

Donegal ETB:

Implementing the Public
Sector Equality and Human
Rights Duty


**Assessment of Equality
and Human Rights Issues
and Evidence Book**



etb

Bord Oideachais agus
Oiliúna Dhún na nGall
*Donegal Education and
Training Board*

Donegal Education and Training Board (Donegal ETB) acknowledges the support of Values Lab towards implementation of the Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty (the Duty) in respect of Donegal ETB.

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Introduction

1

Donegal ETB has undertaken this assessment of equality and human rights issues in compliance with S42 of the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act 2014: the public sector equality and human rights duty (the Duty)¹.

The Duty requires public bodies to have regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, promote equality of opportunity, and protect human rights for employees, service users, and policy beneficiaries, across all their function areas. In undertaking this assessment, Donegal ETB has ensured alignment with guidance issued by the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission².

The Duty requires a public body to prepare and publish an assessment of the equality and human rights issues, facing the identified groups under the Duty, that are relevant to the functions of the public body. This assessment provides the basis for implementing both the overarching Duty under Section 42(1) and the strategic Duty under Section 42(2) of the Act.

This assessment is not an assessment of the performance of Donegal ETB in regard to equality and human rights.

The equality and human rights issues identified include issues where: actions are already being taken; where planning is underway to address the issue; and the issues are newly identified and need to be addressed.

The assessment of equality and human rights issues involves an examination of the situation, experience, and identity of the identified groups for the Duty, to establish the key equality and human rights issues that these groups face and that are relevant to the functions of Donegal ETB, where:

- **Situation** of the group in terms of their access to resources and any particular disadvantage they experience.
- **Experience** of the group in terms of the quality of their interaction with employers and service providers and the wider society.
- **Identity** of the group in terms of how they chose to give expression to their identity and the specific needs that arise from their identity.

1. [Section 42](#), Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act 2014.

2. Implementing the Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty, Guidance for Public Bodies – Second Edition, Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission, 2024.

Introduction cont.

The identified groups for the Duty are:

- groups covered by the nine protected grounds under equality legislation: gender (including transgender people and people transitioning to their true gender); civil status; family status (including lone parents and carers); age; disability; sexual orientation; race (encompassing race, skin colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins); religion (any or no religious belief); and membership of the Traveller community;
- groups covered by the ground of socio-economic status, who are at risk of or experiencing poverty and social exclusion, including working class people, people experiencing rural disadvantage, and ex-offenders; and
- individual rights holders under the relevant human rights instruments.

The identified groups include those at the intersections of these grounds³. It is also important to note that the groups covered are broadly defined in the equality legislation, in particular the race ground (in including refugees and asylum seekers) and the disability ground (in encompassing physical, intellectual, learning, cognitive, emotional and medical conditions)

The functions of Donegal ETB encompass provision of education, training and guidance; provision and funding of youth services; cultural function of promoting the Irish language, culture and tradition; cooperate with and engage with parents and communities; employment; and procurement, grant making, and establishment and maintenance of buildings.

Donegal ETB has identified and defined five values that motivate our ambitions for equality and human rights in implementing the Duty. These are the values of: respect, voice, choice, inclusion, and participation. These values are used as a framework to set out our assessment of the equality and human rights issues relevant to our functions.

3. An intersectional approach reflects the diversity within groups, respecting that people belong to more than one of these groups and hold intersecting identities that need to be taken into account.

Assessment of Equality and Human Rights Issues

- 2.1 Respect
- 2.2 Voice
- 2.3 Choice
- 2.4 Inclusion
- 2.5 Participation

2

Addressing the equality and human rights issues identified below reflects a commitment to respond to the specific oppressions involved in structural racism, classism, ableism, homophobia, transphobia, sectarianism, sexism, and ageism.

The equality and human rights issues identified below relate to all the identified groups unless otherwise indicated. In some instances, specific examples are given for particular groups where there is a unique experience for that group in regard to the issue(s) or where that group experience significant/persistent inequality/discrimination/human rights violations in regard to the issue(s).

Respect



Respect is about dignity, care, empathy, and appreciation of others. It involves treating people fairly and as equals and creating relationships of trust.

The equality and human rights issues to be addressed in implementing the Duty, related to this value and relevant to the functions of Donegal ETB, are:

Discrimination, both by individual behaviours and through institutional systems, including:

- at work, in work, in services provided, and in education and training provision
- pregnancy related discrimination
- discrimination against those transitioning their identity at work

Segregation, including:

- of Black and minority ethnic people including Travellers, in the education and training system
- congregated settings for people with disabilities
- practices and procedures in educational settings that lead to segregation or forms of segregation
- of women in the labour market and in education and training in relation to subject and professional choices

Disrespect, abuse, harassment, and sexual harassment, including:

- at work, in work, in services provided, and in education and training provision

Respect cont.

Stereotypes, preconceived perceptions, unconscious bias, and false assumptions, including:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">— use of language, imagery and materials that diminish or misrepresent diversity— problematising communities on the basis of the discrimination and exclusion they are subject to
Having to hide one's identity for fear of discrimination and harassment, and due to unwelcoming environments, including:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">— for Travellers, LGBTI+, and people with disabilities
Violation of privacy or confidentiality.	
Lack of provision of training on the concepts of equality and human rights, and in relation to eliminating discrimination, harassment, and stereotyping.	
Inadequate policies and systems to respond to issues of discrimination, harassment, and sexual harassment when complaints are raised, with high levels of under-reporting.	



Voice is about representation, empowerment, and influence. It involves listening to people, people having a say and being heard, and partnerships with diverse communities.

The equality and human rights issues to be addressed in implementing the Duty, related to this value and relevant to the functions of Donegal ETB, are:

Lack of voice in or presence on decision-making structures, and inadequate and inappropriate processes through which to secure such voice or presence.

Lack of consultation or dialogue, and lack of adequate and appropriate channels for consultation and forms of dialogue.

Lack of supports for those on such structures that might be required to be effective.

Limited structures and opportunities for the voice to be heard.

Limited presence in senior and decision-making positions.

Lack of knowledge as to how the system works and decisions are made.

Choice



Choice is about individual autonomy and the opportunity to progress and realise one's full potential. It involves the provision of a range of options, having access to meaningful choices, being informed about options, and taking responsibility for the choices one makes.

The equality and human rights issues to be addressed in implementing the Duty, related to this value and relevant to the functions of Donegal ETB, are:

Narrow range of options provided for, and limited or ineffective pathways to progress to different levels in areas such as education, training and in the workplace.

Barriers to having and making real choices including due to:

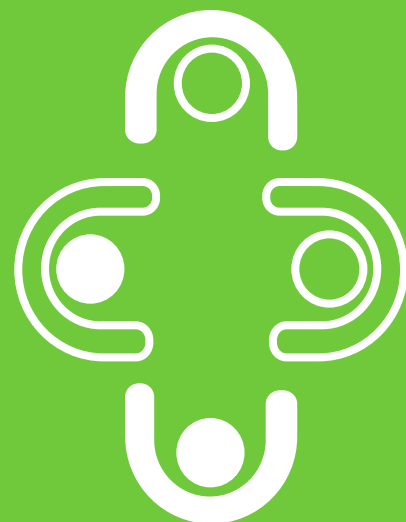
- lack of financial means and disadvantage in relation to such as health status, education status, and accommodation status
- caring responsibilities, including for young people as carers
- inadequate provision of information, and for awareness, including in particular for older people, and for people with disabilities specifically about assisted decision making

Choice cont.

Discouragement from accessing and pursuing outcomes from services, including:

- lack of successful role models
- experiences of discrimination and exclusion, harassment and fear for one's safety
- stereotypes, including in particular gender stereotypes, influencing choices made
- intergenerational disadvantage, in particular educational
- caring responsibilities, unequal sharing of care responsibilities, and lack of supports for caring responsibilities
- low expectations held of members of specific groups, sometimes involving to misdirection in choice making
- low levels of self-esteem and confidence, and internalised oppression, sometimes leading to self-selection out of opportunities

Inclusion



Inclusion is about recognising and embracing diversity, and understanding and catering for difference. It involves organisational change, addressing barriers (physical, attitudinal, systemic), investing resources in this, and ensuring accessibility.

The equality and human rights issues to be addressed in implementing the Duty, related to this value and relevant to the functions of Donegal ETB, are:

Lack of provision for specific needs, including in relation to:

- gender-neutral facilities
- language diversity, including Irish language and Irish sign language
- options for gradual and flexible retirement at work
- curricula, both formal and non-formal, and extra-curricular events that do not reflect or address diversity
- organisational spaces or environment that do not give visibility to diversity
- accessible and affordable care infrastructure including childcare

Inclusion cont.

Inflexible systems and processes that are not tailored to specific needs and present barriers, including:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">— failure to recognise, adapt for, and resource cultural difference— failure to support those with caring responsibilities to combine paid work and caring, including through flexible working arrangements and access to paid leave— lack of reasonable accommodation for people with disabilities in service provision and in the workplace, including flexible working arrangements, modification of work tasks, and provision of necessary technical aids— organisational policies that do not reflect or address diversity— communication processes and materials that do not reflect or address diversity
Lack of universal design, including:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">— buildings, transport, facilities, IT systems, and organisational systems that are not accessible for people with disabilities— public spaces that are not age friendly or that are not accessible to people with disabilities
Lack of equality data to monitor and review diversity and inadequate capacity for the implementation of equality data systems.	
Lack of capacity to respond effectively to diversity and the specific needs that arise due to diversity, including:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">— limited understanding of and knowledge about different groups and their specific needs— lack of training provision on diversity and responding effectively to diversity
Lack of recognition for, understanding of, and response to the specific needs, situations and experiences of those at the intersections between the different groups.	

Participation



Participation is about people having chances and improving their situation along a spectrum of possibilities. It involves establishing pathways that enable people to progress their ambitions and achieve outcomes.

The equality and human rights issues to be addressed in implementing the Duty, related to this value and relevant to the functions of Donegal ETB, are:

Educational disadvantage in terms of participation and outcomes, including:

- early school leaving and unequal educational outcomes for Travellers, Roma, people with disabilities, older people, and LGBTI+ people
- literacy, numeracy and digital literacy barriers
- cost barriers, including travel and accommodation
- lack of pathways to and lack of access to higher education opportunities that are appropriate to skill sets and capacity

Unemployment and underemployment, including:

- for Travellers, Roma, young people, and people with disabilities
- lack of recognition of qualifications obtained outside Ireland and subsequent underemployment and over-qualification for some Black and minority ethnic people
- lack of adequate and appropriate pathways from education to employment

Participation cont.

Poverty and low income, including:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">— for Travellers, Roma, people with disabilities, and people living in Direct Provision— failure to address the additional cost of disability— low living standards for those in jobless households, renters, lone parents, and households with a person with a disability— prevalence of groups in low paid work including in particular women and people with disabilities— gender pay gap for women
Mental health issues along with lack of provision for these, including:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">— for Travellers and LGBTI+ people
Digital exclusion, including:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">— poor availability and quality of broadband, lack of skills, and lack of equipment— for Travellers, older people, people on low incomes
Inadequate transport acting as a barrier to accessing services	

Evidence Book

3

This assessment of equality and human rights is evidence-based in drawing from:

- 3.1 Local Research and Data
- 3.2 National Policy Strategies
- 3.3 National research
- 3.4 International and national submissions

Local Research and Data



The CYPSC Socio-Demographic Profile of County Donegal (data from 2016), identifies issues of situation in relation to the diversity of the population in County Donegal.

In relation to situation:

- There are 53,449 children and young people aged 0 to 24 years in County Donegal.
- Inishowen has a particularly young population with the proportion within the 0-14 years cohort with 9,711 young people in this category (23.95%) exceeding that of both the County and the State, 29.94% of the population is 18 years and under.

Local Research cont.

In relation to situation (cont):

- Five percent of the population (7,459) were born outside of the island of Ireland or the United Kingdom and the top three countries were Poland (1,858 persons), United States (976 persons) and India (517 persons). The top five growing communities were Indian, Pakistani, Romanian, Croatian and Afghanistan. There are between 250 – 350 Traveller families living in Donegal. There are between 40 – 50 Roma families living in Donegal. Under the Refugee Resettlement Programme, 39 families have resettled in Donegal. This number comprises of 199 individuals (88 adults and 111 children). Thirty-seven families are Syrian (all speak Arabic).
- Census 2016 reveals that there were 22,955 people with a physical/intellectual disability in County Donegal of which 16% or 3,777 were children or young people aged 0-24 years, while 20% of all males with a disability and 13% of all females with a disability in Donegal were aged 0-24 years. There were 250 more children and young people with a disability in 2016 than in 2011. In 2020 the Autism Service, identified 694 children aged 6-18 years who had a confirmed diagnosis of ASD.
- In 2016, 12.2% of households in Donegal or 7,120 households were headed by 'one parent' and the vast majority, 86% or 6,122, were one parent mothers.
- The number and rate of children who provide regular unpaid personal help to a family member or friend with a long-term illness, health problem or disability in County Donegal continues to be higher at 4.5% than in the State at 4.1%.

Local Research cont.

In relation to situation (cont):

- Donegal's Gaeltacht is located mainly in the west of the county and experienced a population decrease of -5.6% over the period 2011-2016. There are 15,879 Irish speakers, aged 3 years and over, in Donegal's Gaeltacht (decline of 743 persons). 131 young people from 0 – 18 years living on the islands of Thoraí and Árainn Mhór.
- In Donegal, there were 124,150 people aged 15 years and over in 2016, of which 104,708 had finished their full-time education and 19,422 had not. Additionally, 22% of our population (21,333), who have finished their full-time education, left with no formal or primary education compared to 13% in the State and these figures are higher for males at 24.9% than females at 19%.
- According to Census 2016, Donegal has a lower rate of participation in the labour force at 57.3% than the State at 61.4% with 18% of Donegal's labour force is unemployed or first-time job seekers significantly higher than the State at 12.9%. Of the 12,829 people who were unemployed or first-time job seekers, 1,931 people were under 25 years and 10,898 people 25 years and over. Moreover 32.6% of the labour force aged 15–24 years were unemployed or first-time job seekers, compared to 18.2% aged 25–34 years along with 13.9% aged 35–44 years, 15.7% aged 45–54 years and 22.6% aged 55–64 years. The unemployment rates for males were higher in all of these age categories than for females.

Local Research cont.

In relation to situation (cont):

- In 2015 disposable income (€15,705 per person) was lowest in Donegal at 77.2% of the national average of €20,334. In 2016, Donegal, at -6.4, had the lowest Relative HP Deprivation score in Ireland, compared to the overall state score which was 0.635. In 2016 Donegal had the highest proportion of households at 18.5%, where the state pension was the majority of income. The median gross income per household was €45,256 and households with the lowest incomes were in Donegal (€32,259).
- In 2019, 346 households with children qualified for social housing support. In 13% of households qualifying for social housing support, the main applicant was under 25 years old. This compares to 8% under 25 years old in the State.

In 2022, Donegal Local Development Company data indicates there were 4,500 Ukrainian refugees officially living in County Donegal. As of 22 December 2022, Department of Education data indicates 752 Ukrainian pupils enrolled in primary schools, and 405 in post primary schools in Donegal.

Local Research cont.

The Local Economic and Community Plan: Appendix 2: Participation, Policy Context Review; Key Funding Programmes identifies issues of situation in relation to the socio-economic status ground.

In relation to situation:

- Lack of employment and high youth unemployment.
- Limited number of existing employers and therefore, levels of employment are vulnerable.
- There is an identified need to improve access to services and tailoring access to services around individual needs.
- Barriers to accessing services are as a result of limitations in transportation, limitations of broadband availability and effect of digital exclusion, and language barriers.
- Lack of adequate rural transport.
- Weak availability and quality of broadband .
- Lack of consistent funding stream in respect of community and voluntary sector
- Reliance on community and voluntary sector especially volunteers, to reach marginally excluded groups. There is a threat due to the importance of and reliance on community groups and volunteers in the delivery of services and programmes.

Local Research cont.

Research by David Friel (2022) Our Lives, Our Voices, Our Future: Traveller Men identifies issues of situation, experience and identity in relation to Travellers and to Traveller men living in Donegal.

In relation to situation:

- 2012 statistics show that only 13% of Traveller children complete second-level education compared to 92% of the general public (Economic and Social Research Institute, 2012). Seven out of ten children live in a family where parents have no formal education (Department of Children and Youth Affairs, 2014). Additionally, only 1% of the Traveller community has attained a third-level qualification (Department of Children and Youth Affairs, 2020).
- Today, 80.2% of Travellers are unemployed despite the national unemployment rate in 2018 being at its lowest since 2007 at 5.1% (St Stephen's Green Trust 2019). Travellers' high unemployment rate is due to factors such as poor health, low educational attainment, discrimination, government policies and programmatic issues (see St Stephen's Green Trust 2019).
- A recent report documented the high poverty levels among Travellers with 31% of households, 28% with children, living in acute poverty. One in ten Traveller families also reported going to bed hungry (European Agency for Fundamental Rights 2020c).

Local Research cont.

In relation to situation (cont):

- Watson et al. (2017) found that Travellers represented 9% of the homeless figures despite the community only constituting less than 1% of the total population (Watson et al. 2017). However, recent analysis by Pavee Point (2021) found that 39% of Travellers are experiencing homelessness in comparison to 6% of the general population.
- Traveller men are seven times more likely to complete suicide than the general population, with its prevalence most common in the 15-25 age demographic. Traveller suicide accounts for 11% of all Traveller deaths (AITHS, 2010). Additionally, 90% of Travellers agree that mental health problems are common in the community and 82% have been affected by suicide (O'Mahony, 2017).
- Traveller men in Donegal recognised that accommodation instability, homelessness, negative educational experiences, unemployment, poverty and poor physical health adversely affected their mental health and exacerbated pre-existing mental health diagnoses.

Local Research cont.

Research by David Friel (2022) Our Lives, Our Voices, Our Future: Traveller Men identifies issues of situation, experience and identity in relation to Travellers and to Traveller men living in Donegal.

In relation to experience:

- Recent research has cited discrimination against Travellers in Ireland as the worst in Europe, with 65% of the community facing widespread discrimination in housing, education, employment, health and so on (FRA, 2020, p.3).
- Traveller men in Donegal recognised that negative educational experiences impacted their mental health, with many instances of racism and segregation vividly described throughout the interviews.
- Traveller men in Donegal described how they consistently experienced a “double burden”, firstly as Traveller men and secondly as Traveller men with mental health challenges which they felt contributed to the nature of shame and stigma they faced. This double burden was then compounded by hegemonic masculinity and normative expectations of Traveller men both within and outside the community.

Local Research cont.

In relation to experience (cont):

- Traveller men reported negative experiences with their GPs and mental health services (both statutory and non-statutory) when seeking support in psychological distress, despite their reported higher usage of these healthcare services (AITHS, 2010). Most Traveller men reported having negative experiences of poor cultural competency, bias, lack of empathy or understanding and discrimination.

In relation to identity:

- However, nomadism in Ireland and wider Europe has become increasingly polarised in modernity with social, cultural, political and economic transformations rendering nomadic communities as 'uncivilised' societies in need of 'assimilation' into settled society (see Mac Laughlin, 1999; Ó hAodha, 2011). Multiple other factors have been attributed to the erosion of Traveller culture. One is the suppression of the language which has been historically subject to political turmoil in the decades of state denial of Traveller ethnicity as recognition of language would legitimise Travellers' right to ethnic status (see Rieder, 2018). The lack of provision for Traveller appropriate accommodation has also been identified as a threat to Traveller culture as living among the extended family and preserving cultural practices such as keeping horses is becoming no longer feasible (see Villani and Barry, 2021; Friel, 2021). Finally, the obliteration of the Traveller economy has significantly impacted Traveller culture and nomadism.

National Policy Strategies



The National Disability Inclusion Strategy 2017-2012 identifies or points to issues of situation, experience, and identity for disabled people.

With regard to situation:

- 31% of people with a disability are in paid employment compared with 71% of people without a disability being in employment.
- 42% of people with disabilities live in a jobless household putting them at high risk of poverty.
- People with disabilities have poorer educational participation and outcomes. 50% of people with a disability had not completed second level education compared to 22% of people without a disability.

National Policy Strategies cont.

With regard to experience:

- People with disabilities are more likely to live alone.
- People with disabilities live in congregated settings.
- Lack of information and awareness among people with disabilities about their options for supported decision making.
- Lack of training for staff working in sectors that interact with people with a disability.

With regard to identity:

- Access issues for people with disabilities in relation to public buildings, public transport, IT systems used in service provision, and outdoor facilities, absence of universal design of built environment.
- Lack of provision for Irish Sign Language users when accessing public services with free interpretation needed when accessing/availing of services.

National Policy Strategies cont.

The National Traveller and Roma Inclusion Strategy 2017-2021 of the Department of Justice and Equality identifies issues of situation, experience and identity in relation to Travellers.

In relation to situation:

- Travellers and Roma are among the most disadvantaged and marginalised people in Ireland.
- 84% of Travellers, according to a 2010 study were unemployed.
- 13% of Traveller children complete second level education compared to 92% in the settled community. Of those Travellers who drop out of second level education, 55% have left by the age of 15. The number of Traveller children who progress to third level education represents just 1% of the Traveller community.

National Policy Strategies cont.

In relation to experience:

- Over 40% of Travellers stated that they were not always treated with dignity and respect.
- Travellers don't value education as they don't believe they will get a job afterwards.
- Need for intercultural, anti-racist, and anti-bullying training for teachers and public sector staff.

In relation to identity:

- Need for recognition of distinct heritage, culture and identity of Traveller and Roma communities.
- Travellers believe the only way to get a job is to become a member of the settled community and therefore deny one's identity.

National Policy Strategies cont.

The 2013 report Positive Ageing – Starts Now, National Positive Ageing Strategy, identifies issues of situation, experience, and identity for older people.

In relation to situation:

- The share of adult learners (aged 40 years and over) in Ireland is one of the lowest in the EU at less than 0.5 %.
- The quality of older people's housing can be poorer than that of the general population.
- Older people are twice as likely to report a major problem with their dwelling.
- Lack of accessible, affordable, and flexible transport systems in both rural and urban areas makes it more difficult for older people to get out and about.
- A lack of access to transport and underdeveloped IT skills also constitutes a significant barrier to accessing information for some people as they age.

National Policy Strategies cont.

In relation to experience:

- 2.2 % of the study population experienced abuse or neglect in the last twelve months.
- Older people are often viewed as sick and disabled non-contributors to society and dependent on the welfare system.
- Elder abuse - may involve financial abuse, physical abuse, psychological abuse, sexual abuse or a combination of some or all of these.

In relation to identity:

- 75% of Irish people believe that they should be allowed to continue working past their official retirement age.
- Irish research has found that early retirement is common but often unplanned, due to illness and disability and due to a redundancy package or a pension that made early retirement affordable. This research also found a strong preference for gradual retirement. More flexible retirement options were also considered important.
- Requirement for the design and development of age friendly public spaces, transport and buildings.

National Research



The IHREC and ESRI (2017) report Who Experiences Discrimination in Ireland identifies issues of situation and experience across the identified groups.

In relation to situation:

- Discrimination in recruitment may mean certain groups are systematically assigned lower quality jobs or remain unemployed.
- Unfair treatment can have damaging effects on self-esteem, well-being and health.

National Research cont.

In relation to experience:

- In 2014, 12% of the population in Ireland reported experiencing some form of discrimination in the previous two years.
- Discrimination rates were highest in relation to seeking work (7%), followed by the workplace (5 %), private services (5 %), and public services (3%).
- Discrimination in public services has remained steady at between 3.1% and 3.4% over the study years.
- Women report higher discrimination in the workplace, though we find no gender differences in other areas.
- Older workers (45–64 years) perceive more discrimination than younger workers in seeking work, but in private services, older adults experience less discrimination, particularly those aged 65 years and over.
- Compared to White Irish respondents, Black respondents are three times more likely to experience discrimination in the workplace and in access to public services, and over four times more likely to experience discrimination in access to private services. Asian respondents report more discrimination than White Irish in private services.
- White non-Irish do not differ from White Irish respondents in reported discrimination in any domain: the workplace, seeking work, or in relation to public or private services.

National Research cont.

In relation to experience (cont):

- Travellers report very high rates of discrimination in seeking work, where they are ten times more likely than White Irish to experience discrimination, and extremely high rates of discrimination in private services, where they were over twenty-two times more likely to report discrimination, particularly in shops, pubs and restaurants. The number of Travellers among survey respondents was too low to examine workplace discrimination.
- Compared to Catholics, members of minority religions report somewhat higher discrimination rates in the workplace and in public and private services.
- Never-married lone parents are more likely to experience discrimination in public and private services than single childless adults.
- Persons with Disabilities are more than twice as likely as those without a disability to experience discrimination in all areas – in the workplace, while seeking work, in private services and public services.

National Research cont.

The IHREC and ESRI (2019) report Caring and Unpaid Work in Ireland identifies issues of situation, experience and identity in relation to Travellers.

In relation to situation:

- Ireland has the third highest rate of unpaid work for both women and men in Europe, and the gap between men and women, at 15 hours per week, places Ireland very far down the league table within the EU28 (in 2016).
- Supports for caring are comparatively low; combining paid work and caring remains challenging, and policies to encourage men to take on caring responsibilities are underdeveloped.

National Research cont.

In relation to experience:

- Over half of those carrying out unpaid care work are juggling these responsibilities with employment. Women are overrepresented in the cohort of employees who avail of reduced hours in order to facilitate care and unpaid work.
- Greater recognition of the importance of and need for 'Carer time', is needed in the organisation of employment through access to, for example, flexible work practices and greater access to paid leave schemes for men.

In relation to identity:

- Women are more likely than men to shoulder more responsibility for caring - 45% of women, 29% of men provide care on a daily basis.
- Gendered allocation of unpaid work is a key component to gender inequality in employment, pay, poverty and lifetime income.

National Research cont.

The GLEN and BeLonGTo (2016) report LGBTI+ Ireland report- national study of the mental health and wellbeing of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex people in Ireland identifies issues of situation, experience and identity in relation to LGBTI+ people.

In relation to situation:

- The study also highlights particular vulnerability among young LGBTI+ people, and reports rates of self-harm as two times higher, and attempted suicide as three times higher, compared to their non-LGBTI+ peers.
- A significant proportion of LGBTI+ people experience mental health difficulties. Across LGBTI+ groups between 12-35% of participants recorded scores indicating severe or extremely severe depression, anxiety, and stress.
- In relation to substance misuse, just over 40% of the participants' Audit scores indicated some level of alcohol problem. In terms of illegal drug-use, whilst 27% of the general population have reported using any illegal drugs in their lifetime (National Advisory Committee on Drugs 2011), just over half of the LGBTI+ Ireland study sample had taken drugs recreationally during their life (55.9%; n=1,095).

National Research cont.

In relation to experience:

- Findings indicated that being bullied in school because of LGBTI+ identity exerted a strong influence on the onset of mental health difficulties for young people.
- LGBTI+ people continue to experience incidents of victimisation, discrimination and harassment outside of school: 75.2% reported that over their lifetime they had experienced being verbally hurt, with approximately one fifth of participants having experienced physical attacks due to being LGBTI+.
- Research in the Irish context has invariably demonstrated that many LGBTI+ young people have negative experiences of school and are at greater risk of engaging in self-harming behaviour, experiencing mental health problems and low self-esteem, and leaving school early.
- Research has found a lack of action from school authorities when LGBTI+ pupils reported harassment, as well as low reporting of the harassment experienced.
- In terms of public attitudes, 15% of the sample thought that using LGBTI+ slang words 'isn't really a big deal', 13% did not think that making fun of a young person in school because they are LGBTI+ is harmful, and 28% of participants felt that bullying is a normal part of growing up and school life.

In relation to identity:

- Mayock et al.'s (2009) study found that the curriculum was virtually devoid of any LGBTI+ content (5-8% aware of LGBTI+ content) which rendered LGBTI+ people and issues invisible within the school setting.

National Research cont.

The BelongTo Youth Services and Teachers College in Columbia University (2019) report The 2019 School Climate Survey: the experience of lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans young people in Ireland's schools, identifies issues of situation, experience and identity in relation to LGBTI+ people.

In relation to situation:

- LGBTI+ students are slightly less likely to pursue third level education.
- LGBTI+ students are more likely to have missed school in the past month.
- LGBTI+ students are unlikely to report incidents to the school or family and are likely to feel school intervention is ineffective.
- 45% of LGBTI+ students reported that staff did not intervene if present when homophobic remarks were made.
- Although 88% of LGBTI+ students have an anti-bullying and harassment policy in their school, only 29% of students reported that the policy explicitly mentioned sexual orientation or gender identity and expression.

National Research cont.

In relation to experience:

- LGBTI+ students are victimized and discriminated against.
- 73% of LGBTI+ students feel unsafe at school
 - 47% because of their sexual orientation and
 - 27% because of their gender expression.
- 30% of LGBTI+ students have absented themselves at least one day from school due to feeling uncomfortable or unsafe.
- LGBTI+ students avoid certain spaces and activities due to safety concerns.
- 68% of LGBTI+ students have heard homophobic remarks from other students.
- 50% of LGBTI+ students have heard negative remarks about trans people.
- 55% of LGBTI+ students have heard transphobic remarks from a teacher/member of staff.
- LGBTI+ students are more likely to feel lonely, feel disliked, feel like an outsider and make less friends. LGBTI+ students are more likely to feel isolated, unsupported by friends, and excluded.
- 86% of LGBTI+ students feel deliberately excluded by peers.
- 77% of LGBTI+ students were verbally harassed. 38% were physically harassed. 11% were physically assaulted. 43% were sexually harassed. 39% experienced cyberbullying.

In relation to identity:

- 68% of LGBTI+ students were not taught anything positive about LGBTI+ identities in school.

National Research cont.

Banks J., Grotti R., Fahey E., and Watson D., Disability and Discrimination in Ireland: Evidence from the QNHS Equality Modules 2004, 2010, 2014, ESRI and IHREC, 2018 identifies issues of situation and experience in relation to people with disabilities.

In relation to situation:

- 2016 Census signals that educational attainment amongst people who have a disability is lower than the general population. For example, amongst those aged 15 to 50 years with a disability, 13.7% have completed no higher than primary level education, compared to 4.2% of the general population.
- Equally, participation in the labour market for people with disabilities remains lower than participation rates for the general population: for those aged 15 and over, 22% of people with a disability were at work compared with more than half (53%) of the overall population.
- People with disabilities are more likely to be in poverty and outside the labour force.
- People with disabilities are overrepresented among the homeless population.
- Controlling for a range of characteristics, people with a chronic illness or disability are more likely to have a lower hourly wage compared to those without a disability (Nolan, 2015).

National Research cont.

In relation to experience:

- On average, 15% of people with disabilities experience discrimination compared to 11% of those without a disability.
- People with disabilities experience discrimination in the workplace, while seeking work, in private and public services as well as in many different aspects of housing, including housing and environmental deprivation. When people with disabilities are looking for work, or in the workplace, the odds of experiencing work-related discrimination was twice as high compared to those without disabilities.
- People with disabilities are more likely to report that the discrimination they experience has serious or more serious effects on them compared to those who do not have a disability.
- Discrimination for people with disabilities is mostly experienced in the health services followed by the private sector (e.g. financial institutions, shops, pubs and restaurants).
- Discrimination in private services (such as pubs, shops, restaurants, financial institutions or housing) was also significantly more likely for people with disabilities compared to those without disabilities with the odds 65% higher overall.

National Research cont.

Watson, D., Banks, J., and Lyons, S. (May, 2015),
Educational and Employment Experiences of People with a Disability in Ireland: an analysis of the National Disability Survey **identifies issues of situation, experience and identity in relation to people with disability.**

In relation to situation:

- Children with disabilities are at risk of poorer academic outcomes leading to double disadvantage where economic prospects are reduced both by disability status and by lower levels of education.
- Just 30% of working-age people with a disability were affected by the disability while in education; 17% of them missed some time in school because of their disability and 15% left school sooner than they would have liked.
- Because disability can reduce the likelihood of staying in education, people who were already affected by a disability during their school years were less likely to complete second-level education than those whose disability emerged later.
- People whose disability emerges later in life are likely to face particular challenges in remaining in employment or finding suitable employment.

National Research cont.

In relation to situation cont:

- Existing research in Ireland and internationally has shown that people with a disability are less likely to participate in the labour market and when they do so, are more likely to be unemployed. When they are employed, people with a disability are more likely to be working part-time. 37% of unemployed people with disabilities would be interested in work if the circumstances were right.
- In 2011, the income poverty rate among people with a disability was 45%, compared to 13% of people without a disability.

In relation to experience:

- Research shows that children with disabilities and special educational needs face considerable barriers in engaging with their schoolwork and their peers in school and are more likely to dislike school.

In relation to identity:

- Unmet needs such as services, aids, working conditions and wage subsidies can be barriers to employment. There are a number of factors which would enable people with disability to gain employment including: flexible work arrangements, modified job tasks, a wage subsidy, accessibility, Human support, technical aids and communication aids.

National Research cont.

The Roantree, B., Barrett, M., and Redmond, P. (October, 2022) ESRI report Poverty, Income Inequality, and Living Standards in Ireland **identifies issues of situation in relation to the socio-economic status ground.**

In relation to situation:

- The incidence of low-living standards is particularly noticeable among certain sub-groups: renters, lone parents, those in households where someone has a disability, those in households where no one of working age is in paid work.
- Around 45% of lone parents and 55% of those where no one of working age is in paid work were below the after housing costs (AHC) income poverty line in 2021.
- 55% of households where no one of working age is in employment were below the income poverty line in 2021.
- There is a sizeable group who report being materially deprived but who are not classified as being at risk of poverty. Of these, many lived in a household where someone reported having a disability. Given the significant extra costs of living incurred by households affected by disability, this raises questions about whether the official measure of poverty is adequately capturing the incidence of very low living standards or poverty.

National Research cont.

In relation to situation cont:

- Although they are at much lower risk of poverty, those living in households where someone of working age is in paid work still make up over one-third of those below the poverty line. The working poor are disproportionately likely to be lone parents and renters.
- Increasing the minimum wage will be of limited effectiveness in reducing the overall income poverty rate and underscores the need for other policies to tackle poverty, such as an expansion of the availability of subsidised high quality full-time childcare.

National Research cont.

The Pavee Point and Department of Justice report Roma in Ireland A national needs assessment identifies issues of situation, experience and identity in relation to Roma.

In relation to situation:

- 16.7% of respondents reported that they are in employment.
- Up to 20% of respondents stated that they are experiencing poverty that would be considered extreme. Service providers reported families to be living without food, gas, electricity and water. More broadly, a very high proportion of respondents reported a lack of income and resources, with nearly half of respondents reporting that they did not always have enough food and fuel.
- Poverty and poor living conditions act as formidable barriers to accessing and participating in education. In 25% of households respondents reported that children have gone to school hungry. Inadequate English language and literacy supports for children and parents were also identified as issues, as were parents' own experiences in education including discrimination, segregation and low educational attainment.
- 48.1% of respondents who had applied for social protection were unsuccessful. In this context 17.6% of adults reported begging as their source of income and 14% reported having no income.

National Research cont.

In relation to experience:

- Anti-Roma racism has continued to be a primary factor in disenfranchising the Roma, both socially and economically.
- Roma feel discriminated against in relation to: getting a job 78.9%; getting accommodation 93.3%; getting social welfare 84.3%; at health services 70.5%; getting served in a shop, restaurant, pub or other social venue 74.7%; in the street or another public setting 81.1%; from the guards or in the courts 53.8%; and by a landlord or local authority 76.2%.
- Women feel particularly vulnerable to discrimination.
- A dominating and paternalistic approach used by service providers.

In relation to identity:

- For many Roma the language of the home is not English/Irish. 61% of respondents reported usually speaking Romani at home. This was followed by Romanian at 14.3%, Czech at 10.4%, English at 9.7% and Slovakian at 4.5%.

National Research cont.

The Watson, D., Kenny, O., and F. McGinnity (2017) report, A Social Portrait of Travellers in Ireland. ESRI Research Series No 56 identifies issues of situation, experience and identity in relation to Travellers.

In relation to situation:

- Education: 78% of Travellers had completed no more than primary education compared to 10% of non-Travellers.
- Education: Only 1% of Travellers had a degree or higher, compared to 30% of non-Travellers.
- Education: The adjusted percentage of people who leave school without completing second level takes account of differences in age profile. This figure was 95% for Traveller men and 92% for Traveller women, compared to 30% for men and 24 % women among non-Travellers.
- Education: Age Pattern - Non-Traveller population equates to 14% of those aged 25–34 years leaving before the end of second level, compared to 49% aged 55–54 years. The corresponding figures for Travellers are 91% and 97%, respectively.
- Education: Out-of-school activities, particularly cultural activities, supports for economically vulnerable families, including many Travellers, are particularly important, as such participation is likely to have implications for their longer term cognitive, educational and social development (McCoy, Quail and Smyth, 2012).

National Research cont.

In relation to situation cont:

- Employment: 11% of Traveller adults were in employment, compared to 66% of non-Travellers (2011).
- Employment: 61% of Travellers were participating in the labour market in 2011 (i.e. either at work or unemployed), compared to 79% of non-Travellers.
- Employment: About one half of Traveller adults identified their main status as 'unemployed', compared to a figure of 14% for non-Travellers.
- Employment: Overall, before taking account of other characteristics, Travellers were about 19 times more likely than non-Travellers to not be at work. Travellers are 22 times more likely to not be at work when we adjust for age, because Travellers tend to be younger and younger adults have a higher labour market participation rate than older adults. When we control for differences in level of education, the odds ratio is substantially reduced; it falls to Travellers being nine times more likely to not be at work.
- Employment: The suggestion is that nearly two-thirds of the gap in employment between Travellers and non-Travellers is accounted for by educational disadvantage.
- Employment: At degree-level education, the adjusted percentage at work was only 57 % for Travellers compared to 80 % for non-Travellers.
- Housing: Over three-quarters of Travellers do not have internet access in their accommodation, compared to just 18 % of the general population.
- Housing: Approximately 40% of Travellers live in overcrowded accommodation compared with less than 6% of the total population. At 39% the Mid-West had the joint-highest rate of Travellers living in overcrowded conditions.
- Health: Drawing from Census 2011 on the presence of a long-standing health condition or difficulty with everyday activities, Travellers aged 35–54 years are nearly three times as likely to be affected (31 % versus 11 %).

National Research cont.

In relation to experience:

- Education: The challenges that need to be addressed include: the intergenerational character of educational disadvantage; larger family size, often living in crowded accommodation, which may reduce the opportunity to study; and discrimination in employment and in wider society, which is likely to undermine educational ambition.
- Education: Implications for how schools communicate with parents, some of whom may have literacy issues.
- Education: School admission policies also need to be scrutinised to ensure they do not discriminate against Travellers.
- Employment: Travellers face extreme prejudice and discrimination in Irish society, and this has an impact on their employment chances as well as on their self-confidence in applying for employment.

In relation to identity:

- Education: Traveller and Roma culture and history should be embedded in the formal curriculum (Harmon, 2015)..

International and National Submissions



The IHREC (2017) Submission to the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women on Ireland's combined sixth and seventh periodic reports, identifies issues of situation, experience and identity in relation to women.

In relation to situation:

- Women experience a pay gap of 14% and a pension gap of 38%.
- Women are prevalent in minimum wage jobs and are concentrated in low paid and part-time jobs.
- Women experience barriers to promotion and women are concentrated at middle management in the civil service.
- Gender segregation, horizontal and vertical in the labour market.
- Gender segregation in education subject areas based on gender stereotyping in the choices made in relation school subjects by boys and girls.
- Predominance of women in care work.
- Lack of representation in public and political life.

International and National Submissions cont.

In relation to experience:

- Discrimination, and, in particular, pregnancy related discrimination, with job offers rescinded, reduced hours, negative impact on performance rating, and lack of promotion.
- Trans people experience high levels of discrimination in employment in transitioning or expressing their gender identity.
- Gender stereotyping, assumption of traditional gender roles, and prejudice based on these stereotypes, which has resulted in women being excluded from certain professions, denied promotions, and paid at a lower rate than men who were carrying out the same role.
- Experience of gender-based violence (rape, sexual assault, sexual abuse, sexual harassment, and domestic violence) and limited availability of support services.

In relation to identity:

- Issues affecting and barriers for specific groups of women including Traveller women, women with disabilities, rural women, women in agriculture, women living in direct provision, women in detention, and Trans women.
- Women with a disability are less likely to be active on the labour market and Traveller women experience particularly high levels of unemployment.

International and National Submissions cont.

The IHREC (October 2019) report, Ireland and the Convention on Racial Discrimination, Submission to the United Nations Committee on Racial Discrimination on Ireland's Combined Fifth to Ninth Periodic Report. identifies issues of situation, experience and identity in relation to Black and minority ethnic people, including Travellers.

In relation to situation:

- Census 2016 demonstrates that the level of education among Travellers continues to remain well below that of the general population throughout school, with just 13.3% of girls from the Traveller community being educated to upper secondary school or above compared with 69.1% of the general population. In 2016, nearly 6 in 10 Traveller men (57.2%) had left school at primary level, in sharp contrast to the general population (13.6%).

International and National Submissions cont.

In relation to situation cont:

- Research has highlighted school attendance and completion rates as an issue for the Roma community, with service providers calling for additional supports and resources to be put in place. The inadequate and overcrowded nature of the accommodation that many families are living in has been identified as impacting on the participation of Roma children in school.
- Many Roma children face significant financial barriers to education and are often deemed ineligible for supports, such as the Back-to-School Clothing and Footwear Allowance, due to the Habitual Residence Condition (HRC).
- In 2016, the unemployment rate for Travellers was 80.2%, compared to 12.9% for the general population. Census 2016 also highlighted that only 10.1% of Traveller women and 12.6% of Traveller men list their principal economic status as 'at work'.
- In recent research, 17% of Roma respondents were in employment.
- Difficulties in obtaining recognition of qualifications acquired abroad can give rise to situations of under-employment and over-qualification.

International and National Submissions cont.

In relation to experience:

- The Education (Admissions to Schools) Act 2018 permits 25% of the places in a school that is oversubscribed to be reserved for children or grandchildren of past pupils. IHREC is concerned that the application of this past-pupil criterion will act as a barrier, particularly for children from Traveller families and families of migrant origin in accessing education and may result in their segregation in specific schools.
- Research has indicated a pattern of segregation with students from minority ethnic groups being more likely to attend large urban schools that are less likely to be oversubscribed and have a concentration of students who experience socio-economic disadvantage.
- The issue of racism within the teaching profession needs to be addressed. In particular, both Traveller and Roma children are significantly more likely to have negative experiences in school, including experiences of bullying, racism, and discrimination, and this can result in them hiding their identity or leaving school early. In recent research conducted with the Traveller community, 40% of respondents indicated that either they or their children had been bullied at school due to their Traveller identity; 76% of respondents also reported that Traveller culture is not visible in the school curriculum.

International and National Submissions cont.

In relation to experience cont:

- Labour market discrimination in Ireland is a consistent issue Travellers, Roma, and people of African descent experience significant barriers to accessing employment. Research has found that, compared to 'White Irish' respondents, Travellers are almost ten times more likely to experience discrimination in seeking work.
- In recent research conducted with 481 Travellers, 43% indicated that they had experienced discrimination on the grounds of their identity when seeking to access employment. Twenty % of respondents reported their previous experience of hiding their identity during a recruitment process, such as changing their address.
- In recent research, 79% of Roma respondents felt that they had been discriminated against in getting a job.

In relation to identity:

- Language difference with lack of interpreter services and the need for professionalised and regulated interpreting services.
- Lack of support to Travellers in preserving and developing their identity and culture.
- Lack of cultural competency in public services and the need for cultural competency training.

International and National Submissions cont.

The IHREC (April 2019) Submission to the Universal Periodic Review of the UN Human Rights Council – Second Cycle Mid-Term Review identifies issues of situation, experience and identity in relation to people with disabilities, Black and minority ethnic people including Travellers, and women.

In relation to situation:

- There remain significant barriers to enjoyment of equal rights for persons with disabilities. Education attainment of persons with disabilities is much lower than that of the general population. Ireland has one of the lowest employment rates for persons with disabilities in the EU (26.2% compared to 48.1% in the EU in 2017).
- The 2016 Census showed an unemployment rate of 80% in the Traveller community, compared to a 12.9% rate in the general population. In a study of the 2011 Census statistics, the ESRI stated that “findings point to a level of extreme disadvantage experienced by Travellers across the domains of education, employment, housing and health.
- Women in Ireland earn 13.9% less than men.

International and National Submissions cont.

In relation to experience:

- People with disabilities continue to experience higher levels of discrimination than those without.
- Black respondents experience discrimination in the workplace, in public services and in private services at much higher rates than “White Irish” people. Asian respondents also reported more discrimination than White Irish respondents in private services.
- Black non-Irish people are five times more likely to experience discrimination when seeking employment in Ireland compared to White Irish people and they are over two and a half times more likely to experience discrimination in employment.
- Travellers are almost ten times more likely than the White Irish group to experience discrimination in seeking work.
- Roma in Ireland report high levels of discrimination in a variety of situations such as accessing accommodation, getting a job, accessing social protection and in public settings.
- Just under half of adults born in Ireland believe some cultures to be superior to others.
- The negative stereotypes of Travellers in public discourse reinforces barriers to public services, and exacerbates the disadvantages.
- Domestic violence is prevalent in Ireland. Ireland has less than a third of the number of refuge spaces that it should have under EU guidelines on domestic abuse.

International and National Submissions cont.

In relation to identity:

- Travellers continue to experience barriers to the enjoyment of the rights to adequate and culturally appropriate accommodation, education and healthcare.
- Many Roma report having to hide their identity to avoid discrimination.

Validation Meeting



4

An online validation meeting was facilitated with a range of civil society organisations to discuss and review a draft of the assessment of equality and human rights issues (2nd March 2023). It specifically addressed the questions of:

- Are the equality and human rights issues we have identified relevant and of priority for the group(s) that your organisation represents?
- Are these issues correctly formulated?
- Are there any important gaps in regard to the equality and human rights issues for the identified group(s) that that your organisation represents?

A number of changes were proposed to the assessment and these were all accepted by the working group in the assessment of equality and human rights issues set out above.

Contact us

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Administrative Offices

Ard O'Donnell

Letterkenny

Co. Donegal, F92 DP98

Tel: 074 9161600

Email: info@donegaletb.ie

www.donegaletb.ie



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