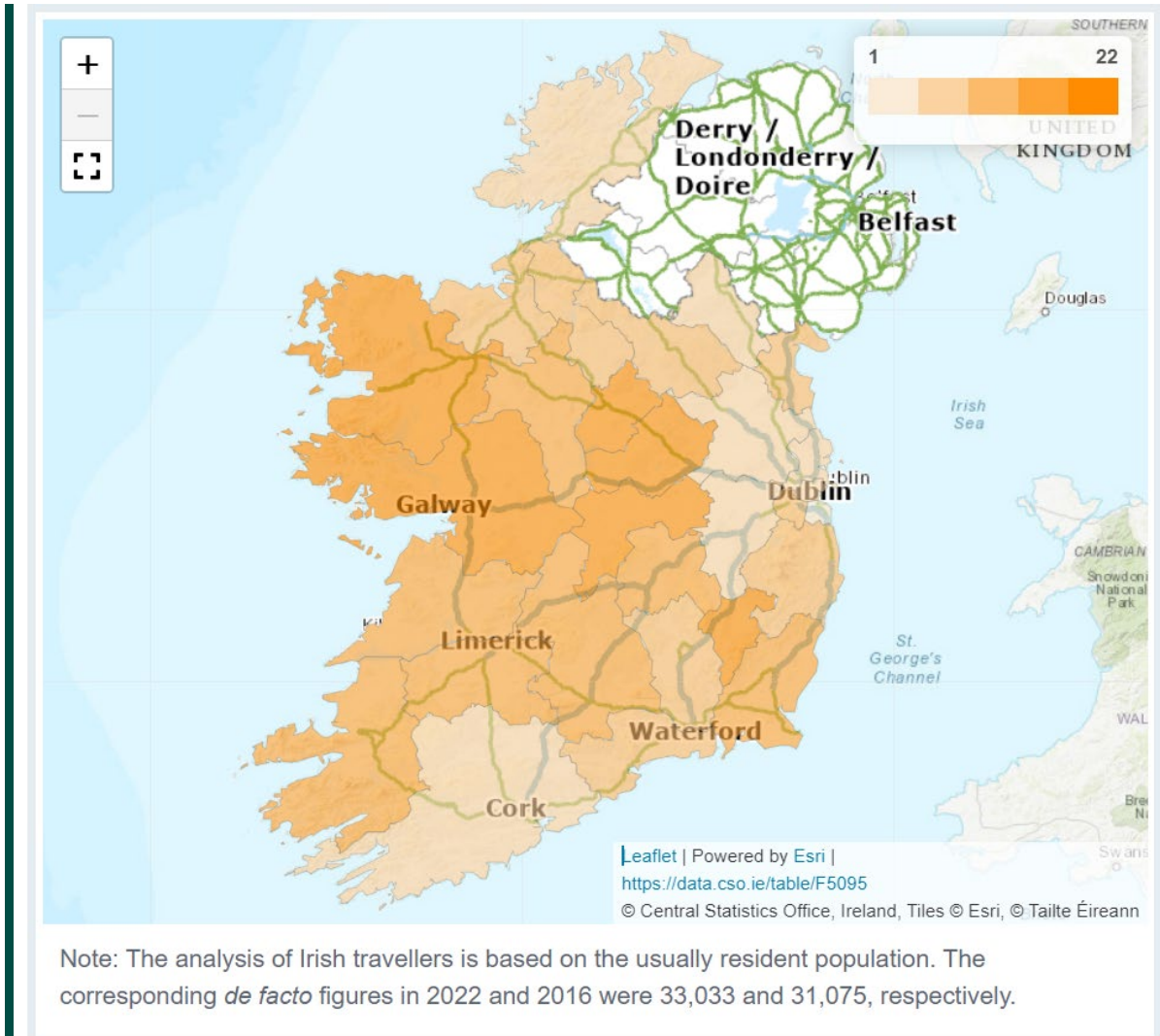
- Over half the Roma population were either adults aged 30 to 44 years or children aged 5 to 14 years.
- Just 16% of the people with an ethnic group/background of Any other White background were children aged 0 to 14 years while more than half the population in this ethnic group were adults between the ages of 25 and 49 years.
- Over 40% of people identifying as Black or Black Irish – African were aged between 0 and 19 years while the ethnic group Black or Black Irish – Any other Black background had an older age profile with 53% between the ages of 20 and 44 years.
- The Indian/Pakistani/Bangladeshi ethnic group were mostly people aged 25 to 44 years (52%) with a further 26% of the population aged under 15 years.
- The proportion of children under 15 years with Arab ethnicity was higher than average, at 29%.

Ethnic Group by Citizenship

The relationship between ethnicity and country of citizenship gives further insight into the diversity of the population.

- The most common country of citizenship of the Roma population was Ireland (28%), followed by Romania (22%), Italy (10%) and Poland (9%).
- The top countries of citizenship of people who identified as Any other White background were Ireland (24%), Poland (16%) and UK (13%).
- The proportion of people who identified as Black or Black Irish – African and had Irish citizenship was 65% with a further 27% recording citizenship in African countries.
- In the Black or Black Irish – Any other Black background ethnic group, 37% were Irish citizens and a further 28% were Brazilian citizens.
- The proportion of people who identified with the Chinese ethnic group/background who were Irish citizens was 40%.
- A further 54% were citizens of countries in the Other Asia category including China.
- The top three categories of citizenship for people in the Arab ethnic group were Ireland (43%), Other Asia (29%) and Africa (19%).
-

4. Irish Travellers



Map 4.1 Irish Travellers usually resident and present in the State per 1,000 of the population by county and city, 2022

The number of Irish Travellers living in the State and counted in Census 2022 was 32,949, an increase of 6% from 30,987 in the 2016 census. Irish Travellers make up less than 1% of the population so, for comparison purposes, it can be helpful to use rates per 1,000 of the population. This shows that in Census 2022, six out of 1,000 people in the State were Irish Travellers. The proportion of Irish Travellers in the population varied from county to county.

- In Galway City, 21 out of every 1,000 people were Irish Travellers, in Longford, the rate was 20 per 1,000 of the population and in Offaly, it was 14 per 1,000.
- Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown had the lowest number of Irish Travellers per 1,000 of the population with just under two Irish Travellers for every 1,000 people.

Statistical Annex - Census of Population 2022 Profile 5 - Diversity, Migration, Ethnicity, Irish Travellers & Religion

- In Kildare and Dublin City, there were just under four Irish Travellers for every 1,000 people.
- The Irish Traveller population increased in most counties, the largest rise being recorded in Offaly, up 30% to 1,174.
- The Traveller population also increased by more than 200 in Cork (up 11% to 2,376), Fingal (up 17% to 1,545) and Tipperary (up 17% to 1,434).
- There were drops in the number of Irish Travellers in some counties; the largest were recorded in Longford (down 13% to 913) and South Dublin (down 12% to 1,943).

Table 4.1 Irish Travellers usually resident and present in the State - number and rate per 1,000 of the population - by sex and county, 2011 to 2022

2011 County and City	Persons (Number)	Males (Number)	Females (Number)	Irish Travellers per 1,000 of total population (Number)
State	29,495	14,582	14,913	6.5
Carlow	413	208	205	7.6
Dublin City	1,923	951	972	3.8
Dun Laoghaire- Rathdown	403	211	192	2
Fingal	1,357	669	688	5
South Dublin	2,216	1,061	1,155	8.4
Kildare	874	451	423	4.2
Kilkenny	483	252	231	5.1
Laois	668	344	324	8.3
Longford	743	374	369	19.2
Louth	663	307	356	5.4
Meath	967	497	470	5.3
Offaly	1,025	494	531	13.4
Westmeath	853	416	437	10
Wexford	1,501	721	780	10.4
Wicklow	721	354	367	5.3
Clare	855	417	438	7.4
Cork City and Cork County	1,865	928	937	3.6
Kerry	860	416	444	6
Limerick City and County	1,514	725	789	8
Tipperary	1,150	575	575	7.3

Statistical Annex - Census of Population 2022 Profile 5 - Diversity, Migration, Ethnicity, Irish Travellers & Religion

2011 County and City	Persons (Number)	Males (Number)	Females (Number)	Irish Travellers per 1,000 of total population (Number)
Waterford City and County	411	201	210	3.6
Galway City	1,666	800	866	22.8
Galway County	2,475	1,207	1,268	14.3
Leitrim	264	147	117	8.4
Mayo	1,385	682	703	10.8
Roscommon	396	228	168	6.2
Sligo	417	210	207	6.5
Cavan	452	227	225	6.2
Donegal	726	371	355	4.6
Monaghan	249	138	111	4.2

2016 County and City	Persons (Number)	Males (Number)	Females (Number)	Irish Travellers per 1,000 of total population (Number)
State	30,987	15,377	15,610	6.6
Carlow	511	252	259	9
Dublin City	2,080	1,038	1,042	3.9
DÃºn Laoghaire- Rathdown	411	210	201	1.9
Fingal	1,315	650	665	4.5
South Dublin	2,200	1,073	1,127	8
Kildare	739	368	371	3.4
Kilkenny	557	286	271	5.7
Laois	780	401	379	9.3
Longford	1,046	530	516	25.7
Louth	771	370	401	6
Meath	971	496	475	5
Offaly	905	434	471	11.7
Westmeath	1,002	514	488	11.4
Wexford	1,508	705	803	10.2
Wicklow	783	384	399	5.6
Clare	905	465	440	7.8

Statistical Annex - Census of Population 2022 Profile 5 - Diversity, Migration, Ethnicity, Irish Travellers & Religion

2016 County and City	Persons (Number)	Males (Number)	Females (Number)	Irish Travellers per 1,000 of total population (Number)
Cork City and Cork County	2,150	1,066	1,084	4
Kerry	960	450	510	6.7
Limerick City and County	1,659	761	898	8.6
Tipperary	1,228	633	595	7.8
Waterford City and County	517	248	269	4.5
Galway City	1,606	790	816	21.2
Galway County	2,640	1,301	1,339	14.9
Leitrim	203	113	90	6.4
Mayo	1,299	661	638	10.1
Roscommon	516	294	222	8.1
Sligo	386	184	202	6
Cavan	477	249	228	6.3
Donegal	586	306	280	3.8
Monaghan	276	145	131	4.5

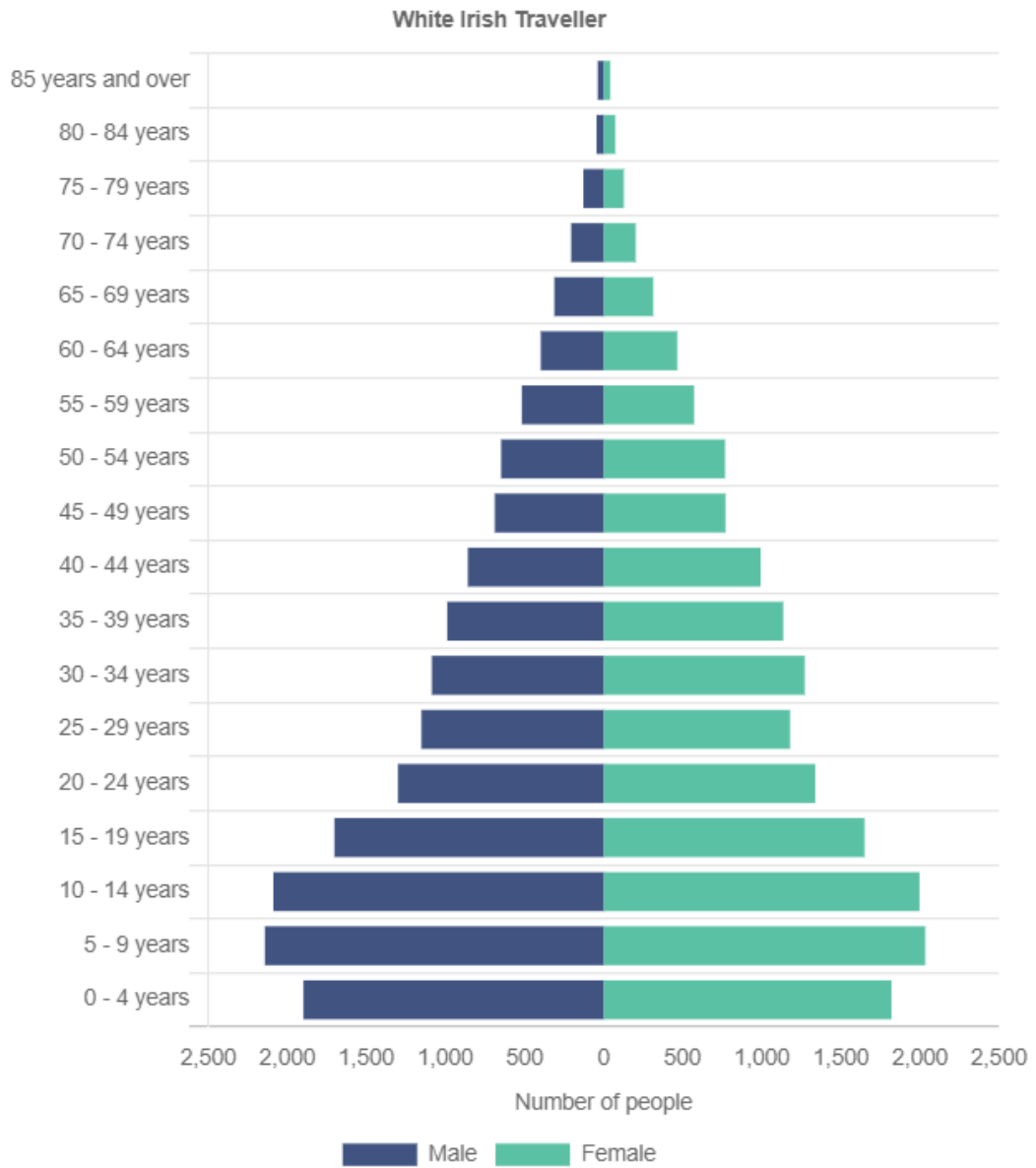
2022 County and City	Persons (Number)	Males (Number)	Females (Number)	Irish Travellers per 1,000 of total population (Number)
State	32,949	16,172	16,777	6.5
Carlow	573	266	307	9.3
Dublin City	2,279	1,151	1,128	3.9
DÃ¡n Laoghaire- Rathdown	429	215	214	1.9
Fingal	1,545	734	811	4.7
South Dublin	1,943	935	1,008	6.5
Kildare	929	471	458	3.8
Kilkenny	637	323	314	6.2
Laois	812	396	416	8.9
Longford	913	452	461	19.7
Louth	930	441	489	6.7

Statistical Annex - Census of Population 2022 Profile 5 - Diversity, Migration, Ethnicity, Irish Travellers & Religion

2022 County and City	Persons (Number)	Males (Number)	Females (Number)	Irish Travellers per 1,000 of total population (Number)
Meath	989	517	472	4.5
Offaly	1,174	574	600	14.2
Westmeath	974	478	496	10.2
Wexford	1,441	695	746	8.9
Wicklow	887	429	458	5.8
Clare	989	493	496	7.9
Cork City and Cork County	2,376	1,156	1,220	4.1
Kerry	1,107	528	579	7.3
Limerick City and County	1,860	883	977	9
Tipperary	1,434	710	724	8.6
Waterford City and County	609	294	315	4.8
Galway City	1,748	853	895	21.3
Galway County	2,509	1,218	1,291	13.1
Leitrim	180	91	89	5.2
Mayo	1,294	654	640	9.5
Roscommon	565	311	254	8.1
Sligo	418	189	229	6
Cavan	469	238	231	5.8
Donegal	670	348	322	4.1
Monaghan	266	129	137	4.1

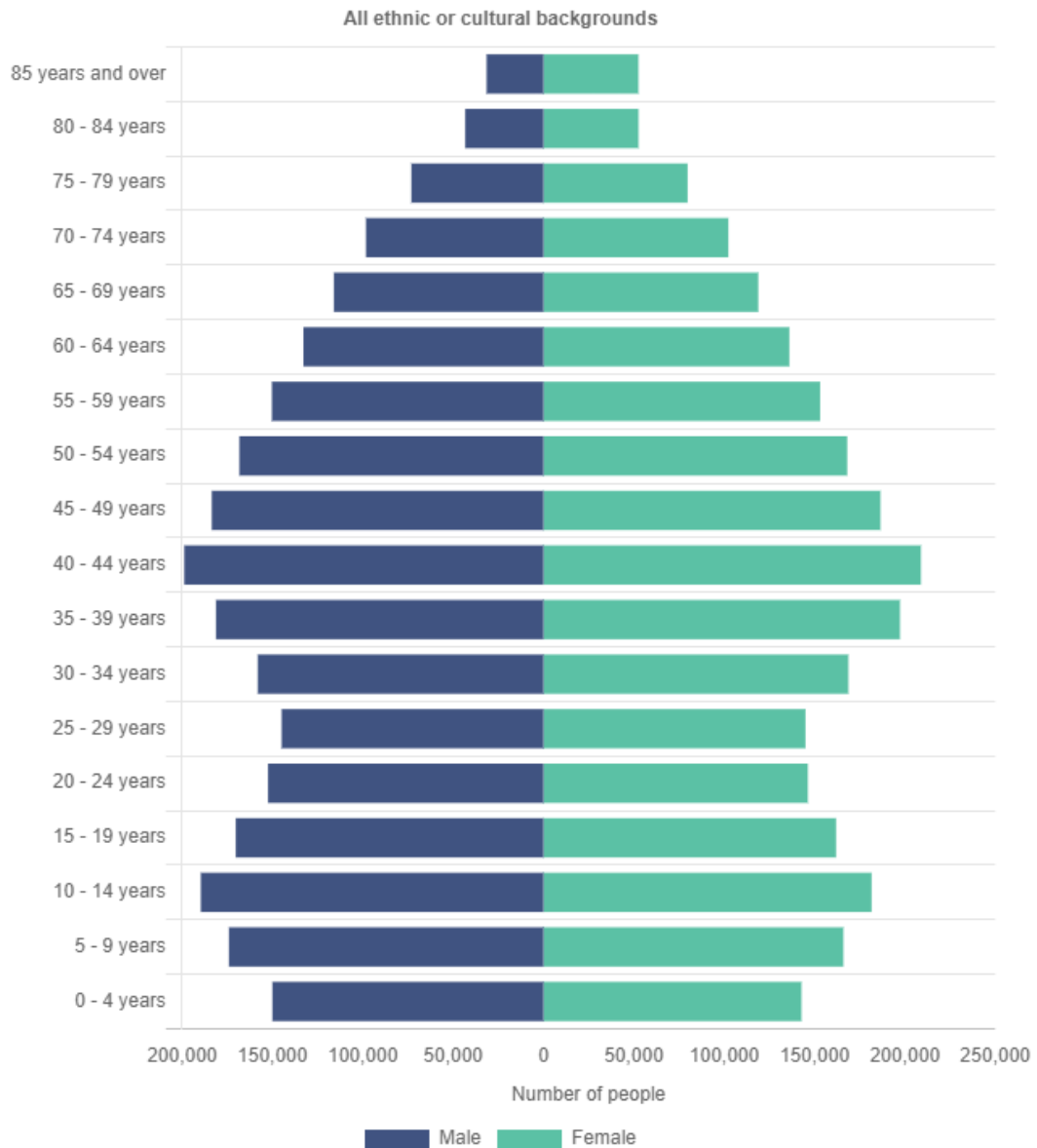
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Statistical Annex - Census of Population 2022 Profile 5 - Diversity, Migration, Ethnicity, Irish Travellers & Religion



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Statistical Annex - Census of Population 2022 Profile 5 - Diversity, Migration, Ethnicity, Irish Travellers & Religion



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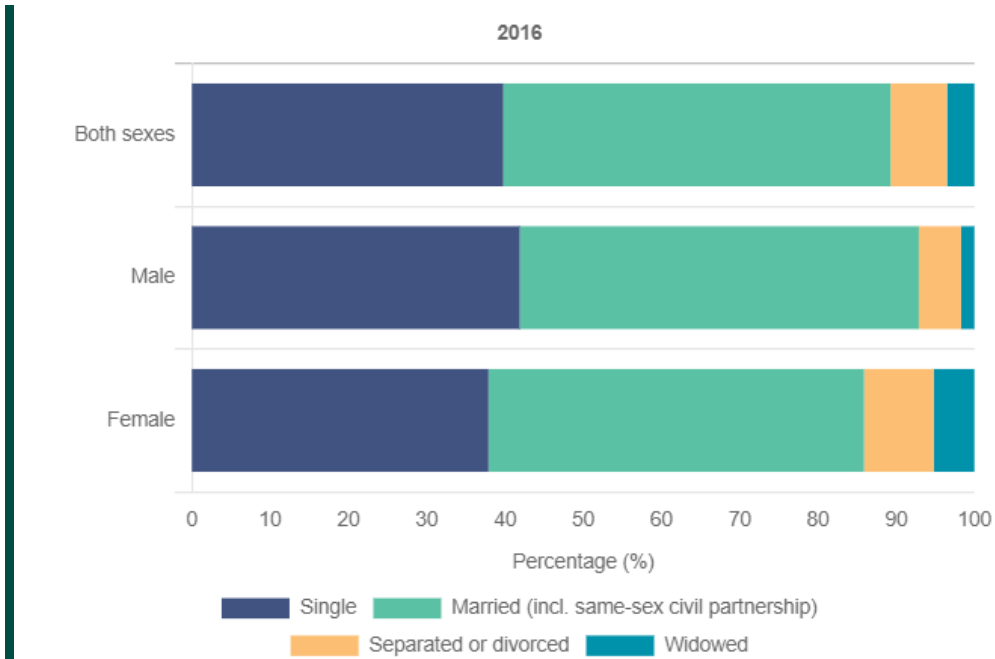
Figure 4.1 Population and Irish Travellers usually resident and present in the State by age group and sex, 2022

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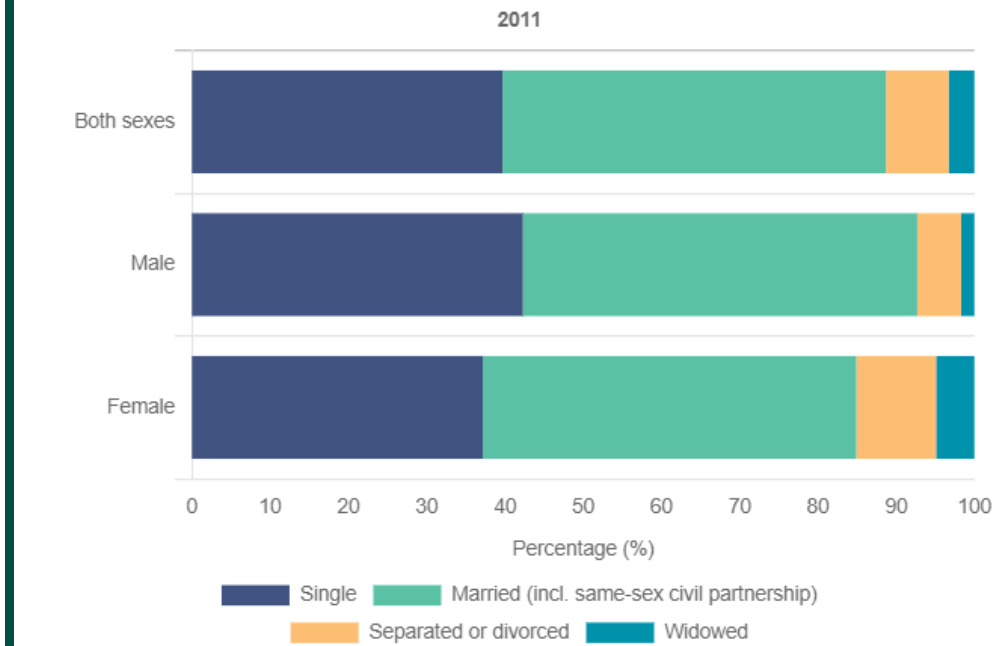
- The figure for Irish Travellers has a pyramid shape as opposed to the hourglass shape of the figure for the total population. This reflects higher fertility rates and lower average life expectancy among the Irish Traveller population than in the overall population.
- Children under the age of 15 made up 36% of Irish Travellers compared with 20% of the total population. At a national level, 15% of the total population was aged 65 years and over while for Irish Travellers, the equivalent figure was just 5%.

Statistical Annex - Census of Population 2022 Profile 5 - Diversity, Migration, Ethnicity, Irish Travellers & Religion

Marital Status of Irish Travellers

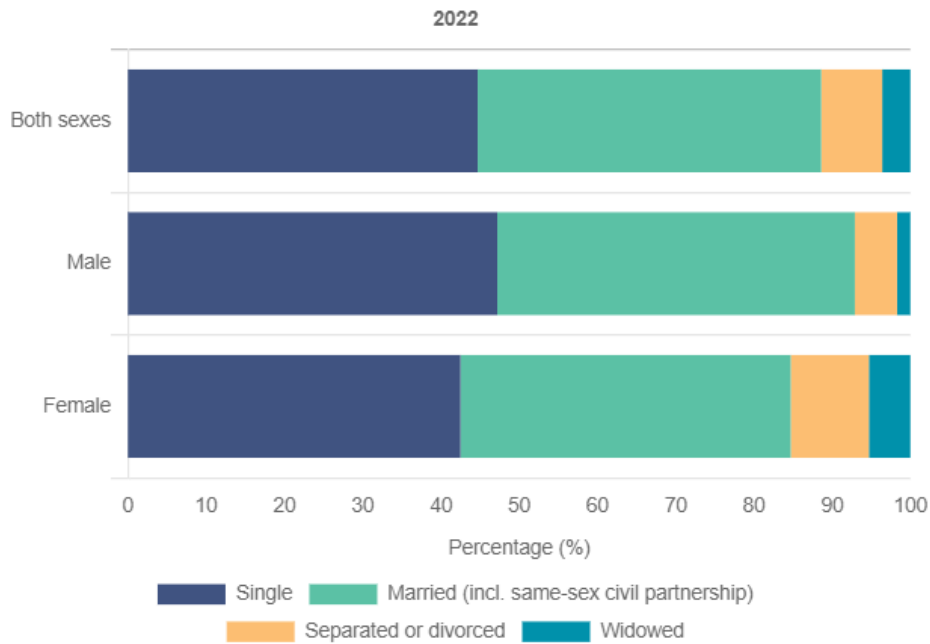


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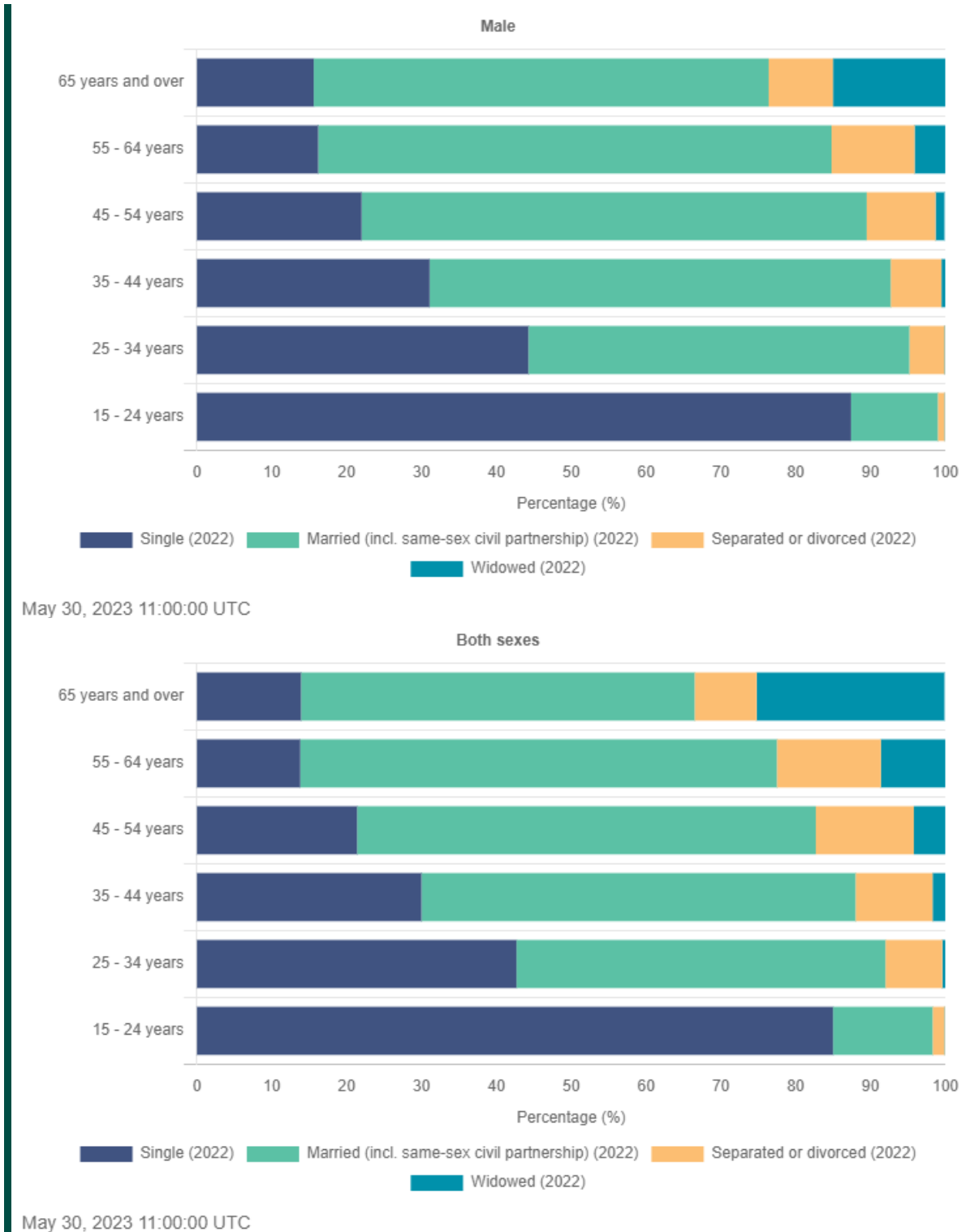
Figure 4.2 Irish Travellers aged 15 years and over usually resident and present in the State by marital status and sex, 2011 to 2022

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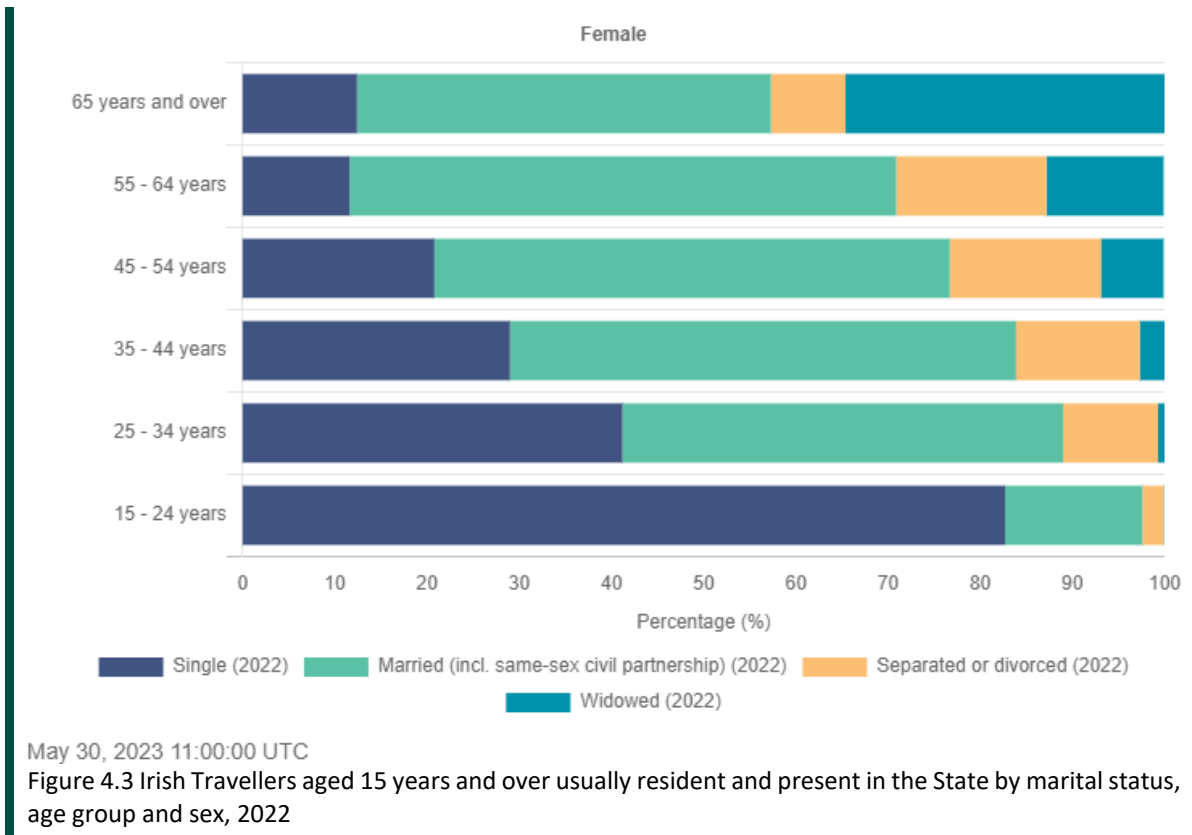
Overall, 45% of Irish Travellers aged 15 years and over were single, up from 40% in 2016. The proportion of married Travellers dropped from 49% in 2016 to 44% in 2022.

- Irish Traveller men were more likely to be either single (47%) or married (46%) than Irish Traveller women (42% single and 42% married).
- Around 10% of Irish Traveller women were separated or divorced compared with 5% of Irish Traveller men.
- Irish Traveller women were also more likely to be widowed (5%) than Irish Traveller men (2%).

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- Over 85% of Irish Travellers aged 15 to 24 years were single while 13% were married.
- The proportion that were married increased to 49% for 25 to 34 year olds.
- Among Irish Travellers aged 55 to 64 years, 14% were separated or divorced compared with 8% of Travellers aged 65 and over.
- Overall, 25% of Irish Travellers aged 65 and over were widowed; the figure for Traveller women aged 65 and over was 35% and 15% for Traveller men.

Statistical Annex - Census of Population 2022 Profile 5 - Diversity, Migration, Ethnicity, Irish Travellers & Religion

Long-Lasting Conditions and Difficulties

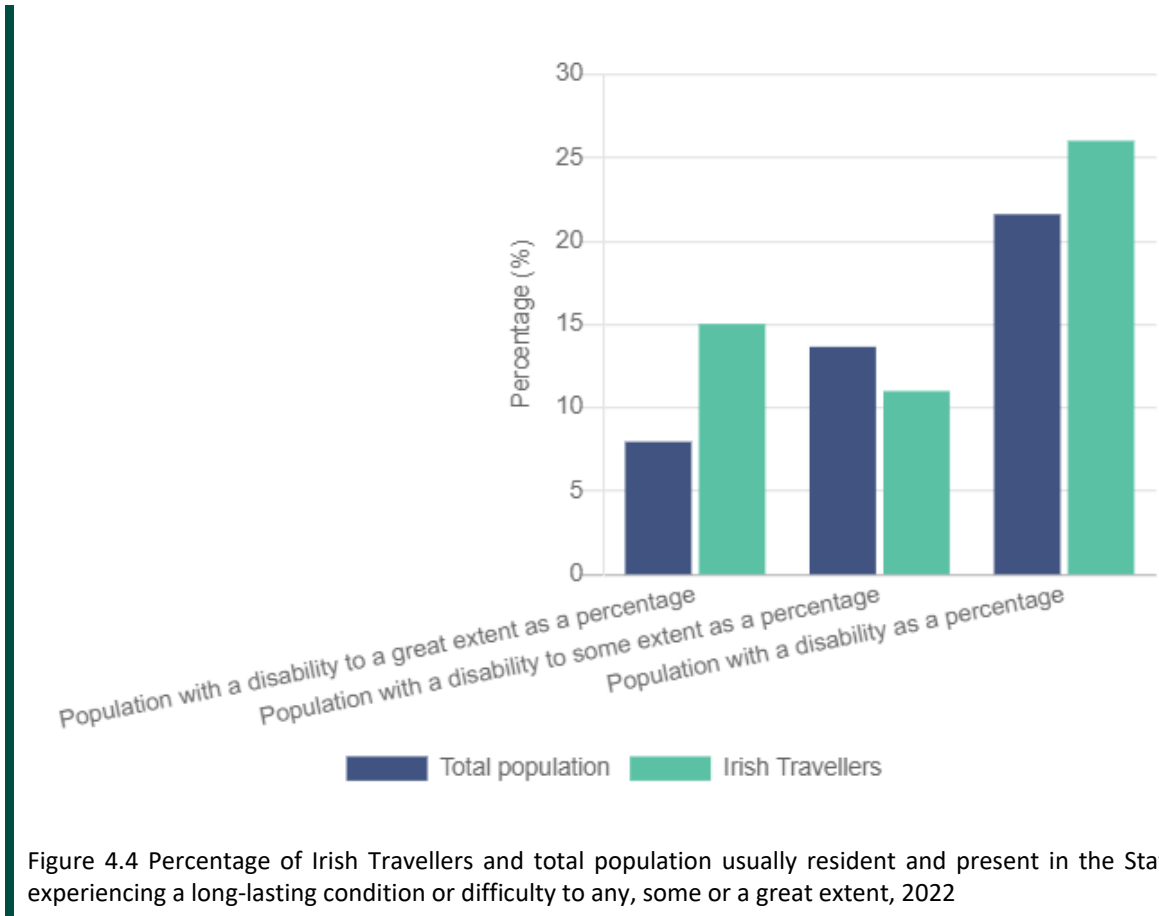


Figure 4.4 Percentage of Irish Travellers and total population usually resident and present in the State experiencing a long-lasting condition or difficulty to any, some or a great extent, 2022

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There were 8,577 Irish Travellers who reported experiencing at least one long-lasting condition or difficulty to any extent, accounting for 26% of the Traveller population. In comparison, 22% of the total population living in the State reported experiencing at least one long-lasting condition or difficulty to any extent.

- Breaking this down further, 15% of Irish Travellers (4,952 people) reported experiencing at least one long-lasting condition or difficulty to a great extent or a lot compared with 8% of all people living in Ireland.
- Another 11% of Irish Travellers (3,625 people) reported experiencing at least one long-lasting condition or difficulty to some extent or a little while the comparable figure for the total population was 14%.

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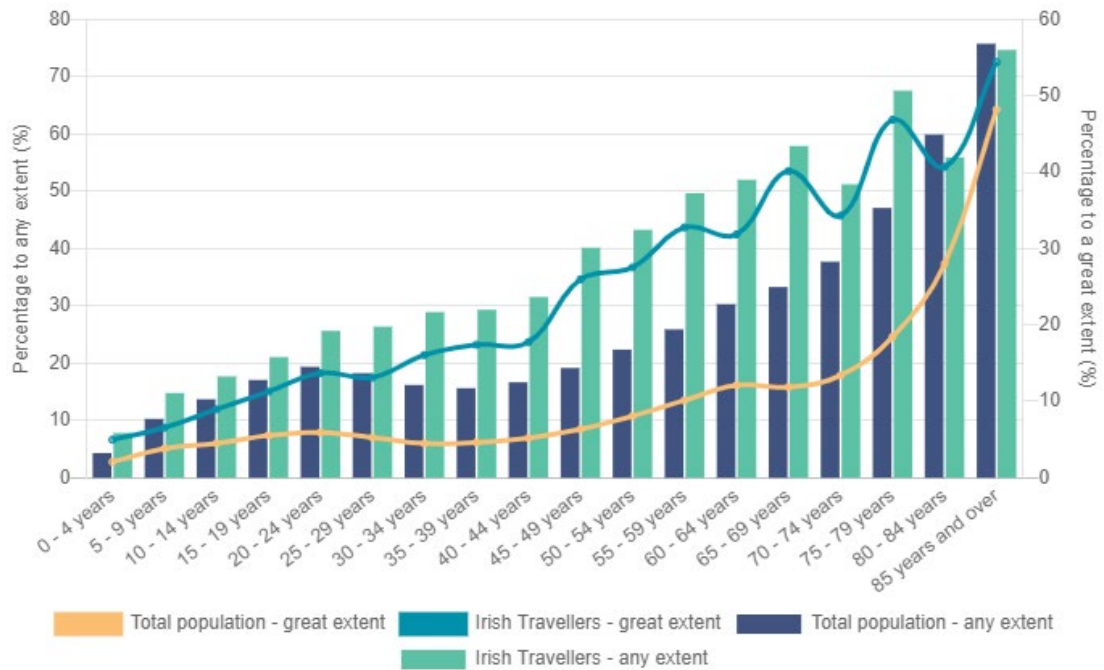


Figure 4.5 Percentage of Irish Travellers and total population usually resident and present in the State experiencing a long-lasting condition or difficulty to any and a great extent by age group, 2022

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The overall proportion of Irish Travellers experiencing a long-lasting condition or difficulty to any extent was slightly higher for men (27%) than women (25%). Looking at the total population, women (22%) were more likely to experience a long-lasting condition or difficulty to any extent than men (21%).

- Of all children under the age of 15 living in the State, 4% reported experiencing at least one long-lasting condition or difficulty to a great extent compared with 7% of Traveller children.
- The proportion of 15 to 29 year old Irish Travellers experiencing at least one long-lasting condition or difficulty to a great extent (13%) was more than twice that of all people in the same age cohort (6%).
- Between the ages of 30 and 59, the proportion of the population experiencing at least one long-lasting condition or difficulty to a great extent was over three times higher for Irish Travellers (21%) than the total population (6%).
- Among the older age cohorts, the differences were less pronounced, and Irish Travellers over the age of 80 were slightly less likely to experience a long-lasting condition or difficulty to any extent than would be expected in the overall population.

Statistical Annex - Census of Population 2022 Profile 5 - Diversity, Migration, Ethnicity, Irish Travellers & Religion

General Health

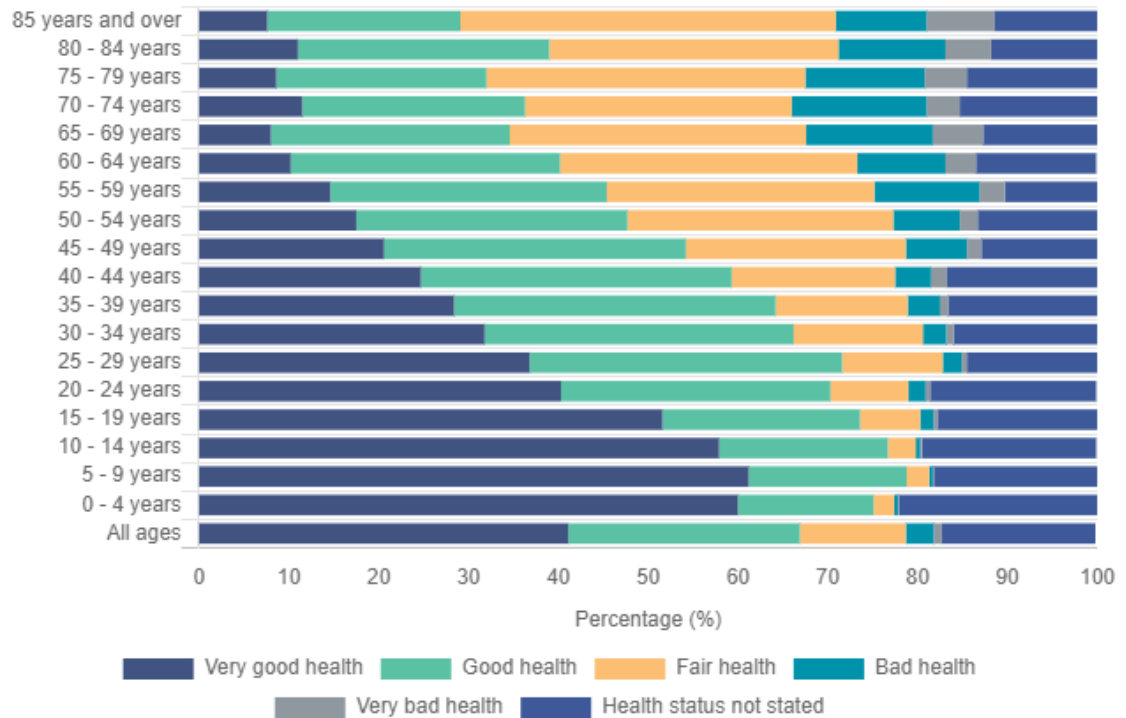


Figure 4.6 Irish Travellers usually resident and present in the State by general health and age group, 2022

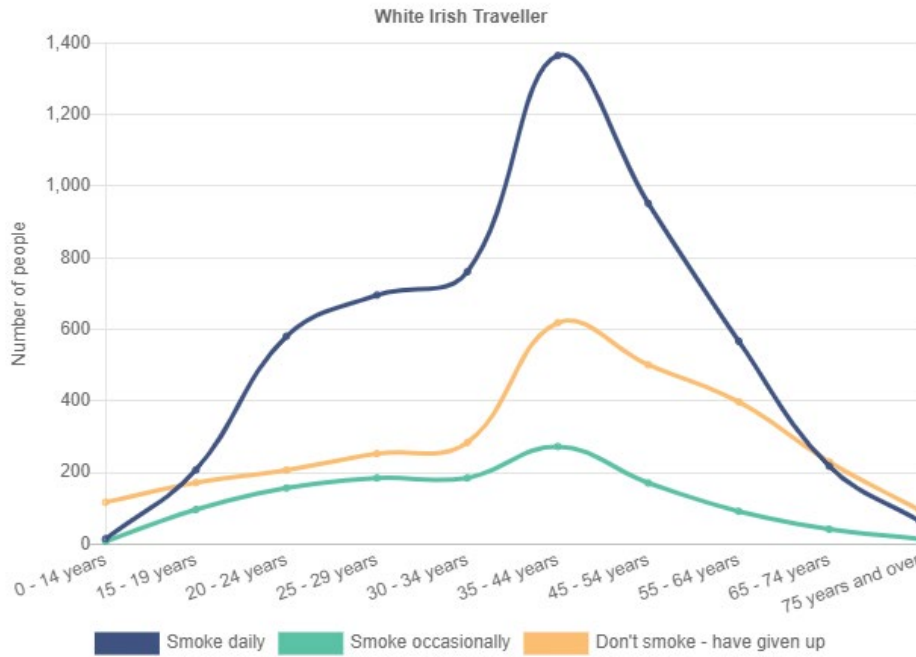
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<https://data.cso.ie/table/F5068>

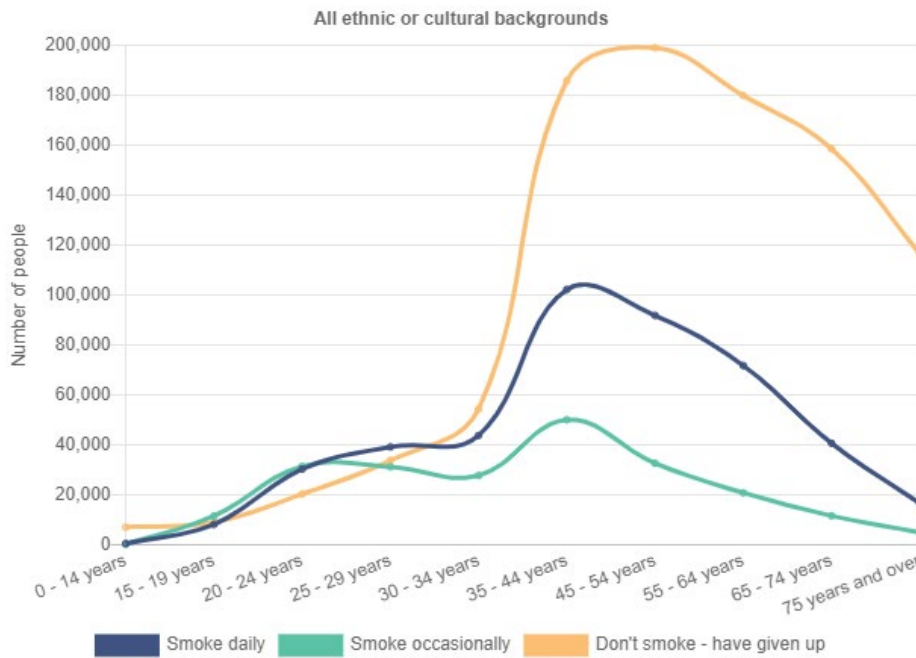
The question on general health shows that 22,050 Irish Travellers reported their general health as being good or very good (67%) while a further 3,899 Irish Travellers reported fair health status (12%).

- There were 1,350 Irish Travellers reporting their health as bad or very bad, 4% of the Traveller population. This is twice as high as the proportion of the total population who reported their health as bad or very bad (2%).
- The level of non-response in this question was quite high for Irish Travellers, at 17%, compared with 7% for the total population.
- In the overall population, the proportion of people with good or very good health decreased slowly with age, up until the age of 70 when the decrease rate started to accelerate.
- In the Irish Traveller population, the proportion of people with good or very good health decreased steadily with age up until the age of 70 at which point, the rate of decrease slowed down.

Statistical Annex - Census of Population 2022 Profile 5 - Diversity, Migration, Ethnicity, Irish Travellers & Religion



October 26, 2023 11:00:00 UTC



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Figure 4.7 Population and Irish Travellers usually resident and present in the State by age group and frequency of smoking tobacco products, 2022

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There were 5,427 Irish Travellers who were daily smokers in Census 2022, or 16% of the Traveller population compared with 9% of the total population.

- Just under half of Irish Travellers had never smoked compared with 60% of the total population.
- Some 9% of Travellers had given up smoking, compared with 19% for the total population.
- Looking at smoking by age shows that one in three Irish Travellers between the ages of 25 and 54 were daily smokers.

Irish Traveller Households

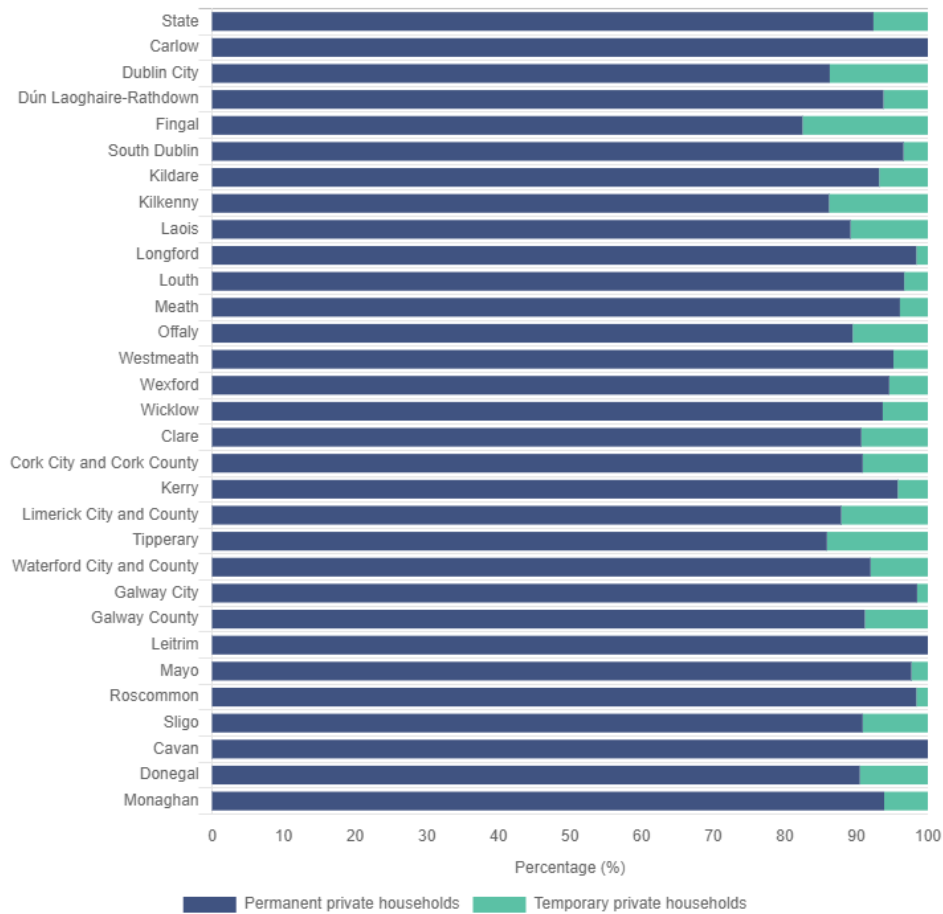


Figure 4.8 Irish Travellers living in private households by type of household, 2022

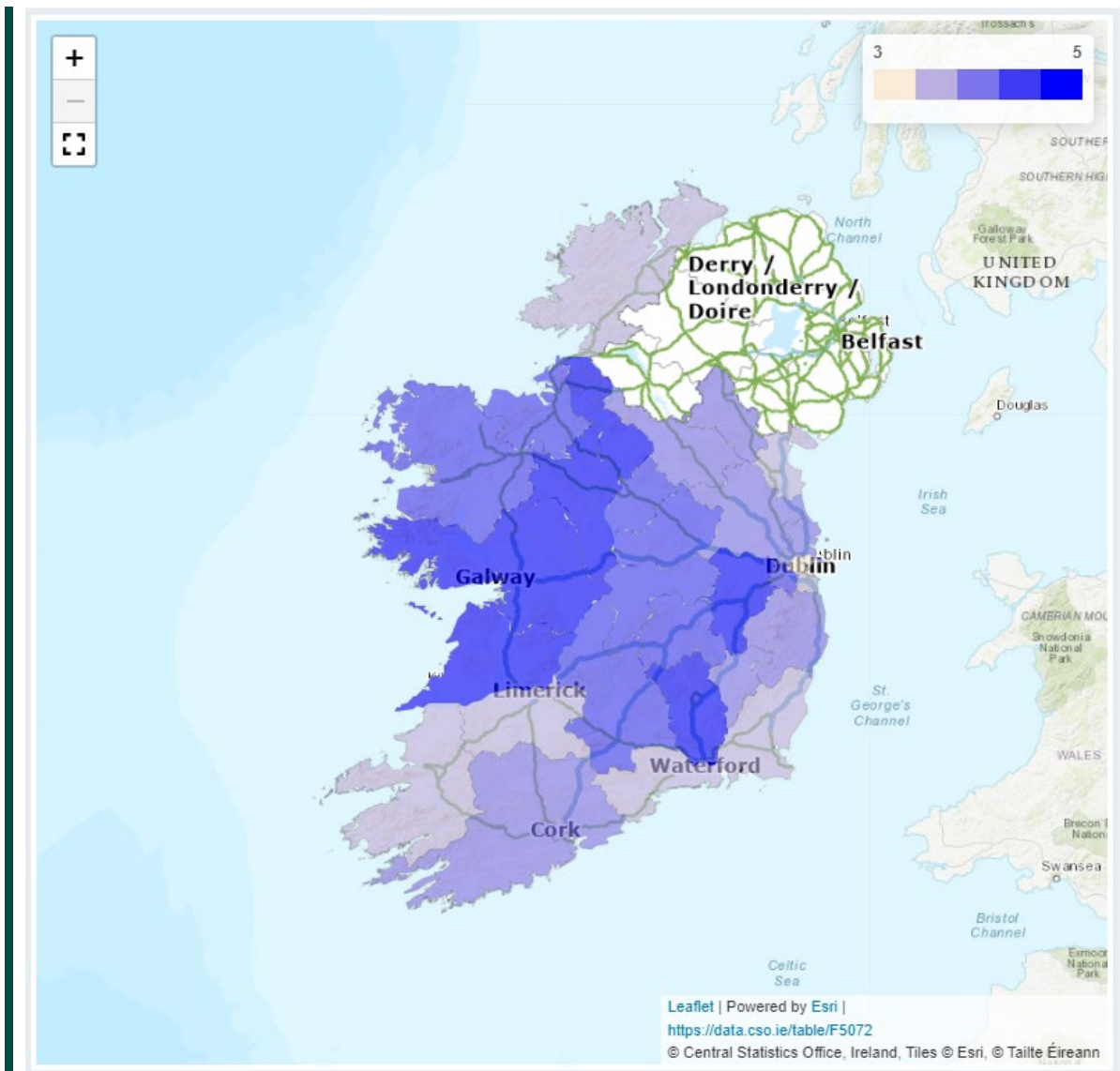
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There were 29,900 Irish Travellers living in private households in Census 2022. The majority were living in permanent housing, while 2,286 people were living in temporary housing units such as caravans and mobile homes.

- The proportion of Irish Travellers living in private households who were living in caravans, mobile homes or other temporary accommodation was 8% in 2022, down from 12% in 2016.
- In Fingal, 18% of Travellers were living in temporary accommodation, the highest proportion in the country in Census 2022.
- In Dublin City, Kilkenny and Tipperary, 14% of Irish Travellers were living in temporary housing.

Household Size



Map 4.2 Average household size of Irish Traveller households by administrative county, 2022

Statistical Annex - Census of Population 2022 Profile 5 - Diversity, Migration, Ethnicity, Irish Travellers & Religion

There were 9,448 private households containing Irish Travellers. These households had an average size of 4 persons per household compared to an average size of 2.7 for the total population.

- Irish Traveller households were largest in Leitrim, Roscommon and Kildare with an average size of 4.6 persons, followed by Clare with 4.5 persons per household.
- The counties where the average size of Irish Traveller households was smallest were Dublin City with 3.5 persons per household and Louth, Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown and Donegal (all with 3.6 persons per household).

5. Religion

In Census 2022, over 3.5 million people living in the State reported that their religion was Roman Catholic, accounting for 69% of the population.

- The number of people who reported having no religion increased to 736,210, over 14% of the population. This was an increase of 63% since the 2016 census, and of 187% since the 2011 census. There were a further 3,823 people who reported that they were Agnostic or Atheist.
- The second largest religious grouping was Church of Ireland or England, Anglican and Episcopalian which accounted for 124,749 people, an increase of 2% since 2016.
- The Orthodox (Greek, Coptic, Russian) grouping accounted for over 100,000 people, an increase of 65% in six years and of 128% in the 11 years since Census 2011.

Table 5.1 Population usually resident and present in the State by religion, 2011 to 2022

Religion	2011	2016	2022
All religions	4,525,28	4,689,92	5,084,87
	1	1	9
Roman Catholic	3,831,18	3,696,64	3,515,86
	7	4	1
No religion	256,830	451,941	736,210
Not stated	68,668	119,349	339,562
Church of Ireland, England, Anglican, Episcopalian	124,445	122,612	124,749
Orthodox (Greek, Coptic, Russian)	44,003	60,777	100,165
Islam	48,130	62,032	81,930
Christian (Not Specified)	39,652	35,996	37,370
Hindu	10,302	13,729	33,043
Presbyterian	22,835	22,188	22,699
Other stated religion (nec)	17,897	19,454	21,220
Apostolic or Pentecostal	13,876	13,193	13,500

Statistical Annex - Census of Population 2022 Profile 5 - Diversity, Migration, Ethnicity, Irish Travellers & Religion

Religion	2011	2016	2022
Buddhist	8,355	9,358	9,053
Evangelical	3,972	9,368	8,646
Jehovah's Witness	6,024	6,264	6,332
Methodist, Wesleyan	6,280	5,847	5,106
Protestant	4,263	4,269	4,657
Baptist	3,219	3,642	4,068
Pagan, Pantheist	1,883	2,645	3,809
Lutheran	5,048	4,549	3,391
Spiritualist	0	2,922	3,293
Lapsed (Roman) Catholic	1,268	8,094	3,254
Born Again Christian	0	2,565	3,138
Agnostic	3,393	5,006	2,881
Atheist	3,751	7,477	942

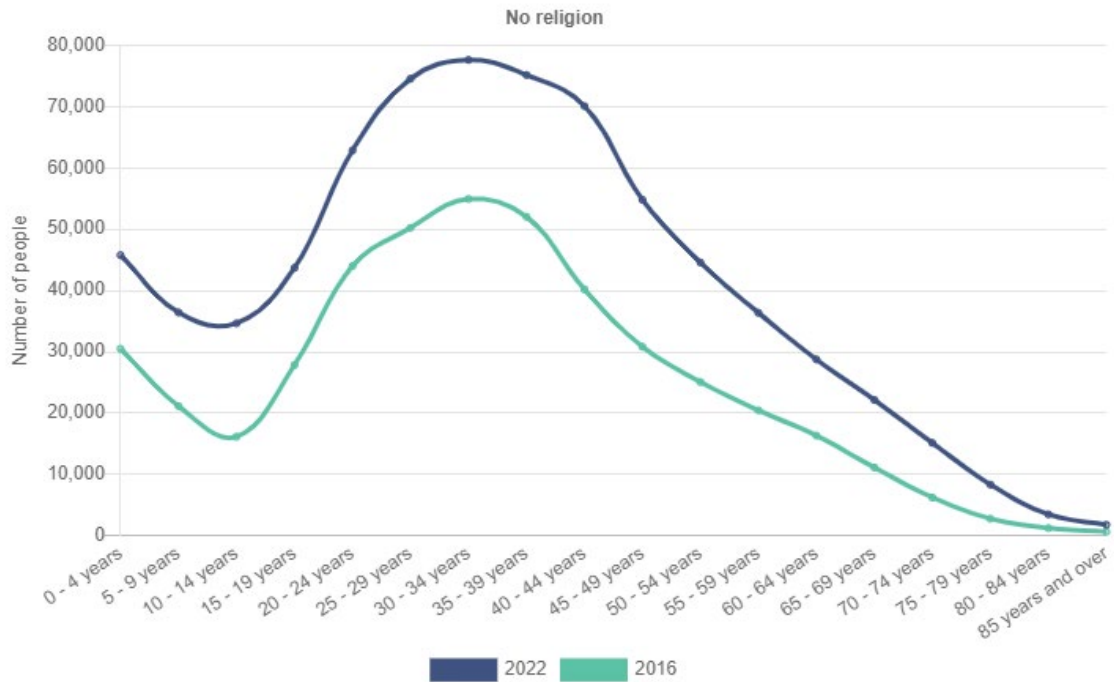
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Religion by Age

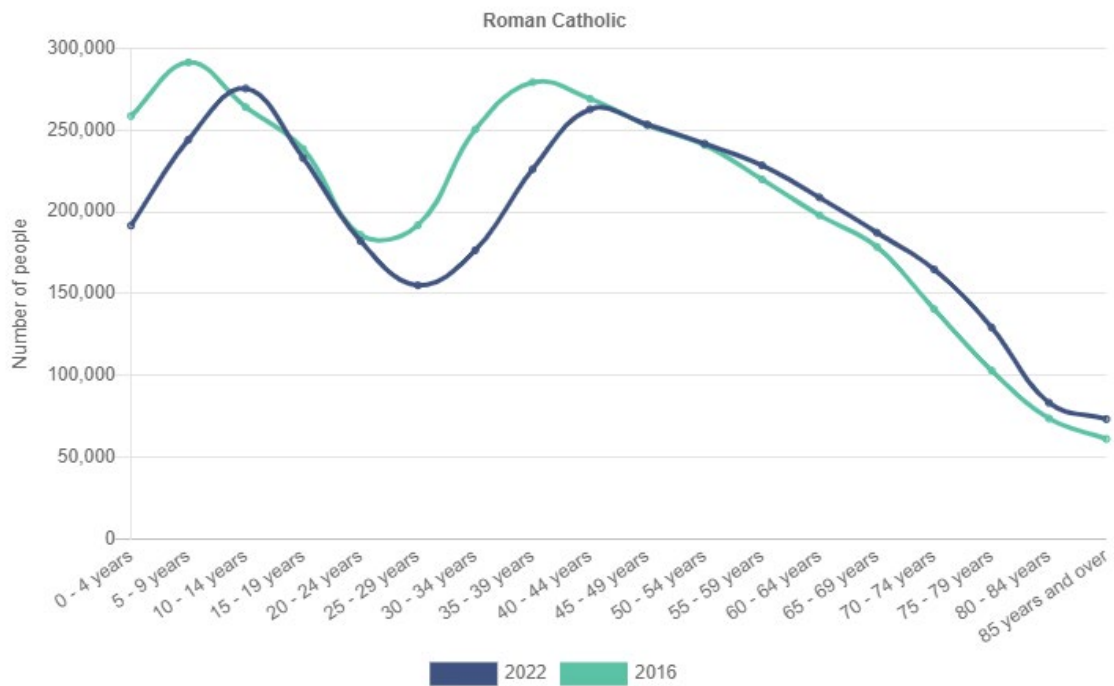
The age breakdown of the population varied across different religious groupings.

- Among pre-school aged children (0 to 4 years), 65% were Roman Catholic, 16% had no religion and 3% were Muslim.
- In the 5 to 9 years age cohort, 72% of children were Roman Catholic, 11% had no religion, 3% were Muslim and 3% were in the Church of Ireland or England, Anglican and Episcopalian grouping.
- People aged 25 to 29 years were less likely to be Roman Catholic (53%) than other age groups. This was also the age cohort with the highest proportion of people with no religion (26%) and the highest proportion of Hindus (over 2%).
- The proportion of the population who were in the Orthodox (Greek, Coptic, Russian) grouping was 2% overall, and more than half were aged between 25 and 49 years.

Statistical Annex - Census of Population 2022 Profile 5 - Diversity, Migration, Ethnicity, Irish Travellers & Religion



October 26, 2023 11:00:00 UTC



October 26, 2023 11:00:00 UTC

Figure 5.2 Population usually resident and present in the State who were Roman Catholic or had no religion by age group, 2016 to 2022

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The number of Roman Catholics aged 45 years and over increased by 7% between the 2016 and 2022 censuses, whereas the overall population in this age cohort increased by 18%.

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- The number of Roman Catholics aged 10 to 24 years was unchanged whereas the population in this age group increased by 14%.
- There was a drop of 21% in the number of Roman Catholics under the age of 10, despite the population in this cohort only decreasing by 8%.
- While the total population increased by 1% among 25 to 44 year olds, the number of Roman Catholics in this age group fell by 17%.
- The number of people with no religion increased across all age cohorts. There were over 100,000 more people aged 45 or over with no religion, an 88% increase since 2016.
- The number of children aged 0 to 9 years with no religion increased by nearly 60% to over 82,000.

Religion and Citizenship

The religious breakdown of the population varied widely by country of citizenship.

- In total, 77% of Irish citizens identified as Roman Catholic and 13% identified as having no religion.
- The proportion of Polish citizens who were Roman Catholic was relatively high as well at 70%, with a further 15% having no religion.
- Over 41% of UK citizens had no religion, while 26% were Roman Catholic and 14% were in the grouping of Church of Ireland or England, Anglican and Episcopalian.
- Almost half of Indian citizens were Hindu and just under a quarter were Roman Catholic.
- Nearly two-thirds of Romanian citizens reported their religion as Orthodox (Greek, Coptic, Russian).

Statistical Annex - Census of Population 2022 Profile 5 - Diversity, Migration, Ethnicity, Irish Travellers & Religion

Datasets related to this release

- [F5003: Population usually resident and present in the State - number and percentage - by citizenship and town of usual residence, 2022](#)
- [F5007: Population usually resident and present in the State by citizenship and ethnic group/background, 2022](#)
- [F5020: Population aged one year and over usually resident and present in the State who were living outside the State one year ago by age group and citizenship, 2022](#)
- [F5060: Average age of the population usually resident and present in the State by citizenship and sex, 2022](#)
- [F5063: Average and weekly rent in rented private households where the head of the household moved to the State in the year to Census 2022 by type of landlord, citizenship of the head of the household, 2022](#)
- [F5064: Population usually resident and present in the State by ethnic group/background, sex and age group, 2022](#)
- [F5067: Population usually resident and present in the State who experienced a long-lasting condition or difficulty - number and percentage - by ethnic group/background, sex and age group, 2022](#)
- [F5068: Population usually resident and present in the State by ethnic group/background, general health and age group, 2022](#)
- [F5071: Population usually resident and present in the State by religion, age group and sex, 2011 to 2022](#)
- [F5088: Population usually resident and present in the State by religion, ethnic group/background and sex, 2022](#)
- [F5095: Irish Travellers per 1,000 of the total population by county and city, 2011 to 2022](#)

Census 2022 Results

This publication is part of a [series of results](#) from Census 2022.

Background

The 26th census since 1841 was carried out on the night of Sunday, 03 April 2022 in accordance with the Statistics (Census of Population) Order 2020 and in order to facilitate the EU requirements arising from the implementing legislation associated with Regulation (EC) No. 763/2008 on population and housing censuses.

Statistical Annex - Census of Population 2022 Profile 5 - Diversity, Migration, Ethnicity, Irish Travellers & Religion

Coverage of the Census

The census population figures in this report relate to the *de facto* population meaning persons who were present in the State on the night of Sunday, 03 April 2022. The *de facto* population includes persons who do not usually live in Ireland but who were in the State on Census Night. It excludes persons who usually live in Ireland but who were temporarily absent, outside of the State, on Census Night. Persons who were present in the State were enumerated and are reported at the location where they spent Census Night. This may not have been the location where they usually live.

Conduct of the Census

The 26th census was originally scheduled to take place on the night of Sunday, 08 April 2021. Following advice from the CSO, the government decided in September 2020 to postpone the census for approximately one year owing to the ongoing difficulties arising from the Covid-19 pandemic.

For the purposes of census enumeration, the State was divided into 6 Census Liaison Areas, 46 Regions, 466 Field Districts and 5,100 Enumeration Areas. Census Enumerators were assigned to these Enumeration Areas and, during the five weeks before Census Night, delivered census questionnaires to all dwellings that were expected to be occupied on Sunday, 03 April 2022. Each address within an Enumeration Area was recorded as either occupied, unoccupied or not suitable for habitation.

The collection of completed questionnaires took place between Monday, 04 April and Friday, 06 May 2022.

The data in this report is based on the information handwritten on the census forms. After collection, the census forms were returned to CSO where they were scanned to capture and digitize the handwritten information. This digitized information was then processed to prepare it for publication.

De Facto versus Usual Residence

The date of the census was chosen to coincide with a period when as many people as possible were at their home address and consequently the figures closely approximate the normally resident population.

The *de facto* measure of the population represents all persons who were present in the State on Census Night, irrespective of whether they were usually resident in the State at the time of the census.

The usually resident and present measure of the population refers to all persons who usually live in Ireland and who were present in the State on Census Night. It excludes persons who were not usually resident in the State on Census Night but who were present and persons who were usually resident in the State but were outside the State on Census Night.

The usually resident and present measure is used when analysing topics such as country of citizenship and households and families.

Definitions and Additional Notes

Reference Person

The reference person in each private household is the first person in the household identified as a parent, spouse, cohabiting partner or head of a non-family household containing related persons. Where no person in the household satisfied these criteria, the first usually resident person was used as the reference person. In this publication, the reference person is referred to as the 'head of household'.

Private Household

A private household comprises either one person living alone or a group of people (not necessarily related) living at the same address with common housekeeping arrangements - that is, sharing at least one meal a day or sharing a living room or sitting room. In order to be included in the household, a person had to be a usual resident at the time of the census. Therefore, visitors to the household on Census Night were excluded, while usual residents temporarily absent (for less than 12 months) were included. A permanent private household is a private household occupying a permanent dwelling such as a house, flat or bed-sit. A temporary private household is a private household occupying a caravan, mobile home or other temporary dwelling.

Non-private Household (Communal Establishment)

A non-private household is a group of persons enumerated in a boarding house, hotel, guest house, hostel, barracks, hospital, nursing home, boarding school, religious institution, welfare institution, prison or ship. A non-private household may include usual residents and/or visitors. However, proprietors and managers of hotels, principals of boarding schools, persons in charge of various other types of institutions and members of staff who, with or without their families, occupy separate living accommodation on the premises are classified as private households.

Disability

Data on disability was derived from answers to Questions 15 and 16 of the census questionnaire. Question 15 was a seven-part question that asked about the existence of the following long lasting conditions: (a) blindness or a vision impairment, (b) deafness or a hearing impairment, (c) a difficulty with basic physical activities such as walking, climbing stairs, reaching, lifting or carrying, (d) an intellectual disability, (e) a difficulty with learning, remembering or concentrating, (f) a psychological or emotional condition or a mental health issue and (g) a difficulty with pain, breathing or any other chronic illness or condition. Respondents had the option to indicate that they did not have any of these long-lasting conditions, had one or more of them to some extent, or had one or more of them to a great extent.

Question 16 was a four-part question that asked whether an individual had a difficulty doing any of the following activities: (a) dressing, bathing or getting around inside the home (self-care disability), (b) going outside the home alone to shop or visit a doctor's surgery (going outside the home disability), (c) working at a job or business or attending school or college (employment disability) and (d) participating in other activities, such as leisure or using

Statistical Annex - Census of Population 2022 Profile 5 - Diversity, Migration, Ethnicity, Irish Travellers & Religion

transport. As with Question 15, respondents could indicate that they had no difficulty with any of these activities, that they had some difficulty or that they had a lot of difficulty.

Compared with the questions used in Census 2016, there was no filter between the two questions, meaning all persons were expected to answer Question 16 irrespective of how they responded to Question 15. Furthermore, following consultation with key stakeholders, it was decided to explicitly require difficulties caused by old age as part of Question 16 on day to day difficulties.

Persons who ticked at least one of the boxes for 'Yes, to some extent' in Q15 or 'Yes, a little' in Q16 but did not tick any of the 'Yes to a great extent' in Q15 or 'Yes, a lot' in Q16 were used as part of the calculation of the 'disability to some extent' rate. Persons who ticked at least one of the 'Yes, to a great extent' boxes in Q15 or 'Yes, a lot' boxes in Q16 were used as part of the calculation of the 'disability to a great extent' rate. Persons who ticked any of the 'Yes' boxes in Q15 or Q16 were included in the 'disability to any extent' rate.

Comparability of Data with Previous Censuses

Multiple questions that appeared on the Census 2016 form changed on the Census 2022 form following the consultation with users that took place between 2017 and 2019. These changes include alterations to text, question format and population cohorts required to respond to questions.

Changing questions can impact upon the response provided by the public. This, in turn, impacts upon the published census data. Data users should be conscious of this when comparing data between Census 2022 and previous censuses.

For some variables, CSO has drawn a direct comparison between Census 2022 data and data from previous censuses where questions have changed. This was done in order to provide context to data users, but the caveat above applies to these comparisons.

The key question changes between Census 2016 and Census 2022 that impact Profile 5 Diversity, Migration, Ethnicity, Irish Travellers & Religion are listed below. Full details of all of the changes and the rationale for them can be found [at the following link](#) which documents the user consultation process for Census 2022.

Statistical Annex - Census of Population 2022 Profile 5 - Diversity, Migration, Ethnicity, Irish Travellers & Religion

Census 2022 Question	Census 2016 Question	Topic	Key Changes
10	10	Nationality/Country of Citizenship	2016 question asks for nationality, 2022 question asks for country of citizenship.
11	11	Ethnic group	2016 question asks for ethnicity, 2022 question asks for ethnic group or background. Response categories changed in 2022 question.
12	12	Religion	2016 question asks 'What is your religion?'. 2022 question asks 'What is your religion, if any?'. Response categories changed in 2022 question. 'No religion' is the first response option in 2022.
15 & 16	16 & 17	Long lasting and conditions difficulties	Two response options for each category in 2016. Increased to three response options in 2022. Filter between questions in 2016 was removed in 2022. Question 16 in 2022 includes instruction to include issues due to old age.

A number of new dual-citizenship categories have been included in the Census 2022 data that were not present in previous censuses. As a result, only Census 2022 data is available for these categories.

These categories would have been included in 'Irish-Other' in previous census results:

- Irish-Albanian
- Irish-Argentinian
- Irish-Bangladeshi
- Irish-Kenyan

Statistical Annex - Census of Population 2022 Profile 5 - Diversity, Migration, Ethnicity, Irish Travellers & Religion

- Irish-Moldovan
- Irish-Moroccan
- Irish-Serbian
- Irish-Syrian

Citizens of Mayotte and Réunion have been included with the statistics for France. In 2016, these countries were included with Other Africa.

Saint Helena, Ascension and Tristan da Cunha have been included with Great Britain. In 2016, they were included with Africa.

The following have been added to the list of countries used in the Census 2022 results:

- The British Indian Ocean Territory
- Christmas Island
- Heard Island and McDonald Islands
- Cook Islands
- New Caledonia
- Norfolk Island
- Palau
- Vanuatu



An Roinn Leanaí, Comhionannais,
Míchumais, Lánpháirtíochta agus Óige
Department of Children, Equality,
Disability, Integration and Youth

National Action Plan Against Racism

First Implementation Report for 2023–2024

Table of Contents

Introduction	3
Monitoring, oversight and overview	6
1. Being safe and being heard	8
Reporting and responding to racist incidents and crimes	8
Accessing legal advice	11
Policing	12
Supporting victims of racism	12
2. Being equal	14
Employment	14
Education	19
Housing and accommodation	25
Health	26
Children and young people	31
Cultural and community participation	32
Interpretation services	34
3. Being seen and taking part	35
Community and media participation and representation	35
Political representation and participation	49
4. Being counted	50
Ethnic equality data	50
5. Being together	54
Combating racism through mainstream policies, programmes and legislation	54
Understanding and preventing racism	58
Table of NAPAR Actions.....	65
Monitoring, oversight and review	65
1. Being safe and being heard	66
2. Being equal	67
3. Being seen and taking part	70
4. Being counted	72
5. Being together	73

Introduction

The *Programme for Government: Our Shared Future* committed to publishing a new National Action Plan Against Racism (NAPAR). The *National Action Plan Against Racism* was launched on 21 March 2023, coinciding with the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination.

The NAPAR represents a national level, State-led, co-ordinated approach to eliminating racism in all its forms in Ireland. This includes antisemitism, Islamophobia, racism that impacts the Traveller and Roma people and communities, and racism affecting people of African descent. Ireland is taking a broad approach to this issue, by considering all facets of racism in the NAPAR.

The Actions in the plan are not specifically focused on any particular group affected by racism or discrimination in Ireland; rather, they relate to a wide variety of groups. It is hoped that the Actions will have a significant positive impact on all minority ethnic communities and faith-based groups in Ireland. It is notable that by 2019, Ireland had one of the highest percentages of foreign-born residents among European Union (EU) Member States, at 17%. Most migration to Ireland is from within the EU. Many non-Irish nationals are first-generation immigrants who arrived in Ireland as adults. Compared with other EU countries with a longer history of immigration, Ireland's proportion of second-generation immigrants, defined as children born in Ireland to immigrant parents, is notably lower (ESRI, McGinnity *et al.*, 2020). The NAPAR is part of Ireland's response to the United Nations' (UN's) call for global action to eliminate racism, and part of the wider effort to combat racism and its impacts across Ireland and the EU as a whole.

Under the National Action Plan Against Racism 2023–2027, the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY) committed to publishing a twice-yearly implementation report capturing the implementation status of each action under the plan, in consultation with the Co-ordination Committee. The information in this report is up to date as of the 2nd August 2024.

This first report is published against a backdrop of a society where social media sites are inundated with anti-immigrant messaging and where orchestrated protests against new refugee accommodation are becoming more prevalent. The November 2023 Dublin riots involved multiple incidents of vandalism, arson, and looting in the city centre, as well as assaults on gardaí and members of the public after far-right agitators manipulated a tragic incident by using social media to stoke public anger about immigration.

Realising the objectives of the NAPAR and supporting social integration of immigrant/marginalised groups in Ireland more generally would not be possible without State funding. In recent years, the State has established a number of funding programmes in the area of integration and anti-racism. These include the following:

- The Communities Integration Fund supports communities across Ireland to play a greater role in promoting the integration of migrants. In 2023, a total of €509,415 was awarded to local community-based organisations in the form of grants of up to €5,000.
- The National Integration Fund promotes the effective integration of migrants into communities across Ireland. Following a funding call in late 2023, a total of 18 organisations are set to receive €2,872,412 in funding, over a period of 3 years, to carry out national and regional projects supporting the integration of migrants.
- Under the European Social Fund Plus (ESF+), a call for proposals was held in 2022 for projects furthering the integration and employment of migrants. Seven projects were funded for a period of 3 years to a total value of €2.7 million to support legally resident migrants who are experiencing barriers to participation and employment because of language difficulties, lack of training or social exclusion.
- The Ireland Against Racism Fund (IARF) has made €1.3 million available in 2023 and a further €1 million in 2024. The IARF has the overall objective of providing funding for national and regional projects, as well as local initiatives, that aim to combat racism and foster racial equality and community cohesion.
- The International Protection Integration Fund was established in 2022; this fund aims to enable community-based organisations across Ireland to play a greater role in supporting the integration of international protection applicants at local and national level. More than €2.8 million in funding has been awarded to 137 organisations since the fund was launched in in 2022.

Part of the 'Monitoring and oversight' section of the NAPAR determined that DCEDIY appoint a Special Rapporteur for Racism and Racial Equality. On 2 July 2024, the Minister of State for Community Development, Integration and Charities Joe O'Brien announced the appointment of Dr Eburn Joseph as the National Action Plan Against Racism Special Rapporteur. Dr Joseph is a diversity and race relations consultant; CEO and founder of the Institute of Antiracism and Black Studies (IABS); Module Coordinator and Lecturer, Black Studies, University College Dublin; and founder and Chairperson, African Scholars Association Ireland (AFSAI) (2018–2022). In her role as National Action Plan Against Racism Special Rapporteur, Dr Joseph will monitor progress towards the objectives of the NAPAR. She may also consider matters pertaining to racial equality more broadly, and will have the authority to request information and data from public bodies to support them in carrying out the role. The Special Rapporteur will present an annual report to the Minister; this report will also be submitted to the relevant Oireachtas Committee.

In conjunction with the announcement of the Special Rapporteur appointment, Minister O'Brien also announced the establishment of the Advisory Committee on Racism and Racial Equality, with membership from a cross-section of Irish society. The NAPAR proposes Actions to help make Ireland a place in which the impacts of racism are fully acknowledged and actively addressed. The Advisory Committee on Racism and Racial Equality is tasked with monitoring and helping to progress the implementation of the NAPAR 2023–2027. Dr Eburn Joseph will chair this Advisory Committee.

In another significant development for the implementation of the NAPAR, Coimisiún na Meán is now operational following its establishment under the Online Safety and Media Regulation Act 2022. Coimisiún na Meán's work will be central to addressing concerns about online safety and the prevalence of hate speech (NAPAR Actions 3.1, 3.2, 3.3 and 3.4). In addition to undertaking the functions of the regulator for broadcasting in Ireland, Coimisiún na Meán will establish a regulatory framework for online safety, update the regulation of television broadcasting and audiovisual on-demand services, and transpose the revised Audiovisual Media Services Directive into Irish law. Coimisiún na Meán's work will include:

- Setting up a new regulatory regime for online safety
- Regulating broadcasting and on-demand services, and
- Supporting the development of the wider media sector through funding schemes, together with initiatives to promote the Irish language, media literacy, as well as equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) in the media sector.

Online services affect users across borders, and therefore Coimisiún na Meán will work closely with its counterparts in other EU Member States and with the European Commission.

Another noteworthy example of the progression of the NAPAR Actions (Action 2.1) is An Garda Síochána proactively reaching out to more vulnerable people and communities, such as residents in International Protection Accommodation Services (IPAS) centres. An Garda Síochána has also implemented two of the three target recommendations stipulated in the NAPAR, namely introducing a third-party referral mechanism and an online facility for reporting hate crime/incidents. With reference to the third target recommendation of Action 1.1, which refers to a civil society framework (i.e. the Garda National Diversity Forum), it was agreed that An Garda Síochána would provide details of third-party referrals, figures for online reporting of hate crime/incidents and the new terms of reference for the Garda National Diversity Forum.

With regard to NAPAR Action 2.1, the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment has recently announced the inclusion of the Irish Civil Service in the categories of employment eligible for Stamp 4 applications. Also as per Action 2.1, a new paid Civil Service internship scheme has been initiated for Travellers.

This report is the first of two reports for the period 2023–2024, and outlines the Actions from the NAPAR already implemented or in progress.

Monitoring, oversight and overview

Monitoring, oversight and review	The Minister for Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth will appoint an independent Special Rapporteur on Racial Equality and Racism.
Implementing bodies	Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth

2023–2024 update

Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth

An open competition for the appointment of a Special Rapporteur on Racial Equality and Racism is now complete. The Public Appointments Service (PAS) assessment board met on 26 April 2024 to shortlist candidates for interview. These interviews were held on 9 and 17 May 2024. The appointment of the successful candidate, Dr Ebun Joseph, was announced by the Minister of State for Community Development, Integration and Charities Joe O'Brien on 2 July 2024. Dr Joseph is a diversity and race relations consultant; CEO and founder of the Institute of Antiracism and Black Studies; Module Coordinator and Lecturer, Black Studies, University College Dublin; and founder and Chairperson, African Scholars Association Ireland 2018–2022.

Monitoring, oversight and review	The Minister for Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth will appoint an advisory committee on Racial Equality and Racism; this committee will be chaired by the Special Rapporteur.
Implementing bodies	Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth

2023–2024 update

Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth

The Special Rapporteur will be supported by an Expert Advisory Group on Racial Equality and Racism. An expression of interest campaign for this group closed in March 2024, with more than 40 applications received. The work of assessing these applications is complete. In conjunction with the announcement of the Special Rapporteur appointment, Minister O'Brien also announced the establishment and membership of the Advisory Committee on Racism and Racial Equality.

Monitoring, oversight and review	The Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth will establish a Co-ordination Committee, with representatives from all relevant Government Departments and local authorities, to co-ordinate activity under the plan and advise on implementation.
Implementing bodies	Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth

2023–2024 update

Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth

A Co-ordination Committee with representatives from relevant Government Departments was established in February 2024. The group convened its second meeting in May, with further plans to meet in Q.3 2024. The committee membership comprises representatives from 10 Government Departments and 6 agencies, with plans for further expansion.

Monitoring, oversight and review	The Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth, working in consultation with the Co-ordination Committee, will prepare a twice-yearly implementation report capturing the implementation status of each action under the plan, and will present this report to the Minister for Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth and to the Special Rapporteur on Racial Equality and Racism.
Implementing bodies	Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth

2023–2024 update

Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth

This report represents the first implementation report for the National Action Plan Against Racism (NAPAR) 2023–2027. The report seeks to capture the implementation status of each action under the plan for the period 2023–2024.

1. Being safe and being heard

Reporting and responding to racist incidents and crimes

Action 1.1

Action 1.1 Target: 2027	Put in place new mechanisms to facilitate third-party and online reporting of racist incidents. This will include the development of a standard civil society national framework to monitor and respond appropriately to racist incidents and hate crimes.
Implementing bodies	Department of Justice; An Garda Síochána; Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth; Department of Rural and Community Development; local authorities; community and voluntary organisations

2023–2024 update

Department of Justice/An Garda Síochána

An Garda Síochána has implemented two of the three target recommendations stipulated in the NAPAR, namely introducing a third-party referral mechanism and an online facility for reporting hate crime/incidents. With reference to the third target of Action 1.1, which refers to a civil society framework (i.e. the Garda National Diversity Forum), it was agreed that An Garda Síochána would forward details of third-party referrals, figures for online reporting of hate crime/incidents and the new terms of reference of the Garda National Diversity Forum. The following are details of (a) these third-party referrals and (b) hate crime reports. Regarding the terms of reference for the Garda National Diversity Forum, it should be noted that a draft has been provided to An Garda Síochána, which is currently being reviewed prior to finalisation:

a) Third-party referrals

The Garda National Community Engagement Bureau (GNCEB) invited approximately 60 civil society organisations to adopt the formalised third-party referral system. The Third-party Referral Process Document and Third-party Referral Form were circulated to these civil society organisations on 13 September 2022. To date, 15 civil society organisations have formally adopted the third-party referral process with An Garda Síochána. These civil society organisations are:

1. Age Action
2. AMACH! LGBT Galway
3. Belong To – LGBTQ+ Youth Ireland
4. Disability Federation of Ireland
5. Exchange House Ireland National Travellers Service

6. Federation for Victim Assistance
7. Gay Project
8. Holocaust Education Ireland
9. Islamic Foundation of Ireland
10. LGBT Ireland
11. Leadership for Inclusion in the Early Years (LINC)
12. Muslim Sisters of Eire
13. Outcomers
14. Pavee Point Traveller and Roma Centre
15. Third Age

The GNCEB continues to engage with agencies that have yet to commit to the process. To date, the Garda National Diversity Unit has not received any third-party referrals using the referral system introduced in September 2023.

Reports/complaints of racist incidents are received from non-governmental organisations (NGOs)/members of the public on a regular basis via email, telephone call, etc. and are actioned accordingly. This is in addition to reports received via the An Garda Síochána online hate crime reporting service.

b) Online reporting of hate crime/incidents

The overall number of reports received by An Garda Síochána's online hate crime reporting facility continues to rise, with Q1 2024 seeing the biggest increase to date – 147% higher than in the same period in 2023.

The percentages of reports received that are hate related are as follows:

- 20% of overall reports in 2021 (Q3 and Q4)
- 28% of overall reports in 2022
- 29% of overall reports in 2023, and
- 25% of overall reports in 2024 (Q1).

A hate crime awareness campaign planned for Q2 2024; this campaign is aimed at encouraging the reporting of hate crime to An Garda Síochána. A nationwide engagement initiative with all International Protection Accommodation Services (IPAS) centres is planned to inform residents of reporting mechanisms for hate crime. The terms of reference for the Garda National Diversity Forum will be finalised in Q3 2024.

Local authorities

The Community Integration Forums are established in all local authorities to support those undergoing the international protection process and beneficiaries of temporary protections (BOTPs). These interagency structures provide a clear governance for the escalation of issues across all government agencies.

The local government sector will work with the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY) and other Government Departments and agency stakeholders in support of any new framework.

There has been ongoing engagement with An Garda Síochána through the work of the current Joint Policing Committees and in the future there will be engagement with the Local Community Safety Partnerships (LCSPs) once established across the sector.

Action 1.2

Action 1.2 Target: 2024	Introduce and publicise safeguards so that all victims of and witnesses to racist incidents and hate crimes can feel safe in reporting to An Garda Síochána, irrespective of their immigration status.
Implementing bodies	An Garda Síochána

2023–2024 update

An Garda Síochána

The Victims Charter sets out the role and expectations of An Garda Síochána for all victims of crime, including hate crime. An Garda Síochána actively encourages and supports victims and witnesses of all crime, including hate crime and racist incidents, irrespective of their immigration status. The GNCEB continues to develop and support a network of Garda Diversity Officers to build trust and confidence with diverse communities, so that they feel encouraged to report any incidents of hate crime. The GNCEB has introduced and maintains an online hate crime reporting facility, allowing victims to make reports safely and securely.

An Garda Síochána has delivered an online hate crime training programme to the organisation in order to ensure that gardaí fully understand the individual and wider community impact of hate crime.

Action 1.3

Action 1.3 Target: 2024	Establish a specialist unit within each Garda Division for the purpose of developing and disseminating expertise and best practice in dealing with hate crime and racist incidents.
Implementing bodies	An Garda Síochána

2023–2024 update*An Garda Síochána*

Notwithstanding that An Garda Síochána does not accept this Action, it is posited that An Garda Síochána keeps a well-developed network of specially trained Garda Diversity Officers in every Garda Division. The GNDU, under the remit of the GNCEB, has a national responsibility for developing and disseminating hate crime policy, training, awareness and best practice. The GNDU regularly engages with European bodies such as the European Union (EU) Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA), the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights; the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe and Radicalisation Awareness Network to ensure that its expertise is in line with international best practice. Learning and developments are filtered down through the Garda Divisions, and this approach allows for a consistency of standards and approach across the organisation.

Garda Diversity Officers and Divisional Diversity Inspectors, supported by the GNDU, provide support at a local level for hate crime investigation where required. The GNDU also provides on-the-ground support to high-level investigations where required.

Accessing legal advice**Action 1.4**

Action 1.4 Target: 2027	Improve access to legal advice and representation for groups experiencing racism. This will include creating links between community organisations and Legal Aid Board Law Centres; extending the remit of the Legal Aid Board to provide legal representation; and giving advocacy organisations standing to initiate proceedings on behalf of those affected by racism.
Implementing bodies	Department of Justice; Legal Aid Board; civil society organisations

2023–2024 update*Department of Justice*

In June 2022, the Minister for Justice, Helen McEntee established the Civil Legal Aid Review Group to review the current operation of the Civil Legal Aid Scheme and make recommendations for its future. The Review Group is chaired by former Chief Justice Frank Clarke, and the membership is drawn from legal practitioners, academics, Department of Justice officials, those who work with marginalised groups, and representatives from the Legal Aid Board, which administers the statutory scheme. The Review Group is currently considering a number of aspects of the existing Civil Legal Aid Scheme, including financial eligibility, the categories of civil law for which legal aid and advice is available, the modes of delivery of legal

aid and advice available under the Civil Legal Aid Scheme, as well as the types of legal determination for which legal representation should be provided.

As part of the review, a comprehensive multi-phased process of consultation has been conducted to ensure that as wide a range of views as possible is captured. Part of this consultation centred on hearing from stakeholders and groups who are traditionally hard to reach, such as members of the Roma and Traveller community and those from migrant backgrounds. Bespoke focus groups captured the views of these communities in terms of their own experiences accessing the Scheme and the barriers they have faced in accessing justice. The Review Group is considering the results of all phases of the consultation process.

The Review Group's work is progressing well and is expected to be completed in 2024. The completed work will include a submission of the Report of the Independent Group reviewing the Civil Legal Aid Scheme, which will then undergo consideration by Minister McEntee with regard to its recommendations and next steps.

Policing

Action 1.5

Action 1.5 Target: 2025	Identify and eliminate any policing practices that target specific groups experiencing racism, including through racial or ethnic profiling. Measures to carry out this action, including training for An Garda Síochána, will need to ensure sensitivity to victims of human trafficking.
Implementing bodies	An Garda Síochána; representative organisations of communities affected by these practices

2023–2024 update

2025 Action. As of August 2024, there is no update on Action 1.5.

Supporting victims of racism

Action 1.6

Action 1.6 Target: 2024	Develop and strengthen mechanisms to address harms caused to individuals by racist actions.
Implementing bodies	Department of Justice; Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth

2023–2024 update

Department of Justice

The Criminal Justice (Incitement to Violence or Hatred and Hate Offences) Bill 2022 will, if enacted, repeal and replace the Prohibition of Incitement to Hatred Act, 1989 with updated provisions for incitement to violence and incitement to hatred. It will also provide for hate crimes for the first time in Irish law. The provisions of the Bill have been carefully developed in line with the respective commitments of the Programme for Government, following extensive consultation with stakeholders and pre-legislative scrutiny.

The development of the new legislation commenced with a public consultation in October 2019. The general scheme was published in April 2021, and the Bill was published in October 2022. It completed all stages in the Dáil in April 2023 and is presently at Committee Stage in the Seanad.

Minister McEntee intends to bring the Bill through the Houses of the Oireachtas in due course. She has made it clear that the introduction of the new legislation meets an important Programme for Government commitment. However, Minister McEntee has acknowledged that a number of concerns have been raised, and she is considering appropriate amendments to address them. The Bill did not return to the Oireachtas before the Summer recess.

Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth

The Ireland Against Racism Fund (IARF) was launched in May 2023. The purpose of this funding scheme is to support community development projects and initiatives that work with minority ethnic communities; to address racism and promote inclusion; and to enable these communities to have a say in the decisions that affect their lives. Under this scheme, 24 projects were funded, with €1.3 million in funding provided to local, national and regional projects aiming to combat racism and foster racial equality and community cohesion. A new IARF launched in July 2024.

DCEDIY has established the NAPAR monitoring framework as part of the NAPAR implementation process. Work is currently underway to develop a new National Integration Strategy, which will build on the momentum of its predecessor, the Migrant Integration Strategy, and address ongoing emerging needs with regard to supporting and promoting migrant integration in Ireland. DCEDIY intends to publish the new strategy in early 2025.

The DCEDIY International Protection Accommodation Policy and Anti-Racism Policy Unit provided funding of €80,000 to Holocaust Education Ireland to support the Holocaust Memorial Event which was held on 28 January 2024. DCEDIY recently nominated a member of its staff for the role of National Coordinator on combating antisemitism.

2. Being equal

Employment

Action 2.1

<p>Action 2.1</p> <p>Target: 2027</p>	<p>Introduce measures to combat racism in employment. This will include specific measures for sectors and workplaces where minority ethnic groups are under-represented, and for sectors and workplaces where they are over-represented. Expand access for people from minority ethnic groups to management and senior executive positions.</p>
<p>Implementing bodies</p>	<p>Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth; professional governing bodies; Public Appointments Service</p>

2023–2024 update

Department of Public Expenditure, NDP Delivery and Reform

The Workforce Capability and Inclusion Unit was recently established to address the Workforce and Organisation of the Future pillar of the Better Public Services and Civil Service Renewal 2030 strategies. To date, the focus on equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) and well-being policy has been to develop inclusive pathways to employment and to support an inclusive working environment. This has included an expansion of eligibility criteria for Civil Service recruitment, and the Civil Service has worked closely with the PAS to expand eligibility to include all Stamp 4 permission holders. Previously, only those with a Stamp 4 permission and an EU familial connection were eligible for Civil Service roles.

The Department of Public Expenditure, NDP Delivery and Reform (DPENDR) is also closely engaged in, and supportive of, the work led by the Department of Justice and others to pilot an internship programme for the Traveller and Roma communities. Successful applicants are placed in positions at either Clerical Officer or Executive Officer level for a period of 12 months. The pilot phase has yet to be completed, while a next iteration of the programme is under active consideration in order to ensure that there are more opportunities for Traveller and Roma people to enter the Civil Service workforce available in the future.

Following on from the Central Statistics Office (CSO) 2023 pilot to produce a statistical analysis of diversity for An Garda Síochána, DPENDR and the PAS are examining the feasibility of this model as an alternative means to anonymously measure the diversity of the public service workforce, adhering to a principle of 'once only' data collection. In 2023, questions on ethnic background for the purpose of equality monitoring were included in the Civil Service Employee Engagement Survey (CSEES) in order to get a better understanding of the composition of the Civil Service workforce and to set a baseline for further progress.

In order to explore areas for further progress, DPENDR and the PAS intend to reconvene the Interdepartmental Working Group which enacted the revised Stamp 4 permissions.

The PAS has established a process for tracking the number of candidates who apply for and are assigned a Stamp 4 permission. Data will be reported as they become available.

The PAS continues to engage with migrant communities in order to highlight careers in the civil and public service and inform these communities of the change to employment eligibility criteria. Most recently, the PAS participated at an AkiDwA Network of Migrant Women event hosted by LinkedIn on supporting migrant women in the labour market.

DPENDR continues to engage with the Department of Justice on the need to expand the current internship programme for members of the Traveller and Roma communities beyond the pilot phase.

A focus on pathways to employment in the civil and public service, as well as improved methods of collecting data, is being highlighted in terms of defining DPENDR's commitments under the new National Traveller and Roma Inclusion Strategy II.

An Economic and Social Research Institute review of equality monitoring data (2019–2021) commissioned by the PAS established baselines for application and assignment across disability, gender and ethnicity. The report confirmed that people from ethnic minority backgrounds are significantly under-represented in the competitions that the PAS undertakes for both Government Departments and many public sector organisations.

The PAS is committed to increasing the number of job applications from, and the hiring of, candidates with an ethnic minority background. The PAS' NUA26 corporate strategy commits to delivering a 20% increase in applications from and assignments of ethnic minority candidates.

The report on the findings of the CSEES will be launched soon. The response rate to the survey was 57% and therefore is not necessarily representative of the Civil Service workforce, as no weighting or calibration was applied. The preliminary results show that those who responded reported their ethnicity as follows: 93.9% white, 0.4% black and black Irish, 0.5% Asian and Asian Irish, 0.8% other and 4.5% not stated or prefer not to say.

One Learning, the digital learning and development ecosystem for the Institute of Public Administration (IPA) promotes participation in the civil and public service by offering courses such as Managing for an Inclusive Workforce; Equality and Human Rights: Understanding Your Role; and Authentic, Inspiring and Inclusive Leadership. These courses are a key support in helping the Civil Service to meet obligations under the Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty set out in the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act 2014.

OneLearning provision has transitioned to the IPA as part of a wider plan to create a centre of excellence for Civil Service and public sector learning and development. The courses under OneLearning are currently available to all civil servants to use.

A staged approach will be undertaken to offer OneLearning courses to the wider public sector. By 2027, the IPA plans to have extended the reach of OneLearning courses to around 20,000 staff in non-commercial State agencies and local authorities, significantly broadening the potential audience for courses in EDI-related matters.

Efforts to increase participation in these programmes will be identified in collaboration with DCEIDY's partners in the IPA, including the IPA OneLearning team.

Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth

DCEDIY is undergoing a review of the Equal Status Acts 2000–2018 and the Employment Equality Acts 1998–2015; examining their operation from the perspective of someone making a claim under their redress mechanisms. DCEDIY is further examining the extent to which those experiencing discrimination are aware of the legislation in place to protect them and whether there are practical or other obstacles which preclude or deter them from taking an action.

DCEDIY invited the public to participate in a consultation via written submissions between the dates of 6 July 2021 to 8 December 2021, and was pleased to receive an extensive response. The public were asked for their views on the functioning and accessibility of the Equality Acts; the scope of the current grounds; whether existing exemptions should be modified or removed; and whether the legislation adequately addresses intersectionality. A report summarising the key issues raised in the public consultation was published on 12 July 2023 and can be accessed on: <https://www.gov.ie/en/press-release/cafb4-minister-ogorman-publishes-report-on-the-submissions-to-the-public-consultation-on-the-review-of-the-equality-acts/>.

Legislative proposals arising from the review will be brought to Government in Autumn 2024.

Action 2.2

Action 2.2 Target: 2027	Introduce timely, accessible and transparent mechanisms by which qualifications earned outside of Ireland can be recognised for use in Ireland.
Implementing bodies	Professional bodies; Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science; Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI)

2023–2024 update

Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science

The academic and professional recognition of qualifications can support persons pursuing employment opportunities, seeking to practise their professions of choice or looking to avail of new educational opportunities.

NARIC Ireland, a service hosted by Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI), supports the fair recognition of qualifications in line with the Lisbon Recognition Convention. It offers advice, where possible, on the recognition of overseas academic qualifications and places them in the context of the Irish National Framework of Qualifications. NARIC Ireland provides comparability statements free of charge, which can be accessed and downloaded via its online portal. These statements can assist qualification holders in accessing employment and education. QQI, in collaboration with its international partners, has increased the number of qualifications and comparability statements available on its database to more than 1,700.

A guide to using the NARIC service is now available in 10 languages. Moreover, NARIC has prepared supplementary 'rough guides' to further support the work of recruiters, guidance personnel, information officers, employers, education and training providers, schools, higher education institutions, competent authorities and credential evaluators who meet with refugees and their families. NARIC has developed rough guides for Ukrainian, Syrian and Afghan qualifications.

NARIC Ireland has also become a signatory to the European Qualifications Passport for Refugees (EQPR) initiative. The EQPR is a standard, portable document that clearly communicates results for individuals who have participated in a fair assessment of qualifications that cannot be fully documented. This enables refugees who do not have any proof of their prior learning to have their qualifications assessed by trained, independent evaluators according to agreed processes. The EPQR outlines the individual's highest achieved qualification(s) as well as their work experience and language proficiency. Where access to a profession is regulated by qualification, a person must apply to the relevant regulator/competent authority for the recognition of their qualifications.

As part of the broader response to the conflict in Ukraine, and to support Ukrainians arriving in Ireland, the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science (DFHERIS) has shared best practice material supplied by the European Commission and other EU Member States with competent authorities in relation to the recognition of professional qualifications of Ukrainians. In addition, these authorities have been advised of further resources from NARIC Ireland that will assist in their work, alongside toolkits and resources developed by the EU and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), for cases where refugees do not have complete evidence or documentation of their qualifications.

Action 2.3

Action 2.3 Target: 2024	Develop and adopt a training, expertise and employment strategy to increase the employment of groups experiencing racism.
Implementing bodies	Department of Social Protection; Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science

2023–2024 update

Department of Social Protection

Pathways to Work 2021-2025, the national employment services strategy, includes a specific strand on 'Leaving No One Behind', which sets out measures to support people from disadvantaged and minority backgrounds in gaining sustainable employment. This includes measures to support members of the Traveller and Roma communities, migrants and other groups who may face discrimination and racism. A mid-term review of the strategy has been undertaken and will be published in the coming months, which will ensure that the strategy remains relevant for addressing current and medium-term challenges in the labour market.

A number of targeted measures are delivered by the Intreo employment service and Intreo partners to support people from disadvantaged backgrounds in finding and keeping quality employment, including:

- Providing intensive one-on-one case officer supports tailored to the individual customer's needs, which includes a model of intensive and frequent engagement with jobseekers aged under 30 years who are at risk of becoming long-term unemployed
- Reserving places on State employment programmes, such as Community Employment and the TÚS initiative, for jobseekers from disadvantaged backgrounds and minority groups, including members of the Traveller and Roma communities, and further developing specific Community Employment schemes for Travellers and Roma
- Extending the eligibility criteria of Community Employment schemes to include beneficiaries of the Temporary Protection Directive who have arrived in Ireland from Ukraine
- Referring jobseekers to the Work Placement Experience Programme which provides jobseekers with direct industry placement and an incorporated learning programme that supports personal development and aligns with sectoral needs
- Referring jobseekers to appropriate English language skills, numeracy and literacy courses that are delivered by 16 education and training boards across the State, and
- Making the higher rate of the JobsPlus recruitment subsidy (€10,000 per year for a 2-year period) available to employers who recruit a jobseeker of Traveller or Roma ethnicity.

Following the formation of a Traveller and Roma Employment Services Consultative Forum in 2022, which comprises community representatives, the Department of Social Protection (DSP) is continuing its proactive engagement in 2024. The Consultative Forum formed a number of subgroups to scope out practical steps to provide Traveller and Roma customers with access to meaningful employment, training and internship opportunities. This was led by members of both the Traveller and Roma communities, as well as representatives from

various Traveller and Roma organisations. The subgroups' findings have been presented to and unanimously accepted by the Consultative Forum, with the following recommendations being actioned by the DSP:

- Appropriate Traveller/Roma cultural awareness training for DSP staff. Training tenders have been submitted and are being considered.
- Appropriateness of the current Intreo employment support workshops and any additional supports required for both communities. The language used at Intreo employment support workshops is now being simplified to make them more accessible to customers.
- Addressing discriminatory hiring and employment practices against members of the Traveller and Roma communities, with a focus on employment in the public sector.

The DSP's EDI team continually promotes opportunities in anti-racism and cultural awareness training for staff, including programmes such as the eLearning module "Equality and Human Rights in the Public Service", delivered through the DSP's Staff Development Division. The EDI team promotes these opportunities in various ways, e.g. through presentations at staff forums and via the DSP's intranet site. Up to 31 December 2023, just under 450 Intreo employment services staff had completed the "Equality and Human Rights in the Public Service" module.

The DSP has undertaken research on existing anti-racism strategies in Europe in order to better understand the issues and inform possible actions the DSP can take to improve employment outcomes of groups experiencing racism.

The DSP also requested that the CSO examine available employment data by ethnicity. The CSO is currently examining this, and, when available, these data will inform relevant actions alongside the work already undertaken.

Education

Action 2.4

Action 2.4 Target: 2027	Introduce measures to address ethnic differentials in education and achieve equality of enrolment, retention, attendance, progression and outcomes for groups experiencing racism. This will include actions to address the recognised differentials for the education of minorities caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and its outcomes.
Implementing bodies	Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth; Department of Education; Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science; educational institutions; education governing and regulatory bodies

2023–2024 update

Department of Education

Work on the development of a Traveller and Roma Education Strategy is progressing in close consultation with stakeholders in the education sector and in Traveller and Roma communities. A public consultation opened from July to October 2023. Independent analysis of public consultation data is currently underway.

An in-depth targeted consultation process is now also complete. This involved three main consultation strands: stakeholders in the education sector; Traveller and Roma families and communities; and Traveller and Roma children and young people. Reports on the insights provided by all three strands are currently being finalised, along with a thorough review of the literature to identify learnings. Together, these will feed into the development of the education strategy, with the aim of having a draft strategy for submission to the relevant Ministers by end June 2024.

As part of the NAPAR, the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) was tasked with reviewing and updating the Intercultural Guidelines for primary and post-primary schools to support the further integration of intercultural education in the curriculum. Following consideration of a discussion paper at its December 2023 meeting, the NCCA Council approved a proposal that the NCCA update the *Intercultural Education in the Post-primary School: Guidelines for Schools*, and the *Intercultural Education in the Primary School: Guidelines for Schools*, which date from 2005/6. The updated materials will be completed and published at the end of 2024. The process of updating is now underway, informed by a review.

The following approaches are proposed as underpinning the revision of the intercultural education guidelines for early childhood, primary and post-primary, emphasising that the redeveloped guidelines will incorporate the early childhood sector, as well as primary and post-primary.

The updating of the guidelines will be informed by an extensive literature review, relating to all levels of education, including early childhood. This will clarify the relationship between intercultural education and other related educations and approaches, thereby providing direction for the scope and purpose of the revised intercultural education guidelines.

The NCCA recognises the importance of supporting participation by key stakeholders, especially those for whom the intercultural guidelines may be most meaningful (i.e. those who are discriminated against and excluded). For this reason, it is proposed that the process of updating the guidelines be carried out in collaboration with representatives from early childhood settings, primary and post-primary schools, and other key stakeholders. The model of collaboration is as follows:

- Preliminary collaboration with representatives from early childhood settings, primary and post-primary schools, and other key stakeholders for the purpose of generating a direction for the scope and purpose of the revised guidelines

- Drafting revised guidelines
- Consultation with school representatives and key stakeholders on the draft revised guidelines
- Redrafting the guidelines based on feedback received
- Production of a short report to settings/schools/key stakeholders outlining how their feedback was integrated into the final materials, and
- Publication of the revised guidelines.

The revised guidelines will be presented as one suite of materials, with aspects tailored for early childhood settings, primary schools and post-primary schools as required, in the interest of curriculum coherence, continuity and alignment.

The updated guidelines will be devised as an online toolkit, with interactive features including key downloadable supports, glossaries, curriculum case studies, whole-school planning templates, adaptable exemplars and external links.

A curriculum audit will be conducted as part of the update, reflecting the major curriculum changes that have taken place since 2005/6. The purpose of the audit will be both to identify opportunities for embedding intercultural education and to address gaps where it has not been implemented, with a view to informing future curriculum developments.

It should be noted that, in tandem with the development of the intercultural education guidelines, the NCCA is currently finalising a suite of video clips exemplifying approaches to including Traveller history and culture in the curriculum. Further work in the area will continue to support the inclusion of the NCCA's *2023 Traveller Culture and History Research report* in the curriculum. The NCCA is committed to publishing examples of pedagogy and child/student work related to Traveller culture and history. Moreover, the NCCA intends that its work in supporting Traveller culture and history in the curriculum will be embedded in the updated intercultural education guidelines publications.

Action 2.5

Action 2.5 Target: 2025	Take steps to strengthen inclusion and anti-racism at all levels of the education system, including through addressing any bias embedded in the curriculum, and to support approaches that are fully intersectional and intercultural.
Implementing bodies	Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth; Department of Education; Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science; educational institutions; education governing and regulatory bodies

2023–2024 update

Department of Education

The *Cineáltas: Action Plan on Bullying Implementation Plan 2023-2027* was published on 10 April 2023 and commits to implementing each of the 61 Actions contained in *Cineáltas: Action Plan on Bullying* within a 5-year period. An Implementation and Evaluation Group has been established to oversee implementation of the Actions as well as the publication of annual implementation and evaluation reports, informed by feedback from children and young people, parents, school staff, education partners, key stakeholders and relevant agencies. This group is chaired by the Secretary General of the Department of Education, Bernie McNally.

Work is well underway to review and update the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*. The updated procedures are due to be published shortly, and continuing professional development and training will be rolled out for all school staff, board of management members and parents.

Oide has designed a one-day professional learning event (PLE) for both primary and post-primary schools titled “Fostering an Inclusive Culture in Schools”. This PLE aims to broaden school leaders’ and teachers’ understanding of inclusion and support the development of an awareness of the value of embracing diversity within schools. The importance of all learners experiencing a sense of belonging to their school is a central theme in the PLE. There will be opportunities for participants to explore how they can foster an inclusive culture in their schools, where all learners, including those from migrant, refugee and ethnic minority backgrounds, feel a strong sense of belonging.

The NCCA is currently reviewing and editing video footage from various post-primary settings of teachers teaching about Traveller culture and history. This footage will be published on the NCCA website, with appropriate guidance and support, as practical demonstrations to support teachers. Preliminary findings were published in Q1 2024, with further examples to follow throughout 2025, including from early childhood and primary school settings.

The NCCA has completed a review of its current suites of intercultural guidelines for primary and post-primary schools, and has set out next steps were approved by the NCCA at its December 2023 meeting.

Welcome to Our School webinar

The National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS) has a one-hour webinar that introduces school staff (or individual teachers) to methods for addressing the well-being needs of children and young people from Ukraine, or from other cultural and linguistic backgrounds. This webinar is intended specifically for those who are new to supporting such children and young people, or who are reviewing their methods of doing so. The webinar outlines how to adopt the Hobfoll Principles, a set of key psychosocial principles that have been found to be effective at addressing the well-being needs of those impacted by a traumatic event. The webinar includes strategies to support attendees in putting the Hobfoll Principles into practice, and the last 15 minutes are a question and answer session.

Key learning outcomes:

- Awareness of issues arising for children new to Ireland
- Understanding of the Hobfoll Principles, and
- Confidence in how to put them into practice in their school.

Embracing Diversity – Psychological Theory to Educational Practice

The NEPS offers the training course, “Embracing Diversity – Psychological Theory to Educational Practice”, over two 2-hour sessions, inviting attendees to reflect on cultural diversity, their role in supporting it and why it matters. The content includes looking at cultural and linguistic diversity in Ireland; why it is important to promote inclusive education; key psychological constructs such as bias, stereotyping and intersectionality; inclusive language; and examples of good practice in schools. Outside of the sessions, attendees are encouraged to engage in self-reflection and group activities with regard to their own attitudes, behaviours and practice.

Key learning outcomes:

- Understand why inclusive practice is important
- Understand how to promote inclusive practice
- Be aware of underlying psychological constructs and principles in this area, and
- Be able to identify key areas for an action plan using the *Wellbeing Policy Statement and Framework for Practice 2018–2023*.

Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science

Under the Higher Education Authority’s (HEA) *Race Equality in the Higher Education Sector Implementation Plan 2022-2024*, higher education institutions (HEIs) are developing race equality action plans. They will report to the HEA on progress relating to the *Race Equality in the Higher Education Sector Implementation Plan 2022-2024*. The plan also includes Actions for HEIs relating to the recognition of foreign qualifications, as well as a stand-alone document on race equality which provides signposts to the other relevant policies. These Actions are connected to supporting diversity in staffing and student recruitment.

By May 2024, 21 HEIs had signed and endorsed the Anti-Racism Principles for Irish Higher Education Institutions. These principles address the recommendations in the *Race Equality in the Higher Education Sector: Analysis Commissioned by the Higher Education Authority* report, which calls on HEI leadership to actively embed a culture of race equality within their institutions. The HEA launched the Anti-Racism Principles for Irish Higher Education Institutions in March 2023. In line with the terminology used in broader government policy in relation to combating racism and race inequality, the decision was made to frame the

document as a set of ‘anti-racism principles’ rather than as a charter/statement on race equality.

In 2024, the HEA established an advisory group on anti-racism in Irish HEIs to advise the HEA on policy relating to addressing racism in Irish HEIs and advancing race equality as a strategic priority and part of institutional culture. HEIs will report to the HEA on progress relating to the *Race Equality in the Higher Education Sector Implementation Plan 2022-2024*.

The HEA is convening an advisory group which will advise the HEA on policy related to advancing race equality and the *Race Equality in the Higher Education Sector Implementation Plan 2022-2024*. This is with the aim of advancing race equality in higher education, progressing the recommendations of the *Race Equality in the Higher Education Sector: Analysis Commissioned by the Higher Education Authority* report and implementing the Actions in the *Race Equality in the Higher Education Sector Implementation Plan 2022-2024*. The advisory group will be chaired by the HEA and will meet approximately three/four times per year. The first meeting of the advisory group is intended to be held in May 2024.

Action 2.6

Action 2.6 Target: 2024	Include specific measures to target minority ethnic researchers in all national research funding programmes.
Implementing bodies	Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science; Department of Health; Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth; Irish Research Council; Science Foundation Ireland; Health Research Board

2023–2024 update

Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science

The Research and Innovation Act 2024 names a new agency for research and innovation, Taighde Éireann, and includes as an object “to advance the principles of equality, diversity and inclusion with regard to opportunities to undertake research and innovation and in the undertaking of that research and innovation”. The agency’s commitment to EDI occurs in a context of “promot[ing] the attainment and maintenance of excellence in the standard and quality of research and innovation undertaken”.

Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth

Research Ireland (the new agency replacing Science Foundation Ireland and the Irish Research Council) will have to perform its functions in the context of the following objective of the Research and Innovation Act 2024: “to advance the principles of equality, diversity and

inclusion with regard to opportunities to undertake research and innovation and in the undertaking of that research and innovation”.

Housing and accommodation

Action 2.7

Action 2.7 Target: 2027	Introduce special measures for groups experiencing racism who are most at risk of homelessness or are unable to access appropriate housing or accommodation.
Implementing bodies	Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage; local authorities

2023–2024 update

Local authorities

Local authorities will collaborate with community-based organisations, advocacy groups and grassroots initiatives that work directly with marginalised communities affected by racism. These partnerships can facilitate outreach, service delivery and community empowerment efforts.

Local authorities will work with key stakeholders towards implementing community outreach programmes to actively engage with marginalised groups experiencing racism and provide them with information about available housing resources, rights and support services.

Action 2.8

Action 2.8 Target: 2025	Address discrimination against racialised groups in accessing the private rental sector, including differentials in access to and acceptance of the Housing Assistance Payment (HAP), which can impact on minority ethnic groups accessing accommodation.
Implementing bodies	Department of Housing; local government and heritage organisations; local authorities

2023–2024 update*Local authorities*

The Homeless HAP scheme is available for people who have been granted leave to remain in Ireland. Work with the NGOs contracted to support these to avail of the homeless HAP supports. Action 2.8 aligns with the goals of the new national Migrant Integration Strategy.

Health**Action 2.9**

Action 2.9 Target: 2025	Put in place measures to address ethnic differentials in health and mental health outcomes, acknowledging the social determinants of health. This is to include culturally appropriate targeted measures in mainstream services and reinforcement of autonomous peer-led targeted initiatives.
Implementing bodies	Department of Health; Health Service Executive

2023–2024 update*Department of Health/Health Service Executive***Ethnicity data**

The Health Service Executive's (HSE) ability to respond to the health needs of ethnic minorities remains challenged by the lack of capacity of its health information systems and datasets to capture ethnicity data in a standardised way. Ethnicity data are required to systematically measure health and healthcare outcomes for minority ethnic groups (e.g. Travellers or refugees and applicants seeking protection) or to monitor health inequalities. The existence (and use) of an 'ethnic identifier' question is the first step in collecting ethnicity data. The National Traveller Health Implementation Group (NTHIG), in line with *National Traveller Health Action Plan 2022-2027* (NTHAP) Actions 10, 11 and 12, is looking at challenges to collecting ethnicity data in health information systems, and is working with key stakeholders to try and address these.

The HSE National Social Inclusion Office (NSIO) has carried out a programme of work to develop and support ethnic equality monitoring within a range of health services. Information on this can be accessed on: <https://www.hse.ie/eng/about/who/primarycare/socialinclusion/intercultural-health/ethnic-equality-monitoring>, and training for HSE staff can be accessed on HSeLand.

The NSIO also works with NGOs and communities to build trust in the process of ethnicity data collection.

The National Traveller Health Action Plan 2022-2027

2023 was the first complete year of implementation of the NTHAP 2022–2027. During 2023, the HSE established the NTHIG to drive, support and monitor the regional and national implementation of the NTHAP. This group has developed its programme of work and established subgroups to drive specific areas of the NTHAP, including implementation and monitoring; finance; ethnic equality and data; and human resource workforce planning and career progression. The HSE National Traveller Mental Health Working Group is represented in the NTHIG and supports implementation of the NTHAP mental health Actions. Each Community Health Organisation/Traveller Health Unit area has developed 5-year local Traveller health implementation plans, with progress on implementation being reported to the NTHIG.

In 2024, the NTHIG prioritised the strengthening of Traveller health infrastructure through resourcing of additional staff, training and standardising of good practice. Funding has been allocated for the establishment of two new primary healthcare for Traveller projects (PHCTPs), in east Limerick and in Drogheda, Co Louth, and for 14 full-time community health worker posts across 7 Traveller Health Unit areas. Funding has also been allocated to develop standardised accredited training programmes for all staff in PHCTPs; a review of Traveller Health Units establishing a partnership process to support ongoing review of PHCTPs; NTHAP standardisation of Traveller cultural awareness training; mapping of assets to support Traveller health; and the development of a Traveller proofing toolkit for health services.

The NTHIG met twice in 2024. Community Health Organisations (CHOs) have submitted progress reports on NTHAP implementation, which have been reviewed by the NTHIG. There has been good progress across the 45 NTHAP Actions.

The NTHIG human resources (HR) subgroup completed a workforce planning survey for PHCTPs to support its work on Action 41 of the NTHAP, “in exploring barriers to recruitment and retention staff in PHCTPs”. The subgroup is also working with the organisation National Traveller MABS to develop a guide to in-work entitlements for Traveller community health workers. The guide is due to be finalised in Q2 2024.

The HSE National Mental Health Service has supported the funding of seven community health workers to signpost Travellers to mental health services. It has also funded the adoption of culturally appropriate mental health training for PHCTP staff.

The newly established East Limerick Traveller Project is operational and is being hosted by Ballyhoura Development CLG. The project employs a project co-ordinator and 10 Traveller community health workers.

Work has commenced on the development of a Traveller proofing toolkit in line with Action 18 of the NTHAP.

Traveller women's homeless initiative

Following the consultation process and call for proposals, €500,000 has been allocated to support the health of Traveller women experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness. This funding has been distributed among three CHO areas, specifically CHO 9 (covering CHO 6 and CHO 7), CHO 1 and CHO 2. These initiatives will address the health inequalities faced by Traveller women experiencing or at risk of homelessness. The initiatives commenced in Q1 2024 and will run for 18 months, during which time the following will be completed:

- Using Action research, the implementation of this initiative will be supported, as will the creation of a model describing the key elements and cultural adaptation required for these services.
- An implementation group, comprising representatives from the Department of Health, the NSIO and Genio Trust, is being established. This group will receive feedback from the Action research and help guide the implementation of the work, highlighting successes, challenges and workarounds.

Monitoring of implementation progress and supporting the CHOs to deliver on proposals

Development of a national model to support Traveller women at risk of homelessness with a practical implementation guide. In addition, guidance will be included in the final report on how to overcome the various challenges of rolling out these types of culturally appropriate supports across the health and accommodation systems.

This programme commenced in January 2024 and will continue until June 2025. There will be economies of scale due to the support that Genio Trust is providing for the roll-out of the NTHAP.

Refugee and migrant healthcare

The Service Delivery Model for the HSE Health Response for Refugee and Applicants Seeking Protection was ratified in February 2023. It provides guidance and recommendations with regard to its core components, which include the primary care migrant health team; acute services; general practitioner (GP) sessional arrangements; catch-up vaccination programme; National Transit Centre; psychosocial services; and infectious disease testing.

The HSE continues to provide targeted healthcare services to more than 125,000 refugees, international protection applicants and BOTPs. This includes supporting the implementation of the Refugees and Applicants Seeking Protection Service Delivery Model to ensure improved access, uptake and health outcomes for migrant health populations. The HSE achieves this by working in conjunction with public health, community services and GPs to increase access to in-reach, health screening, vaccination and psychosocial supports.

The HSE has put in place a service delivery model for refugees and applicants seeking protection. There is an uneven distribution of BOTPs across Ireland, and high concentrations of BOTPs can in some instances put strain on areas with existing healthcare service capacity

challenges. Many areas are experiencing capacity challenges due to GP shortages and significantly increased demand for services, particularly in areas where access to primary and community care services may be more challenging.

Second National Intercultural Health Strategy

The Second National Intercultural Health Strategy has been completed, and a review of the implementation of the strategy is underway.

A number of resources have been developed under the *Second National Intercultural Health Strategy 2018-2023* to support staff in delivering culturally appropriate health services and to support service users from minority ethnic groups to access health services. These resources are as follows:

- The HSE *Emergency Multi-Lingual Aid* booklet has been updated, reviewed and translated into 18 languages. This multilingual phrasebook with visual aids helps healthcare staff communicate with people who do not have English as their first language in emergency presentations while awaiting an interpreter. The HSE *Emergency Multi-Lingual Aid* booklet is available on www.healthpromotion.ie
- HSE [My Health, My Language](#) is a multimedia suite of 187 videos covering 11 health topics, developed to provide service users with information about the public healthcare system and common health topics in 17 languages.
- The HSE Ethnic Equality Monitoring is a Programme of Work undertaken to promote ethnic equality monitoring across the HSE. This includes updated resources and information on www.hsesocialinclusion.ie; an eLearning programme on www.hseland.ie for all staff; and a webinar held in Q1 2023.
- The HSE's [About the Irish health system: A guide for refugees and other migrants](#) is available in 21 languages and provides information on how to access different types of healthcare, including GPs, pharmacists, hospitals, specialist services and what to do in an emergency.
- The HSE Intercultural Awareness eLearning programme is a four-module programme designed to support staff in being aware and respectful of the ethnic, cultural and religious diversity of people who use HSE services. The main aim of this programme is to reduce the potential harm that unconscious bias may cause.
- A number of training supports were put in place during 2023 to support staff delivering services to refugees, BOTPs and international protection applicants. These are trauma-focused cognitive behavioural therapy; narrative exposure therapy; working effectively

with interpreters; and working sensitively with migrants who have experienced sexual violence.

- The third edition of [*Female Genital Mutilation. Information for Health-Care Professionals Working in Ireland*](#) was produced and disseminated.
- The Irish Family Planning Association and the AkiDwA Network of Migrant Women were provided funding to provide specialist services to women and girls who have experienced female genital mutilation (FGM).
- The HSE NSIO, the HSE Mental Health Engagement and Recovery Office and Genio Trust collaborated to fund a research study in University of Galway to examine the extent to which these organisations are accessible to populations who can encounter barriers to social inclusion. These populations include:
 - (1) those who use drugs and alcohol
 - (2) those who experience homelessness
 - (3) those who experience mental health challenges
 - (4) those from migrant, minority ethnic and Roma backgrounds, and
 - (5) members of the Traveller community.

The purpose of this work was to inform the strategies of the two HSE Offices in relation to these groups; to support Genio Trust's service reform programmes in this area; and more broadly to inform any future HSE agendas with respect to public and patient engagement.

- Scripts for two Roma mental health videos (with captions) for the My Health, My Language website were developed and approved in partnership with the HSE Mental Health Engagement and Recovery Office and the HSE NSIO. The two videos are in Slovak and Romanian, as these are the languages most widely spoken by the Roma community in Ireland.
- A review of the HSE's *About the Irish health system – a guide for refugees and other migrants* is underway, and an updated version will be made available by end of Q2 2024.
- A training course in two parts, "Working with Interpreters Training", took place on 17 April 2024. This training is available to all HSE frontline staff and staff in funded services. A total of 712 staff attended the session. Recordings are available on YouTube and can be accessed on: <https://youtu.be/WEIcXmfw6RQ>, <https://youtu.be/HWtqfv-ljNA>.
- Under Sharing the Vision Social Inclusion WorkStream, Action 61, funding was approved for cultural competency training and imagery re-scripting (trauma intervention aimed at

reducing distressing intrusive memories). Training for mental health staff is to be provided by the Woodfield Trauma Service.

The AkiDwA Network of Migrant Women delivered an FGM training programme for HSE NSIO staff on 20 March 2024. The recording has been made available on YouTube.

The University of Galway Service Involvement and Lived Experience research study has been finalised. Key findings include the current state of service involvement for the five populations, understandings of service involvement for the five populations and challenges for service involvement for the five populations.

Children and young people

Action 2.10

Action 2.10 Target: 2025	Make changes to oversight mechanisms, with the aim of ensuring that child and family services are provided in a non-biased and culturally sensitive manner; establish an advisory group where service users of child welfare organisations who have experience of racism can share their lived experiences to inform future practice improvements.
Implementing bodies	Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth; Tusla – Child and Family Agency

2023–2024 update

2025 Action. As of August 2024, there is no update for Action 2.10.

Action 2.11

Action 2.11 Target: 2025	Take measures to ensure the inclusion of minority ethnic young people in mainstream youth work and other State-funded youth initiatives; reinforce support for targeted minority ethnic group youth initiatives; and resource initiatives aimed at empowering young people to understand and challenge racism.
Implementing bodies	Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth; National Youth Council of Ireland

2023–2024 update

2025 Action. As of August 2024, there is no update for Action 2.11.

Cultural and community participation**Action 2.12**

Action 2.12 Target: 2027	Establish the position of racial equality officer in all arts, culture and sport funding bodies. This role will include working with funding recipients to support local collaborative anti-racism programmes across the arts, culture and sports sectors.
Implementing bodies	Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media; Sport Ireland; local sports partnerships; the Arts Council; funding bodies

2023–2024 update

2025 Action. As of August 2024, there is no update for Action 2.12.

Action 2.13

Action 2.13 Target: 2024	Take steps to increase the participation of minority ethnic groups in arts, culture and sport activities, and establish information-sharing and peer-networking channels for young athletes and artists from racialised backgrounds to enable them to develop their careers.
Implementing bodies	Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media; Sport Ireland; local sports partnerships; the Arts Council; funding bodies

2023–2024 update*Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media*

Sport Ireland's policy on diversity and inclusion in sport was launched in May 2023 following a period of extensive consultation with the sport sector and key stakeholders. The policy identifies 5 pillars and lists 12 high-level objectives to support implementation. In addition, a detailed internal action plan covering the period 2022–2024 was produced by Sport Ireland.

Significant progress has been made on the implementation of the policy to date. Of the 52 Actions listed in the internal action plan, 82% are ongoing or complete, with the remaining 18% due to commence in 2024. Some examples of relevant progress include:

- **Leadership:** A diversity and inclusion in sport advisory group was established to assist, advise and guide Sport Ireland on its implementation of the policy. The group consists of sport stakeholders, people from diverse communities and those advocating for people from those communities.
- **Capacity:** In Q1 2024, Sport Ireland will deliver diversity, inclusion and anti-racism training to the sport sector. This will be made available to all national governing bodies (NGBs), local sports partnerships (LSPs) and other funded bodies. It will be on a demand-led basis, and provision will be made to deliver further training later in 2024 if required.
- **Investment:** Investment through Dormant Accounts Funding (DAF) to support the delivery of programmes and initiatives across the sport sector. In 2023, Sport Ireland invested €4.86 million in the network of LSPs and €6.4 million in the network of NGBs. In addition, €1.7 million was allocated to the NGB Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Fund. Further investment of €1.8 million was made in community sport and physical activity hubs which aim to bring local people together and provide a home for local clubs and sports organisations focusing specifically on under-represented communities and ethnic minorities. Several hubs, such as the Cricket Ireland hub in Doughiska, Co Galway, are placing a specific emphasis on providing opportunities for ethnic minority communities to get active.
- EDI and anti-racism training is being delivered to approximately 400 key personnel across the sport sector; this commenced in April 2024.
- Recruitment continues across LSPs for 29 European Social Fund Plus (ESF+) Social Innovation in Sport officers. Eight officers have been recruited to date, and further recruitment will continue throughout 2024. This innovative EU-funded programme will develop new social inclusion programmes through sport and physical activity, with a specific focus on people at risk of social exclusion and poverty.

Sport Ireland has been awarded €11.3 million from the ESF+ programme as part of the Employment, Inclusion, Skills and Training Programme (EIST) 2021–2027, to be used towards the implementation of a social innovation and inclusion programme over the next 5 years.

EIST has a high-level objective of fostering active inclusion with a view to promoting equal opportunities, non-discrimination and active participation, as well as improving employability, particularly for disadvantaged groups. Sport Ireland's programme is listed under EIST's Social Innovation Pillar, and will pilot and implement a range of new, targeted and innovative programmes aiming to improve the socioeconomic status of people at risk of social exclusion and poverty.

Sport Ireland's programme will focus on, but is not exclusively limited to, the following target groups: ethnic minorities; youth at risk, persons with a disability; and persons from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Action 2.14

Action 2.14 Target: 2023	Provide funding for national and local initiatives that aim to combat racism and foster racial equality and community cohesion, in order to support the implementation of this plan and the achievement of its objectives.
Implementing bodies	Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth; community and voluntary organisations

2023–2024 update*Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth*

The Ireland Against Racism Fund (IARF) was launched on 2 May 2023, and remained open for applications until 31 May 2023. The IARF provides funding for national and local initiatives that aim to combat racism and foster racial equality and community cohesion, in order to support the implementation of the NAPAR and the achievement of its objectives. DCEDIY has provided funding of €1.3 million (total) for national and regional projects (scheme A) and local projects (scheme B). Details of both schemes are available on [4](#). The IARF launched its next funding call in July 2024.

DCEDIY provided €80,000 in funding to Holocaust Education Ireland to support the Holocaust Memorial Event held on 28 January 2024.

Interpretation services**Action 2.15**

Action 2.15 Target: 2027	Professionalise and regulate interpreting services used by public bodies, including through the development of a system of accreditation and training, and address barriers faced by groups experiencing racism in accessing these careers.
Implementing bodies	Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth; Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science; Quality and Qualifications Ireland; all local authorities

2023–2024 update

2027 Action. As of August 2024, there is no update for Action 2.15.

3. Being seen and taking part

Community and media participation and representation

Action 3.1

Action 3.1 Target: 2024	Consider ethnic and racial equality and diversity in all media programming, and make this a criterion for funding.
Implementing bodies	Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media; Coimisiún na Meán

2023–2024 update

Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media

Coimisiún na Meán is currently developing a gender, equality, diversity and inclusion (GEDI) strategy to progress diversity standards across the media sector. This is expected to be published mid-2024. On publication of the strategy, Coimisiún na Meán will develop a set of diversity standards for the sector.

Coimisiún na Meán

Coimisiún na Meán's GEDI strategy will be published Q2 2024. The strategy is based on four pillars: Workplace/Culture; Representation/Content; Engagement; and Development. Coimisiún na Meán has begun preparatory work for the development of a set of GEDI standards for the Irish audio and audiovisual sector.

As part of recently completed licensing processes, commitments relating to EDI have been incorporated into a successful applicant's contractual conditions. Consideration of such will continue to be factored into the next phase of commercial radio licensing being undertaken in 2024. Coimisiún na Meán will seek to build on this aspect of the licensing process to ensure that the progression of strategies and initiatives, both on and off the air, align with the principles set out in its GEDI strategy.

Currently, applications for the Sound & Vision 4 funding scheme are assessed based on various criteria, including how the proposal addresses diversity. In Round 51 of the scheme, for example, applicants were asked to what extent their proposal demonstrated that it would support greater gender, equality, diversity and inclusion, and whether the proposal demonstrated that it would deliver greater integration and a voice for New Irish communities. Recent programmes funded by Sound & Vision 4 include *Faithless* on Virgin Media One.

Action 3.2

Action 3.2 Target: 2025	Develop a code of ethics for media practices to address the representation in media of minority ethnic and racialised communities, and to make adherence to the code a condition for public funding of media.
Implementing bodies	Coimisiún na Meán

2023–2024 update

Coimisiún na Meán

A revision of Coimisiún na Meán’s Code of Programme Standards commenced in H1 2024. A more substantive review will take place in 2025 with regard to the statutory review of the code previously undertaken by the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland. Principle 5 of the current Code of Programme Standards states that “programme material shall not stigmatise, support or condone discrimination or incite hatred against persons or groups in society in particular on the basis of age, gender, marital status, membership of the Traveller community, family status, sexual orientation, disability, race, nationality, ethnicity or religion.”

Representation in the media of minority ethnic communities is also addressed in Coimisiún Na Meán’s GEDI strategy, which contains guidance for the media industry was published in July 2024 and will be followed by GEDI standards for the industry, adherence to which will be a condition for receiving public funding.

Action 3.3

Action 3.3 Target: 2024	Take steps to ensure that measures to eliminate the dissemination of hate speech online are effective and appropriate to the local context in Ireland.
Implementing bodies	Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media; Coimisiún na Meán; online service providers

2023–2024 update

Coimisiún na Meán

The Digital Services Act (DSA) is a harmonised EU-wide law that systemically addresses online regulation and illegal content, including illegal hate speech. It came fully into force on 17 February 2023. Separately, public consultation for the draft Online Safety Code closed on 31 January 2024, and Coimisiún na Meán is now considering those responses. The draft

Online Safety Code includes within its scope illegal and harmful content, content which amounts to incitement to violence or hatred, and offences concerning racism or xenophobia.

The DSA establishes a framework for regulating online illegal content. Under the DSA, the EU Commission assumes the role of lead regulator for the 22 designated Very Large Online Platforms (VLOPs), which must now abide by new regulatory rules. Fourteen of the 23 VLOPs are located, or have their EU headquarters, in Ireland. This means that the Irish Digital Services Coordinator, a role established under the DSA in each EU Member State to oversee compliance with the DSA, is playing a key role in the regulation of these VLOPs. Commissioner John Evans, Coimisiún na Meán, is Ireland's Digital Services Coordinator and a member of the European Board for Digital Services, an independent advisory group of digital services coordinators. The DSA requires online platforms to swiftly remove illegal content, including illegal hate speech, once it is reported or identified. On 19 February 2024, Coimisiún na Meán opened a new user contact centre, which provides the public with information about their rights online and how to make a complaint if platforms are not meeting their legal obligations. Under the DSA, platforms are required to provide transparency reports and undergo risk assessments with regard to their moderation policies and how they intend to mitigate risks associated with illegal content, including hate speech.

In July 2023, Coimisiún na Meán published a call for inputs on the proposed Online Safety Code, and it received responses from industry, civil society, government and other regulators. These inputs informed the creation of the draft Online Safety Code and statutory guidance, published in December 2023, which were the subject of a public consultation that closed at the end of January 2024. The draft Online Safety Code contains definitions of "illegal content harmful to the general public" and "regulated content harmful to the general public", including content that constitutes a criminal offence relating to racism or xenophobia, and content that incites violence or hatred against an individual or group based on sex, race, colour, ethnic or social origin, genetic features, language, religion or belief, political or any other opinion, membership of a national minority, property, birth, disability, age or sexual orientation. The definitions are drawn from the Audiovisual Media Services Directive and the Online Safety and Media Regulation Act 2022. Coimisiún na Meán is now reviewing responses to the consultation. Following the conclusion to the consultation process, the draft Online Safety Code may be amended in light of responses.

Action 3.4

Action 3.4 Target: 2024	Develop pathways for media training for members of communities experiencing racism, and encourage and support ethnic minority media professionals.
Implementing bodies	Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media; Coimisiún na Meán; online service providers

2023–2024 update*Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media*

The development of pathways to careers in the media sector to be included in the above strategy. Recommendation 6.6 (establish a media access and training scheme) is subject to the passage of legislation that establishes a media fund on a statutory basis.

Coimisiún na Meán's GEDI strategy rests on four pillars, one of which is 'Engagement'. Key principles of engagement include the development of opportunities and paths to access employment in the media sector for people from marginalised backgrounds, as well as collaboration and cooperation with industry-wide skills, training and development and funding organisations.

Coimisiún na Meán through its Sectoral Learning and Development Programme also supports training and development activities. Among the groups receiving support this year is Gorm Media, whose Wideshot Programme is aimed at young people from under-represented and ethnic minorities.

Coimisiún na Meán

Coimisiún na Meán's GEDI strategy was published in July 2024 and includes commitments on collaboration and cooperation with industry-wide skills, training and development and funding organisations. Coimisiún na Meán also encourages integration of GEDI in training, mentorships and internships, and it plans to launch an annual GEDI forum, which will facilitate the sharing of information in areas such as media training.

Action 3.5

Action 3.5 Target: 2024	Support community development projects and initiatives that work with minority ethnic communities to address racism, promote inclusion and have a say in the decisions that affect their lives.
Implementing bodies	Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth; Department of Rural and Community Development; local authorities

2023–2024 updates*Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth*

The *Programme for Government: Our Shared Future* committed to develop a successor to the Migrant Integration Strategy, which concluded in 2021. Work is currently underway to develop a new national strategy for migrant integration, which will build on the momentum of its predecessor and address ongoing emerging needs in supporting and promoting migrant integration in Ireland. The new strategy is intended to be published in early 2025.

A public consultation to inform the development of the new national strategy for migrant integration concluded on 30 November 2023. The aim of the consultation was to gain insights into the migrant experience in Ireland, and to better understand the challenges, needs and opportunities with regard to supporting and promoting migrant integration.

Integration funding

A range of funding programmes are available to support migrant integration within Ireland.

- The **Communities Integration Fund** supports communities across Ireland in playing a greater role in promoting the integration of migrants. In 2023, a total of €509,415 was given to local community-based organisations in the form of grants of up to €5,000.
- The **National Integration Fund** promotes the effective integration of migrants and Irish citizens with a migrant background into communities across Ireland. DCEDIY is currently evaluating applications for the 2024 funding call that committed approximately €750,000 per year, subject to the availability of funds.
- Under the **ESF+**, a call for proposals was held in 2022 for projects furthering the integration and employment of migrants. Seven projects were funded for a period of 3 years to a total value of €2.7 million.
- On 20 October 2023, the **Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund 2021-2027 (AMIF)** launched a call for proposals from organisations planning projects to support the reception and integration of third-country nationals in Ireland. A total of €10 million will be made available to organisations nationwide to support them in providing reception and integration supports to third-country nationals. In addition,

the AMIF intends to provide funding to local authorities for a range of integration supports via the Irish Refugee Protection Programme (IRPP).

- The **Ireland Against Racism Fund (IARF)** made €1.3 million available in 2023. The IARF has the overall objective of providing funding for national and regional projects, as well as local initiatives, that aim to combat racism and foster racial equality and community cohesion.
- The **International Protection Integration Fund** aims to enable community-based organisations across Ireland to play a greater role in supporting the integration of international protection applicants into Irish society at the local and national levels. More than €2.8 million in funding has been awarded to 137 organisations since the fund was launched in 2022.
- The **International Protection CYPSC Fund** was introduced in 2023 for the Children and Young People's Services Committees (CYPSCs), in order to support them in further developing, enhancing and expanding the provision of support services to families in IPAS centres. In 2023, more than €1.3 million was awarded to the fund for a range of initiatives, including projects aimed at community integration, supports for parents, emergency accommodation and mental health. Following the success of its first year, this funding stream will be implemented again in 2024.

Department of Rural and Community Development

Community Development Pilot Programme

The Community Development Pilot Programme has been set up to trial community development initiatives that address poverty, social exclusion and inequality, and that promote human rights.

The objectives of the programme are as follows:

- To develop community development responses to a range of social, economic and environmental concerns
- To facilitate an empowering collaborative approach to building relationships and to undertake cooperative initiatives between marginalised groups, mainstream services and decision-making bodies, and
- To showcase and profile the benefits of an autonomous approach to community development in relation to existing, new and emerging issues.

The following community development programmes (CDPs) are now in the third year of the Community Development Pilot Programme:

- **Cultúr Migrants Centre** : The Cultúr Migrants Centre is a dedicated space for migrant's and refugee's integrational development and a one-stop shop for

agencies, service providers and public bodies to reach migrant communities. This CDP facilitated the creation of a poster campaign to raise awareness about the issues affecting migrant communities, migrant rights and recommendations on how to integrate migrants into wider Irish society. The posters are displayed in public spaces. The Cultúr Migrants Centre was commended at the Louth Public Participation Network Awards as a result.

- **Donegal Intercultural Platform:** The Donegal Intercultural Platform has developed a training and dialogical initiative called the CARA (Community Anti-Racism Actions) Donegal project, which entails workshops on understanding and responding to racism at community organisations level as well as “Conversations for Change” sessions with groups like men’s sheds, Active Age groups, women’s groups, etc.
- **Longford Roma and New Communities CDP:** The Longford Roma and New Communities CDP organised one of the two regional National Traveller and Roma Inclusion Strategy (NTRIS) consultation events for Roma. This was an important opportunity to call attention to the limited focus on Roma in the current strategy, and to amend this shortcoming in a successor NTRIS.
- **Clare Traveller CDP:** Clare Traveller CDP secured the inclusion of Travellers in voicing their insights and perspectives in a number of innovative local developments, including Clare Public Participation Network’s (PPN) anti-poverty strategy and *Fair Clare: Securing Socio-Economic Rights & a Just Transition in County Clare*, a report published by TASC (Think-tank for Action on Social Change). Clare Traveller CDP has delivered training to Travellers to support them in advocating for their community on issues that affect their lives.
- **Kilkenny Traveller Community Movement (KTCM):** KTCM was involved in one of the four regional NTRIS consultation events for Travellers, where it raised issues and received diverse perspectives on these issues from those present at the event. The RTÉ documentary *Patrick: A Young Traveller Lost* was developed in conjunction with the KTCM CDP and Kilkenny Travellers and was broadcast on RTÉ 1 television.

Two new projects, the Amal Women’s Association and the Limerick Traveller Network, have recently been added to the Community Development Pilot Project, and are in the early stages of programme implementation.

- **Amal Women’s Association:** The Amal Women’s Association provides a collective space for Muslim women who have experienced racism or domestic violence, or who have had to engage with the family courts system or mental health services. It hosts weekly coffee mornings, activities for women and information sessions with members of An Garda Síochána on anti-racism initiatives, and domestic violence victim supports.
- **Limerick Traveller Network:** The Limerick Traveller Network organises events, meetings and activities to help people come together, form connections and raise

awareness of issues. These include a mix of open days and events such as Traveller Pride Week, Travellers Together Preventing Suicide (an annual campaign organised on 10 September, World Suicide Prevention Day), National Traveller Mental Health Day, International Women's Day, International Human Rights Day. The Limerick Traveller Network plans to engage with local and national networking groups in the areas of mental health, accommodation, human rights and education.

Community Services Programme

The Department of Rural and Community Development (DRCD) Community Services Programme (CSP) supports more than 420 community-based organisations in providing a vast range of local services nationwide through a social enterprise model. It provides employment opportunities for disadvantaged individuals such as minority ethnic communities, including members of the Traveller community.

The CSP provides an annual co-funding contribution towards each full-time equivalent position being supported, and, where warranted, towards the cost of employing a manager. There are currently six Traveller organisations supported under the CSP that employ Travellers and a further 16 CSP-funded organisations that employ Travellers. To date, 69 CSP-supported staff have self-declared that they are members of the Traveller community.

The DRCD also launched a call for new CSP organisations in early 2024. Applications were invited from organisations under two strands. Strand 1 focused on organisations operating in the circular economy which are owned and led by Traveller organisations and/or provide employment primarily to members of the Traveller community. Strand 2 focused on organisations demonstrating that their proposal meets one or more of the CSP strategic objectives of promoting social inclusion and equality and building sustainable communities.

A further 14 organisations have been approved for the programme, thereby supporting 13 manager positions and 23 full-time equivalent positions. It should be noted that, in order to qualify for the CSP, 70% of an organisation's staff must be taken from the specified target groups, which include ethnic minority groups. Two of these new organisations work with members of the Traveller community.

In addition, Dormant Accounts Funding (DAF) has been allocated in 2024 to support eight Traveller organisations in further developing their proposals to establish a social enterprise that would employ members of the Traveller community.

Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme 2018–2023/2024–2028

The Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP) provides a 'step up' in life to those who need it most, helping them move closer to mainstream services, become part of their New Communities and make Ireland their new home. SICAP is one of the most effective programmes in operation for facilitating migrant integration in Ireland. It reaches into almost every migrant community in Ireland and is based on personal contact between migrants

and SICAP workers, who are skilled and knowledgeable in terms of navigating the barriers to employment, education, access to services, social connections and political participation.

Under SICAP 2018–2023, there were 13 target groups which the programme aimed to reach out to, including New Communities, Roma and Travellers. As part of a mid-programme review in 2021, SICAP named various national priority groups to be prioritised for receiving supports for the remainder of the programme. These national priority groups included New Communities, with a particular focus on those living in direct provision, as well as Travellers and Roma.

Local Community Development Companies and Local Development Companies were asked to select from the national priority groups. A total of 32 areas selected New Communities, with a particular focus on those living in direct provision, as a priority group, while 19 areas selected Travellers and Roma.

Under SICAP 2024–2028, there are 12 named target groups. These include refugees (including BOTPs and people with refugee status, as well as those with subsidiary protection and those with permission to remain in Ireland), international protection applicants, Travellers and Roma. In advance of SICAP commencement, LCDCs were asked to select one to three local priority target groups from the named target groups as groups to be prioritised for the duration of the programme.

Ten areas selected Travellers, 10 areas selected international protection applicants, 5 areas selected refugees and 2 areas selected Roma.

There are 105 Actions in SICAP's plans for 2024 that name rights and integration for international protection applicants, refugees, Travellers, Roma or refugees and migrants as their primary focus area. It contains eight thematic focus areas for service delivery, including refugee and migrant rights and integration. This particular focus area will take a rights-based approach to engaging with refugee and migrant communities, and will see supports delivered for refugee and migrant engagement with employers, integration with local activities and anti-racism initiatives, advocacy group support and participation in leadership programmes.

Typical SICAP activities to support migrants, asylum seekers and refugees (New Communities) as well as Travellers and Roma communities through dedicated outreach, employment supports, Fáilte Isteach English classes, health promotion and well-being programmes, as well as intercultural events. A substantial amount of work is also being carried out locally through SICAP to combat racism and promote integration in communities.

The proportion of people from the New Communities target group who engaged with SICAP increased substantially in 2022, up from 13% in 2021 to 31% in 2022. Fifty-eight per cent of beneficiaries within the New Communities target group were refugees, an almost fourfold increase on the 2021 figure of 15%. Likewise, the number of asylum seekers availing of SICAP supports increased significantly, from 2,649 people in 2021 to 13,651 in 2022. Similar increases were seen in the number of children and parents participating in child and family

activities supporting asylum seekers and migrants. It is expected that 2023 figures will reflect further increases in numbers of these target groups availing of SICAP services.

Funding of more than €44 million has been allocated to the Social Inclusion and Community Activation Funding for the Social Inclusion & Community Activation Programme has increased by €8.3 million over 3 years, totalling €47.4 million in 2024. Additional funding of €10 million was secured in 2023 and 2024 for delivery of SICAP supports to new arrivals and recruitment of additional community engagement workers to support this cohort. For 2024, a further €10 million in funding has been secured to deliver SICAP supports to new arrivals, allocated using a revised funding model which accounts for proportions of new arrivals in each SICAP Lot. The overall result of this revised model is a more equitable distribution of funding, which ensures that the vast majority of contract areas have proportionally similar funding levels according to the size of their New Communities populations. The model ensures that distribution of funds is data-driven, that funding follows the changing needs of areas based on population concentrations and that programme implementers have the resources to recruit community engagement workers where they are most needed.

The following include some examples of specific anti-racism initiatives carried out under SICAP 2018–2023.

County Kildare LEADER Partnership

In its campaign against racism and social exclusion, SICAP supported the Yellow Flag Programme, which is aligned with the Kildare Traveller & Roma Inclusion Strategy 2019-2023 and aims to achieve greater awareness, understanding and acceptance of Travellers and Roma in wider Irish society. Schools participating in the Yellow Flag Programme in 2023 included Curragh Community College; St Mary's College, Naas which achieved all eight programme steps and was awarded Yellow Flag status in May 2023; and Piper's Hill College, Naas which is in its second year of the Yellow Flag Programme. The SICAP Education Support Worker is also joining the Equality Committee at Curragh Community College in 2024.

Empower

Empower established Fingal Anti-Racism Network in consultation with the Irish Network Against Racism (INAR) and Fingal Communities Against Racism. This is a network of community groups and individuals from many SICAP target groups. Frontline Empower SICAP team members have completed the Immigrant Council of Ireland's anti-trafficking training as well as INAR's anti-racism and iReport training.

Donegal Local Development CLG

Over the course of 2023, community groups in different areas across Donegal raised the issue of racism, hostility towards refugees and asylum seekers and growing far-right activity. The Donegal Local Development CLG (DLDC) SICAP New Communities team collaborated with the Donegal Volunteer Centre to support staff and board members of community organisations, and local volunteers, in participating in workshops aimed at finding ways to

address these issues in their area. The workshops were very well received, and a number of follow-up actions have been taken.

South West Mayo Development Company

SICAP organised and participated in several projects throughout Social Inclusion Awareness Week from 9 to 15 October 2023, including the Mayo Says No to Racism subgroup, which explores and campaigns against racism in Mayo, and the Crowned Mayo event, an exploration of identity through story, conversation and artwork by African women living in Mayo.

Mayo North East

The SICAP Traveller Community Development Worker participates in fora and working groups such as Mayo Says No to Racism, the Mayo Traveller Interagency Group, and Healthy Mayo, thus ensuring that the lived experience of the Traveller community is understood by wider Irish society and that new projects being designed for delivery reflect the needs and engagement expectations of the Traveller community.

Leitrim Development Company

As part of Social Inclusion Awareness Week, SICAP worked with the Leitrim International Community Group to organise anti-racism and intercultural awareness training with the Immigrant Council of Ireland. This training initiative was attended by 14 people.

While there has generally been a positive response in communities to welcoming New Communities in Leitrim, Leitrim Development Company noted a shift in the last few months of 2023, when enthusiasm for volunteering among the local community declined and protests against IPAS accommodation occurred.

To counteract these issues, SICAP organised anti-racism and intercultural workshops with local migrant groups. SICAP also held a Festival of Nations, celebrating all cultures in Leitrim. In addition, Leitrim Development Company worked with local and national media to highlight positive integration stories in Leitrim.

Dublin Inner City Co-op

One Dublin Inner City Co-op member delivered a Global Citizenship Education (GCE) programme and also commenced a programme of training staff and some participants in GCE, which includes anti-racism training, to promote a greater understanding of the reasons for increased migration from countries in the Global South. This training also aims to teach people skills in taking positive community action and using their voice to give feedback in a positive manner.

Dublin South City Partnership

Dublin South City Partnership (DSCP) supported Dublin 8 For All, Drimnagh For All and Inchicore Mammies to run positive campaigns of welcoming refugees.

DSCP invited new residents to their communities to attend local events and festivals.

A number of training events were held for workers and activists. Topics covered included intercultural awareness, anti-racism training and how to counteract far-right messaging.

DSCP hosted meetings between DCEDIY and concerned residents/public representatives to provide information on IPAS centres planned for local areas, engage with residents to alleviate concerns, and counter misinformation.

DSCP facilitated Canal Communities Against Racism in supporting people from local groups experiencing racism, connecting them with community gardaí and INAR, and supporting them to use the iReporting system.

Dublin Northwest Partnership

Dublin Northwest Partnership engaged with Unite the Union on delivering anti-racism training to staff in June 2024. Dublin Northwest Partnership is currently examining adapting this training for use with local community groups. This will form part of the SICAP programme of work in 2024 and will be closely linked to the development of a broader active citizenship programme.

PAUL Partnership Limerick

PAUL Partnership Limerick continues to chair the Limerick Migrant Integration Steering Group and the Limerick City Ukrainian Response Group, and to sit on the wider Ukrainian Community Response Forum for both Limerick city and county. In addition, PAUL Partnership Limerick sits on the anti-racism subgroup of the Migrant Integration Steering Group.

PAUL Partnership Limerick continues to support Limerick United Against Racism, an anti-racism campaign led by the Limerick Integration Working Group.

Over the course of SICAP 2018–2023, PAUL Partnership Limerick has worked closely with the Exchange House Ireland National Travellers Organisation to support the establishment and formalising of the Limerick Traveller Network. The Limerick Traveller Network, launched in 2023 by Minister of State for Community Development, Integration and Charities Joe O'Brien, offers a representative voice for the Traveller community in Limerick city. Through SICAP, and in collaboration with the Exchange House Ireland National Travellers Organisation, PAUL Partnership Limerick has continued to support Network members in developing the skills and capacity to be representatives for their own communities. In 2023, PAUL organised a conflict resolution workshop, facilitated by an external facilitator, specifically for the Limerick Traveller Network.

Ballyfermot Chapelizod Partnership

Ballyfermot Chapelizod Partnership (BCP) reported that the early months of 2023 saw a concerning rise in misinformation relating to refugees/asylum seekers in the local area, accompanied by racist and anti-immigrant sentiment. To counteract and challenge this

growing narrative, BCP was centrally involved in the establishment of Ballyfermot Cherry Orchard For All. The group met a number of times throughout 2023, hosting activities which included training for staff and residents on anti-racism, cultural competence and challenging far-right rhetoric.

BCP developed a leaflet drop campaign to counteract misinformation and disinformation, where leaflets were delivered to every household in the SICAP catchment area. In addition, on St Valentine's Day, it held a flag event in the local people's park celebrating the diversity of the area and giving a strong message of welcome to New Communities in the area. The event was well received, with coverage in local and national media.

North East West Kerry Development Programme

SICAP co-funded a local Kerry United Against Racism group made up of local people and invited representatives from the Tralee International Resource Centre.

Empowering Communities Programme

The Empowering Communities Programme (ECP) aims to enhance community access to key services and empower local communities to craft their own response to area-based poverty, social exclusion and the resulting consequences, with the support of the relevant LCDC.

In some communities, the challenges posed by high levels of deprivation combined with high incidence of criminality have gone beyond the capacity of existing structures, or individual organisations, to respond to. While many of these communities receive support under DRCD programmes such as SICAP, the LEADER Programme and the Community Enhancement Programme, it is apparent that there are a number of communities across the country where additional, more intensive support is required. To this end, the ECP secured €2 million in funding to design and implement a new programme aimed at specifically targeting area-based deprivation through a community development approach.

The ECP has been essential in encouraging integration of New Communities in several locales. Programme areas have reported that in many instances members of New Communities are mistrustful of traditional statutory programmes and supports. By providing local communities with a dedicated engagement worker to serve as a recognisable face of the programme, the ECP has taken a first step in assisting New Communities and ethnic minorities to integrate locally, interact with other community groups and begin engaging with services already available in the area.

Substantial work on integration of migrants within communities and measures to combat racism has been carried out across a number of ECP programme areas in 2023, and will be expanded throughout 2024.

The Arranmore ECP has been heavily involved in integration initiatives for Ukrainians arriving on the island, linking individuals and families with various services and hosting events to encourage community mixing. The programme has facilitated voluntary initiatives to promote

integration, led by Ukrainian individuals on the island, including recreational dancing and fitness classes.

The ECP areas in North-West Dublin intend to expand on capacity building programmes in 2024, with specific programmes focusing on anti-racism practices and community integration through existing resources, in this case using local community gardens in ECP areas to encourage inter-community interaction.

Work is ongoing in the South Dublin ECP to develop an anti-racism policy tailored to the area. Galway Rural Development now collaborates with Galway Traveller Movement to organise various community events. Galway Rural Development is also examining recruitment of an additional ECP support worker with a view to providing more intensive integration supports for new arrivals in the Ballinasloe area.

The Mayo ECP has engaged with the Local Area Employment Service on a Young Traveller Pilot Programme, aimed at providing supports for Young Adult Travellers in training, education and employment. An 8-week pilot focusing on personal development was held in Ballina. The project took a collaborative approach to design, development and delivery with participants. The ECP is examining possibilities as to a second round of the pilot.

The Wexford ECP noted in its 2023 report that high levels of division between communities in the programme catchment area posed difficulties for integration efforts, with there being very few instances of interaction between the various cohorts. In particular, the Traveller community in the area noted high levels of discrimination experienced by its community members. The Wexford ECP has commenced weekly drop-in clinics in a local community hall, which has encouraged social interaction between various community groups. The programme has also linked with the local Traveller Community Health Programme to provide additional supports. Supports for local Travellers, Roma and migrants to address racism and discrimination and articulate their experience via cross-cultural contact opportunities is now a specific goal of the Wexford ECP's 2024 action plan, with a view to providing structured opportunities for inter-community interaction and building understanding.

The Wexford ECP has organised events, support clinics and local volunteering efforts, which has resulted in almost all programme areas reporting increased mixing among members of different communities in the localities targeted.

Local authorities

To meet the goal of Action 3.5, local authorities intend to:

- Establish local authority integration teams to support those going through the international protection process and BOTPs, who will support the integration of this cohort into communities
- Support and run the Community Recognition Funds locally
- Deliver funding provided through SICAP to assist the integration of new arrivals to Ireland

- Progress work through the PPNs
- Create initiatives through the Healthy Cities and Counties Programme (Healthy Ireland)
- Create initiatives through the Sláintecare Healthy Communities programme
- Engage in collaborative work with local authorities and the Arts Council under Department of Community and Rural Development Framework for Collaboration, and
- Support the Community Integration Forums.

Political representation and participation

Action 3.6

Action 3.6 Target: 2025	Establish public office mentoring programmes for members of minority ethnic communities and introduce positive measures to support the selection of minority ethnic candidates, based on the model in use to increase the numbers of women in politics.
Implementing bodies	Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage; local authorities; political parties

2023–2024 update

Local authorities

Local authorities will work as appropriate with the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (DHLGH) towards the development of programmes aimed at encouraging more people from minority ethnic groups to run for local or national election.

4. Being counted

Ethnic equality data

Action 4.1

Action 4.1 Target: 2024	Determine data sources that can be used to monitor racial equality according to the outcome indicators set out in the Monitoring section of this plan.
Implementing bodies	Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth; Central Statistics Office; Department of Public Expenditure, NDP Delivery and Reform; Data Protection Commission

2023–2024 update

Department of Public Expenditure, NDP Delivery and Reform/Public Appointments Service

DPENDR is continuing to explore the feasibility of accurately measuring diversity across the civil and public service workforce, based on the model developed by An Garda Síochána.

DPENDR will continue to support the identification and refinement of metrics as part of Equality Budgeting programmes of work.

Central Statistics Office

The CSO continues to consider all data sources, both administrative and primary, to satisfy this requirement. The CSO intends to carry out an equality survey in Q3 2024 that will provide further data in the area of diversity in the civil and public service.

The CSO will also have a key role in overseeing progress on the Actions which are outlined in the National Data Equality Strategy. Several of these Actions complement Action 4.1 in the NAPAR.

Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth

An Equality Budgeting scan was conducted by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) in 2019 to assess the actions that the Irish Government had taken to mainstream equality considerations as part of the budget process. The scan suggested that, in order to improve Equality Budgeting and ensure accurate and informed data, there is a need to improve the collection of equality data in Ireland.

On 21 March 2022, to mark the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, the Minister of State for Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth, Roderic O’Gorman, announced the development of a National Equality Data Strategy by the CSO and

DCEDIY that will put in place a strategic approach to improving the collection, disaggregation and use of equality data.

The National Equality Data Strategy will provide a general approach for identifying and filling current gaps in equality data, as well as develop standard practices in classification. It is intended to improve the collection of all equality data, improve the ability of public bodies to monitor the impact of policies and initiatives, and complement the Equality Budgeting initiative led by DPENDR.

A working group has been established which brings together a range of stakeholders from across Government, as well as civil society and research bodies. The draft Strategy states that the overall goal is to improve the collection, disaggregation and use of equality data in Ireland, and it outlines various Actions under these headings. The working group conducted a consultation on the draft Strategy in 2023 and the Strategy was published in June 2024.

Action 4.2

Action 4.2 Target: 2025	Create legal safeguards for the collection of ethnicity data by recognising ethnic equality monitoring as a legitimate basis for gathering special category data.
Implementing bodies	Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth; Central Statistics Office; Department of Public Expenditure, NDP Delivery and Reform; Data Protection Commission

2023–2024 update

Central Statistics Office

The Statistics Act, 1993 provides a legislative basis for the compilation and dissemination of official statistics. It obligates the CSO to treat all information or concerns relating to individuals as strictly confidential and to use such information solely for statistical purposes.

Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth

DCEDIY published the National Equality Data Strategy in June, 2024.

Action 4.3

Action 4.3 Target: 2025	Introduce a standardised ethnic classification (based on the Census) across all routine administrative systems, State agencies and surveys in line with human rights standards, in order to enable ethnic equality proofing and monitoring of State policies, budgets and programming. This will be supported by the development and use of standard ethnic equality data monitoring tools and guidelines, and will link with the forthcoming National Equality Data Strategy.
Implementing bodies	Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth; Central Statistics Office; Department of Public Expenditure, NDP Delivery and Reform

2023–2024 update*Department of Public Expenditure, NDP Delivery and Reform/Public Appointments Service*

DCEDIY and the CSO have been leading on the development of the National Equality Data Strategy. DPENDR was represented on the working group for the Strategy which was published in June.

The work of DPENDR on Equality Budgeting (Priority Action 5.1) includes providing more information on the likely impact of budgetary measures across a wide range of policy areas, and how outcomes differ across socioeconomic groups based on, for example, gender, age, ethnicity and so on. A key feature of the Equality Budgeting annual cycle is the continuous review and refinement of metrics in order to strengthen the reporting of this information and provide greater insight into the progress that is being made.

DPENDR welcomes the publication of the National Equality Data Strategy, to which the Department has contributed as part of the working group.

DPENDR will continue to support the identification and refinement of metrics as part of Equality Budget programmes of work.

Central Statistics Office

In line with its strategic goal of data stewardship, the CSO has commenced developing a suite of data standards to assist in the standardisation of how key data concepts are collected and disseminated. These data standards are being developed in consultation with key stakeholders and will contain common elements such as descriptions and definitions of concepts, standards, questions and response options, and guidance on how to categorise and classify concepts when publishing data. Data standards with regard to ethnicity, sex, gender, sexual orientation and disability are in development, following the successful conclusion of the Census consultation process. It is planned that these will be finalised in late 2024.

We are currently finalising the following concepts, which will be added to the data standards which we hope to publish in Q3 2024:

- Marital status
- Religion
- Main activity status
- Full-time/Part-time employment status
- Household relationship, and
- County

The data standards will be available on a CSO metadata website, and support will be available to data providers on how to introduce the new standards into their systems.

Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth

DCEDIY published the National Equality Data Strategy in June.

Action 4.4

Action 4.4 Target: 2025	Carry out a comparison of Census 2016 and Census 2022 to provide data to inform action on the intersectionalities of ethnicity and other protected characteristics.
Implementing bodies	Central Statistics Office

2023–2024 update

Central Statistics Office

The CSO has published detailed statistical tables from both Census 2016 and Census 2022 cross-tabulating the ethnicity variable with other relevant variables, both related to protected characteristics and other topics. These tables are available on the CSO website for anyone to access. The CSO also provides a facility to request bespoke statistical tables which include data on ethnicity or any other variable from both Census 2016 and Census 2022, as well as from previous censuses.

Data tables are available on the CSO website. Further data tables can be requested by contacting census@cs0.ie.

5. Being together

Combating racism through mainstream policies, programmes and legislation

Action 5.1

Action 5.1 Target: 2024	Include objectives and actions to address racism, including systemic racism, in all relevant public policy programmes, publicly funded community and voluntary sector programmes, and private sector State-commissioned and resourced services.
Implementing bodies	Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth; Department of Rural and Community Development; all public authorities; and relevant community and voluntary organisations

2023–2024 update

Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage

The Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (DHLGH) is committed to fulfilling its obligations under the Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty to develop policies supporting, and exercising, good practice and operational standards in relation to human rights and equality.

The DHLGH published its *Statement of Strategy 2023-2025* in June 2023 which set out the human rights and equality issues relevant to the DHLGH functions and purpose. The DHLGH reports periodically on actions taken to address those issues in its Annual Report. The DHLGH will continue to work towards meeting its obligations under the Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty.

Further to this, work is continuing on the DHLGH's Public Sector Duty Action Plan, with expected publication in Q1 2024. In Year 1, the DHLGH continued to work to meet its obligations under the Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty. The DHLGH's Public Sector Duty Action Plan is expected to be published in H1 2024.

Department of Public Expenditure, NDP Delivery and Reform/Public Appointments Service

Work is continuing on the development of the Equality Budgeting framework to track public expenditure designed to combat inequalities, including those related to racial discrimination. This work is due to be piloted in 2024 with a view to full implementation in 2025.

The Performance and Equality Budgeting team in DPENDR will chair the Equality Budgeting Interdepartmental Group. The next meeting is to be held in early in Q2 and will continue to

facilitate the embedding of equality initiatives across all Government Departments. The Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission is a member of this group.

Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science

Under the Higher Education Authority's (HEA) *Race Equality in the Education Sector: Implementation Plan 2022-2024*, higher education institutions (HEIs) are developing institutional race equality action plans

The *Race Equality in the Education Sector: Implementation Plan 2022-2024* includes Actions for HEIs to take with regard to the recognition of foreign qualifications. It also includes a stand-alone race equality document which provides easy-to-access signposts to the other relevant policies. These Actions are connected to supporting diversity in staffing and student recruitment.

To date, 21 HEIs have signed and endorsed Anti-Racism Principles for Higher Education Institutions. These principles address the recommendations in the *Race Equality in the Higher Education Sector: Analysis Commissioned by the Higher Education Authority* report, which call on HEI leadership to actively embed a culture of race equality within HEIs. In March 2023, the HEA launched *Race Equality: Anti-Racism Principles for Irish Higher Education Institutions*. In line with broader government policy in relation to combating racism and race inequality, the HEA made the decision to frame the document as a set of 'anti-racism principles', rather than as a charter or statement on race equality.

The HEA is convening an advisory group which will advise the HEA on policy related to advancing race equality and *Race Equality in the Education Sector Implementation Plan 2022-2024*. It is envisaged that this group will advise on how these campaigns can be progressed. The advisory group will be chaired by the HEA. It is envisioned that the advisory group will meet approximately three/four times per year.

Department of Rural and Community Development

The Government's strategy for the community and voluntary sector, *Sustainable, Inclusive and Empowered Communities*, supports consultation, inclusion and participation of communities, particularly disadvantaged communities, in public policy and decision-making at all levels. The plan includes high-level objectives and actions to support disadvantaged communities.

Department of Social Protection

The *Department of Social Protection Customer Charter and Action Plan 2023 - 2026* commits to greeting customers politely and treating them with courtesy and respect regardless of their gender, marital status, family status, age, disability, sexual orientation, race, religion or ethnicity, and ask that customers do the same. The Department of Social Protection (DSP) offers translation and interpretation services in all languages to customers who need this service.

The *Customer Charter and Action Plan 2023-2026* sets out 34 Actions, to be implemented over the next 3 years, which will improve our standards of customer service. The plan is framed using the 12 Guiding Principles of Quality Customer Service, one of which is 'Equality and Diversity'. Here, the DSP commits to investigating the barriers to accessing DSP services, and the potential need for a protocol that will allow advocates to easily act on behalf of customers, subject to statutory provisions. The DSP will also review the availability of information in other languages to identify gaps in accessibility for non-English speakers.

All public employment services are available on a non-discriminatory basis to any jobseeker, and not just those currently receiving jobseeker's payments. Any jobseeker, including members of minority groups, seeking support from Intreo employment services, including the services of an EPA/Job Coach, can request this on a voluntary, walk-in basis to any service in the network.

Pathways to Work 2021-2025, the national employment services strategy, includes a specific strand, 'Leaving No One Behind', which sets out measures to support people from disadvantaged and minority backgrounds in gaining sustainable employment. This includes measures to support members of the Traveller and Roma communities, migrants and other groups who may face discrimination and racism.

Following the formation of a Traveller & Roma Employment Services Consultative Forum in 2022, which comprises community representatives, the DSP has continued its proactive engagement in 2024. The aim of this consultation forum is to improve access to Intreo employment services; establish the effectiveness of current employment services supports for these communities; identify barriers to employment; support communities in identifying routes to employment; and, if required, develop additional targeted interventions.

Coimisiún na Meán

Through its Sound & Vision 4 funding scheme, the Sectoral Learning and Development Programme and the Sponsorship Scheme, Coimisiún na Meán supports the production of content for audiences and the delivery of training programmes, events and activities that help develop a media sector that is fully representative of the diversity of Irish society.

In March 2024, Coimisiún na Meán allocated almost €800,000 to 50 projects that showcase and support diversity and innovation in media through its Sound & Vision 4 scheme. Examples include the Catalyst International Film Festival in Limerick city, which amplifies diverse voices and promotes equality, diversity and inclusion in film-making, and X-Pollinator, a talent development initiative addressing the lack of gender diversity in the Irish screen industry.

Action 5.2

Action 5.2 Target: 2027	Carry out reviews of existing and proposed legislation that impacts on minority ethnic groups in order to determine the extent to which it supports the objectives of this plan, and where necessary propose changes.
Implementing bodies	All government aegis

2023–2024 update*Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science*

The Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science (DFHERIS) is assessing the best approach to ensure consistency in reviewing existing and proposed legislation that impacts on minority ethnic groups.

Department of Social Protection

All legislation that goes through the DSP is equality-proofed during the drafting process. The DSP's Legislation Unit keeps up to date with equality cases in the Workplace Relations Commission and the superior courts, and considers the implications such cases might have for its own internal process on an ongoing basis.

Department of Justice

When developing policy approaches, the Department of Justice considers any potential impacts. Should a proposal arise that impacts on minority ethnic groups, it will review the proposal in conjunction with the NAPAR. In addition, while not solely relevant to minority ethnic groups, the Zero Tolerance Domestic, Sexual and Gender-Based Violence strategy and the *Third National Action Plan to prevent and combat Human Trafficking 2023 - 2027* both have Actions to keep legislation under review.

Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth

DCEDIY is undertaking a review of the Equality Acts, examining their operation from the perspective of someone taking a claim under their redress mechanisms. DCEDIY is further examining the extent to which those experiencing discrimination are aware of the legislation and whether there are practical or other obstacles which preclude or deter them from taking an action.

DCEDIY invited the public to participate in a consultation via written submissions between 6 July 2021 and 8 December 2021, and was pleased to receive an extensive response. Participants were asked for their views on the functioning and accessibility of the Equality Acts; the scope of the current grounds; whether existing exemptions should be modified or removed; and whether the legislation adequately addresses intersectionality. A report summarising the key issues raised in the public consultation was published on 12 July 2023 and can be

accessed on: <https://www.gov.ie/en/press-release/cafb4-minister-ogorman-publishes-report-on-the-submissions-to-the-public-consultation-on-the-review-of-the-equality-acts/>

It is intended that legislative proposals arising from the review will be brought to Government in the Autumn.

Understanding and preventing racism

Action 5.3

Action 5.3 Target: 2023	Carry out a programme to raise public education and awareness in support of the objectives of this plan.
Implementing bodies	Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth

2023–2024 update

Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth

DCEDIY has engaged in preliminary talks with its Media Unit to create a plan to carry out a programme to raise awareness in support of the NAPAR.

Action 5.4

Action 5.4 Target: 2025	Introduce a workers' and employers' guide for combating racism and promoting racial equality in the workplace across all sectors, with an associated awareness campaign.
Implementing bodies	Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment; Irish Congress of Trade Unions; Irish Business and Employers Confederation; employer and professional bodies

2023–2024 update

2025 Action. As of August 2024, there is no update for Action 5.4.

Action 5.5

Action 5.5 Target: 2027	Introduce mandatory and continuing anti-racism education, including cultural competency and unconscious bias training, for all staff at all levels throughout the public sector as part of the fulfilment of the Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty.
Implementing bodies	Department of Public Expenditure, NDP Delivery and Reform; all public bodies

2023–2024 update*Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage*

The DHLGH is committed to fulfilling its obligations under the Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty to develop policies of, and exercising, good practice and operational standards in relation to human rights and equality. For example, work is underway with the National Quality Standards Framework (NQSF) for Homeless Services in Ireland, which is in place nationally for local authority and NGO-delivered services.

Standard 1.1 of the Framework aims to ensure that service users are treated with dignity and respect; that their equality is promoted; and that the service respects their age, gender, sexual orientation, disability, family status, civil status, race, religious beliefs or identity as a member of the Travelling community. The DHLGH's Public Sector Duty Action Plan is expected to be published in H1 2024. With regard to the National Quality Standards Framework for Homeless Services in Ireland, it is in place nationally for all local authority and NGO services. It is within the purview of housing authorities to monitor standards. Training in the area of anti-discrimination and cultural competency already takes place for staff in housing authorities.

Department of Public Expenditure, NDP Delivery and Reform/Public Appointments Service

Promotion of participation in current courses provided by IPA OneLearning has continued in Managing for an Inclusive Workforce, Equality and Human Rights, Understanding Your Role, and Authentic and Inclusive Leadership. These courses are a key support to the Civil Service in meeting obligations under the Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty set out in the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act 2014. OneLearning provision has transitioned to the Institute of Public Administration as part of a wider plan to create a centre of excellence for Civil Service and public service learning and development. OneLearning is currently available to all civil servants. A staged approach will be undertaken to offer OneLearning courses to the wider public service. By 2027, the Institute of Public Administration plans to have extended the availability of OneLearning courses to around 20,000 staff in non-commercial State agencies and local authorities, significantly broadening the potential audience for courses in EDI-related matters.

As of late February, uptake of relevant OneLearning courses was as follows:

- “Managing for an Inclusive Workforce” – 242 participants have completed this live facilitated course. Three scheduled courses were cancelled due to lack of uptake.
- “Equality and Human Rights: Understanding Your Role” – 298 participants have completed this live facilitated course. No scheduled courses have been cancelled due to lack of uptake.
- “Authentic, Inspiring and Inclusive Leadership” – 250 participants have completed this live facilitated course. One scheduled course was cancelled due to lack of uptake.
- “Equality and Human Rights in the Public Service” – 4,261 participants have completed this self-study online course.

While uptake has improved somewhat, the cancellation of facilitator-led programmes is challenging.

In Q2 2025 the Public Appointments Service (PAS) will roll out intercultural competency training for Assistant Principal (AP) and Principal Officer (PO) level staff, in order to better equip them to manage both their diverse teams and the increasingly diverse range of candidates who apply for roles through the PAS.

Targeted action is required to increase uptake of relevant courses. DPENDR will explore options with OneLearning, as well as with learning and development partners.

Department of Rural and Community Development

Participation of Marginalised Communities in Local Decision-Making Structures (DAF Measure) was a project funded by Dormant Accounts Funding (DAF). This project was led by Pobal on behalf of the DRCD and aimed to build capacity, as well as provide resources and toolkits, to support the engagement of marginalised communities in consultation and decision-making processes at the local level.

To date, the following outputs have come from this project:

- An initial national event, targeted at LCDCs, local authority staff and other relevant local stakeholders, aimed to build capacity and share information on principles of good consultation and meaningful engagement.
- Three pilot LCDC projects (Clare, Wicklow and Galway city) were selected to develop and test engagement strategies as part of the Local Economic and Community Planning (LECP) process, in order to inform the development of adaptable toolkits/resource packs that can be scaled up and used in a variety of local and central government consultation and engagement processes.
- A resource guide, *A Guide for Inclusive Community Engagement in Local Planning and Decision Making*, was launched on 2 February 2023, with a revised version

launched on 25 October 2023 based on feedback from training participants and learnings from the pilot projects.

- Community Work Ireland was engaged to deliver training workshops on inclusive community engagement, based on the guide, to local authorities and other relevant local stakeholders. Fifteen in-person workshops were held across Ireland. These workshops were intended for Chief Officers and members of the LCDCs, as well as local authority staff, LDCs, public participation networks (PPNs) and education and training boards (ETBs) involved in local consultation processes. Associated training was held in the areas of public sector duty, intercultural awareness and engagement strategies.

Most recently, skills-based training on facilitation skills, including creative facilitation, was delivered to local authority staff who deal with marginalised communities. Five in-person workshops were delivered on the topic “Approaches and skills to facilitate inclusive community engagement in planning and decision making”. A total of 79 staff from 16 local authorities participated in this training, which included follow-up online workshops.

A community of practice has also been established to allow the training participants to continue to share learnings in the future. A series of training videos on engagement with marginalised communities, which will work in tandem with the guide, are currently being finalised and will be released early in 2024. The DRCD hosted a number of thematic webinars in 2022 to support the LCDCs in the LECP process. Included in these thematic webinars were inputs on the Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty and the LECP. These webinars were recorded and are available on gov.ie as a resource for local authorities.

The DRCD with the support of Pobal has completed the implementation of the Participation of Marginalised Communities in Local Decision-Making Structures (DAF Measure) in 2023. This project aimed to build capacity, as well as provide resources and toolkits to support the engagement of marginalised communities in consultation and decision-making processes at local level.

Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science

The DFHERIS Learning and Development (L&D) Unit is awaiting the publication of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) strategy to finalise its approach to EDI training for the DFHERIS. In addition to driving uptake of the OneLearning courses on equality and human rights (“Equality and Human Rights in the Public Service”; “Equality and Human Rights: Understanding Your Role”; and “Managing for an Inclusive Workforce”), the L&D Unit will finalise its plan for EDI education. The plan will address cultural competency and unconscious bias training, as requested in the NAPAR.

- Continue to raise awareness of EDI topics in Education and in the workplace by promoting participation in OneLearning webinars, and Tea & Talk workshops (e.g. “Dignity and Respect in the Workplace”; “Onboarding Staff With a Disability”; “Inclusive Consultation”)

- Continue to deliver unconscious bias training when colleagues are involved in interview boards as required
- Identify whether further training is required for customer-facing units (e.g. HR, customer service, EDI and Access unit) and deliver such training
- Review DFHERIS's induction programme and material to encourage staff with disabilities to be forthcoming so they may have access to reasonable accommodation supported by the L&D unit, and
- Examine the feasibility of delivering lectures on post-secondary education in Ireland, including issues in relation to access to and completion of post-secondary education for students from under-represented groups as well as students from overseas. There is also an Irish Language Sign training course in the pipeline for September 2024.

Department of Social Protection

The DSP's customer service training incorporates information on unconscious bias and equality and human rights legislation. The training recommends that learners take the "Equality and Human Rights in the Public Service" e-learning module provided by the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission. In 2023, 747 staff completed customer service training, and 643 staff completed the "Equality and Human Rights in the Public Service" e-learning module.

Looking specifically at staff working in employment services, the accredited professional education programme for DSP Employment Personal Advisers/Job Coaches, Level 7 Certificate in PES Provision, contains a dedicated academic unit in ethics, equality and diversity. In 2023, approximately 450 employment services staff attended the "Equality and Human Rights in the Public Service" training course.

Across the DSP's Relations Division, there are six Employer Relations Officers designated for outreach and engagement related to EDI. These EDI-focused officers cover different regions of Ireland and fulfil several functions. As follows:

- Building relationships with representative and advocacy groups across the country
- Promoting DSP schemes and services that support disadvantaged groups directly to employers, and
- Organising information sessions and recruitment events that put employers in contact with advocacy groups and jobseekers.

The DSP's EDI team will continue to promote anti-racism and cultural awareness education for staff, using existing channels such as OneLearning, staff presentations, webinars and the DSP's intranet site.

The DSP will develop targeted learning modules to address critical areas such as the relevant legal frameworks, cultural competency and unconscious bias. When developing new learning modules, the DSP will strive to represent the diverse society in which we live.

Human rights training, including anti-racism education, will be an integral part of the induction process, ensuring that all staff receive essential training in these key areas. As part of the induction programme, it is recommended that all new recruits to the DSP complete the “Equality and Human Rights in the Public Service” e-learning module.

A best practice guideline and toolkit for content creators and trainers will ensure that all in-house courses align with the obligations outlined in Section 42 of the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act 2014.

Central Statistics Office

The CSO has mandatory unconscious bias training for all selection board members involved in CSO recruitment competitions. The CSO requires all staff to complete the following training modules, located on the OneLearning platform:

- “Disability Awareness Training” (incorporates elements of unconscious bias)
- “Equality and Human Rights in the Public Service” e-learning module, and
- CSO’s SMART Start Induction for all new entrants includes details on dignity at work as well as supports for staff and Employee Assistance Officers present on EAO Role/Service.

The CSO is planning to put unconscious bias and anti-racism training on its training programme for 2024/5.

Department of Justice

The Department of Justice is fully committed to fulfilling its commitments as outlined in the NAPAR, as well as its responsibilities to promote equality; prevent discrimination; and protect the human rights of its staff, the people it serves and everyone affected by its policies and plans, as per Section 42 of the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act 2014. In 2020, the Department of Justice established an EDI and Public Sector Duty Committee with senior representation from across the organisation. The Committee produced an EDI strategy which provides a clear and accessible framework for the Department of Justice to fulfil its obligations and ambitions related to the Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty.

The EDI strategy highlights the need to embed EDI-related training into ongoing training programmes at all stages of an employee’s career. Staff are reminded that the protection and promotion of equality and human rights is core to the work of civil servants, and they are encouraged to complete an e-learning module, “Equality and Human Rights in the Public Service”, which supports staff within public bodies to understand and meet their obligations under the Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty. Training on a range of EDI-related areas such as disability awareness, intercultural relations and managing inclusivity has been rolled out and embedded in ongoing training programmes, including induction sessions for all newly appointed or promoted colleagues. All Department of Justice staff also have access to e-learning training on the ‘Just a Minute of Patience’ or JAM Card, which enables people with

a hidden disability or communication barrier to communicate in a discreet and easy way that they need extra time and understanding.

The Department of Justice has also delivered cultural competence training to a number of staff in critical front-facing roles, including the International Protection Office and the Border Management Unit at Dublin Airport. The Department of Justice aims to ensure that cultural competence training is delivered more widely in the coming months.

Action 5.6

Action 5.6 Target: 2024	National research funding programmes to prioritise research that includes objectives on racial equality and racist extremism.
Implementing bodies	Department of Public Expenditure, NDP Delivery and Reform; Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science; Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth; Irish Research Council; Science Foundation Ireland; Health Research Board

2023–2024 update

Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science

A review will be considered by the Research and Innovation Policy Advisory Forum once it is established. This is expected to be established in late 2024.

Table of NAPAR Actions

The table below lists all Actions in the NAPAR, and the public bodies that were identified as responsible for implementing each action.

Monitoring, oversight and review

Monitoring, oversight and review	<p>Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth</p> <p>The Minister for Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth will appoint an independent Special Rapporteur on Racial Equality and Racism.</p>
Monitoring, oversight and review	<p>Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth</p> <p>The Minister for Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth will appoint an advisory committee on Racial Equality and Racism; this committee will be chaired by the Special Rapporteur.</p>
Monitoring, oversight and review	<p>Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth</p> <p>The Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth will establish a Co-ordination Committee, with representatives from all relevant Government Departments and local authorities, to co-ordinate activity under the NAPAR and advise on implementation.</p>
Monitoring, oversight and review	<p>Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth</p> <p>The Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth, working in consultation with the Co-ordination Committee, will prepare a twice-yearly implementation report capturing the implementation status of each action under the NAPAR, which will be made to the Minister for Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth and to the Special Rapporteur on Racial Equality and Racism.</p>

1. Being safe and being heard

<p>Action 1.1</p> <p>Target: 2027</p>	<p>Department of Justice; An Garda Síochána; Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth; Department of Rural and Community Development; local authorities; community and voluntary organisations</p> <p>Put in place new mechanisms to facilitate third-party and online reporting of racist incidents. This will include the development of a standard civil society national framework to monitor and respond appropriately to racist incidents and hate crimes.</p>
<p>Action 1.2</p> <p>Target: 2024</p>	<p>An Garda Síochána</p> <p>Introduce and publicise safeguards so that all victims of and witnesses to racist incidents and crimes can feel safe in reporting to An Garda Síochána, irrespective of their immigration status.</p>
<p>Action 1.3</p> <p>Target: 2024</p>	<p>An Garda Síochána</p> <p>Establish a specialist unit within each Garda Division for the purpose of developing and disseminating expertise and best practice in dealing with hate crime and racist incidents.</p>
<p>Action 1.4</p> <p>Target: 2027</p>	<p>Department of Justice, Legal Aid Board</p> <p>Improve access to legal advice and representation for groups experiencing racism. This will include creating links between community organisations and Legal Aid Board Law Centres; extending the remit of the Legal Aid Board to provide legal representation; and giving advocacy organisations standing to initiate proceedings on behalf of those affected by racism.</p>
<p>Action 1.5</p> <p>Target: 2025</p>	<p>An Garda Síochána</p> <p>Identify and eliminate any policing practices that target specific groups experiencing racism, including through racial or ethnic profiling. Measures to carry out this action, including training for An Garda Síochána, will need to ensure sensitivity to victims of human trafficking.</p>

<p>Action 1.6</p> <p>Target: 2024</p>	<p>Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth</p> <p>Department of Justice</p> <p>Develop and strengthen mechanisms to address harms caused to individuals by racist actions.</p>

2. Being equal

<p>Action 2.1</p> <p>Target: 2027</p>	<p>Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth; Public Appointments Service</p> <p>Introduce measures to combat racism in employment. This will include specific measures for sectors and workplaces where minority ethnic groups are under-represented, as well as for sectors and workplaces where they are over-represented. Expand access for people from minority ethnic groups to management and senior executive positions.</p>
<p>Action 2.2</p> <p>Target: 2027</p>	<p>Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science; Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI)</p> <p>Introduce timely, accessible and transparent mechanisms by which qualifications earned outside of Ireland can be recognised for use in Ireland.</p>
<p>Action 2.3</p> <p>Target: 2024</p>	<p>Department of Social Protection; Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science</p> <p>Develop and adopt a training, expertise and employment strategy to increase the employment of groups experiencing racism.</p>

National Action Plan Against Racism - First Implementation Report for 2023/2024

<p>Action 2.4</p> <p>Target: 2027</p>	<p>Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth; Department of Education; Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science</p> <p>Introduce measures to address ethnic differentials in education and achieve equality of enrolment, retention, attendance, progression and outcomes for groups experiencing racism. This will include actions to address the recognised differentials for the education of minorities caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and its outcomes.</p>
<p>Action 2.5</p> <p>Target: 2025</p>	<p>Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth; Department of Education; Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science</p> <p>Take steps to strengthen inclusion and anti-racism at all levels of the education system, including through addressing any bias embedded in the curriculum, and to support approaches that are fully intersectional and intercultural.</p>
<p>Action 2.6</p> <p>Target: 2024</p>	<p>Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth; Department of Health; Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science; Irish Research Council; Science Foundation Ireland; Health Research Board</p> <p>Include specific measures to target minority ethnic researchers in all national research funding programmes.</p>
<p>Action 2.7</p> <p>Target: 2027</p>	<p>Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage; local authorities</p> <p>Introduce special measures for groups experiencing racism who are most at risk of homelessness or who are unable to access appropriate housing or accommodation.</p>
<p>Action 2.8</p> <p>Target: 2025</p>	<p>Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage; local authorities</p> <p>Address discrimination against racialised groups in accessing the private rental sector, including differentials in access to and acceptance of the</p>

National Action Plan Against Racism - First Implementation Report for 2023/2024

	Housing Assistance Payment (HAP), which can impact on minority ethnic groups accessing accommodation.
Action 2.9 Target: 2025	Department of Health; Health Service Executive Put in place measures to address ethnic differentials in health and mental health outcomes, acknowledging the social determinants of health. This will include culturally appropriate targeted measures in mainstream services and reinforcement of autonomous peer-led targeted initiatives.
Action 2.10 Target: 2025	Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth; Tusla – Child and Family Agency Make changes to oversight mechanisms with the aim of ensuring that child and family services are provided in a non-biased and culturally sensitive manner, and establish an advisory group where service users of child welfare organisations who have experience of racism can share their lived experiences to inform future practice improvements.
Action 2.11 Target: 2025	Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth; National Youth Council of Ireland Take measures to ensure the inclusion of minority ethnic young people in mainstream youth work and other State-funded youth initiatives, reinforce support for targeted minority ethnic group youth initiatives, and resource initiatives aimed at empowering young people to understand and challenge racism.
Action 2.12 Target: 2027	Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media; Sport Ireland; the Arts Council Establish the position of racial equality officer in all arts, culture and sport funding bodies. This role will include working with funding recipients to support local, collaborative anti-racism programmes across the arts, culture and sports sectors.

Action 2.13 Target: 2024	<p>Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media; Sport Ireland; the Arts Council</p> <p>Take steps to increase the participation of minority ethnic groups in arts, culture and sports activities and establish information-sharing and peer-networking channels for young athletes and artists from racialised backgrounds to enable them to develop their careers.</p>
Action 2.14 Target: 2023	<p>Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth</p> <p>Provide funding for national and local initiatives that aim to combat racism and foster racial equality and community cohesion, in order to support the implementation of this plan and the achievement of its objectives.</p>
Action 2.15 Target: 2027	<p>Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth; Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science; Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI); all public authorities</p> <p>Professionalise and regulate interpreting services used by public bodies, including through the development of a system of accreditation and training, and address barriers faced by groups experiencing racism in accessing these careers.</p>

3. Being seen and taking part

Action 3.1 Target: 2024	<p>Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media; Coimisiún na Meán</p> <p>Consider ethnic and racial equality and diversity in all media programming and make this a criterion for funding.</p>
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National Action Plan Against Racism - First Implementation Report for 2023/2024

<p>Action 3.2</p> <p>Target: 2025</p>	<p>Coimisiún na Meán</p> <p>Develop a code of ethics for media practices in order to address the representation in media of minority ethnic and racialised communities and make adherence to the code a condition for public funding of media.</p>
<p>Action 3.3</p> <p>Target: 2024</p>	<p>Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media; Coimisiún na Meán</p> <p>Take steps to ensure that measures to eliminate the dissemination of hate speech online are effective and appropriate to the local context in Ireland.</p>
<p>Action 3.4</p> <p>Target: 2024</p>	<p>Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media; Coimisiún na Meán</p> <p>Develop pathways for media training for members of communities experiencing racism, and encourage and support ethnic minority media professionals.</p>
<p>Action 3.5</p> <p>Target: 2024</p>	<p>Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth; Department of Rural and Community Development; local authorities</p> <p>Support community development projects and initiatives that work with minority ethnic communities to address racism, promote inclusion and ensure that they have a say in the decisions that affect their lives.</p>
<p>Action 3.6</p> <p>Target: 2025</p>	<p>Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage; local authorities</p> <p>Establish public office mentoring programmes for members of minority ethnic communities and introduce positive measures to support the selection of minority ethnic candidates, based on the model in use to increase the numbers of women in politics.</p>

4. Being counted

<p>Action 4.1</p> <p>Target: 2024</p>	<p>Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth; Central Statistics Office; Department of Public Expenditure, NDP Delivery and Reform; Data Protection Commission</p> <p>Determine data sources that can be used to monitor racial equality according to the outcome indicators set out in the Monitoring section of the NAPAR.</p>
<p>Action 4.2</p> <p>Target: 2025</p>	<p>Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth; Central Statistics Office; Department of Public Expenditure, NDP Delivery and Reform; Data Protection Commission</p> <p>Create legal safeguards for the collection of ethnicity data by recognising ethnic equality monitoring as a legitimate basis for gathering special category data.</p>
<p>Action 4.3</p> <p>Target: 2025</p>	<p>Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth; Central Statistics Office; Department of Public Expenditure, NDP Delivery and Reform</p> <p>Introduce a standardised ethnic classification (based on the Census) across all routine administrative systems, State agencies and surveys in line with human rights standards, in order to enable ethnic equality proofing and monitoring of State policies, budgets and programming. This will be supported by the development and use of standard ethnic equality data monitoring tools and guidelines, and will link with the forthcoming National Equality Data Strategy.</p>
<p>Action 4.4</p> <p>Target: 2025</p>	<p>Central Statistics Office</p> <p>Carry out a comparison of Census 2016 and Census 2022 to provide data to inform action on the intersectionalities of ethnicity and other protected characteristics.</p>

5. Being together

<p>Action 5.1 Target: 2024</p>	<p>Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth; Department of Rural and Community Development</p> <p>Include objectives and actions to address racism, including systemic racism, in all relevant public policy programmes, publicly funded community and voluntary sector programmes, and private sector State-commissioned and resourced services</p>
<p>Action 5.2 Target: 2027</p>	<p>All government aegis</p> <p>Carry out reviews of existing and proposed legislation that impacts on minority ethnic groups, in order to determine the extent to which it supports the achievement of the objectives of the NAPAR, and where necessary to propose changes.</p>
<p>Action 5.3 Target: 2023</p>	<p>Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth</p> <p>Carry out a public education and awareness raising programme in support of the objectives of the NAPAR.</p>
<p>Action 5.4 Target: 2025</p>	<p>Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment; Irish Congress of Trade Unions; Irish Business and Employers Confederation</p> <p>Introduce a workers' and employers' guide for combating racism and promoting racial equality in the workplace across all sectors, with an associated awareness campaign.</p>
<p>Action 5.5 Target: 2027</p>	<p>Department of Public Enterprise, NDP Delivery and Reform; all public sector employees</p> <p>Introduce mandatory and continuing anti-racism education, including cultural competency and unconscious bias training for all staff at all levels throughout the public sector, as part of the fulfilment of the Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty.</p>

Action 5.6 Target: 2024	Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth; Department of Public Expenditure, NDP Delivery and Reform; Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science National research funding programmes to prioritise research that includes objectives on racial equality and racist extremism.