



AN ROINN DLÍ AGUS CIRT AGUS COMHIONANNAIS
DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE AND EQUALITY

**Minutes of the 1st Meeting of the Migrant Integration Strategy Monitoring
and Co-ordination Committee
Tuesday 27 June 2017
Yeats Suite, Mont Clare Hotel, 1-4 Merrion Street Lower, Dublin 2**

Attendees:

Minister David Stanton T.D. (Chair, D/Justice and Equality)
Ms. Alwiye Xuseyn (AkidWa)
Ms. Anca Lupu (New Communities Partnership)
Ms. Carol Baxter (D/Justice and Equality)
Ms. Catríona O'Brien (D/Education and Skills)
Sgt. Dave McInerney (An Garda Síochána)
Mr. David Lawler (D/Defence)
Mr. Declan Smyth (Central Statistics Office)
Ms. Diane Nurse (Health Service Executive)
Ms. Fiona Finn (NASC)
Ms. Fiona Conroy (D/Health)
Mr. Frank Bradley (OPMI, D/Justice and Equality)
Ms. Helen Lowey (Migrant Rights Centre Ireland)
Mr. John Burke (D/Public Expenditure and Reform)
Mr. John Lohan (D/Children and Youth Affairs)
Mr. Kevin Clarke (INIS, D/Justice and Equality)
Ms. Michelle Noone (Public Appointments Service)
Ms. Olive Walsh (D/Transport, Tourism and Sport)
Ms. Philomena Connick (OPMI, D/Justice and Equality)
Mr. Richard King (Crosscare)
Ms. Sarah O'Halloran (D/Social Protection)
Ms. Saoirse Brady (Children's Right Alliance)
Mr. Shane O'Connor (OPMI, D/Justice and Equality)
Ms. Teresa Buczkowska (Immigrant Council of Ireland)
Ms. Tinu Achioya (Cultúr)
Ms. Tonya Myles (Cairde)
Ms. Úna Ní Dhubhghaill (OPMI, D/Justice and Equality)

Apologies:

Ms. Fiona Ward, (Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation)
Ms. Leonie Kerins, (Doras Luimní)
Mr. Paul Lemass, (Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government)
Ms. Sharon Corcoran, (County and City Managers Association)

1. Opening Remarks and Adoption of Agenda

Minister Stanton opened the meeting by welcoming the nominees to the Committee. He noted the remit of the Committee was to monitor and co-ordinate the implementation of the Migrant Integration Strategy. He outlined the Strategy's Whole-of-Government approach which is reflected in the Committee's membership. The Minister noted that the non-Government sector also have a key role to play, and encouraged NGO colleagues to identify opportunities to contribute meaningfully to the implementation of the strategy. The strategic approach is to combine access for migrants to mainstream services with targeted positive action programmes to address specific needs. An important task for this Committee will be to monitor how well that approach is working and recommend changes where evidence shows they are needed. The Minister emphasised the importance of this work at present and underlined the risks faced by Irish society if integration is not supported by government, communities and individuals, or if anti-integration agendas are allowed to gain a foothold in communities.

The Minister concluded his opening remarks and proposed the adoption of the agenda. The agenda was adopted without amendment.

2. Adoption of Terms of Reference for Committee

Minister Stanton asked Ms. Úna Ní Dhubhghaill from the Office for the Promotion of Migrant Integration to introduce the Terms of Reference.

Ms. Ní Dhubhghaill, presented an overview of the proposed Terms of Reference for the Committee. These are derived from the Strategy itself, as adopted by Government.

The Terms of Reference are as follows:

1. To oversee implementation of the Migrant Integration Strategy;
2. To review implementation of all actions;
3. To agree indicators for monitoring progress;
4. To assess whether or not further action is required on specific issues;
5. To make recommendations on actions needed to be added to the Strategy or changed to respond to changing needs;
6. To contribute to a progress report to Government at the end of 2018 on the implementation of all actions.

The Terms of Reference were adopted without amendment.

3. Presentation on Migrant Integration Strategy

Ms. Carol Baxter, Assistant Secretary at the Department of Justice and Equality, gave a brief presentation on the Strategy.

Ms. Baxter presented an overview of the Migrant Integration Strategy, whose vision is that migrants are facilitated to play a full role in Irish society, that integration is a core principle of Irish life and that Irish society and institutions should work together to promote integration. Ms. Baxter summarised the strategic approach and the specific actions applicable to Government Departments and Agencies.

Minister Stanton thanked Ms. Baxter for her presentation, and emphasised the cross-cutting nature of this policy area for both Government Departments and voluntary organisations.

4. Tour de Table

Minister Stanton invited each representative on the Committee to give an update on progress towards the Strategy commitments in their area of responsibility or their own organisation's contribution to migrant integration. Core issues raised by each organisation are listed below.

Core Issues outlined by organisation		
Mr. Kevin Clarke	INIS, Department of Justice and Equality	Citizenship Fees: under ongoing review, not expected to increase. Citizenship test: could be used to incentivise English language acquisition.
Mr. John Burke	Department of Public Expenditure and Reform	One per cent target on diversity within the civil service: first step will be to establish the baseline.
Ms. Catriona O'Brien	Department of Education and Skills	Emphasised the diversity among migrants' education levels, skills and need for supports. Underrepresentation among teachers: competency in Irish is an issue.
Ms. Fiona Conroy	Department of Health	Relevant colleagues from 'Social Inclusion' to follow up.
Mr. John Lohan	Department of Children and Youth Affairs	Migrant children can have particular vulnerabilities. This strategy is consistent with DCYA's own approach (<i>Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures</i>) and there is some overlap between this Committee and the Advisory Council for that Strategy.

Ms. Sarah O'Halloran	Department of Social Protection	There are a number of actions for DSP. The current social inclusion action plan is coming to an end and work is underway on a new plan. This involves public consultation. The Migrant integration strategy will be taken into account in this process.
Ms. Olive Walsh	Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport	Sports funding can be used in various ways to target migrant participation. Work is underway in the Local Sports Partnerships and National Governing Bodies supported by Sport Ireland to boost migrant participation. Under the DTTAS Sports Capital Programme, assessment of applications includes the use of facilities/equipment by disadvantaged groups and people, including migrants.
Mr. David Lawler	Department of Defence	On a national basis, the Defence Forces have developed a diversity and inclusion strategy and action plan and this reflects the commitment in the White Paper on defence that the Defence Forces should be representative of the society they serve.
Mr. Declan Smyth	Central Statistics Office	CSO is rolling out a series of 2016 census data publications. The Migration and Diversity publication is due in September. The CSO will also be publishing revised annual population estimates for 2011-2017 in September to take account of the 2016 Census results.
Sgt. Dave McInerney	An Garda Síochána	The Garda Racial, Intercultural and Diversity Office are providing intercultural training courses in collaboration with civil society organisations.
Ms. Diane Nurse	Health Service Executive	Main priority could be around interpreting, HSE would welcome the development of an all-government approach to interpreting. The gathering of ethnicity data by health service providers is also critical to establishing migrant needs in this area.
Ms. Michelle Noone	Public Appointments Service	This is an important focus area at present for PAS, who conduct 'Diversity Audits' of recruitment campaigns and run training initiatives for staff so that they are adept at communicating with candidates from different backgrounds.
Ms. Fiona Finn	NASC	NASC provide information, support and advocacy services to all migrant categories. Currently working with Cork City Council in developing their integration strategy. Work with political parties to encourage migrant voter registration.
Ms. Tonya Myles	Cairde	Concern around migrant health, mental health in particular, and other issues having a direct effect on health. Dealing with clients that have reported experiencing discrimination by public services and found that normal complaints procedures are often not adequate.

Ms. Teresa Buczkowska	Immigrant Council of Ireland	Integration work – providing anti-racism training to front line staff. Focus on civic participation. Training modules on voting rights etc. Support migrants who want to run for local elections.
Ms. Alwiye Xuseyn	AkidWa	Work to promote equality for migrant women through training. Encouraging migrant women to participate in democratic representation, running in local elections.
Ms. Anca Lupu	New Communities Partnership	Provide a range of training programmes for migrants. Work with schools to support migrant children to become more knowledgeable about Irish society.
Ms. Helen Lowry	Migrant Rights Council of Ireland	Focus on migrant workers. Provide information and advocacy to non-EEA persons and help them to navigate the system. Also community development work.
Mr. Richard King	Crosscare	Provides advocacy services to migrants – focus on certain vulnerable communities. Particular focus on homeless migrants – supporting migrants exiting homelessness.
Ms. Tinu Achioya	Cultúr	Supports migrants in Meath by running programmes of education, teaching migrants English for employment prospects and providing integration supports.
Ms. Saoirse Brady	Children’s Right Alliance	Expertise in a range of different areas, particular focus on child refugee initiative, consequences for children of time spent in direct provision, etc.

Minister Stanton thanked all committee members for their contributions and acknowledged the considerable work ongoing in many areas that will help to achieve the objectives of this Strategy. The committee will continue to monitor progress on all actions in the Strategy as there is a lot more work to do.

5. Presentation on 2016 Census Figures

Minister Stanton invited Mr. Declan Smyth of the Central Statistics Office to put into context the work of the committee with a short presentation on what the 2016 Census figures can tell us so far about migration, ethnicity and diversity.

Themes covered included: the increase in the number of foreign born persons, country of origin breakdowns, Dual Irish Nationality impact on figures (i.e. the decrease in some non-national measures may be accounted for by increases in dual or Irish nationals, leading to the necessity to cross-reference place of birth to maintain visibility of migrants in the data), foreign languages spoken at home, and labour force participation by nationality.

6. Proposed Work Plan for Committee

Minister Stanton invited Ms. Úna Ní Dhubhghaill to introduce the proposed Working and Co-ordination Arrangements for the Committee.

Ms. Ní Dhubhghaill, presented the proposed work plan and approach. For ease of management and co-ordination, it was proposed to consolidate the 76 actions from the Strategy under five broader thematic sub-committees, with a central co-ordination group to co-ordinate reporting and address a small number of specific cross-cutting actions. The five themes are:

1. Active Citizenship;
2. Education;
3. Employment and Pathways to Work;
4. Promoting Intercultural Awareness and combating Racism and Xenophobia;
5. Public Services and Social Inclusion.

It was proposed that the organisation with the most actions in each theme would chair the thematic subcommittees. The co-ordination group would be chaired by the OPMI and include the Chair of each of the thematic sub-committees. The membership of the subcommittees will be dictated by the theme in question. Each sub-committee will lead on the development of progress indicators for the actions within its thematic area, and on monitoring progress against these indicators to report to the full Committee.

Minister Stanton thanked Ms. Ní Dhubhghaill for the presentation and invited members for their comments on the proposal and questions of clarification. In the discussion that followed, the following points were made:

Organisations are not restricted to membership of a single sub-committee;

NGOs have extensive “on-the-ground” experience and knowledge that they can usefully share with this Committee;

Integration funding seems disproportionately focussed on non-EEA migrants

A number of organisations that are not members of the standing Committee may be asked to participate in sub-committees to bring particular knowledge and expertise to the theme in question.

While the detailed working arrangements for each sub-committee will be a matter for the lead organisation, it will be important to have a consistent approach to progress indicators and reporting.

Committee members were invited to submit their feedback on the working plan proposal and to indicate the subcommittees they wished to participate in

Minister Stanton announced that there would be a feedback form issued after the meeting and that any suggestions for future meetings would be welcomed.

Minister Stanton thanked members for their contributions. These would be reflected in a revised draft of the Work Plan, this was circulated for agreement on the 30th June. Minister Stanton concluded that the Office for the Promotion of Migrant Integration is here to support this work and assist members in whatever way possible, but emphasised that the success of the Strategy will depend on all of the members present.

7. Next Steps

Minister Stanton summarised the 'Next Steps' for the committee.

- A revised Work Plan reflecting the discussion to be circulated by email by the Secretariat [OPMI] for comment /agreement. This email was issued on the 30th June 2017.
 - Members are asked to confirm which sub-committees they wish to participate in. [All Members].
 - Draft minutes of the meeting will be circulated for comment. [OPMI]
 - Following receipt of feedback on Work Plan and sub-committee membership, a revised Work Plan will be circulated. [OPMI]
 - A meeting of the Co-ordination Group will be convened in the coming weeks. [OPMI]
 - Each of the Thematic Sub-Committees is asked to take forward the work of developing progress indicators and timelines ahead of the next meeting.
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8. Any Other Business and Date of Next Meeting

Minister Stanton thanked all for their attendance and contributions today. The next meeting of the Committee would be provisionally set to take place on the **17th of October**, this date is subject to change, and a revised date of **4th October** is now set.