

WORKING FOR TRAVELLERS EQUALITY

Equality mainstreaming toolkit for enterprise and employment programmes

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THE EQUALITY AUTHORITY
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Key terms

EQUALITY MAINSTREAMING

Systematic integration of an equality perspective into policy-making, policy implementation and policy evaluation.

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

An equality impact assessment involves checking that policies are designed, delivered and evaluated in a way that has a positive impact on members of groups that experience inequality.

EQUALITY COMPETENCE

Equality competent organisations have structures, policies, practices and procedures that enable them to effectively promote equality, accommodate diversity and combat discrimination as an integral part of all their work.

Equality mainstreaming is the goal, equality impact assessment is the means, and equality competence is the capacity to achieve the goal and implement the means.

Introduction to equality mainstreaming for Travellers

This toolkit provides a guide to equality mainstreaming in relation to Travellers, and specifically for enterprise and employment programmes. The methods used are based on best practice principles. They are therefore applicable to other groups targeted, including those groups included in the nine grounds identified in equality legislation.

It is based on the experiences of an equality mainstreaming programme undertaken by the Galway Traveller Movement (GTM) in partnership with the Galway City Partnership and Galway Rural Development.

Between June and November 2012, Galway Traveller Movement (GTM) developed an equality mainstreaming project focusing on enterprise and employment programmes. A series of seminars and workshops took place with project partners Galway City Partnership and Galway Rural Development.

As part of this project, GTM designed and delivered specific training and support for Travellers (and Traveller representatives) to enable them to participate effectively in the equality mainstreaming process. Three Traveller women became 'Traveller enterprise ambassadors' – the term was used to capture the role played by the women. The Traveller enterprise ambassadors had experience of enterprise and had previously participated in pre-enterprise training and an enterprise support programme developed by GTM.

What is equality mainstreaming?

Equality mainstreaming has been defined as 'the systematic incorporation of non-discrimination and equality concerns into designing, implementing and evaluating the policies and programmes of an organisation.'¹

It's where an organisation tries to make sure that an action is implemented in a way that will benefit all groups covered by the equality legislation, where the action is relevant to them.

Who should carry it out?

Equality mainstreaming is an internal exercise. The staff of the organisation responsible for designing, implementing or evaluating policies and programmes should carry it out. Equality mainstreaming can also require external supports. These can include the particular expertise and experience of members of those groups who are the focus of the mainstreaming, and an external expert in the field of implementing equality mainstreaming.

Why do it?

Equality mainstreaming can:

- Enable an organisation to be more effective in promoting equality and combating discrimination as part of its work.
- Support better policy-making, implementation and evaluation by an organisation by ensuring a positive impact on all members of any target group.
- Build confidence in and support for the work of an organisation among all members of the community it seeks to serve.

¹ European Commission (2011) *Compendium of Practice on non-discrimination/equality mainstreaming*, 8

Preparation for equality mainstreaming

CAPACITY-BUILDING

Capacity-building is important for an organisation committed to equality mainstreaming. Those involved in designing, implementing or evaluating policies and programmes need to have the skills, knowledge and values to be able to ensure that the policy or programme has a positive impact on the target group(s).

Diversity and equality training are key to building this capacity. This training can support:

- Development of the skills needed to: 1) conduct an equality impact assessment of policies and programmes, 2) engage with organisations that represent target groups and 3) make adjustments to policies and programmes in order to take account of diversity.
- Acquisition of knowledge about concepts such as equality, diversity and discrimination and of the particular situation, experience and identity of the group(s) that are the focus for an equality impact assessment.
- Embedding of values of equality, respect and recognition for diversity into an organisation's policies and practices. These values are crucial to ensuring policies or programmes have no place for stereotypes, prejudice or discrimination.

Ideally, diversity and equality training should be designed and delivered in conjunction with representatives of the group(s) experiencing inequality.

What we did

At the start of the process, a seminar was held with all project partners, Travellers, and Traveller representatives to discuss equality mainstreaming – concepts and practice. This seminar was facilitated by an expert in equality issues.

ORGANISATIONAL CONTEXT

Organisations committed to equality mainstreaming need to create a context that enables and encourages this equality mainstreaming approach to policies and programmes. The following should be put in place:

- An equality policy that sets out the organisation's commitment to equality mainstreaming and the standards it wishes to achieve.
- Data gathering systems to ensure that policy and programme design is evidence-based when it comes to groups experiencing inequality.
- An equality plan that sets out what the organisation aims to achieve through its policies and actions in relation to groups that experience inequality and discrimination.

What we did

One of the practical outcomes of the equality mainstreaming project was the support provided by GTM and Traveller enterprise ambassadors to partners in putting in place an 'ethnic identifier' to enable data to be gathered on the participation of Travellers in their services.

The ethnic identifier used was based on the question used by the CSO in census 2011.

Equality impact assessment

What is it?

An equality impact assessment is an exercise that can be carried out on the design, implementation or evaluation of a policy or programme to assess the ability of that policy or programme to benefit members of groups that experience inequality and discrimination. It is the key tool for implementing equality mainstreaming.

In conducting an equality impact assessment, we test the policy or programme for potential adverse impacts. This is done by considering the following questions in relation to the design or the delivery of the policy or programme:

- Is the policy or programme discriminatory by treating members of a particular group less favourably?
- Does it take into account the diversity of members of groups experiencing inequality and discrimination that form part of the target group for the policy or programme?
- Does it advance equality for members of groups experiencing inequality and discrimination by having a positive impact on them?

If a policy or programme is found to have an adverse impact on members of groups experiencing inequality and discrimination, an equality impact assessment provides the opportunity for a redesign of the policy or programme and/or its delivery while still meeting the objectives of the policy or programme.

If a redesign is not possible without compromising the objectives of the policy or programme, additional specific measures could be put in place to reduce any adverse impact.

Steps in carrying out an equality impact assessment

Once the policy or programme that is to be the focus for the equality impact assessment has been identified, there are three key steps in the process of an equality impact assessment:

- Gathering knowledge and data
- Assessing impact
- Participation by representatives of the group(s) concerned

Ideally all policies and programmes should be subject to an equality impact assessment. However priority could be given to policies and programmes that are designed to benefit a diverse target group and that are to a significant scale in terms of potential impact and resources deployed.

What we did

Three workshops were held with each of the project partners (6 workshops in total) after the initial training seminar took place. These workshops were practical and each covered the three specific steps involved in undertaking an equality impact assessment. Each of the partners selected a policy for the assessment which ensured that the workshops were practical, relevant and action-based.

This proved so useful and practical I'm sorry I moaned about going in the first place!

Partner organisation workshop participant

[the workshops] were not too technical or academic... plain speak...practical and informative

Partner organisation workshop participant

STEP 1 – GENERATE KNOWLEDGE AND COLLECT DATA

Travellers experience widespread discrimination in Ireland, and 'membership of the Travelling community' is one of the nine grounds specified in equality legislation. In conducting an equality impact assessment, it is necessary to generate knowledge and collect data about Travellers which is relevant to the policy and programme under consideration.

Collecting information about the situation, experience and identity of Travellers is key when testing the impact of a policy or programme on Travellers.

What sort of information should be collected?

The key issues for Travellers should be identified – it is not necessary to gather all existing data in relation to Travellers but instead to collect key data of relevance to the selected policy or programme.²

There are three main headings under which to generate relevant knowledge and collect relevant data in relation to Travellers:

- **Situation** – What is the situation of Travellers? For enterprise and employment policies, this could examine their situation in terms of access to economic resources, their labour market situation, employment rates and education status. It could also consider relevant social issues such as health status and accommodation status. Research and statistical information (e.g. census data) is a good source of information.
- **Experience** – What is the relationship between Travellers and wider society? How does this relationship impact on Travellers' experience with societal institutions? In enterprise and employment policies this could include Travellers' experiences of employment, educational/training establishments, labour market services, or enterprise agencies.

Remember – Racism and discrimination is a reality for Travellers from a very early age. It would be unrealistic to expect that the impacts of these experiences can be eradicated by one or two positive experiences at a later stage in life.

- **Identity** – What are the values, beliefs and aspirations held by Travellers? In relation to enterprise and employment policies, issues of identity in relation to economic activity, family, and nomadism could be taken into account.

Remember – Travellers are not a homogenous group. There may be differences in the experience, situation and identity of each individual or of a particular subgroup, such as older Travellers, younger Travellers, disabled Travellers and Traveller women.

Where to get the knowledge and data?

Sources of data could include:

- Statistical data (e.g. health surveys, census data, local census of Travellers' data, housing data from Department of Environment, etc.).
- Research and qualitative data (e.g. research carried out by local and national Traveller organisations).
- Policy and legislation.
- Policy submissions made by Traveller representative groups.

Sources of knowledge could include:

- Consultation with Travellers and Traveller organisations in relation to the barriers to taking up enterprise and employment programmes.

Remember – it is important to gather local as well as national knowledge and data. There may be significant variance between local and national data, in which case it is important to understand why this is so. For example, accommodation for Travellers may be particularly poor in a local area, relative to the national situation. This could impact on other aspects of their lives.

EXAMPLES OF SITUATION, EXPERIENCE AND IDENTITY OF TRAVELLERS

SITUATION

- Low educational attainment compared with national population
- Higher levels of unemployment
- Poor health status compared with national population

EXPERIENCE

- More likely to experience discrimination and racism at individual level and institutional level

IDENTITY

- Traveller culture values nomadism
- The manner in which the Traveller economy prizes a home base, flexibility and an income focus reflects key elements of Traveller culture
- The extended family is often highly valued
- Passing skills down between generations and family members is valued

For other sources of information, see the back of this toolkit and the factsheet which has been produced as part of this project.

Gaps in information

When gathering data, consider the following:

- Have you found any gaps or difficulties in gathering data?
- How can you compensate for these gaps?
- What steps can you take to improve your own data collection?

STEP 2 – ASSESSMENT OF IMPACT

An assessment of impact considers whether the policy or programme is in any way discriminatory against Travellers, whether it takes account of Traveller diversity and whether it will positively impact on Travellers.

If it is found that the policy or programme discriminates, does not accommodate diversity or fails to advance equality, it will be likely to have an adverse impact and will not have a positive impact. In this case, the policy or programme will need to be amended or redesigned and/or mitigation actions will be required.

This step involves analysing the knowledge and data collected and identifying priorities and issues that need to be considered in relation to the design and delivery of the policy or programme.

On the basis of the knowledge and data gathered on the situation, experience and identity of the Travellers, three key questions are relevant for assessing impact:

- Is the policy or programme free from discrimination against Travellers? Does the policy or programme comply with equality legislation?
- Does the policy or programme adequately take account of the diversity of Travellers in its design and in its delivery?
- Will the policy or programme improve the situation and experience of Travellers and advance equality for them?
- If the answer to any of the above questions is no, the policy or programme is considered to have an adverse impact.

Four further questions then need to be addressed:

- What changes are required to eliminate any discrimination found against Travellers?
- Could the policy or programme and/or its method of delivery be redesigned to better accommodate the cultural diversity of the Traveller community?
- Could the policy or programme and/or its method of delivery be re-designed to better advance equality for Travellers?
- Are there any other actions that need to be taken to alleviate any adverse impact identified?

SAMPLE TEMPLATE

Given what we know about the situation of Travellers, what are the potential issues with the policy or programme in relation to discrimination – diversity – equality?

POSITIVE IMPACTS discrimination – diversity – equality	ADVERSE IMPACTS discrimination – diversity – equality	What needs to happen to mitigate the adverse impacts and to eliminate discrimination, accommodate diversity and advance equality?
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SITUATION

EXPERIENCES

IDENTITY/ VALUES

ARE THERE ANY PARTICULAR GROUPS OF TRAVELLERS (SUBGROUPS) THAT MIGHT BE ADVERSELY IMPACTED UPON BY THE POLICY OR THE ACTION?

DOES THE POLICY NEED TO BE REDESIGNED OR CHANGED? HOW MIGHT IT NEED TO BE REDESIGNED OR CHANGED?

ARE THERE ANY BARRIERS TO THIS HAPPENING? WHAT ARE THESE? WHAT MITIGATING STEPS ARE REQUIRED?

STEP 3 – PARTICIPATION

Travellers and Traveller organisations should participate in equality mainstreaming.

This participation is in addition to the necessary consultation with Travellers and Traveller organisations in the initial formulation of the policy or programme on which the equality impact assessment is conducted.

Organising participation

In the context of an equality impact assessment, participation by Travellers and Traveller organisations is not about assessing the overall quality of the policy, action, or its delivery in general terms. This should already have taken place when the policy was originally formulated and drafted. Here we are specifically talking about participation in relation to assessment of the policy or programme in an equality context.

During this stage of the equality impact assessment, the organisation presents details of the knowledge and data gathered, how this information was analysed and suggested changes to the policy or action arising from this analysis to Travellers and Traveller representatives.

After the presentation, Travellers and Traveller organisation representatives should be invited to comment on and seek clarification on the presentation i.e. the information gathered, the process engaged in and the suggested changes to policy/action.

What we did

The third of three workshops held with each partner organisation as part of this project focused on participation. The partners presented to the Traveller enterprise ambassadors the work they had undertaken on their selected policies for the equality impact assessment, and their proposals for changes in these policies. Discussions on how these policies might impact on Travellers and different groups of Travellers took place.

'It is important that the organisation is open to the questioning and not be intimidated by it. The success of this project was dependent on the openness of the partner organisations.'

– Traveller enterprise ambassador

A working process is then applied where Travellers and Traveller organisation representatives test the adequacy of the knowledge and data gathered, the analysis of this data and the outcomes from the analysis.

This will establish whether further changes need to be made to ensure that the policy or programme contains no discriminatory elements, takes adequate account of difference and advances equality for Travellers.

'It was important to have Travellers on board – real experiences – opportunity to share experiences, listen and to ask questions.'

– Partner organisation view

'It was set out at the beginning that being able to have our voice heard was important. Rather than the voice of those who think that they know about what Travellers needed.'

– Traveller enterprise ambassador

Supporting participation

It is essential that Traveller organisations provide training and support for Travellers and Traveller representatives to equip them with the knowledge and skills to engage in the equality mainstreaming process.

What we did

Travellers played a key role in the equality mainstreaming project and workshops. Prior to the workshops, GTM provided training to Travellers on the following:

- Key concepts of equality and equality mainstreaming
- An overview of Travellers in Ireland and the Traveller economy
- Racism, discrimination and human rights
- Gathering information about the situation, experience and identity of Travellers
- The practice of equality mainstreaming

'The first training session raised these issues about the difference between discrimination and equality of outcome. It opened up the whole discussion about what equality actually means.'

Traveller Enterprise Ambassador

Although I am a Traveller, I learned a lot about my own culture and about Travellers situation, experience and identity and the impact of policies

Traveller Enterprise Ambassador

Three enterprise ambassadors participated in this equality mainstreaming project. They identified the following skills and attributes as important for ambassadors:

- Previous involvement in issues involving Travellers within a Traveller organisation as well as in enterprise
- Awareness of the situation, experience and identity of Travellers
- Commitment to achieving equality for Travellers
- Ability to hear negative comments about Travellers and to respond diplomatically
- Good communication skills
- Confidence and enthusiasm

In addition to the formal training, the three enterprise ambassadors participated in preparatory sessions prior to each workshop. These preparatory sessions provided an opportunity for the ambassadors to rehearse their roles in delivering the workshops and in so doing built their skills and confidence.

These preparatory sessions provided a space for discussions and role plays in relation to the content and delivery of each individual workshop. They covered the following:

- Designing and delivering the workshop – agreeing each individual's role in the delivery of the workshop, practicing presentations, role playing possible scenarios that might emerge at the workshops, fine-tuning timing of the workshops, etc.
- Preparation for presentation of inputs on situation, experience and identity of Travellers for workshops. Trial runs and exercises on undertaking an impact assessment of policies.

It was found that this approach of 'learning by doing' prior to each workshop built upon the theoretical approach of the initial training workshops.

Debriefing sessions were also provided for the ambassadors by GTM after each workshop. These sessions created a space to discuss the process i.e. what worked well, what they found challenging and to identify how the process might be improved on in subsequent sessions.

'Preparation meetings and debriefing meetings after each workshop were important, for clarifying what was ahead of you and what you were going into for the next session.'

Traveller enterprise ambassador

'I felt comfortable going into both partner organisations because there were links with them. If you were going into an organisation that was not open (to Travellers) and where there was no prior knowledge (of Travellers), it would be different. It can be frightening walking in. But knowing each other and having that relationship in advance helped.'

Traveller enterprise ambassador

Taking Action

Finally, it is important to note that equality mainstreaming involves taking action arising from the findings of the equality impact assessment.

An equality action plan will establish short and medium term priorities, a timeframe for achieving priorities, and will monitor and review progress in achieving priorities.

What we did

Arising from the equality mainstreaming project, partners have amended ways in which programmes are advertised, targeted and communicated. Ethnic identifiers have been put in place, and policies have been changed.

I found the Equality Workshops provided an ideal opportunity to gain clarity on what Equality Mainstreaming is. I am now applying an integrated equality perspective to three labour activation measures in the company. Before taking part in the workshops I did not feel confident enough to do this.

Galway City Partnership

It made us more aware that instinctive actions being undertaken by staff to assist equality of access and outcome need to be clearly set out in our policies to ensure continuity of service - also the process helped to identify gaps and improvements that could be made."

Working through the tool kit has provided a solid base from which to look at equality mainstreaming in our other programmes and services.

Galway Rural Development

Resources

Useful websites

Pavee Point
paveepoint.ie

Irish Traveller Movement
itmtrav.ie

National Traveller Women's Forum
ntwf.net

Galway Traveller Movement
gtmtrav.ie

Equality Authority
equality.ie

European Commission
ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/index_en.htm

Useful publications

NATIONAL PUBLICATIONS

Task Force on the Travelling Community (1995) Report of the Task Force on the Travelling Community. Dublin: Government Publications.

Central Statistics Office: Census 2011 statistics. www.cso.ie

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Hibernian Consulting (2006) Opening Pathways to Employment for Travellers in South Dublin County Council. Review of Pilot Action by South Dublin County Council on Traveller Employment. Undertaken as part of the Equal at Work initiative. http://cdb.southdublin.ie/index.php?option=com_docman&task=cat_view&gid=187

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