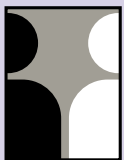


spectrum

issue 5: March 2004

The Journal of the National Consultative Committee on Racism and Interculturalism



NCCRI

**21st March 2004
International Day
Against Racism.**

What is the NCCRI?

The National Consultative Committee on Racism and Interculturalism (NCCRI) is an expert body established to provide an ongoing structure to develop programmes and actions and providing advice to address racism and support cultural diversity in Ireland. It is core funded by the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform.

Spectrum is a publication of the National Consultative Committee on Racism and Interculturalism (nccri).

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Editorial



To mark international day against racism (March 21st), the NCCRI has published this special edition of Spectrum to highlight some of the events that will be taking place linked to both the day itself and European Week Against Racism (March 20th-28th).

This is the third year that the NCCRI, the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland and the Know Racism programme have come together to develop a coordinated approach to events in Ireland, North and South.

The theme of March 21st 2004 is 'participation'. Consequently a key focus will inevitably be on the participation of minority ethnic groups in the forthcoming local and European elections. It is to be welcomed that some politicians are already seeking the votes of people from minority ethnic groups in their constituencies.

The NCCRI will be working with political parties to try and ensure that the elections are carried out in an environment that is free from racism. It is important that vulnerable minorities such as Travellers, refugees and asylum seekers and migrants are not unfairly singled out to get cheap votes.

The potential of the census to provide more data on ethnic diversity in Ireland is an important way to both identify needs, and to measure progress in building a more inclusive and intercultural society in Ireland. We consider some of the issues.

This edition of Spectrum also looks at the controversy in France raised by the recent banning of overt religious symbols in schools, including dress codes associated with the Muslim community. Whatever the official reasons given by the French authorities for the ban, such as the secular tradition of French education, the timing inevitably raises questions and suspicions that the ban is in part politically motivated and primarily directed at the Muslim community. The issue is a sensitive one that involves issues such as freedom of choice and the right to practice and express one's religion. Given our own history of religious, political and ethnic diversity, particularly in education, it is unlikely that the approach adopted by the French government would be countenanced in Ireland.

The Holocaust Memorial Day was held on 29th of January 2004 in City Hall Dublin. It was a moving occasion that focussed on the persecution and genocide of over six

million Jews. The Memorial Day also acknowledged the persecution of hundreds of thousands from the Roma community, gay and lesbians, people with disabilities, and others from political and religious groups during and before the Second World War. This annual event is an important occasion to highlight racism in all its forms and in particular anti-Semitism.

The Government is committed to publishing the National Action Plan Against Racism early in 2004. The Plan has the potential to develop an overall framework to combat racism and to promote a more inclusive and intercultural society. Progress in developing the plan is charted on the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform's website www.justice.ie

Recent racist attacks in Northern Ireland outlined in this edition of Spectrum highlight the importance of both support for anti racism initiatives in the North and developing joint approaches to combating racism on a North/South basis. Both the Northern Ireland Council for Ethnic Minorities and the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland are represented on the NCCRI Partnership. March 21 and a recent joint seminar on migration held in Belfast provide an important opportunity to strengthen these links.

Political Participation: Potential of the Local Elections



Catherine Lynch¹ outlines the election process at local level and developments to date. She considers the importance of political participation by members of minority ethnic groups and to keeping the election process free of racism. She looks at initiatives that have the potential to achieve these goals and identifies sources for further information.

On June 11 2004 local elections will be held across the country to appoint local public representatives to each city and county council. Local Government has a wide range of responsibilities and power at local level has increased through recent local government reforms. All residents in Ireland over the age of 18, regardless of their citizenship, are entitled to vote in the local elections.

Democracy is underpinned by the concept that people who are affected by the decisions made by politicians should have a say in the making of those decisions. At a political level, the main mechanism through which this is achieved in practice is having a say on who is elected through the election process.

While there are some opportunities for a more participative interaction with the State, it is important that everyone has their say through the representative democratic model that frames the Irish political system.

Recent reform of local government has attempted to give greater power to local authorities and bring decision making closer to people on the ground. Changes have also been made to increase the power of local authorities to devise policy and contribute to planning for the city or county. New committees have now been created in every local authority in which elected representatives participate in policy-making and economic and social planning.

Due to recent legislative changes, public representatives who hold a seat in the national parliament, Dáil Eireann, will no longer be eligible for election to a local authority and the 2004 elections will be the first that incorporate this change. This presents opportunities to new candidates, including potentially those from minority ethnic groups.

Local government is an important site for ensuring a true representation of the Irish population. There are 29 county councils, 5 city councils, as well as 5 borough councils and 49 town councils that have certain local government powers. They are responsible for a number of

principal services such as housing, water supply and sewerage, road transportation and safety, development incentives and controls, environmental protection, recreation and amenities. There have been members of minority ethnic communities who have served as public representatives in the Oireachtas, although this representation has declined in recent years. Diversity has not been traditionally represented at local political level and even the gender balance of elected representatives is highly disproportionate. Encouragingly, a number of women and men from minority ethnic communities in various regions have signalled their intention to stand for election with a particular interest in representing minority issues. Community groups and activists are also taking on a role to encourage and support the participation of traditionally excluded groups, both in candidature and in voting. The importance of political participation by minority ethnic groups is recognised at all levels, international, European and national. The report of the consultation process around the National Action Plan against Racism (NAPR), *Diverse Voices*, recognises political participation and involvement of members of minority ethnic groups in all levels of the political process as a key mechanism to ensuring an anti-racist society.

Key issues identified in the consultative process included the need for political parties to continue to effectively police and enforce the Anti Racism Political Protocol governing political parties and elections. It also suggests that positive action measures be considered to ensure a diversity of public representatives. The role of Seanad Eireann in facilitating such participation was also highlighted. This potential has already been identified and utilised. During the last elections to the Seanad for example, one Traveller woman campaigned for election. Though she was not elected, her campaign was monumental as she was the first Traveller to run for the election.

The report also suggests the building of a stronger focus for local government bodies in combating racism and building interculturalism through area and county based partnerships and the possibility of expanding the work and remit of Social Inclusion Units. Awareness and education are important to ensure greater representation of minority groups in politics. Commitment to social inclusion within the body politic is also critical. The duration of the local election process will be an important time to remind public representatives of the Anti-Racism Political Protocol which all the major political parties in

¹Catherine Lynch is Community Development Officer with the NCCRI.

Ireland have endorsed. The Protocol commits its signatories to ensure that election campaigns are conducted in such a way that they do not incite hatred or prejudice on the grounds of 'race', colour, nationality or ethnic or national origins, religious belief and membership of the Traveller Community.

A number of groups around the country have begun to organise around the forthcoming local elections. NCCRI in partnership with Integrating Ireland, for example, developed a campaign last year encouraging and informing members of minority ethnic groups, particularly migrant groups, around opportunities and processes for political participation. On March 21st, NCCRI will re-launch the Anti-Racism Protocol for Political Parties as part of its sustained effort to ensure that candidates keep their election campaigns free of racism.

It is clear that people realise the importance of and the right to political participation of minority ethnic groups in local elections. NCCRI has been informed of many developments including:

- New migrants in Ireland registering to vote
- Members of minority ethnic groups standing as candidates for election
- Support within minority ethnic communities of candidates from their community running for election e.g. Mosney
- A number of minority ethnic women are also standing for election, an encouraging development given the barriers experienced by many women in Ireland in the political arena
- Members of minority ethnic groups mobilising around particular political parties. It was reported that a group of about 60 asylum seekers living in Mosney, Co. Meath were working to establish a new Fianna Fáil cumann (Irish Independent 06/02/2004)
- Recognition of some candidates of the importance and potential power of the vote of minority ethnic groups including newer voters from minority ethnic communities. It was reported that a Fianna Fáil candidate was seeking votes from the Chinese community in his Dublin constituency and had translated his campaign literature into Mandarin (Irish Times, 03/02/2004)
- Signing and support by all political parties of the Anti-Racism Protocol for Political Parties.

You must be over the age of 18 to vote in local elections and Irish citizenship is not required. However, in order to vote, you must be registered in the register of electors,

being ordinarily resident in the area on the 1st September 2003. A register of electors is compiled each year by city and county councils. The draft register was published in November 2003 and displayed for public inspection in post offices, libraries and other public buildings. Late applications can be made right up until 15 days before polling day, through the supplement to the register of electors. Anyone intending to vote should check the register to ensure you are correctly registered.

In order to vote, each person must be registered to vote. Election of candidates happens through a system of 'proportional representation' in a multi-member electoral area. Proportional representation means that as a voter, you can indicate your first and subsequent choices for the candidates on the ballot paper. To be elected, a candidate must receive a quota of votes, which depends on the number of valid polling papers and the number of seats to be contested.

In local government elections, it is not necessary to be an Irish citizen to be elected as a public representative. Someone wishing to stand for local election may nominate him/herself or be nominated by a registered elector and can be nominated to stand in more than one area. A candidate does not have to be affiliated to a political party to stand for election. The nomination paper of a candidate who is not a member of a registered political party must be assented to by 15 electors registered in the local electoral area concerned. The arrangements for nominations will be published by the returning officers along with the notice of election in May 2004.

Both minority ethnic groups and members of the majority population in Ireland can use the forthcoming local election to ensure that the political process and decisions made have better outcomes for members of minority ethnic groups.

Count Me In!

To ensure that you have your say in June, you can:

- Ensure you are registered to vote.
- Use your vote.
- Run for election.
- Get involved at a party political level.
- Be aware of the Anti-Racism Protocol and make sure your local candidates heed its message.
- Use the door step – when candidates call ask them what they are doing about equality and issues around racism.
- Have a voice, use your voice, be listened to and be counted.

Forthcoming initiatives:

NCCRI will re-launch the Anti-Racism Protocol for Political Parties on March 21st, International Day Against Racism (see events guide in this issue). The Protocol seeks to ensure that political parties actively challenge racism and ensure that candidates in elections do not engage in actions or speech that stigmatises communities for the purposes of short-term political gain.

The NCCRI is also preparing an Information Pack for Election candidates in the run up to the election. This will include practical information for politicians who wish to respond to questions/comments that are made on the doorstep to them while out canvassing.

Further info.

For further information on the political process, contact the Franchise Section, Dept. of the Environment and Local Government, Custom House, Dublin 1. Locall 1890 202021, Tel. 01-8882420. A range of organisations, both governmental and non-governmental, provide information around the political process. Useful sources include the following websites:

www.oasis.gov.ie
www.comhairle.ie
www.gov.ie/
www.viron.ie
www.nccri.com
www.integratingireland.ie
www.irishrefugeecouncil.ie

Anti Racism Protocol for Political Parties in relation to the conduct of election campaigns

Preamble

Political parties who are signatory to this Protocol undertake to ensure that election campaigns¹ are conducted in such a way that they do not incite hatred or prejudice on the grounds of race, colour, nationality or ethnic or national origins, religious belief and membership of the Travelling Community.²

Political parties agree:

- To send a consistent and clear message to their constituents that they reject racism.
- To condemn any campaign materials or statements susceptible to incite hatred or express prejudice on the grounds of race, colour, nationality or ethnic or national origins, religious belief and membership of the Travelling Community.
- To guarantee that when engaging in on-going debate in relation to groups which are the potential targets of racism, such as asylum seekers and refugees and Travellers, that such debate is conducted in a responsible way and with respect to the dignity and rights of minority ethnic groups.
- To use appropriate and inclusive language and words when referring to people of different ethnic backgrounds, in order to avoid creating prejudice or confusion.³
- To inform all party-political campaigners about the intent and contents of this protocol.
- To request that candidates standing for election sign the appended Declaration of Intent.



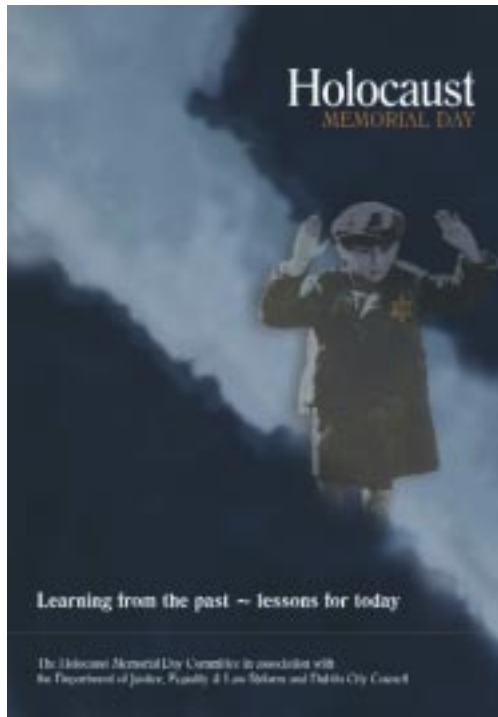
Including our election, general election, and election to the European Parliament.
This is the original version of the Anti-Racism Protocol for Political Parties in relation to the conduct of election campaigns.
The original version includes the text of the Declaration of Intent and the text of the Declaration of Intent.

Anti Racism Protocol for Political Parties in relation to the conduct of election campaigns

All the Political Parties of the Oireachtas have signed up to this Protocol. A new version of the Protocol with party logos will be launched on March 21 in Dublin.

Remembering the Holocaust Learning Lessons for Today

by Oliver Donahoe¹



“Go home from this place and tell your children... that today you looked into eyes that witnessed the most cataclysmic events ever unleashed by mankind upon mankind...” (Paddy Fitzgibbon speaking at the unveiling of the only public Holocaust memorial in Ireland in the Garden of Europe, Listowel, Co. Kerry in May, 1995).

No other event demonstrates more vividly and painfully the horror of racism, taken to its ultimate conclusion, than the murder of six million European Jews in the Holocaust. Others who were considered ‘inferior’ by the Nazis also perished, including people with disabilities, members of ethnic minorities, the Roma community and homosexuals. That is why Holocaust Memorial Day is so important in the on-going struggle against racism.

Families who had lived in these European countries for nearly a thousand years were still seen as strangers without the most basic of all human rights, the right to life. Those Jews who thought they were hated because they were different tried to become the same and abandoned the distinctive features of Jewish life. But anti-Semitism continued. The victim cannot cure the crime. Only laws based on human rights can protect the innocent.

In his book, *Modernity and the Holocaust*, Z. Bauman reminds us that the ‘final solution’ emerged “inch by inch, pointing at each stage to a different destination, shifting in response to ever-new crises, and pressed forward with a ‘we will cross that bridge once we come to it’ philosophy.” One of the lessons to be learned from the Holocaust is how easily casual prejudice can turn into callous persecution and persecution into mass murder.

On January 25th Ireland’s Holocaust Memorial Day (HMD) ceremony took place in City Hall in Dublin. It was organised by the Holocaust Memorial Day Committee in association with the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform and Dublin City Council. The commemoration was a response to the Stockholm Declaration which was signed by 44 countries, including Ireland, in January 2000 on the anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau and which stated “...The horrors that engulfed the Jewish people and other victims of the Nazis must forever be seared in our collective memory. With humanity still scarred by genocide, anti-Semitism, ethnic cleansing, racism, xenophobia and other expressions of hatred and discrimination, we share a solemn responsibility to fight against these evils”

The honoured guests at this year’s HMD Commemoration were Holocaust survivors from Bergen-Belsen, Sudetenland, Aurich and Kindertransport. Addressing this year’s HMD Commemoration, President Mary McAleese said “...It is intolerable that in such a short space of time the lessons of the Holocaust could so easily be overlooked. The world is pock-marked by acts which echo the unthinkable and unspeakable evils that were perpetrated on the Jewish people within living memory.”

In a message from Pat Cox, President of the European Parliament to the Dublin Commemoration, he said “Despite the deplorable upsurge in anti-Semitic and racist incidents in recent times, Europe has absorbed the lessons of the Holocaust. As the European Union looks forward to welcoming 10 new member states, we must all redouble our efforts to fight all forms of ethnic intolerance.”

¹ Oliver Donahoe is Chairperson of the Holocaust Memorial Day Committee.

Census & Data Collection



The NCCRI has long been an advocate for more effective and increased data collection on ethnicity and racism in Ireland. In a recent submission to the Central Statistics Office (CSO) the Committee highlighted the importance of data in identifying discrimination and promoting an intercultural Ireland. Anna Visser, Research and Policy Officer with the NCCRI discusses some of the key issues.

Data is the key to both determining where racial discrimination is happening, as well as evaluating policies aimed at overcoming it. As the Commission for Racial Equality in the United Kingdom has pointed out 'to have an equality policy without ethnic monitoring is like aiming for good financial management without keeping financial records'. Data collection is essential in any strategy which seeks to highlight possible inequalities, investigate their underlying cause and remove any unfairness or disadvantage.

Currently there is a very limited picture of ethnic diversity in Irish society. Despite consultation with groups representing minority ethnic groups, including the Traveller community, during the 2002 census the government decided not to collect data relating to ethnicity. However for the first time a question was included on the Traveller community.

In the context of the increasing diversity of Irish society the underlying need for an ethnicity question is becoming more urgent. While the existing data on nationality provides some insight into the composition of Irish society it fails to provide a picture of the complex nature of the diverse identities. For example a French national who is black may have very different experiences to other French nationals.

In a recent submission to the CSO's consultation on the census questionnaire content, the NCCRI made the case for data collection, at all levels of society, both national and local. Data collection is an important tool in reflecting the changing diversity of society and to track discrimination, not only in the individual sense, but also institutionally. In the fight against racism and discrimination data on ethnicity serves to underpin and support a wide range of functions.

- Data collection is essential in any strategy which seeks to highlight possible inequalities. Ethnic monitoring can tell whether there is equality of opportunity and treatment of all ethnic groups.
- By identifying discrimination and inequalities

the results of data collection serve to underpin initiatives aimed at promoting equality. However equality policies, by themselves, will not bring about racial equality, there must be mechanisms for ensuring that such policies are being implemented.

- One of the reasons why policies and services have failed minority ethnic groups in the past is the lack of information available about them. A picture of the ethnic composition of local populations can help plan and deliver services, while needs assessments will highlight gaps in existing service provision.
- Data collection is a requirement in evaluating policies which seek to overcome discrimination and promote equality. Without data collection it is impossible to know whether a policy on, for instance, promoting mixed housing provision is effective in overcoming spatial segregation.
- Instating an ethnic question into national and local collection mechanisms demonstrates political commitment that such issues are being taken seriously, and reflects commitment to accommodating diversity and promoting interculturalism.
- There are national and international legal instruments which authorise and encourage the use of statistical evidence, examples including the International Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD), and the EU Directive 2000/43, the Race Directive, which is currently being incorporated into Irish Law, through the Equality Bill 2004.

Without data, it is very difficult to effectively target and measure the impact of strategies which aim to combat racism and promote a more inclusive, intercultural society in Ireland. Data is a tool and not an end in itself. The challenge remains to ensure that once collected, quality data is used effectively to inform policy and assist planning. Part of this challenge also includes ensuring that existing data legislation and guidelines are adequate to protect against the potential misuse of this data.

International Day Against Racism March 21st 2004

European Week Against Racism March 20th – 28th 2004



The National Consultative Committee on Racism and Interculturalism (NCCRI) in conjunction with the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland and the Know Racism Campaign is assisting in the co-ordination of activities to celebrate International Day Against Racism and European Week Against Racism. In previous years, North and South, many groups have organised successful events to mark and celebrate these symbolic dates.

The theme for 2004 will focus on the full participation of minority ethnic groups in broader society. The theme of participation emphasises that minority ethnic groups are a part of Ireland, a part of local communities, a part of the electorate, and part of what will soon be an expanded European Union. Participation was identified as one of the five key objectives that should underpin the National Action Plan Against Racism, due to be published in 2004. There are at least three levels of participation:

1. Political Level :

The forthcoming European elections in June 2004 (and local elections in Ireland) across the European Union (EU) represents a significant opportunity to develop positive actions around diversity and the political process as well as ensuring elections are held in a racism free environment.

2. Policy Level :

The involvement of minority ethnic groups in the policy process including participation in forums which have an input in policy development, is a key part of the democratic process.

3. Community Level :

There is a need to enhance community development supports to minority ethnic groups to facilitate their participation in local and policy level decision-making.

Disclaimer: The NCCRI, Equality Commission for N.I. and Know Racism Campaign cannot be held liable for any errors in the description of events contained here or for the organisation of events unless otherwise indicated.

EVENTS FOR INTERNATIONAL DAY AGAINST RACISM AND EUROPEAN WEEK AGAINST RACISM

ORGANISATION	EVENT	DATE	VENUE	CONTACT
ANTRIM				
Business in the Community (BITC) & OMI Consultancy	Seminar to examine the consequences of racism on minority ethnic women's participation in NI society	23rd of March 2004 9am to 2pm	Ramada Hotel Belfast	Denise Cranston/ Fee Ching Leong (048) 90410410. feel@easyjet.co.uk
CARLOW				
St Patrick's Carlow College	Notice board display and distribution of leaflets to raise awareness of issues surrounding racism and inequalities	March 23rd to 25th 2004 11am to 5pm	St Patricks Carlow College	Stephanie McDermott. Tel. 056-772 8848. smdcos@eircom.net
CORK				
Traveller Visibility Group	Launch of two pieces of research. "Nomadism in Cork City; A survey of transient Traveller family numbers and patterns of movement, February 2003 to February 2004. "We consult who decides; A qualitative study of consultative processes between Traveller groups and statutory agencies in the Cork area"	Monday March 22nd at 11am	University College Cork	Dave McCarthy, Traveller Visibility Group. tvg@indigo.ie Tel: 021 503786
DERRY				
Opportunity Youth	Delivering Anti-Racism Training to all young people that we work with	March 22nd to 26th 2004	Training organisations throughout NI	Darren Boyce. Tel. 028 71371162. darren@opportunity-youth.org
DONEGAL				
Letterkenny Community Development Project	Information evening to create awareness about racism. Guest speakers from minority ethnic groups	March 22nd 2004 at 8pm	Cheshire Apartments, Longlone, Letterkenny	Margaret Toner. Tel. 074-9120633. lkennycdp@eircom.net
DUBLIN				
Afghan Community of Ireland/Central Library Ilac Centre	Afghan Calligraphy and Painting Exhibition	March 22nd to 30th 2004 at 10am to 7pm	Central Library, Ilac Centre	Cathy McKenna Tel. 01-8734333 Nasruddin Saljuqi Tel. 01-868 3577. afgcommunity@hotmail.com
Bahai Community of Dun Laoghaire/Rathdown	Programme of readings and music celebrating the oneness of mankind	March 22nd 2004 at 8pm	Royal Marine Hotel Dun Laoghaire	Naghmeh Reilly. Tel. 01-296 1836 Mahin Sevidvash Tel. 01-2859071
(DAWN) Diversity at Work Network	Launch of Diversity at Work Employers Handbook	Wednesday March 24th 2004	TBC	Jennifer Wallace. Tel. 01-4785777 Jean Reddan Tel. 01-6612888
Dublin International Students (DIS)	Monkey Funk International Student Party in support of European Week Against Racism	24th of March 2004. 10pm til late	Coyote Lounge, D'Olier St., Dublin 2	Zoe Healy, MCRC. Tel. 01-6795242. post@cradle.ie
Eigse Laoghaire, Multicultural Arts	Readings from the publication "Pangaea"	March 20th to 28th 2004	Various venues in Dublin area	Veronica Heywood. Tel. 01-280 3204. heywood59@hotmail.com
Gazeta – Russian Newspaper	Official Launch of "Needs Assessment Research for Russian Speaking Community" and presentation by Nasha Gazeta	25 March 2004 16.00–18.00pm	Royal Dublin Hotel, O Connell St Lower, Dublin 1	Sergey Tarutin. Tel. 01-874 0004. gazeta@russianireland.com

ORGANISATION	EVENT	DATE	VENUE	CONTACT
ICON North East Intercultural Working Group	Intercultural Day in Multicultural Resource Centre	24th of March 2004. 11am to 3pm	Dublin Multicultural Res. Centre, Mandela House 44 Lower Gardiner St, D1.	Zoe Healy, MCRC. Tel. 01-6795242. post@cradle.ie
Info Centre for Immigrants, Fingal County Council & Rockabill Film Society	Showing of multicultural film as a way of promoting social and cultural integration in the community	20 and 21 March 2004. 12pm - 6.00pm	Community Ctre, Mourne View Estate, Skerries, Dublin.	Adesola Oyinloye Tel. 01- 8105810 immigrants_information@yahoo.co.uk
Irish Human Rights Commission & Amnesty International in association with the Equality Authority	Conference: Combating Racism and Promoting Equality Through Legislation. Speakers include Professor Colin Harvey, Imran Khan and Barbara Nolan.	27 March 2004	Trinity College Dublin	Mary Ruddy (IHRC) Tel. 01 8589601 or Katrina Goldstone at Tel. 01 6776361
Irish Human Rights Commission & NCCRI	Launch of joint publication "Safeguarding the Rights of Migrant Workers and their Families: A Review of International Human Rights Conventions and EU Policy and their Implications for Policy in Ireland."	15 March 2004 at 2pm	TBC	Mary Ruddy (IHRC) Tel. 01 8589601 or Jacqueline Healy at Tel. 01 4785777
Islamic Cultural Centre of Ireland	Multicultural day: Portraying the many cultures present within the Muslim community of Ireland.	March 27 2004 2pm to 6pm	Islamic Cultural Centre of Irl. 19 Roebuck Rd, Clonskeagh, D4.	Summayah Kenna Tel. 01-2080000. summayah@iccislam.org
Kurdish Community in Ireland	Kurdish New Year NewRoz. Cultural event in Dublin including drama, poetry, dance, food and traditional dress from all over Kurdistan.	March 21st 2004	St. Agnes Primary School. St. Agnes Rd. Crumlin, Dublin.	Latif Serhildan. Tel. 086-8805826 serhildantakak@eircom.net. www.kurdistanolidarityireland.com
Multicultural group Ballyfermot Partnership	African drumming workshop with young people; cultural celebration with music, dance, food and entertainment including different nationalities and the Traveller community.	Thursday 25 March 2004 at 4pm	Ballyfermot Community Civic Centre	Angela Joy/Michelle Griffin. Tel. 016207173 / 6207150. ajoy@ballyfermotpartnership.ie or michellegriffin@urbanbl.ie
National Consultative Committee on Racism and Interculturalism (NCCRI)	Launch of International Day Against Racism and Count Me In Campaign – Keep Elections Free from Racism	Sunday March 21 2004	TBC	Catherine Lynch. Tel. 01-4785777
National College of Art and Design (NCAD) Students Union	A Multicultural Week in NCAD to celebrate and promote awareness of cultural diversity in Ireland	March 8th to 12th 2004.	NCAD	Deirdre Byrne Tel. 01-671 1553 / 087-997 0415 ncadsu@hotmail.com
NEAR FM 101.6	Special radio programme dealing with strategies and tools to overcome racism and highlight the different faces of discrimination. It will feature interviews with the migrant community, Irish Refugee Council, City Bridges, Know Racism and NCCRI.	March 21 2004	NEAR FM studios	Soledad Galiana Tel. 01-867 1016 sally@nearfm.ie
Pavee Point Travellers Centre	Launch of video which promotes anti-racism in community development projects and family resource centres	March 23 2004 at 2.00pm	Pavee Point Travellers Centre	Alison Fox Tel. 01-878 0255 pavee@iol.ie
Pavee Point Travellers Centre	Launch of research "Dismantling the Traveller Economy – a look at the impact of EU Directives on Traveller economic activity"	March 19 2004 at 5.00pm	Croke Park	Brid O Brien Tel. 01-878 0255 pavee@iol.ie

Pavee Point Traveller Centre	"Introduction to Traveller Health" – an open day for Health Board members of Community Care Area 6	22nd of March 2004. 11am to 1pm	Pavee Point Traveller Centre, Nth Grt. Charles Street, Dublin1	Joanna Fictoor / Michelle Donnelly. Tel. 01-8780255. pavee@iol.ie
Phibsboro branch of Dublin City Public Libraries	Book display consisting of books for adults and children on racism, anti-racism and multiculturalism.	Mon + Wed: 12:45-4 +4:45-8pm. Tue, Thurs and Sat: 10:00-1:00 + 2:00-5pm.	Phibsboro Library, Blackquire Bridge	Mags Curley. Tel. 01-8304341, mags.curley@dublincity.ie
Roma Support Group	Launch of Roma in Ireland website	March 19 2004 at 5.00pm	Pavee Point Travellers Centre	Caoimhe McCabe Tel. 01-878 0255/pavee@iol.ie
Southside Travellers Action Group	Multicultural staff team are making a radio programme for Dublin South Community Radio describing the benefits of working in a multicultural environment.	March 19th at 4pm	Dublin South Radio, Loreto Ave, Rathfarnham Dublin 16.	Joe Dempsey. Tel. 01-2957372. taisteal@eircom.net
Swords Educate Together National School	Black and White Day for whole school. Class and assembly games and activities	March 23 2004. 8.30am to 2.10pm	Swords Educate Together National School	Gerard Kelly Tel. 01-8903899 setms.ias@eircom.net
Tallaght Intercultural Action	Celebrating Cultural Diversity: Working Against Racism in the Community	24 March 2004. 10.00am to 4pm	St Melruann's Parish Centre, Tallaght Village	Awa S. Kennan/Kay Muhall. Tel. 087-2486392. tallaghtinterculturalaction@eircom.net
Wellview Green Resource Centre/NCYP Blanchardstown Youth Service (Foreige) in association with Fingal Co. Council.	International Futsal (indoor football) involving local youths and young people from ethnically diverse communities in Dublin 15	March 23rd 2004 3pm to 7pm	Blanchardstown Institute of Technology.	Beryl Walsh. Tel. 01-826 2878. berylw01@eircom.net
Youth Action Against Racism and Discrimination (YARD) in association with NCCRI	Competition for young people to develop an Intercultural Plan for their clubs.	Award ceremony: March 19 2004 at 10am.	Equality Authority, 2 Clonmel Street, Dublin 2.	Niamh McCrea, YARD at 01-4784122. yard@nyci.ie
FERMANAGH				
OMI Consultancy & Women of the World	Six-day anti-racism training programme to prepare participants to challenge racism at different levels of society	February and March 2004	Clinton Centre, Enniskillen, Co. Fermanagh.	Maria Ellis / Fee Ching Leong (048) 90410410. feel@easyjet.co.uk
GALWAY				
Galway Educate Together National School	Highlighting International Day Against Racism through their religious and ethical education programme	During European Week Against Racism	Galway Educate Together National School	Clare Hansen Tel. 091-527887. galwayschproject @eircom.net
Galway Refugee Support Group	Galway One World Night with Flamenco, Sean Nos, Tango, West and South African Dance. Followed by DJ and Live Music	14 March 2004 at 8pm	Black Box, Galway City	Celine Geoffret, Galway Refugee Support Group. Tel. 091-779083 refugee.galway@ireland.com
KERRY				
Kerry Action for Development Education (KADE)	Intercultural event to celebrate the rich tapestry of culture and nationalities in the region. Music and dancing from different cultures. Anti-racism materials will be on display at the event.	March 17 2004. 2pm to 5pm	Mount Brandon Hotel Conference Centre Tralee Kerry	Mary McGillicuddy. Tel. 066-7181358. kade@eircom.net
South Kerry Development Partnership	Global Tralee 2004. World Café – discussion event on a multicultural South Kerry	TBC	TBC	Jane Brennan. Tel. 066-9761615. jbrennan@skdp.net
KILDARE				
Athy Travellers Club	The Culture Room of the Athy Travellers Club will be open and Traveller women will be available to give talks on their culture and ways of life	20-28 March 2004 9am to 1pm	Mount St. Marys, Athy, Co. Kildare	Sr. Rosarii Martin. Tel. 059-8632612. athytraveller-sclub@eircom.net

NUI Maynooth Kilkenny Campus	Awareness Week – Creation of a Multicultural Atmosphere on campus	March 22nd to 26th 2004	NUI Maynooth Kilkenny Campus	Brian Desmond. 056-7775910. brian.desmond@may.ie
KILKENNY				
Creidim Centre, St Kierans College, Kilkenny	A celebration of cultures – an afternoon to highlight the need to respect all people as we work towards an intercultural society	March 27 2004. 3pm to 5pm	Creidim Centre, St. Kierans College, Kilkenny	Ms. Liz Ruth. Tel. 056-7770261. smdcos@eircom.net
Dochas Kilkenny	"Kilkenny Says No To Racism" – Street Awareness Day "Community interculturalism working against racism" Mayor of Kilkenny (Pat Crotty) in association with Dochas host a social evening in Mayors Chambers, City Hall	March 22nd 2004. 10.30am to 1.30pm	City Hall, Kilkenny. 10am to 4pm and 8pm to 10pm	Theresa Delahunty, Dochas Kilkenny. Tel. 056-7789916. kilkennydochas@eircom.net
Doras Luimni	Exhibition of paintings by Limerick based refugees and asylum seekers in the community college. There will also be music and poetry.	March 2004 – TBC	Community College, Callan, Co. Kilkenny	Kate Hennessy. Tel. 087-671 1390 caitluimni@hotmail.com
Kilkenny School Project National School	Series of talks, showing of video, discussion and games highlighting cultural diversity focusing specifically on the Traveller culture	March 22nd to 26th 2004.	Kilkenny School Project National School	Stephanie McDermott / Mary Nicholson. Tel. 056-775 1407. smdcos@eircom.net
LEITRIM				
Leitrim County Library (Ballinamore Branch)	Multicultural day. Exhibition on cultures of local asylum seekers, presentation on Azerbaijan spring holiday, Irish music and display of art by local schoolchildren	March 19 2004 10am to 10pm	Ballinamore Library	Mary Bohan Tel. 071-964 4012
LONGFORD				
St Joseph's National School Longford	Multicultural Week to highlight and celebrate the presence of minority ethnic groups in the school and Longford town. Art workshops, art and poetry competition, school concert and a drumming workshop. A local African choir will sing at the concert.	European Week Against Racism March 22nd to 26th 2004 Concert: Thursday 25th	St Joseph's National School Longford	Evelyn Crossan/ Loretta Farrell Tel. 043-45700. saimhinso@hotmail.com
TIPPERARY				
Tipperary Regional Youth Service	Short Study Visit of youths from all over Europe to explore themes of intercultural / anti-racism	21st – 28th March 2004	Tipperary town	Pauline Cummins. Tel. 062-52604 tippic@eircom.net
WATERFORD				
New Ross Community Development Project	Workshop on participation and policy making at local level	March 22nd 2004. 10.30am to 1.30pm	St Michael's Theatre, New Ross	Esther Foley / Jane McGrath. Tel. 051-425636 newrosscdp@eircom.net
WESTMEATH				
Harmony Community Development Programme	Intercultural women's event to include cookery classes and bowling, children's art workshop (after school project) in association with the National Parents Support Project	During European Week Against Racism	Harmony CDP, Garden Vale, Athlone	Liz Fletcher. Tel. 090 647 6346 harmonycdp@eircom.net

For more information on International Day Against Racism, please contact Catherine Lynch or Jacqueline Healy, NCCRI, Tel. 01-4785777 or log onto www.nccri.com

Diversity at Work Network (DAWN)

Businesses Counting the Cost of Ignoring Diversity



The Diversity at Work Network is a partnership initiative of Chambers of Commerce of Ireland (CCI), the Institute of Technology, Blanchardstown and the NCCRI. Jean Reddan of the CCI explains that understanding the experiences of minority ethnic groups, including migrant workers, and the experiences of those with whom they work, is becoming more and more important to maintaining an effective and productive working environment.

A Changing Environment in Ireland

In recent times, Ireland has seen unprecedented economic growth. Once regarded as a country of emigration, Ireland is now an economy dependant on immigration to fulfil vacancies in the labour market. Today, there are approximately 160 different nationalities living and working in Ireland. Last year, the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment (DETE) issued 45,274 work permits as compared to 6,528 in 1999.

Migrant workers have a vital and positive role in contributing to a diverse and successful Irish economy. Furthermore, the accession of ten new member states to the European Union in May 2004 will not only expand the Union but will also bring a new dynamic to the Irish labour market.

Ignoring Diversity: Limiting a Business's Potential

In this current environment, the question is "as an Irish business, is diversity something you have considered?" Likewise, what's the greatest loss to a company when diversity isn't a priority? It is not just the negative financial and public relations implications of discrimination lawsuits or even the lack of creativity engendered by diverse employees' perspectives and personal experiences. It is the loss of potential business in the form of new customers in growth markets, customers who are proving increasingly loyal to companies that, in their minds, "get it" by understanding their culture and their needs.

The Business Case for Diversity

Both private companies and public sector organisations are under continuing pressure to add to their bottom line. For the private sector this is profit and profitability; for the public sector, it is the efficient delivery of service to all members of society.

The case for diversity will be different depending on the business but there is a compelling generic case for achieving and managing diversity in the workplace. Diversity can help organisations identify and capitalise on opportunities to improve products and services; attract, retain and motivate staff effectively; improve the quality of decision-making at all levels in the organisation and reap the many benefits from being perceived as a socially conscious and progressive organisation. These benefits should be manifested in an improved bottom line and maximisation of shareholder value. Whether you are a large or small company, you need to embrace equality and foster diversity. From an employer perspective, we know that diversity will not succeed without an imperative from the CEO and consistent follow-up.

Diversity At Work Network

One key barrier to the adoption of diversity issues in the workplace has been a lack of resources to assist employers and Small Management Enterprises to take the issue on board. As a result, the Chambers of Commerce of Ireland in association with the National Consultative Committee on Racism and Interculturalism (NCCRI) and the Institute of Technology Blanchard town (ITB) has developed the "Diversity at Work Network" (DAWN) project, which is funded by the EU Equal programme. The aim of this unique national project is to create a range of supports for local businesses to help them to create an intercultural working environment, which accommodates and benefits from a diverse workforce.

Local Diversity Networks

From an employer perspective a key issue is to ensure the adoption of diversity issues at local level. The DAWN Project is working with employers from large and small companies in strategic locations around the country through the establishment of DAWN Local Platforms in partnership with Cork Chamber of Commerce, Monaghan Chamber of Commerce and South Dublin Chamber of Commerce.

The platforms with support from the NCCRI will facilitate the development of a range of practical supports that are based on local business' experience and need. This will include the publication of a Diversity At Work Employer's Handbook, tailored training, diversity audits and diversity accreditation. In terms of benefits to individual businesses, the platform will give employers:

- The opportunity to share experiences & information with other employers of diverse workforces through the establishment of a peer network (This peer network will be small and will consist of 10 local companies).
- The opportunity to contribute to the actions of the network.
- Access to information & services.
- Customised products such as induction pack, Diversity at Work Employer's Handbook etc.
- Support participating companies in implementing organisational change.
- Anti-racism and equality training for a number of company representatives. The training will be delivered by the NCCRI.
- Understanding and appreciation of EU and domestic equality legislation.

DAWN Contact Details

If you would like any more information on the Diversity At Work Network, please do not hesitate to contact Jennifer Wallace in the NCCRI (Tel. 01-4785777) or Jean Reddan/Denise Brennan in the Chambers of Commerce of Ireland (Tel: 01-6612888).

Racist Incidents in the North Reactions and Responses



Joe Lenaghan¹ from the Equality Commission of Northern Ireland gives an overview of the recent manifestations of racism that came to public attention.

The recent spate of racist attacks on minority ethnic families living in the Donegal Road/Village area of South Belfast raises a number of issues that have implications for tackling racism and xenophobia in the North. South Belfast is an area where most members from minority ethnic groups in Belfast live. These include Chinese, Filipino, South African, Asian and Pakistani migrants working in the Belfast City and Royal Victoria hospitals and the medical and bio-chemical teaching hospitals. The Queen's University Belfast continues to attract overseas students in significant numbers.

Of course racist attacks are not a new phenomena in the North. Travellers and other established minority ethnic communities such as the Chinese community have experienced racist violence in the past. It is also important to acknowledge that any decrease in reporting of incidents should not be attributed to an overall reduction in racism. As we know racism takes many different forms, including discrimination, harassment and exclusion as well as racist attacks. There are concerns also about reporting of such incidents to the police as many victims will not report due to apathy or fear of further victimisation from their attackers. Some communities' past experience of policing in their countries of origin has instilled a lack of confidence in law enforcement agencies in general. It is also the case that in the past that some ethnic minorities have complained of slow or lack of adequate police responses to incidents by police in Northern Ireland that has affected confidence in Northern Ireland. So police statistics

relating to racist incidents can be an incomplete and underestimation of the true extent of the problem.

The issue of dealing with racist incidents and their apparent increase in the North has come to the fore through campaigning by minority ethnic and Traveller support groups seeking an introduction of stronger race hate crime legislation, as well as more effective monitoring and policing arrangements arising from the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry recommendations. Regarding the monitoring of racist incidents an interagency group involving minority ethnic representatives, equality and human rights bodies alongside a range of public service bodies and the police have been working to establish an effective mechanism with reporting and data collection protocols across the public service.

The recent revelation by the police that racist incidents in the North have increased ninefold together with the Northern Ireland Housing Executive's findings that thirty minority ethnic families and individuals were intimidated from their homes last year is startling. In the South Belfast area fifty racist incidents were reported during the period of October to December 2003. During this period also the British Nationalist Party had circulated racist material in the Village/Donagall Road area and prior to Christmas pipe bombs were thrown at houses occupied by Chinese, African and Muslim families in the same area. As attacks became more frequent the Anti Racism Network (ARN), formed last year in response to the growing opposition to the construction of a Mosque in the Craigavon/Portadown area, organised two Stop the Racist

¹Joe Lenaghan is on the Board of the NCCRI representing the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland.



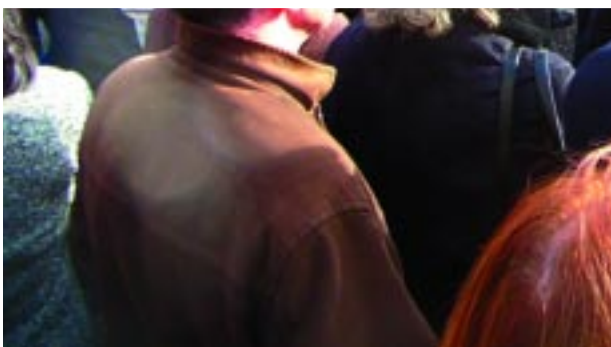
Photos taken at a recent anti-racism rally in Belfast. Photographs: Mike Byron

Attacks rallies in city centre Belfast in December and January to coincide with Human Rights Day and Holocaust Commemoration Day. At the January rally, with over 2,000 in attendance, speaker after speaker from minority ethnic and religious communities and the trades unions called for an end to the vicious attacks which had left victims homeless and traumatised. Politicians and community leaders were called upon to use their influence and show leadership in challenging racism and to isolate and marginalise those whose views sought to inflame racial tensions and hatred.

The rise in racist incidents is also being linked to organised 'extortion' by the local UVF in this area of South Belfast. It is no secret that a local Chinese businessman was prepared to give evidence as a prosecution witness to a case involving attempted extortion charges against a number of individuals linked to the UVF and involving substantial amounts of money. As the date for the hearing drew nearer in early January the attacks increased, with victims mainly from the Chinese community but also including Black Africans. Through these attacks and other forms of intimidation there was a withdrawal of the witness evidence and consequently the Director of Public Prosecutions withdrew the case. This incident raises serious law and order and policing issues for Government and its enforcement agencies but also for members of black and minority ethnic communities themselves. The Chinese community in the North and in Belfast in particular is more likely to be associated with restaurant and take away business serving local communities into the early hours of the morning particularly at weekends. There have been many robberies of Chinese businesses and in one case in Carrickfergus, Co Antrim, in the early

1990s one Chinese owner was murdered. His murder investigation met with a wall of silence and the perpetrators remain undetected. Despite the arrest of individuals following the recent spate of racist attacks in South Belfast the police have confirmed that no charges have been brought against any individuals.

In mid February the Government announced details of the long awaited hate crime legislation. The proposed measures in the draft Criminal Justice (NI) Order 2004 will enable Courts in the North to increase sentences by up to four years in cases where offences involve hostility based on actual or presumed racial group, religion and sexual orientation which is directed at either an individual or group and includes damage to property. While strong hate crime legislation is a welcome addition to any racial equality and good relations strategy, it will not be much of a deterrent in local communities such as those in South Belfast, if the Director of Public Prosecutions is unable to achieve convictions due to the intimidation of witnesses through victimisation of minority ethnic communities. There is a big 'fear factor' in the community where local people who are opposed to these attacks are afraid to attend community meetings and speak out against the perpetrators. The NI Housing Executive's policy of selling off vacant properties and derelict properties to speculators had increased the number of owner occupants and private landlords. Consequently, landlords have increased lets to minority ethnic people and local people believe their community is being 'squeezed'. The South Belfast Partnership Board believes that part of the problem lies in planning regulations and are pressing for changes to planning laws which make it easy for landlords to change the use of vacant properties in small inner-city



Photos taken at a recent anti-racism rally in Belfast. Photographs: Mike Byron

communities and turn them into multi occupancy accommodation. This creates opportunities for minority ethnic people to move into their small communities and some local community leaders say that this is a cause of racism.

Minority ethnic umbrella groups believe that in the Donegal Road area there is a lot of paramilitary activity and the numbers of asylum seekers although small are increasing in this area. One local landlord was interviewed in the media about the racist attacks on properties he had let to minority ethnic families in the area, and confirmed that he had been 'put under pressure' by the UVF not to let properties to members of minority ethnic communities.

At the other end of the Donegal Road community leaders in the Donegal Pass area fear their community is being eroded and being replaced with a 'Chinatown'. Here too there are concerns over land use for private development in an area that has supported mainly public housing. This area hosts an established Chinese community supporting popular food restaurant businesses, however there is evidence of local resentment directed at the Chinese community's economic success in the face of disadvantage in local dominant white loyalist communities. Community representatives here say they are happy to accept other cultures if they accept their British culture.

Clearly these racist policies, practices and attitudes need to be challenged and at policy and practice level they will be through the Equality Commission's development and promotion of a Code of Practice on Housing and Accommodation and through the Equality Impact Assessment process requiring public authorities to mitigate against any policy considered to be adversely impacting on racial groups. Such challenges to racism must also come from within communities and which need to be sustained in order to be effective in anti racism work.

There is a need to build the capacity of black and minority ethnic community organisations through sustained long term funding and skills development programmes to enable them to effectively engage with local communities, to raise awareness and to challenge racism. This must be a key element of any Racial Equality Strategy and should be included as common measures in both the Irish and UK National Action Plans Against Racism as called for in the Durban Declaration arising from the UN World Conference Against Racism in 2001.

Media Review



A selection of articles from the NCCRI press-cutting archive from 2004 on the reaction to the banning of conspicuous religious symbols in state schools in France.

There was significant media coverage of the proposed new law in France seeking to ban religious symbols such as the hijab, Jewish skullcaps and large Christian crosses. The law was passed on the 10th of February and is expected to come into force in schools in September. President Chirac was reported as saying that the aim of the ban was to protect the principle of secularism and equality but some commentators believe the primary motivation was to curb the perceived growth of Islamic fundamentalism in France's Muslim community – the largest in Western Europe at an estimated five million. The ban does not apply to students in private schools or to French schools in other countries. Also pupils will still be allowed to wear discreet religious symbols of faith such as Islamic pendants, the Star of David or crosses. Whatever the intent and individual motivations, the ban has helped stir up considerable anti Muslim rhetoric in France.

Review of Selected Media Reports

The French Prime Minister Mr. Jean Pierre Raffarin was reported as saying that certain religious signs such as the Islamic veil are taking on a political meaning. He rejected arguments from the Muslim and Jewish communities that head coverings was a requirement of their religion and the ban would violate their freedom of belief, responding that religion cannot be a political project. He also said that the French government would soon expand the ban into public hospitals where some Muslims refuse treatment by doctors of the opposite sex and to the civil service and possibly private companies.

Patsy McGarry, Religious Affairs Correspondent with the Irish Times reported on a demonstration in January

outside the French embassy in Dublin against plans by French President Mr. Jacques Chirac to ban the hijab and other overt religious symbols in state schools. The demonstration was part of a worldwide International Day of Protest against the ban. He reported Muslim women as saying that they do not expect that there will be moves by the authorities here to outlaw headscarves. They acknowledged that there have been problems with wearing the hijab in Irish schools in the past but not anymore. He reported Patricia McKenna MEP as saying that unlike Christians, Muslims have a specific dress code and if we value free speech and democracy we have to be willing to allow people to express their ethnic and religious identities. She said that there would be outrage in Ireland if priests wearing collars or nuns in habits were banned from schools. She said that the proposed French law represented “a gross breach of human rights, including the right to religious expression and worship.”

Fintan O Toole of the Irish Times took a different view from Patricia McKenna concerning the demonstration at the French embassy. ‘The protesters are wrong and that they expose the dangers of a kind of multicultural ideology that is in fact a recipe for ghettoisation’ He argues that by taking the teachings of a conservative elite as the essence of Islam we will be employing a type of tolerant bigotry, denying Islam the complexity and contradiction that we recognise in Christianity. He feels there is a real danger that, in the name of tolerance, we end up validating fake traditions that use religion as an excuse for oppression. He disagrees with the view that Muslims have a specific dress code, saying that the only references to women's clothing in the Koran are vague, the only clear requirement being modesty which was a concept that varies according to the cultural norms of a particular period or society. He pointed to the different interpretations of what should be worn by women from the



headscarf to the yashmak and opposed the use of the language of human rights to defend patriarchal traditions with no real roots in religion. He gives the example of the weekend demonstrations in Paris where the march was led by men who prevented reporters from speaking to veiled and unveiled women who walked behind them. He concluded by saying that spurious notions of diversity can serve to undermine equality.

Lara Marlowe for the Irish Times argues that the debate on headscarves in France revealed a racist subtext. She reported that the law is widely viewed as a means to braking Islamic fundamentalism, as eight to ten percent of France's population are Muslim. She reported that the public debate in France went far beyond the wearing of headscarves with anti-Islamic prejudice coming to the surface. Discussions focused on educators being threatened for teaching biology, the history of religion or the Holocaust and people denouncing instances of forced marriage and polygamy in France. She reports that one of the main arguments for the legislation was that teachers were put in the awkward position of safeguarding France's secular tradition without a law to support them yet the largest federation of public schools teachers last week said that the ban was dangerous for secularisation and the Republic. Deputies who did not vote in favour of the ban said the ban was discriminatory, stigmatising and marginalising further the Muslim community of France. In July 2003 Mr. Chirac established the Stasi Commission to study the desirability of such a law banning headscarves. Lara Marlowe reports that of the 150 witnesses called only one was a woman wearing a headscarf, a Frenchwoman of Algerian origin Ms. Saida Kada, the co-author of a book on the wearing of the veil. She was reported as saying that the French debate has taken on a dispute that exists within the Muslim

community itself and had concluded that Muslims who believe the covering is God's will are fundamentalists and those who say its not are moderate and good. She had overheard a politician remark that the ban would liberate immigrant women. She considered this attitude to be "colonial rhetoric".

Elaine Ganley for the Irish Examiner in Paris reported the British Foreign Office Minister as saying that the British government supports the right to display religious symbols, saying that integration does not require assimilation. She reports that on the 10th of February the French government voted overwhelmingly to ban students from wearing Islamic headscarves and other religious apparels in schools. It will then go to the Senate in March where little opposition is expected. Sanctions for refusing to remove conspicuous religious signs and clothing include warnings to temporary suspension from school to expulsion. The ban will also prevent students from denying the Holocaust or refusing to take part in biology or physical education. Media coverage indicate that Belgium and France may follow France's example and impose a similar ban in their respective countries.

NOTICEBOARD



World Refugee Day Awards 2004

A special UN General Assembly Resolution was unanimously adopted in 2000, designating the 20th of June every year as World Refugee Day. To mark this day, the African Refugee Network in partnership with Dublin City Council, Integrating Ireland, NCCRI, SPIRASI, KNOW RACISM and UNHCR, with support from CREATE, will again, following the success of last year, organise World Refugee Day Awards. These Awards are presented to asylum seekers and refugees who have positively contributed to the local communities in which they live and also to individuals from those communities who have extended a hand of friendship and solidarity to promote the inclusion of refugees and asylum seekers in their communities.

The award is open to anyone living in Ireland. The emphasis is on individuals contributing to interaction at a local and regional level rather than on national organisations. Specially commissioned awards from the National College of Art and Design will be presented to the winners at the ceremony to take place on Thursday 17th of June 2004 in the Atrium, Civic Office, Dublin City Council, Woodquay, Dublin 2. Two awards will be given under each of the five categories which are Arts & Culture, Sports, Community and Environment, Education and Youth, Health and Welfare.

For more information and nomination forms please contact the African Refugee Network, 90 Meath Street, Dublin 8 Tel. 01-473 4523.

New Publication: Safeguarding the Rights of Migrant Workers and Their Families

The NCCRI and the Irish Human Rights Commission will launch their joint publication on migration standards at European and international level on the 15th of March 2004. The aim of this report is to seek to contribute to the process of ensuring there are adequate safeguards for the rights of migrant workers and their families in Ireland. The report seeks to fulfil this aim through the:

- Review of international human rights conventions that are of relevance to migrant workers and their families, including those not yet ratified by Ireland.
- Review of progress at an EU policy level in developing safeguards for the rights of migrant workers and their families.
- Drawing out the implications for policy in Ireland arising from these two reviews.

Both organisations envisage that the publication will be a very useful tool to inform legislative and policy developments related to migrant workers and their families. It will also create public awareness of the Irish government's obligations in this field and the standards that have yet to be attained. The launch of the publication during the Irish Presidency gives both the NCCRI and the Irish Human Rights Commission an opportunity to call on all the member states of the European Union to ratify the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families 1990. Ratification will form a solid foundation upon which to build a fair migration policy for the enlarged European Union.

For a copy of the publication, you can contact the NCCRI on Tel. 01-478 5777 www.nccri.com or the Irish Human Rights Commission on Tel. 01-858 9601. www.ihrc.ie

Recent Publications



Irish Travellers – Challenging the Myths.
Published as part of Traveller Focus Week 2003 by the Irish Traveller Movement, Pavee Point Travellers Centre, National Travellers Women's Forum and NCCRI. Available from the Irish Traveller Movement at Tel. 01-679 6577.

Donahue/Ward/McVeigh: Misli, Crush, Misli: Irish Travellers and Nomadism: A Research Report for the Irish Traveller Movement and Traveller Movement.
(Northern Ireland). Available from the Irish Traveller Movement Tel. 01-6796577

Cairde: Listen!: The Experiences of Minority Ethnic Women Living with HIV.
November 2003. Available from Cairde at Tel. 01-855 2089.

Africa Solidarity Centre; Positive Politics: Participation of Immigrants and Ethnic Minorities in the Electoral Process (2003).
Available from www.africasolidarity.ie

EUMC: Migrants, Minorities and Employment: Exclusion, Discrimination and Anti-discrimination in 15 Member States of the European Union.
October 2003. Available from the EUMC, information@eumc.eu.int or website: <http://eumc.eu.int>

Equality Authority (Cathryn Costello/Eilis Barry): Equality in Diversity: The New Equality Directives.
Collection of 18 essays. Available from Equality Authority, 2 Clonmel Street, Dublin 2.

Irish Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children: "Leanbh – Protecting Children Begging and at Risk on the Streets."
Annual Report 2002-2003

Craol, Community Radio Forum of Ireland: Community Radio and Community Development.
A report funded by the Broadcasting Commission of Ireland under the Community Radio Support Scheme.

Available from Craol at 01-462 3333 please contact Stephen Mulkearn at Tallaght FM, 01 462 3333 <mailto:tcr@eircom.net>

Terenure Enterprise Centre: Enterprise Supports, Training and Start-Up Assistance for Ethnic Minority Entrepreneurs.

October 2003. Available from Terenure Enterprise Centre, 17 Rathfarnham Road, Terenure, Dublin 6. Tel. 01-490 3237

European Network Against Racism: European Strategies to Combat Racism and Xenophobia as a Crime.
Available at www.enar-eu.org

Tallaght Partnership: Manual of the Education and Ethnic Minorities Project.
Available from Tallaght Partnership. Contact Clement Esebamen at Tel. 01-466 4280

Department of Education & Science: Your Education System.
Available from The Secretariat, Your Education System, Educational Research Centre, Drumcondra, Dublin 9. www.youreducation.ie

Garda Siochana Annual Report 2002.
Available from Government Publications or www.garda.ie

Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform Annual Report 2002.
Available from Government Publications or www.justice.ie

South West Inner City Network: Building Solidarity Across Communities: Bringing Anti-Racism to the South-West Inner City.
October 2003. Available from South West Inner City Network Ltd. Tel. 01-473 2141

Slava Beskhnelnitskii: Perceptions of Ireland – an illustrated book about Ireland in the Russian language.
Contact the Society of Russian Speakers in Ireland (SORUSSI) at Tel. 087-6439105.

What is Racism?

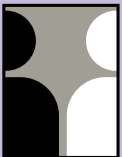
Racism is a specific form of discrimination and exclusion faced by minority ethnic groups in Ireland. It is based on the false belief that some 'races' are inherently superior to others because of different skin colour, nationality, ethnic or cultural background. Racism deprives people of their basic human rights, dignity and respect.

Racial discrimination is defined in Article One of the UN International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (1969) as

"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."

What is Interculturalism?

An intercultural approach is the development of strategy, policy and practice that promotes interaction, understanding, respect and integration between different cultures and ethnic groups on the basis that cultural diversity is a strength that can enrich society, without glossing over issues such as racism. Interculturalism is now replacing earlier approaches such as assimilation and multiculturalism.



NCCRI

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