



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

## Minutes of the 2nd Meeting of the Migrant Integration Strategy Monitoring and Co-ordination Committee Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> October 2017: Atrium, St Stephen's Green

### Attendees:

Minister David Stanton T.D. (Chair, D/Justice and Equality)  
Mr. Noel Waters (Secretary General, D/Justice and Equality)  
Ms. Carol Baxter (Asst. Secretary, D/Justice and Equality – Equality, Integration and Asylum Services)  
Ms. Úna Ni Dhubhghaill (D/Justice and Equality – Head of Integration, OPMI)  
Mr. Adam Egan (D/Justice and Equality – Equality Division)  
Ms. Alwiye Xuseyn (AkidWa)  
Ms. Anca Lupu (New Communities Partnership)  
Ms. Breda Farrell (D/Transport, Tourism and Sport) (*Standing in for Olive Walsh*)  
Ms. Carol Baxter (D/Justice and Equality)  
Ms. Patricia Sheehan (D/Education and Skills) (*Standing in for Catriona O'Brien*)  
Sgt. Dave McInerney (An Garda Síochána)  
Ms. Diane Nurse (Health Service Executive)  
Ms. Fiona Hurley (NASC) (*standing in for Ms. Fiona Finn*)  
Ms. Fiona Conroy (D/Health)  
Ms. Fiona Ward, (D/Business, Enterprise and Innovation)  
Mr. Grant Couper (D/ Housing, Planning and Local Government)  
Ms. Helen Lowry (Migrant Rights Centre Ireland)  
Ms. Hillary Harmon (Children's Right Alliance) (*Standing in for Ms. Saoirse Brady*)  
Mr. Joe O'Brien (Immigrant Council of Ireland)  
Mr. John Burke (D/Public Expenditure and Reform)  
Mr. John Lohan (D/Children and Youth Affairs)  
Ms. Judy Howard (D/Education and Skills)  
Mr. Kevin Clarke (INIS, D/Justice and Equality)  
Ms. Marianna Prontera (Cairde)  
Mr. Mark Shannon (D/Public Expenditure and Reform)  
Ms. Michelle Noone (Public Appointments Service)  
Mr. Nick Henderson (Irish Refugee Council)  
Ms. Patricia Sheehan (D/Education and Skills)  
Mr. Paul Crowley (Central Statistics Office)  
Ms. Philomena Connick (OPMI, D/Justice and Equality)  
Ms. Rachel Bermingham (Doras Luimní)  
Mr. Richard King (Crosscare)  
Ms. Sarah O'Halloran (D/Employment Affairs and Social Protection)  
Mr. Shane O'Connor (OPMI, D/Justice and Equality)  
Ms. Tinu Achioya (Cultúr)

### Apologies:

Ms. Sharon Corcoran, (City and County Managers Association)  
Mr. David Lawler (D/Defence)  
Mr. John Burke (D/Public Expenditure and Reform)  
Ms. Tonya Myles (Cáirde)

**Apologies (continued):**

Mr. Paul Lemass (D/Housing, Planning and Local Government)

Ms. Caitriona O'Brien (D/Education and Skills)

Mr. Declan Smyth (CSO)

Ms. Leonie Kerins (Doras Luimní)

Ms. Saoirse Brady (Children's Rights Allowance)

## **Welcome and Apologies**

Minister Stanton opened the meeting and highlighted the importance that the Government attaches to the work of the Committee and that this was reflected by Minister Flanagan confirming he will attend the next meeting. He also urged Committee members to work together beyond the confines of the Committee to ensure progress on the Strategy.

The Minister asked Committee members who find themselves unable to attend to ensure they send a suitable deputy in their stead. The Minister stated that at the first Committee meeting in June he detected a real sense of purpose among the group to deliver on the goals of the Strategy and today presents a great opportunity to build on that.

Nick Henderson of the Irish Refugee Council was also welcomed to the committee for the first time.

## **1. Opening Remarks & Adoption of Agenda**

The Minister opening remarks concluded that the focus of the day's meeting should be on agreeing indicators and desired outcomes for the 76 actions in the strategy and to need to capture a clear understanding of how these actions will have a positive impact on migrant lives. The Minister suggested that that the Migrant Integration Strategy and its associated Reporting template would be living documents which could change to capture progress and changes to indicators when needed.

The Agenda was adopted without comment.

## **2. Minutes of Last Meeting**

Minutes were adopted without comment.

## **3. Matters Arising**

Some Government departments have been restructured with changes in work since the first meeting. Mr. Grant Couper mentioned how two actions had moved to the new Department of Rural and Community Development (Actions 17 and 22). Employment policy has moved to Social Protection.

The Minister remarked that the sub committees have been slow in getting up and running and he raised issue of chairmanship of committees.

Several issues were raised by the members.

- Some NGOs raised capacity issues for organisations from outside Dublin who have to attend Committee meetings in Dublin
- NGOs feel they could contribute to multiple sub-committees, but they could not commit without clarity on working arrangements as there will be resource issues
- There was general agreement that work on indicators would be more appropriate in the proposed thematic sub-committee structure.
- There were queries on the working arrangements for the proposed thematic sub-committees and in particular how frequently they would meet and who would chair the meetings

- The NGOs had a pre-meeting in advance of today's Committee meeting and a key issue which emerged was that of housing for migrants which they feel has largely been ignored in the Strategy. The NGO group requested that the Committee explore ways of bringing the focus onto the migrant housing issue as part of their work.
- Concerns were raised by some Committee about the difference between 'responsible bodies' and 'reporting departments' on the worksheets. In particular the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection stated they could not reasonably be expected to follow through on 24 actions and chair two thematic sub-committees on top of their existing workload without additional resources.

The officials, in response, remarked

- Anxious that the sub-committees form and get up and running in advance of the next Committee meeting and stated that a schedule of meetings starting in early November will be circulated in due course.
- Noted that the move of the Employment portfolio to DEASP created more work and suggested that the working arrangements for sub-committees could be re-examined. This can be discussed bilaterally with DEASP.
- The Minister suggesting housing could be examined at the one-year review mark, but he wished to see the current actions bedded in and implemented first.

At this juncture, the Secretary General of the Department of Justice and Equality, Noel Waters, addressed the meeting and reiterated the Minister of State's earlier comments about the importance of the work being done by the Committee in light of the changing face of Ireland. He encouraged all to work in a spirit of cooperation as the success or failure of this strategy will have far-reaching impact.

#### **4. Presentation on 2016 Census Profile 7 : Migration and Diversity**

Minister Stanton invited Mr. Paul Crowley of the Central Statistics Office to give a short presentation on what the 2016 Census figures could tell us so far about migration, ethnicity and diversity. This was followed by questions and a discussion.

- Population will likely rise by 250k by 2021 census.
- Migrant population masked by how respondents self-identify.
- Brexit and a common travel area with UK may push more to seek Irish citizenship.
- Difficult to disaggregate data to identify Irish born children to migrant parents – working with ESRI to create new identifiers.
- The census captures ethnicity, but does not capture 'race'.
- Members invited to attend a citizenship ceremony.

#### **5. Integration Strategy Progress Report #2**

Minister Stanton invited Shane O'Connor to give an overview of the progress on the actions to the Committee. This was followed by a round table discussion involving Departments and Agencies. Issues raised included:

- The limitations of the Social Inclusions data when assessing poverty and how the collection must be in line with EU comparative monitoring guidelines, making stratification challenging.
- Data is needed to map how poverty levels amongst migrant groups is changing over the duration of the strategy.
- Statistics show a higher proportion of non-Irish people to Irish homeless at present. Difficulty in differentiating entitlements, from legal status and ordinary residence.
- It was suggested a themed day on progress in education could be valuable.
- Need to establish metrics and baselines on actions such as new teachers.
- The process for repeat citizenship applications was discussed, particularly where someone has wrongly declared on their form. Every case judged on its own merits, no further guidance could be given beyond being factually accurate in the application.
- The registration of non-nationals under 16 was discussed.
- A new research agreement with ESRI is being established with the aim of creating new data collection processes.
- There was a discussion about constitutes a school outside the system, outside of the Dept. of Education remit, particularly religious schools as a process of building relationships with the schools and via this to the parents and the wider communities.
- There are language schools among EU communities that give weekend classes to teach the culture and language of their home culture.
- There was a need to put structures in place for weekend schools, as they are in addition to mainstream education.

## **6. Integration Strategy Monitoring Indicators**

Úna Ní Dhubhghaill gave a presentation on the indicators. Emphasised the need for metrics and set out a number of steps which will be taken in this regard including:

- By 1<sup>st</sup> Nov we will have sorted the sub-committee structures
- By the end of November, we should have identified the input and output indicators.
- Where possible the sub-committees will prepare impact indicators.
- All responses back by 1<sup>st</sup> week in December.
- Committee members from non-responsible bodies can opt into any sub-committee or nominate others to join
- The Main Committee is set and other NGOs cannot join at this point but Committee members, may if they wish, suggest additional nominees for thematic sub-committees
- Commentary is welcome on any indicator and NGOs are not bound to talk purely on the matters before any sub-group they join.
- Would ask for commentary on the existing text indicators by October 19<sup>th</sup>. Where gaps persist, action owners have a duty to do prepare draft indicators for discussion
- At the next plenary session it is proposed that the Committee formally approve the finalised indicators.

## **7. Schedule of Meetings**

This item was not taken due to time constraints.

## **8. AOB**

No items were recorded under AOB.

## **9. Next Meeting**

The next plenary session is provisionally scheduled for Mid-December subject to the availability of the Minister Stanton, Minister Flanagan and the Taoiseach who has also expressed a desire to attend. (Meeting was subsequently re-arranged for 31<sup>st</sup> January 2018)