

# National Traveller and Roma Inclusion Strategy 2017 – 2021



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



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the most disadvantaged and  
marginalised people in Ireland.



# Foreword

I am delighted, in my capacity as Minister of State for Justice with special responsibility for Equality, Immigration and Integration, to present the National Traveller and Roma Inclusion Strategy for the years 2017 – 2021 inclusive. This Inclusion Strategy is a cross-Departmental initiative to improve the lives of the Traveller and Roma communities in Ireland.

Travellers and Roma are among the most disadvantaged and marginalised people in Ireland. During the years of the financial crisis from which Ireland is emerging, those at the margins of our society frequently – and regrettably – suffered disproportionately from the effects of financial adjustments. Now that Ireland's economy is back on a firmer footing, it is a moral and societal imperative that we work together to address the real needs of these communities.

It is worth noting, however, that budgetary/ economic considerations are not the only factor at play in disadvantage or marginalisation; rather, we need to adopt an approach across Government that considers both the direct and indirect effects of policies on groups and individuals that are socially disadvantaged.

I also firmly believe that we need to adopt a partnership approach with marginalised groups, such as Traveller and Roma organisations,

to ensure that their concerns are considered when national policy is being developed. It is not a matter of the State deciding what is best for marginalised groups and individuals – that approach will not result in meaningful change or improvement in quality of life over the long term. We need to work together in a true partnership where Travellers and Roma groups and individuals work with Government to address the challenges that arise. Such a collaborative and participative approach is necessary so that Travellers and Roma will feel valued and empowered in our society and so that they will feel that they have ownership over, or input into, the decisions which affect their lives.

I am particularly concerned by the reported rate of mental health problems in both the Traveller and Roma communities. Reliable data has indicated that the suicide rate is almost seven times higher among Traveller males than in the general population. As a society, we cannot stand idly by and allow this situation to continue. In addition, especially as a former teacher, I am concerned by the poor education completion rates of both Traveller and Roma children and youths. Action is needed now, across the public sector, to address these and many other problematic issues.

This Inclusion Strategy is the result of painstaking work, participation and cooperation by a wide array of individuals, organisations and Government Departments over the past eighteen months. I am proud to say that it heralds a new era for Traveller and Roma inclusion in Ireland.

My Department held a comprehensive, three phase, public consultation to develop this new Inclusion Strategy. Phase 1 sought to identify the key themes for the new Inclusion Strategy, while the consultations in Phase 2 assisted in the identification and agreement of high level objectives under each of the agreed key themes. While all of the Traveller representative bodies did their utmost to contribute to this process, I would particularly like to pay tribute to Pavee Point who provided valuable administrative assistance in this regard in Phases 1 and 2. Phase 3 of the consultative process was used to identify an array of detailed actions (to achieve each agreed objective) as well as the core Departmental/organisational responsibilities needed for fulfilment of those actions.

Among the key initiatives and developments arising from the development of this Inclusion Strategy are the following:

1. State recognition of Travellers as an ethnic group of the Irish nation;
2. investment by the State in community-based support mechanisms to ensure greater retention of Traveller and Roma children and youths in the education system;
3. increased funding to be invested by the State to promote knowledge of, and pride in, Traveller culture and heritage;
4. in consultation with Traveller representatives, a culturally appropriate initiative will be designed to address feuding in the community;
5. a new system of ethnic identifiers will be developed across the public sector to help to track progress and/or challenges for the Traveller and Roma communities in Ireland; and
6. reinvigorated efforts by the State to ensure that Travellers and Roma interact fully with the public health sector in order to address some of the underlying health-related challenges facing those communities.



I would like to thank officials from a range of relevant Government Departments and organisations who gave considerable time and effort to contribute to a meaningful and worthwhile discussion on the development of this Inclusion Strategy. Many of those officials did so despite depleted staffing resources and many other competing priorities. I am proud of our civil and public servants who give generously and wholeheartedly to processes such as this one.

Integral to the finalisation of this Inclusion Strategy was the work of the National Traveller and Roma Inclusion Strategy Steering Group that has members from relevant Government Departments as well as Traveller and Roma representatives and advocates. This Steering Group was formed specifically to work on development of this Inclusion Strategy and then to monitor implementation and progress. I feel strongly that a whole of Government approach is necessary to the achievement of meaningful change and progress for the Traveller and Roma communities in Ireland. Many of the objectives and actions identified during the consultative process cross traditional Departmental and organisational lines and will require close cooperation and ongoing consultation. We need to move away from the traditional model of delineated sectors of activity and move towards one where joined up Government is the

way to achieve true progress. This may put an additional burden on Government Departments initially but we all need to become accustomed to a new style of thinking and operating so that cooperation and inclusion become our automatic watchwords.

On 30 May 2017, the Government and the National Traveller and Roma Inclusion Steering Group considered, in parallel, the final draft of this Inclusion Strategy. The Government approved the proposed text of this Inclusion Strategy subject to any final adjustments agreed bilaterally with Departments and in the light of the Steering Group's deliberations.

The question of recognition of Travellers as an ethnic group in Ireland was considered in depth in the context of the development of this Inclusion Strategy. In September 2015, my predecessor - Aodhán Ó Riordáin, the then Minister of State for New Communities, Culture and Equality - brought a paper to the Cabinet Committee on Social Policy and Public Service Reform on the question of recognising Travellers as a distinct ethnic group within Irish society. This followed a process of dialogue with the national level Traveller NGOs during 2015 that culminated in the presentation of an agreed position paper by them and confirmation that there would be no legal or expenditure implications arising from such



recognition. The key point is that recognition of the distinct heritage, culture and identity of Travellers and their special place in Irish society would be hugely important to Traveller pride, to Traveller self-esteem and to overcoming the legacy of marginalisation and discrimination that the community has experienced.

I have had a longstanding interest in this area, most notably through my chairing of the Joint Oireachtas Committee on Justice, Defence and Equality when it produced its report on the Recognition of Traveller Ethnicity (April 2014). The rapporteur in that instance was Senator Pádraig Mac Lochlainn who has continued to do sterling work on this issue. I made a presentation on this issue to the Cabinet Committee on Social Policy and Public Service Reform in December 2016,

following which an invitation was extended to Traveller representatives to meet that Cabinet Committee to further those discussions. In what, I think, was an unprecedented step, four Traveller representatives subsequently made a presentation to that Cabinet Committee on 06 February 2017.

I would also note that the current Joint Oireachtas Committee on Justice and Equality, chaired by Deputy Caoimhghín Ó Caoláin, issued a report in early 2017 supporting the recognition of Traveller ethnicity; that report was an important contribution to the discussion.

It is noteworthy that Traveller representatives have been working, over the course of several decades, to attain ethnic recognition



for their community in Ireland. On behalf of the Government, I would like to thank those advocates for their tireless efforts and persistence in pursuing their objective.

I am delighted that, on 01 March 2017, An Taoiseach, supported by representatives of all parties, made a statement in Dáil Éireann to announce Ireland's recognition of Travellers as a distinct ethnic group in Irish society. This was a momentous and unprecedented decision in our country's history and is one of which we should be justifiably proud. By taking this step, Ireland has shown its determination to value the unique culture, identity and heritage of Travellers in this country.

Recognition of the distinct heritage, culture and identity of Travellers and their special place in Irish society will be hugely and symbolically important to their pride and self-esteem and overcoming the legacy of economic marginalisation, discrimination and low self-esteem with which the Traveller community has struggled. This is not to ignore the real problems that the Traveller community faces but such a symbolic gesture will create a new platform for positive engagement by the Traveller community and the Government in together seeking sustainable solutions based on respect and an honest dialogue on these issues and challenges. To reiterate a point

made by An Taoiseach, this is an important and symbolic gesture that is very important to Travellers but it has no legislative implications, creates no new rights and has no implications for public expenditure.

As we move now towards implementation stage of this Inclusion Strategy, I would like to point out that this Inclusion Strategy should be regarded by all as a living document which will be subject to regular monitoring as well as amendment (where appropriate), particularly in the light of the outcome of a mid-term review planned for early 2019.

I look forward to continuing to work with the Traveller and Roma communities in Ireland and to achieving tangible improvements in their lives as important parts of Irish society.

### **Mr David Stanton TD**

Minister of State for Justice at the Department of Justice and Equality with special responsibility for Equality, Immigration, and Integration

June 2017

The total number of Travellers  
in Ireland as enumerated in  
April 2011 was 29,573 according  
to Census 2011...



# Background and Context

## Travellers

The Equal Status Act 2000 defines the term “Traveller community” as the community of people who are commonly called Travellers and who are identified (both by themselves and by others) as people with a shared history, culture and traditions including, historically, a nomadic way of life on the island of Ireland.

The total number of Travellers in Ireland as enumerated in April 2011 was 29,573 according to Census 2011; this accounts for less than one per cent of the total population of Ireland.

Travellers in Ireland have the same civil and political rights as other citizens under the Constitution. The key anti-discrimination and other legislative protections (the Prohibition of Incitement to Hatred Act 1989, the Unfair Dismissals Acts 1977, the Employment Equality Acts and the Equal Status Acts) specifically identify Travellers by name as a group protected. The Equality Act 2004, which transposed the EU Racial Equality Directive, applied all the protections of that Directive across all of the nine grounds contained in the legislation, including the Traveller community ground. All of the protections afforded to ethnic minorities in EU Directives and international conventions apply to Travellers because the Irish legislation giving effect to those international instruments explicitly protects Travellers.

In January 2017, the Economic and Social Research Institute issued a research paper (number 56) entitled “*A Social Portrait of Travellers in Ireland*”; that research paper had been commissioned and funded by the Department of Justice and Equality. The research found that Travellers stand out as a group that experiences extreme disadvantage in terms of employment, housing and health and that faces exceptionally strong level of prejudice. Extrapolation from the ESRI’s research shows the following:

- Travellers are a relatively young population. The 2011 Census show that the average age among Travellers is 22.4 years compared to 36.1 years in the general population.
- Over half of Irish Travellers are aged under 20 years.
- Irish Travellers tend to marry younger and have larger families (CSO 2012). One third of Travellers aged 15 – 29 years are married compared to 8% of the general population of the same age.
- Irish Travellers have an average of five children compared to a national average of three children.
- Census 2011 shows that the Traveller

population is not evenly spread across the country with the highest number of Travellers living in Galway county (8.4%) and South County Dublin (7.5%). The proportion of Travellers living in urban areas is 82%.

- The Irish Prison Service Traveller Census (2008) estimated a Traveller population of 320 (299 male prisoners and 21 female prisoners) which represents 8.7% of the prison population (despite Travellers representing less than 1% of the total population). Based on estimates from the Irish Prison Service, the risk of male Travellers being imprisoned was 11 times that of the general male population while Traveller women were 22 times more likely to be imprisoned than non-Traveller women.

There is a steeper increase in poor health with age for Travellers, particularly in the 34-64 age range, than in the general community. Some of the difficult issues currently faced by Travellers, as set out by the ESRI, include declining family structures and religious certainty, lack of employment and pressure to engage in damaging group activities such as heavy drinking, coupled with a sense of exclusion and experiences of extreme prejudice. The ESRI states that these factors can result in generalised poor self-esteem and self-efficacy which is associated with depression and other mental health problems; these conditions are, in turn, related to higher incidences of suicide.

- The suicide rate is almost seven times higher among Traveller males than in the general population.



Allowing for differences in age between adult Travellers and the general adult population, Traveller mortality is 3.5 times higher than non-Travellers overall while infant mortality is 3.6 times higher among Travellers than among the general population.

- The average expected age of a Traveller man is 61.7 years compared to the national average of 76.8.
- Traveller women have a life expectancy of 70.1 compared to the national average of 81.6.
- Travellers have a 14.1% infant mortality rate, compared to the settled population at 3.9%.
- 31% of Travellers reported cost as a factor in eating healthily.
- 50% of Travellers expressed difficulty reading medication instructions.
- 66.7% of service providers believe that Travellers experience discrimination in their use of health services.
- Over 40% of Travellers stated that they were not always treated with dignity and respect.
- Waiting lists, embarrassment, lack of information, cost, difficulty getting to

services, health settings and refused services were identified as barriers to accessing health services.

Traveller access to health services is at least as good as that of the general population but Travellers are less likely to attend outpatient appointments or engage with preventative services.

There is a very large disparity between Travellers and non-Travellers in the level of education completed. The labour market disadvantage of Travellers is largely linked to that educational disadvantage. Poor levels of education can also affect many other aspects of life. Pavee Point has indicated the following statistics.

- 13% of Traveller children complete second-level education compared to 92% in the settled community.
- Of those Travellers who drop out of second level education, 55% have left by the age of 15.
- The number of Traveller children who progress to third level education represents just 1% of the Traveller community.

The majority of Travellers (70%) have only primary or lower levels of education.

The All Ireland Traveller Health Study questioned the often-cited mobility patterns and tradition of nomadic lifestyle as most Travellers responded that they are actually based in one place during term time. However, school attendance can be poor.

The ESRI research paper found that among the reasons for leaving school early are likely to be the negative experiences of Traveller children in school. Traveller children (along with immigrant children and those with a disability) are significantly more likely to report being bullied at school (Department of Children and Youth Affairs, 2016).

The All Ireland Traveller Health Study pointed to a reluctance to continue in mainstream education as Travellers feel that it is not associated with any positive outcomes because of the high level of discrimination faced by Travellers when seeking employment.

Transgenerational issues are relevant as poor education levels among parents mean it is more difficult to read or interpret their children's educational material making it harder for Travellers to help their children with homework.

- Over two thirds (67.3%) of Traveller children lived in families where the mother had either no formal education or only primary education (Department of Health and Children, 2012).
- The low enrolment of Traveller children in preschools, noted by the Joint Oireachtas Committee on Health and Children (2016) is of concern as Traveller children are entering primary school already at a disadvantage.

The All Ireland Traveller Health Study found that more Irish Travellers live in a house (73%) than in a caravan or mobile home (18%). Census 2011 found that 85% of Travellers were living in standard accommodation with only 12% in caravans or mobile homes; however, Travellers are much less likely than the general population to own their own home (20% v 70%) while four times as many Traveller families live in only one room.



According to the National Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee's Annual Report in 2013:

- 361 Traveller families lived on “unauthorised sites”;
- 188 Traveller families lived on “basic service bays”;
- 182 Traveller families shared permanent halting sites;
- 17 Traveller families shared basic service bays/transient halting sites;
- 663 Traveller families shared houses.

Recently there has been a significant decrease in Traveller families living in private rented accommodation. Between 2013 and 2015, 237 Traveller families left private rented accommodation. This figure correlates with an increase of 200 Traveller families sharing houses and an increase of 173 families on “unauthorised sites”. Pavee Point states that it would seem that Traveller families are responding to the accommodation crisis by relocating to sites that are already overcrowded or unsafe.

Of the 9,281 Travellers families identified by Local Authorities in a survey carried out for the

Housing Agency (2014), only 18% were living in Traveller-specific accommodation (mainly group housing schemes and permanent halting sites).

Traveller representative organisations point to inadequacies in the Local Authority statistics, noting that homelessness among Travellers is labelled as “sharing” of housing or halting site bays resulting in overcrowding or living on unauthorised sites.

Travellers have reported that Traveller-specific accommodation is not being used by Travellers for the following reasons: tension, conflict and intimidation within and between Traveller families, the location and design of sites and schemes, health, overcrowding and poor maintenance/management of sites.

There is a strong link between education attainment and employment in the Irish labour market and young people leaving school early face a far higher risk of unemployment. In 2012, only 35% of Irish people with no qualifications were active participants in the labour market compared to 50% of those with a Junior Certificate, 70% with a Leaving Certificate and 79% with a post-Leaving Certificate qualification (2012). Furthermore, lower qualifications generally lead to low skilled jobs and low earnings throughout the life course.



The All Ireland Health Study of 2010, found that 84% of Travellers during the study were currently unemployed.

Census 2011 reveals that out of a total labour force of 4,144 Traveller women, 81.2% were without work.

Many young Travellers indicate that there is very little point in staying on at school because there was no chance of gaining paid employment afterwards because of discrimination. They feel that the only way to get on and get jobs was to integrate, become like the settled population and deny one's identity.

## Roma

The Roma community in Ireland consists of persons from a range of European countries including Romania, Hungary, Slovakia, Poland and the Czech Republic (Czechia). Roma people have the same rights and responsibilities as any other European Union citizen when in Ireland. There are no official statistics on the number of Roma in Ireland but it is estimated to be in the region of 3,000 – 5,000.

The European Commission and the Council of Europe tend to use “Roma” as an umbrella term to refer to a number of different groups (such as Roma, Sinti, Kale, Gypsies, Romanichels, Boyash, Ashkali, Egyptians, Yenish, Dom and Lom) and also include Travellers, without denying the specificities and varieties of lifestyles and situations of these groups.

According to a Press Release (dated 28 June 2016) from the European Court of Auditors, EU policy initiatives and EU-funded projects to promote Roma integration have made significant progress but there are still obstacles and dilemmas which prevent the money from having the greatest possible impact with one of the most marginalised groups in Europe. In their special report Number 14/2016 entitled *“EU policy initiatives and financial support for Roma integration: significant progress made over the last decade but additional efforts needed on the ground”*, the auditors assessed

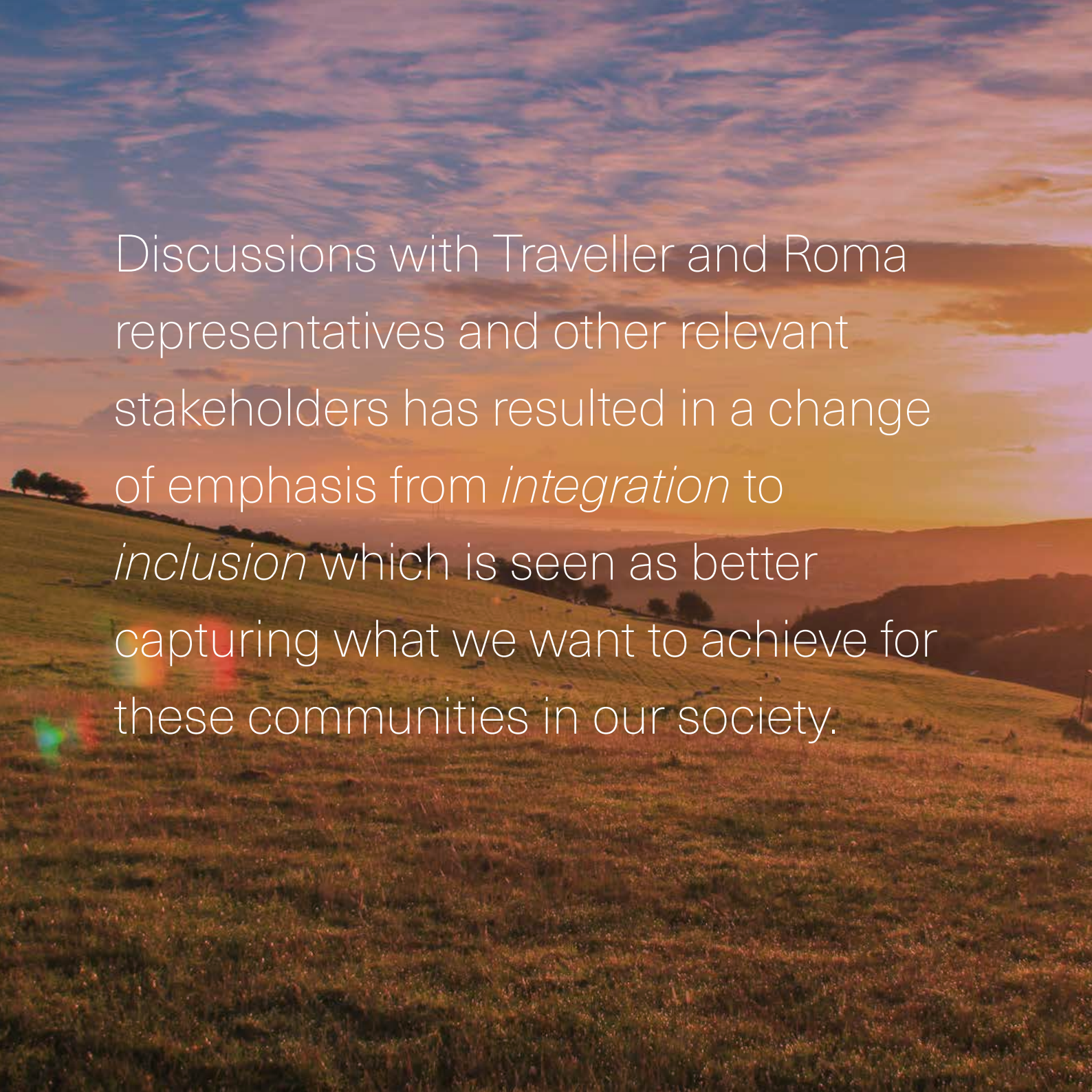
whether EU policy initiatives and financial support had contributed effectively to Roma integration during the last decade.

While the auditors noted a number of improvements, they pointed out that additional efforts are required by both the Commission and the Member States to ensure that EU-funded projects better contribute to Roma inclusion on the ground. The report recommends a number of steps for the Commission and for Member States to take including revision of National Roma Integration Strategies.

A press release by the Fundamental Rights Agency (on 29 November 2016) noted that 80% of Roma interviewed are at risk of poverty compared with an EU average of 17%.

During 2016, Slovakia in its role as President of the European Council sponsored Council Conclusions (“Accelerating the Progress of Roma Integration”). Ireland fully participated in the discussions on those Council Conclusions and supported the Slovakian Presidency in their efforts in this regard. Those Council Conclusions have been completed and agreed by all Member States of the European Union. Ireland must now act on the commitments made during that process in order to improve the quality of life of Roma in this country.



A landscape photograph of rolling green hills under a sunset sky. The sky is filled with soft, wispy clouds in shades of blue, orange, and pink. The hills are covered in lush green grass, and a few trees are visible on the left side. The overall scene is peaceful and scenic.

Discussions with Traveller and Roma representatives and other relevant stakeholders has resulted in a change of emphasis from *integration* to *inclusion* which is seen as better capturing what we want to achieve for these communities in our society.

# Development of this Inclusion Strategy

During 2014, the Department of Justice and Equality assessed the effectiveness of the structures in place for consultation with, and delivering better outcomes to, the Traveller and Roma communities in Ireland. It also considered the impact of the National Traveller and Roma Integration Strategy that was produced by the Department in 2011.

Discussions with Traveller and Roma representatives and other relevant stakeholders has resulted in a change of emphasis from *integration* to *inclusion* which is seen as better capturing what we want to achieve for these communities in our society.

This Department established a National Traveller and Roma Inclusion Strategy Steering Group, chaired by the then Minister of State for New Communities, Culture and Equality, to ensure that a renewed emphasis is given across Government to making progress in relation to implementation of a new National Traveller and Roma Inclusion Strategy. Minister David Stanton has chaired that Steering Group since mid-2016.

Following the establishment of the Steering Group, a comprehensive consultation process was undertaken to develop this new Inclusion Strategy. This process was led and coordinated by the Department of Justice and Equality.

The consultation process involved three phases, as set out below.

## Phase 1: mid-2015

This phase commenced with an open call to NGOs, Traveller and Roma communities, and other interested parties/individuals to respond to a suggested list of proposed themes or policy areas to be covered in the new Inclusion Strategy. There was a positive and enthusiastic response to this open call and the following overall themes were selected for the Inclusion Strategy:

1. cultural identity
2. education
3. employment and the Traveller economy
4. children and youth
5. health
6. gender equality
7. anti-discrimination and equality
8. accommodation
9. Traveller and Roma Communities, and
10. public services.

It was also decided that the question of recognition of Traveller ethnicity would be considered in the context of this Inclusion Strategy.

### **Phase 2: February 2016 - June 2016**

During the second phase, relevant NGOs, Traveller and Roma communities and other interested parties were invited to give their input in relation to a set of proposed priority, high level objectives that they would like to see achieved during the term of this Inclusion Strategy. In the case of each proposed high level objective, respondents were invited to say if they agreed or disagreed with the proposal as well as what they might like to change or add in relation to the proposed objectives.

This stage of the consultation involved regional meetings which took place in Sligo, Athlone, Limerick and Dublin in February 2016. In total, approximately 330 people took part in these consultations. Respondents were also given the opportunity to email their observations to the Department via a specific email address and/or to respond to an online questionnaire.

### **Phase 3: July 2016 - December 2016**

The themes and high level objectives that were suggested for the Inclusion Strategy were revised in the light of views expressed by stakeholders in Phases 1 and 2.

This final phase of the consultative process focussed on drafting and discussing a set of proposed actions that would be needed in order to achieve each of the proposed high level objectives. Those proposed actions were the subject of public consultations which were held in Sligo, Athlone, Limerick and Dublin in September 2016. As in the previous phases, respondents were also welcome to submit observations in writing/email.

Attached, as the core of this document, is a list of actions which will be in effect the core of this new Inclusion Strategy.

It should be noted that, as well as new and revised actions, the Inclusion Strategy also contains details of continuation of programmes and services already underway and new developments already in the pipeline in addition to proposals which have been developed specifically as a result of the discussions on this Inclusion Strategy.



## National Traveller and Roma Inclusion Strategy Steering Group

At the end of each of the phases in the consultative process, the draft Inclusion Strategy was brought for further consultation to the National Traveller and Roma Inclusion Strategy Steering Group. The Steering Group was formed specifically to work on development of this Inclusion Strategy and then to monitor its implementation and progress. This inter-Departmental and cross-sectoral approach was central to the development of the Inclusion Strategy and will be key to its successful implementation.

The Steering Group consists of a range of relevant representatives from the following:

- Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine
- Department of Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs
- Department of Children and Youth Affairs
- Department of Education and Skills
- Department of Health
- Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government
- Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation
- Department of Justice and Equality
- Department of Public Expenditure and Reform
- Department of Social Protection
- An Garda Síochána
- Health Service Executive
- Higher Education Authority
- Local Government Management Agency
- TUSLA (the Child and Family Agency)
- Bray Travellers (Community Development Group)
- Exchange House
- Involve
- Irish Traveller Movement
- Minceirs Whiden
- National Traveller Women's Forum

- Navan Travellers' Workshops
- Parish of the Travelling People
- Pavee Point Traveller and Roma Centre
- Traveller Counselling and Psychotherapy Service
- Western Traveller and Intercultural Development.

A draft of the new National Traveller and Roma Inclusion Strategy was submitted by the Department to the Senior Officials Group on Social Policy and Public Sector Reform on 09 May 2017.

A final draft of the new National Traveller and Roma Inclusion Strategy was discussed at a meeting of the Steering Group on 30 May 2017 on which date Minister Stanton also submitted the document to Government for consideration.

The Inclusion Strategy was approved by Government on 30 May 2017 for commencement of implementation with immediate effect. It is intended that the revised Inclusion Strategy will run to the end of 2021. The Strategy is a living document and will undergo a mid-term review, with adjustments being made to the committed actions in the light of developments.

## **Connection with other national Strategies**

Actions to address the issue of drug and/or alcohol misuse as experienced among the Traveller and Roma communities are also being considered in the context of the Government's forthcoming National Drugs Strategy and through the measures identified under the Report of the Substance Misuse Steering Group.

Issues relating to Gender Equality are being also addressed in the context of the National Strategy for Women and Girls (2017 – 2020).

The Second National Strategy on Domestic, Sexual and Gender-based Violence (2016 – 2021) contains actions in relation to vulnerable groups, including Travellers and Roma.

As such, synergies in the implementation of these Strategies in conjunction with this Inclusion Strategy have been secured.

# Monitoring and Implementation

As its first task following approval of this Inclusion Strategy, the Steering Group will consider the monitoring arrangements to be put in place in relation to implementation of the actions.

The Department of Justice and Equality will coordinate with relevant Government Departments in relation to the timing of work in relation to achievement of each relevant action; this may, in some cases, require cross-Departmental consultation and agreement. The Steering Group will then consider the actions identified by the Departments and discuss a set of key performance and output indicators for each year that the Inclusion Strategy is in place. In other words, each action will have an associated timescale; while such timescales are at the discretion of, and the primary responsibility of, the relevant Department, the Steering Group may seek to highlight actions which it feels should be prioritised bearing in mind the competing priorities and constraints (staffing, funding, etc.,) placed on Departments. The Steering Group will publish an annual report on progress for each year of the Inclusion Strategy.

Departments will incorporate elements of positive action measures and mainstreaming where possible in order to assist with implementation of this Inclusion Strategy.

As indicated above, the Strategy is a living document and the Department of Justice and Equality will conduct a mid-term review of implementation of the Inclusion Strategy, with adjustments to committed actions being made in the light of progress and developments in relation to the Traveller and Roma communities generally.

The Department of Justice and Equality, as key coordinator of this Inclusion Strategy, will compile periodic relevant reports as required, in order to fulfil the State's national and international (EU and Council of Europe in particular) obligations with regard to Traveller and Roma inclusion.

It is implicit in this Inclusion Strategy that all Departments and agencies will endeavour to fulfil the commitments relating to them while working in conjunction with Traveller and Roma organisations/representatives to the fullest extent practicable.

## Further Information

Further information in relation to issues concerning Traveller and Roma inclusion as well as issues arising from this Inclusion Strategy may be obtained from:

Equality Division

Department of Justice and Equality

Bishop's Square

Redmond's Hill

Dublin 2

D02 TD99

or via email to: [ntris@justice.ie](mailto:ntris@justice.ie).

A copy of this Inclusion Strategy is available on [www.justice.ie](http://www.justice.ie).

Tá leagan Gaeilge den Stráitéis seo ar fáil.

# Strategic Themes, High Level Objectives and Actions

**Cultural Identity**

**Education**

**Employment and The Traveller Economy**

**Children and Youth**

**Health**

**Gender Equality**

**Anti-Discrimination and Equality**

**Accommodation**

**Traveller and Roma Communities**

**Public Services**

## Cultural Identity

Theme and Objectives	Actions
<b>Traveller culture, identity and heritage is supported and valued within Irish society.</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="497 183 1385 239">1. The Department of Justice and Equality will support, strengthen and expand Traveller Pride Week and increased national awareness of the event.</li><li data-bbox="497 263 1385 295">2. The Department of Justice and Equality will support International Roma Day.</li><li data-bbox="497 327 1396 414">3. The Department of Justice and Equality will develop other supports for members of the Traveller and Roma communities to develop new and ambitious initiatives exploring Traveller and Roma arts, culture and traditions.</li></ol>
<b>Travellers and Roma should be supported to develop, preserve and promote their cultural heritage.</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="497 507 1388 678">4. The Department of Education and Skills has prepared intercultural guidelines for primary and post primary schools to support all member of the school community to develop an inclusive school community. These guidelines will support schools in collaboration with Traveller and Roma organisations to develop education resources on Traveller and Roma culture and history for use in primary, post primary and adult education settings.</li><li data-bbox="497 710 1348 885">5. We will support Traveller and Roma cultural heritage centres and communications media to develop and promote their culture, stories and music of Travellers and Roma, including support for accessible cultural archives, to ensure that Travellers, Roma and members of the settled population can utilise and engage with materials on Traveller and Roma cultural heritage.</li><li data-bbox="497 917 1380 1061">6. The Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine will support a Traveller equine strategy to support Travellers to engage with knowledge and competence in the equine industry. Traveller horse owners/keepers must comply with all EU and national legislation relating to equine identification and animal welfare.</li><li data-bbox="497 1093 1396 1204">7. A targeted Traveller and Roma communications initiative will be supported to promote positive attributes and actions of both communities. It will facilitate counteracting negative mainstream media while engendering an increased sense of pride in the Traveller and Roma communities.</li></ol>
<b>Intergenerational learning, cultural continuity and positive self- identity for Travellers and Roma should be facilitated.</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="497 1241 1396 1348">8. The Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine will support the development of regional Traveller horse projects in association with Local Authorities to promote knowledge and care of horses, with a focus on animal welfare and road safety.</li><li data-bbox="497 1380 1380 1524">9. The Department of Justice and Equality will support the development of intergenerational initiatives in collaboration with local Traveller and Roma organisations to support cultural continuity and promote positive self-identity to promote, pass on and preserve knowledge of traditional Traveller and/or Roma crafts and skills.</li></ol>



## Education

Theme and Objectives	Actions
<p><b>Access, participation and outcomes for Travellers and Roma in education should be improved to achieve outcomes that are equal to those for the majority population.</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>10. The Department of Education and Skills, the Department of Children and Youth Affairs and TUSLA will develop proactive, early intervention education welfare supports to promote and support Traveller and Roma attendance, participation and engagement with the education system and retention to the Leaving Certificate or equivalent.</li> <li>11. The Report and Recommendations for a Traveller Education Strategy will be reviewed by the Department of Education and Skills and the review will be published by early 2017.</li> <li>12. All relevant Departments and agencies will promote the Early Childcare and Education (ECCE) pre-school scheme, as well as the Access and Inclusion Model (AIM) for Children with a Disability, within the Traveller and Roma communities in order to facilitate access for every child to free pre-school from the age of three until they start school.</li> <li>13. The Department of Education and Skills, the Department of Children and Youth Affairs and TUSLA will implement good practice initiatives to support parental engagement in education and increase children's school readiness.</li> <li>14. In line with the National Plan for Equity of Access to Higher Education (2015-2019), the Department of Education and Skills will support the development by the higher education sector of a network of peer support and mentoring for Travellers and Roma in third level education.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Access, participation and outcomes for Travellers and Roma in education should be improved to achieve outcomes that are equal to those for the majority population.</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>15. The Department of Education and Skills will support the development by the higher education sector of positive action measures to encourage and support Travellers and Roma to become teachers. The Department of Education and Skills will work with the Department of Children and Youth Affairs to support those wishing to enter the workforce as early years educators.</li> <li>16. The Department of Education and Skills will review policy on admissions to school in line with the Programme for Government commitment to publish new School Admissions legislation taking account of current draft proposals and addressing issues including publication of school enrolment policies, an end to waiting lists, introduction of annual enrolment structures, and transparency and fairness in admissions for pupils and their parents.</li> </ol>

**Access, participation and outcomes for Travellers and Roma in education should be improved to achieve outcomes that are equal to those for the majority population.**

17. The Department of Justice and Equality will fund Traveller community groups to implement community-based supports to assist retention of Traveller and Roma children in the education system. The intervention and the supports to be provided will be designed in consultation with the Department of Education and Skills, the Department of Children and Youth Affairs/TUSLA, and Traveller interests.
18. In consultation with representative groups, the Department of Education and Skills will commission research on the effectiveness of their anti-bullying procedures and guidelines on Traveller and Roma experiences in the school system.

**There should be a positive culture of respect and protection for the cultural identity of Travellers and Roma across the education system.**

19. The Department of Education and Skills has introduced programmes for initial Teacher Education and for Continuing Professional Development (CPD) based on the concept of inclusive education. The Department of Education and Skills will ensure that such programmes enable teachers to deal with teaching and learning needs of all students from all cultural backgrounds and provide support for pedagogical practices that promote inclusion.
20. The Department of Education and Skills will request that the Teaching Council examine how the areas of intercultural, anti-racism and diversity are dealt with in Initial Teacher Education Programmes during the review of the “Criteria and Guidelines for Programme Providers of Initial Teacher Education”.
21. The Department of Education and Skills will continue to address the areas of anti-racism, identity-based bullying and cultural awareness through a suite of supports including the recently revised Stay Safe Programme and the Continuing Professional Development (CPD) provided by Department-funded support services to teachers at Primary and Post-Primary level.

**There should be improved opportunities for Traveller and Roma men to engage in culturally appropriate apprenticeships, training and lifelong learning.**

22. SOLAS and the Education and Training Boards will continue to provide training and education that supports Traveller men and women to develop literacy, numeracy and “soft” skills, in line with the Further Education and Training (FET) strategy.
23. The Department of Justice and Equality, in collaboration with Traveller and Roma organisations and employer bodies, will promote greater Traveller and Roma participation in apprenticeship and traineeships.

## Employment and the Traveller Economy

Theme and Objectives	Actions
<p><b>There should be increased employment, training and apprenticeships opportunities for Travellers and Roma.</b></p>	<p>24. The Department of Social Protection will promote the availability of existing employment and training services (e.g. those provided by the Education and Training Boards) to the Roma and Traveller communities and continue to ensure promotional and information materials are available and accessible on any of its schemes and services including via the Department's website. The Department of Social Protection will provide tailored supports for the long-term unemployed and for young people to build their confidence and prepare them for the workplace.</p> <p>25. The Department of Social Protection will develop targeted initiatives to increase Traveller and Roma engagement with employment and training services.</p> <p>26. Anti-racism and cultural awareness training for staff will be developed under the new shared Civil Service learning and development curriculum and will be made available for Departments in 2017.</p> <p>27. The Department of Social Protection and the Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government will put in place liaison arrangements between INTREO and the Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP) to enable Travellers and Roma to access relevant supports, training and opportunities.</p>
<p><b>Targeted positive public service recruitment to train and employ Traveller and Roma staff in public services should be introduced.</b></p>	<p>28. We will develop proposals for internships for Traveller and Roma in Government Departments, Local Authorities and other public bodies and will support provision of Transition Year, Leaving Certificate Applied and Youthreach work experience placements for Travellers and Roma in public services and statutory agencies as a route to meaningful employment.</p>
<p><b>Entrepreneurship and self-employment opportunities for Traveller and Roma should be supported.</b></p>	<p>29. The Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government, in conjunction with Local Authorities, will arrange for the inclusion in Local Economic and Community Plans of provisions for Traveller and Roma economy supports including general policies and programmes as well as group-specific (targeted) initiatives to support Travellers and Roma in enterprise, mainstream labour market and the Traveller economy.</p>

**Entrepreneurship and self-employment opportunities for Traveller and Roma should be supported.**

30. The Local Enterprise Offices (LEOs) are the “first stop shop” for providing advice and guidance, financial assistance and other supports to anyone interested in starting or growing their own business. A number of LEOs have undertaken targeted initiatives to engage with prospective entrepreneurs amongst the Traveller and Roma communities and other ethnic and minority groups. The LEO Centre of Excellence in Enterprise Ireland will promote best practice activities in this area amongst all LEOs nationally.
31. SICAP Programme Implementers will ensure that Traveller and Roma participants availing of SICAP supports are made aware of the opportunities for local self-employment (which may include social entrepreneurship) and, where appropriate, receive training to enhance their skills to take up these opportunities.
32. The Department of Social Protection, in collaboration where appropriate with the Department of Justice and Equality, will support Traveller MABS.

**There should be clear links and progression routes between education, training, and employment.**

33. All Departments will equality proof measures to ensure they are accessible for Travellers and Roma.
34. The Department of Education and Skills will develop a national policy on recognition of prior learning by 2018, which will benefit Travellers and Roma as well as other target groups identified in the National Access Plan.
35. The Department of Education and Skills will develop an accessible and inclusive model of Recognition of Prior Learning in collaboration with Traveller and Roma organisations to support the accreditation and employment of Travellers and Roma.
36. The Department of Social Protection will ensure that Travellers and Roma under the age of 25 who register as unemployed claimants of Jobseekers’ payments will receive a good quality offer of employment, continued education, apprenticeship or traineeship within a period of four months of registering, in line with commitments under the Youth Guarantee.

## Children and Youth

Theme and Objectives	Actions
<p><b>Traveller and Roma children should be consulted appropriately in the development of policy, legislation, research and services.</b></p>	<p>37. TUSLA will consider and promote the human rights and equality impact of its strategic programmes to ensure that its child protection and welfare services balance the need to recognise and respect ethnic and cultural diversity with the need to promote and ensure child welfare and protection. TUSLA will encourage representations from the Traveller and Roma communities are included in all relevant participatory forums including Children and Young People Services Committees.</p> <p>38. The Department of Children and Youth Affairs will further develop mechanisms to ensure Traveller and Roma young people are supported and facilitated to participate in Comhairle na nÓg as well as the Children and Young People's Participation Hub.</p> <p>39. The Department of Children and Youth Affairs and its agencies will ensure the voice of Traveller and Roma children is included within the statutory educational welfare services.</p> <p>40. Traveller and Roma representatives will continue to be included in participation initiatives of the Department of Children and Youth Affairs.</p> <p>41. The Department of Education and Skills (and its agencies) will review current practices on student participation in the school inspection process. A review of questionnaires for students administered as part of Whole School Evaluations is planned for 2017.</p>
<p><b>Appropriate, culturally sensitive, preventative and early intervention supports should be available for Traveller and Roma families, if and when required, to enable children to live in a safe and secure environment.</b></p>	<p>42. The Department of Health, in conjunction with the Health Service Executive, will develop programmes to address mental health issues among children and youths in the Traveller and Roma communities</p> <p>43. All public bodies, particularly TUSLA and the Health Service Executive, who employ trained and appropriately qualified social workers who work with Traveller and/or Roma families, will deliver appropriate continuing professional development training to develop cultural awareness and competency relevant to the role of the social worker.</p> <p>44. TUSLA will active involvement by representatives of the Traveller and Roma communities in identifying need and developing needs-led responses in Family Resource Centres.</p>

**Appropriate, culturally sensitive, preventative and early intervention supports should be available for Traveller and Roma families, if and when required, to enable children to live in a safe and secure environment.**

45. TUSLA-led Child and Family Networks will encourage involvement from Traveller and Roma organisations/communities when engaging with Traveller and Roma families. The use of Meitheal (the TUSLA-led National Practice Model for early identification of need and practical help provision) will be encouraged where more than one agency involvement is needed to support children and families and concerns are not at a sufficient level of risk to require Social Work involvement. (Parents participate in Meitheal by their consent.)
46. All relevant public bodies, including the Health Service Executive and TUSLA, will develop initiatives in collaboration with Traveller and Roma organisations to inform and empower families about available resources and supports.
47. The Department of Children and Youth Affairs will explore measures to encourage and support Travellers and Roma to become social workers and social care workers.

**Traveller and Roma children should have opportunities to participate in culturally appropriate youth programmes that meet their needs.**

48. Youth programmes and services will be developed in a culturally inclusive and appropriate manner. Grant bodies (the Department of Children and Youth Affairs, the Education and Training Boards and TUSLA) will include this as a requirement where relevant in Service Level Agreements with funded youth services.
49. Youth programmes and services will ensure the active participation of Travellers and Roma in their representative structures.
50. TUSLA and the Department of Education and Skills will endeavour to ensure Travellers and Roma have access to appropriate sexual health and relationship education.
51. The Health Service Executive will support the youth sector to develop targeted culturally appropriate programmes for Travellers and Roma which support mental well-being and resilience in youth work settings.



**Traveller and Roma children should have opportunities to participate in culturally appropriate youth programmes that meet their needs.**

52. The Department of Education and Skills and TUSLA and the Department of Children and Youth Affairs (via the Education and Training Boards) will strengthen cooperation between formal education and non-formal learning sectors to address the high rate of early school-leaving in the Traveller and Roma communities based on best practice models and reviews of existing programmes.
53. The Department of Children and Youth Affairs (via the Education and Training Boards) will provide accessible safe spaces for young Travellers and Roma e.g. access to school and community facilities in “out-of-school time”.
54. The Department of Children and Youth Affairs and the Education and Training Boards will ensure improved engagement, participation, retention and progression of Travellers and Roma in youth work programmes.
55. SICAP Programme Implementers will continue to provide supports, which include homework clubs, additional tuition, career guidance/counselling support, community awareness of drugs programmes and youth work in collaboration with schools and other youth programmes/schemes to children and young people from target groups, including Traveller and Roma, who are at risk of early school leaving.

**There should be a special focus on Traveller and Roma children’s rights.**

56. All relevant Departments and Agencies will ensure that work undertaken with Traveller and Roma families is underpinned by the ten common basic principles on Roma inclusion adopted by the European Commission.
57. An Garda Síochána will develop revised protocols on the exercise of powers under section 12 of the Child Care Act 1991 which provide detailed instruction for members of An Garda Síochána in dealing with situations in which section 12 of the 1991 Act is most commonly invoked. An Garda Síochána will include, where appropriate, specific guidance on the more unusual situations in which the identity of children is in doubt. The findings of the independent audit of the exercise by An Garda Síochána of section 12 of the Child Care Act 1991 will inform these revised protocols.

**There should be a special focus on Traveller and Roma children's rights.**

58. TUSLA will consider the human rights and equality impact of its policies, services, procedures and practice to ensure that its alternative care strategy balances the need to recognise and respect ethnic and cultural diversity with the need to promote and ensure the best interests of the child and will consult with the Traveller and Roma communities in relation to the development of an implementation plan to support the provision of culturally-appropriate care placements for Traveller and Roma children who are in care under the provisions of the Child Care Act 1991.
59. TUSLA will highlight the need for culturally sensitive placements and a diversity of carers in its national recruitment campaigns for foster families.
60. TUSLA will ensure that Care Plans will consider the cultural needs of children in care.
61. Local Authorities, when designing Traveller specific accommodation, will consider the need for access to safe, appropriate play areas.



## Health

Theme and Objectives	Actions
<b>Travellers and Roma should have improved access, opportunities, participation rates and outcomes in the health care system.</b>	<p>62. The Health Service Executive will examine how drug and alcohol services engage and educate family members, as appropriate, in the development and delivery of service user care plans.</p> <p>63. The Health Service Executive will ensure that the new Mental Health Clinical Programme to tackle dual diagnosis will take account of the needs of Travellers and Roma with co-morbid mental health and substance abuse problems.</p> <p>64. The Health Service Executive will facilitate the establishment of a network of regional Traveller peer support workers through Traveller organisations and/or primary healthcare projects to support service users in accessing addiction rehabilitation services.</p> <p>65. The Department of Health and the Health Service Executive will ensure that there is Traveller and Roma representation on their national and local health-related structures relating to Travellers and Roma, as appropriate.</p> <p>66. The Health Service Executive, in consultation with Traveller organisations, will continue to address the prevalence, range and treatment of chronic health conditions amongst travellers e.g. diabetes, asthma, cardiovascular and circulatory conditions, poor mental health and suicidal ideation.</p> <p>67. The Health Service Executive and other relevant bodies, in consultation with Traveller organisations and other stakeholders, will work towards a phased, incremental implementation of a standardised ethnic identifier across all health administrative systems to monitor access, participation and outcomes of all groups, including Travellers and Roma, and to inform the development of evidenced-based policies and services.</p> <p>68. The Department of Health and the Health Service Executive will support the implementation of the findings of the National Roma Needs Assessment for Roma in Ireland.</p> <p>69. The Health Service Executive will review the legislative and policy restrictions that impact on the provision of medical cards for Roma with no income.</p>

**Travellers and Roma should have improved access, opportunities, participation rates and outcomes in the health care system.**

70. The Health Service Executive will promote immunisation uptake among members of the Roma community, with a particular emphasis on early childhood vaccinations.
71. The Health Service Executive, in consultation with Roma representatives, will assess the primary care and basic needs of vulnerable Roma.
72. Acknowledging the results of the National Roma Needs Assessment for Roma in Ireland, the Health Service Executive will support Roma women to access maternal health services in a timely and appropriate manner.

**Health inequalities experienced by Travellers and Roma should be reduced.**

73. The Health Service Executive will develop and implement a detailed action plan, based on the findings of the All Ireland Traveller Health Study, to continue to address the specific health needs of Travellers, using a social determinants approach.
74. The Department of Health and the Health Service Executive will review the existing arrangements for engagement between them and Traveller representative organisations with a view to agreeing improvements to the current arrangements.
75. The Department of Health and the Health Service Executive will continue to ensure that specific funding is allocated for Traveller and Roma health initiatives.
76. Pending a review of service, the Health Service Executive will develop a plan to expand the Primary Healthcare for Traveller projects and take into account also the needs for targeted initiatives for men.
77. The Health Service Executive, in conjunction with the Education authorities and local Traveller organisations, will examine how primary healthcare programme workers can access and receive accreditation for their work so as to improve employment prospects for members of the Traveller and Roma communities who are employed on these programmes.
78. The Health Service Executive will develop primary healthcare projects for Roma based on the Traveller Primary Healthcare Project model and informed by the findings of the National Roma Needs Assessment for Roma in Ireland.
79. The national framework for action to improve health and wellbeing, Healthy Ireland, will continue to take a whole of Government approach to drive change at population level and will focus on specific targeted actions and interventions for disadvantaged communities and at-risk groups including Travellers and Roma.

**Health services should be delivered and developed in a way that is culturally appropriate.**

80. The Department of Health and the Health Service Executive will work with the relevant training bodies and the Higher Education Authority and also with Traveller organisations to include training on Traveller health status and Traveller and Roma cultural awareness as well as anti-racism training on the undergraduate and graduate curricula for health professionals.
81. The Health Service Executive will design and disseminate culturally appropriate and culturally competent, accessible information and healthcare materials in partnership with Traveller and Roma organisations.
82. The Health Service Executive will support and train healthcare staff to use clear language in dealing with diagnosis and treatment options.
83. The Department of Health and other relevant Departments will collaborate with educational institutions and programmes including the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland (RCSI), the Schools of Nursing and Midwifery and the Irish College of General Practitioners (ICGP) programme to develop initiatives that promote access by Travellers to education and accreditation programmes that enhance their ability to compete on an equitable basis for mainstream health posts.
84. The Health Service Executive will engage with Traveller representative organisations to establish pathways to employment and support existing employees.
85. The Health Service Executive will seek funding for Roma health advocates on the basis of a needs assessment.
86. The Health Service Executive will work towards ensuring access to interpreters for Roma in GP consultations and across health services as appropriate.

**The rate of suicide and mental health problems within the Traveller and Roma communities should be reduced and positive mental health initiatives should be put in place.**

87. The Health Service Executive will support and further develop culturally appropriate services to respond to the mental health needs of Travellers and Roma in consultation with Traveller and Roma organisations.
88. The Health Service Executive will develop targeted interventions and educational materials to support good mental health, suicide prevention and promote self-esteem and self-acceptance for young Travellers.
89. The Health Service Executive (National Office for Suicide Prevention) will develop communication campaigns to reduce stigmatising attitudes to mental health and suicidal behaviour at population level and within priority populations including the Traveller and Roma communities.

**The rate of suicide and mental health problems within the Traveller and Roma communities should be reduced and positive mental health initiatives should be put in place.**

90. A review by the National Office for Suicide Prevention of its funding of Traveller projects will assess the effectiveness of existing programmes and provide guidance in relation to future initiatives.
91. The Health Service Executive (National Office for Suicide Prevention), in consultation with Traveller organisations, will conduct research on suicide and self-harm in the Traveller community, as part of the implementation of Connecting for Life, Ireland's National Strategy to Reduce Suicide 2015 – 2020.
92. In collaboration with Traveller organisations and other relevant stakeholders, the Health Service Executive (National Office for Suicide Prevention) will provide training and guidance to improve recognition of, and response to, suicide risk and suicidal behaviour among Travellers through programmes such as Assist and SafeTALK. The National Office for Suicide Prevention will link with the Health Service Executive's Social Inclusion Unit to ensure effective approaches are taken.
93. The Department of Justice and Equality will review the Traveller Counselling Service with a view to supporting its continuation.
94. The Health Service Executive will explore prescribing practices to Travellers as evidenced amongst a cohort of the Traveller community with a view to rationalising prescribing patterns and medication management for individuals. Relevant recommendations will be integrated into policy, guidance, protocol and training programmes.
95. The Health Service Executive will review the access and barriers to primary and secondary mental health services for Travellers and Roma, in the context of the implementation of the ethnic identifier, and in partnership with Traveller and Roma service users, carers and families in order to develop and implement appropriate steps to ensure greater inclusion and continued use of these services by Travellers and Roma.
96. The Health Service Executive will recruit nine Mental Health Service Co-ordinator posts to support access to, and delivery of, mental health services for Travellers, in each Community Health area, as outlined in the Mental Health Division's strategic priorities in its Operational Plan for 2017.



## Gender Equality

Theme and Objectives	Actions
<b>The multiple disadvantages face by Traveller and Roma women should be addressed.</b>	<p>97. We will provide targeted supports for Traveller and Roma women to engage effectively with stakeholder groups, including children and young people, which are consulted in the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of actions under the Strategy.</p> <p>98. The Department of Justice and Equality will support the development of community leadership in gender equality with men and women from the Traveller and Roma communities with a view to developing gender equality.</p>
<b>Traveller and Roma women should be supported in key areas including education, employment and economic development.</b>	<p>99. All relevant Departments will resource the development and implementation of local Traveller and Roma women's forums/groups to provide support in health, education, training, employment and accommodation issues.</p> <p>100. The Department of Children and Youth Affairs will, through a Single Affordable Childcare Scheme, support the provision of accessible and affordable childcare to facilitate Traveller and Roma women's engagement in education and the labour market.</p> <p>101. The Department of Education and Skills will consider measures targeted at Travellers and Roma as part of any future proposals extending student supports to part-time students.</p>



**The incidence of violence against Traveller and Roma women should be addressed.**

102. All Departments and agencies will be mindful of the National Strategy on Domestic, Sexual and Gender-based Violence and will implement and report on the commitments in that Strategy appropriately in accordance with the structures set out in that Strategy.
103. The Health Service Executive and TUSLA will develop joint approaches, as needed, to implementing community-based outreach and referral programmes that can achieve the best outcomes for victims of gender-based violence in the Traveller and Roma communities.
104. TUSLA will engage with Traveller and Roma communities as part of its commissioning process in order to identify and implement evidence-informed responses to gender-based violence in these communities.
105. The Health Service Executive will continue to deliver training to service providers on violence against Traveller and Roma women to remove barriers to services.
106. TUSLA, and the Health Service Executive, will ensure that policy and practice across all components of specialist domestic, sexual and gender-based violence services, including Sexual Assault and Treatment Units, is non-discriminatory towards service users from the Traveller and Roma communities.
107. We will introduce positive action measures to enable Traveller and Roma women to access gender-based violence training and employment opportunities in state and voluntary sector services, including refuges, counselling roles, An Garda Síochána and social work.
108. TUSLA will work with stakeholders on the specific needs of Roma women experiencing violence to enable them to access supports, including women's refuges.



## Anti –Discrimination and Equality

Theme and Objectives	Actions
<p><b>Incidences of direct and indirect discrimination should be addressed through targeted interventions for Travellers and Roma.</b></p>	<p>109. The Department of Justice and Equality has published the National Migrant Integration Strategy, which includes a strong anti-racism component. That Strategy will be fully implemented with ongoing review and consultation with stakeholders.</p> <p>110. The Department of Justice and Equality will develop national initiatives to promote positive representations of, and respect for, Travellers and Roma.</p>
<p><b>Robust measures to address racism and hate speech in the mainstream media and public sphere should be adopted and implemented.</b></p>	<p>111. The Department of Justice and Equality will review the Prohibition of Incitement to Hatred Act 1989 in the light of reports by civil society, international obligations and the experience of other jurisdictions, given the age of the legislation, the changes in Irish society and the use of the internet and social media since its enactment to ensure that it is updated as necessary to respond to contemporary issues and the needs of our more diverse society.</p> <p>112. Members of the Traveller and Roma communities will be supported in the reporting of racist crimes.</p> <p>113. Members of An Garda Síochána will continue to receive adequate training on processing reports of racist crime, including relevant legislation and proper recording.</p> <p>114. The Garda Bureau of Community Diversity and Integration will continue to develop good relationships between An Garda Síochána and the Traveller and Roma communities and carry out awareness-raising with the Traveller and Roma communities on how to report racist crime.</p>
<p><b>Culturally appropriate supports should be developed so that LGBTI Travellers and Roma are included, accepted and protected in their own communities and wider Irish society.</b></p>	<p>115. Traveller and Roma organisations will be encouraged and supported to develop links with LGBTI organisations.</p> <p>116. The needs of LGBTI Travellers and Roma will be one specific focus in the development of the LGBTI Inclusion Strategy, to be led by the Department of Justice and Equality, and on which a consultation process will commence in 2018.</p> <p>117. The Department of Justice and Equality will support the development and delivery by Traveller and Roma organisations of initiatives aimed at challenging homophobia and transphobia within the Traveller and Roma communities including support for Traveller and Roma families who have children/partners coming out.</p>

<p><b>There should be access to redress in cases of discrimination in a timely and accessible manner.</b></p>	<p>118. The Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation will ensure the Workplace Relations Commission has adequate staff and financial resources to adjudicate complaints in relation to discrimination in a timely manner.</p> <p>119. The Department of Justice and Equality will support a legal advice and advocacy service for Travellers and Roma.</p>
<p><b>Travellers and Roma should have access to mainstream and targeted financial services such as savings and affordable credit options.</b></p>	<p>120. The Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government will review the caravan loan scheme through which local authorities provide loans to Travellers for caravans.</p> <p>121. The Department of Justice and Equality, in collaboration with relevant Departments and Agencies, will explore possibilities for low cost loans and affordable credit options for members of the Traveller community.</p>
<p><b>Travellers and Roma who come into contact with the criminal justice system should be supported, including throughout sentences and post release to reintegrate into the community.</b></p>	<p>122. The Department of Justice and Equality (Irish Prison Service) will, in conjunction with the Education and Training Boards, provide access to Travellers and Roma to education while in prison, including literacy education.</p> <p>123. The Department of Justice and Equality (Irish Prison Service) will make specific supports and resources available for Traveller and Roma prisoners including access to appropriate in-reach services, as well as information about housing, health and social protection services.</p> <p>124. The Department of Justice and Equality (Irish Prison Service and Probation Service) will, in conjunction with the Community and Voluntary sector, enhance services to Travellers through the Travellers in Prison Initiative, including supports for female Travellers in custody, targeted reintegration supports, supports for families affected by imprisonment and peer support services to those in custody.</p> <p>125. Ireland (via the Department of Justice and Equality) will implement the CERD Committee's General recommendation XXXI on the prevention of racial discrimination in the criminal justice system with a focus on data collection by an independent body for the purposes of identifying trends in racial discrimination.</p>

## Accommodation

Theme and Objectives	Actions
<p data-bbox="197 188 523 331"><b>There should be adequate provision of accessible, suitable and culturally-appropriate accommodation available for Travellers.</b></p> <p data-bbox="197 367 523 596"><b>Delivery of Traveller accommodation should be underpinned by a robust monitoring and evaluation framework, with a view to ensuring full expenditure of funds allocated for Traveller-specific accommodation.</b></p>	<p data-bbox="561 188 1460 450">126. The National Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee (NTACC), which includes all key stakeholders, is awaiting a review of funding, allocations, spending and outputs in relation to Traveller accommodation from the Housing Agency, which is expected imminently (June 2017). The NTACC has agreed a sub-group to examine and analyse the findings of the review, with a view to preparing a report and recommendations for the Minister for Housing and Urban Renewal as soon as possible after its receipt, which will include a review of the Housing (Traveller Accommodation) Act 1998.</p> <p data-bbox="561 485 1460 628">127. The Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government will ring-fence its Capital budget for Traveller accommodation and put robust mechanisms in place to monitor expenditure and delivery, including periodic reviews to assess progress in meeting needs and to identify new and emerging needs.</p> <p data-bbox="561 663 1460 775">128. The National Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee will examine how best to develop the capacity and operation of Local Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committees to maximise their contribution to local accommodation programmes and policies.</p> <p data-bbox="561 810 1460 954">129. The Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government will ensure that any guidelines developed by the National Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee in relation to the operation of the Local Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committees are promulgated across all Local Authorities.</p> <p data-bbox="561 989 1460 1069">130. The Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government will assess if there are any barriers to Travellers accessing social housing waiting lists.</p> <p data-bbox="561 1104 1460 1216">131. The National Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee and the Local Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committees will examine how best they can further develop the involvement of Traveller-specific accommodation tenants in issues relating to their scheme or site.</p>


## Traveller and Roma Communities

Theme and Objectives	Actions
<b>Traveller and Roma people should be supported to participate in political processes at local and national levels.</b>	132. The Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government will support the work of Traveller and Roma organisations on voter education and voter registration initiatives for the Traveller and Roma communities.
<b>Traveller and Roma organisations should be resourced to support and facilitate political engagement and leadership in the Traveller and Roma communities.</b>	133. The Department of Justice and Equality will support the development of mentoring programmes to build and develop the capacity of Travellers and Roma to represent their communities at a local, national and international level.
<b>A strong Traveller and Roma infrastructure, underpinned by community development principles should be supported and resourced.</b>	134. The Department of Justice and Equality will continue to support and fund local Traveller Community Development Projects, and additional funds will be made available (where possible) to include new projects in counties not currently served.  135. The Department of Justice and Equality will continue to support and resource Traveller organisations at national and local level, underpinned by community development principles.  136. The Department of Justice and Equality will provide dedicated funding for Roma initiatives and projects, underpinned by community development principles.
<b>Effective measures should be collaboratively undertaken by Government Departments, statutory agencies and Traveller and Roma organisations to protect support the Traveller and Roma communities in addressing conflict, feuding and anti-social behaviour.</b>	137. The Department of Justice and Equality will ensure Traveller access to victim support services.  138. The Department of Justice and Equality will put in place and fund an effective and sustained programme, in partnership with the Traveller community and all relevant Departments and agencies, to bring feuding to an end definitively over a period of time. This will include development of mediation services and embedding of mediation services and capacities in local Traveller organisations.  139. The Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government will promote and support Travellers' civic involvement in their own communities and local areas.  140. An Garda Síochána, in consultation with Traveller interests, will ensure that crime and anti-social behaviour within the Traveller community is responded to effectively and that the community is protected, including provision to Garda members of pre-service and in-service training to ensure Gardaí gain a greater understanding of the diversity of the Traveller community and recognise the traumatic impact of criminality.



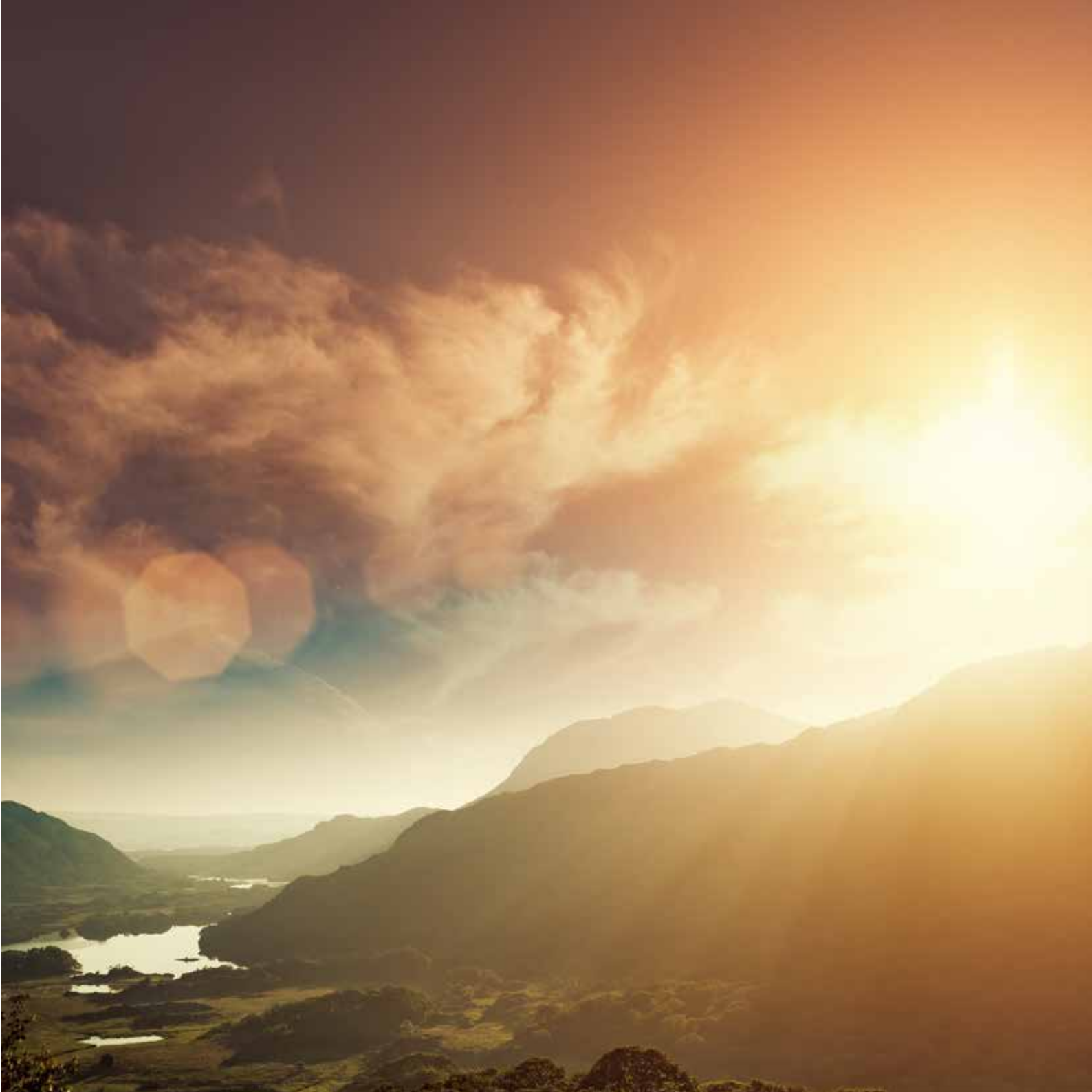
## Public Services

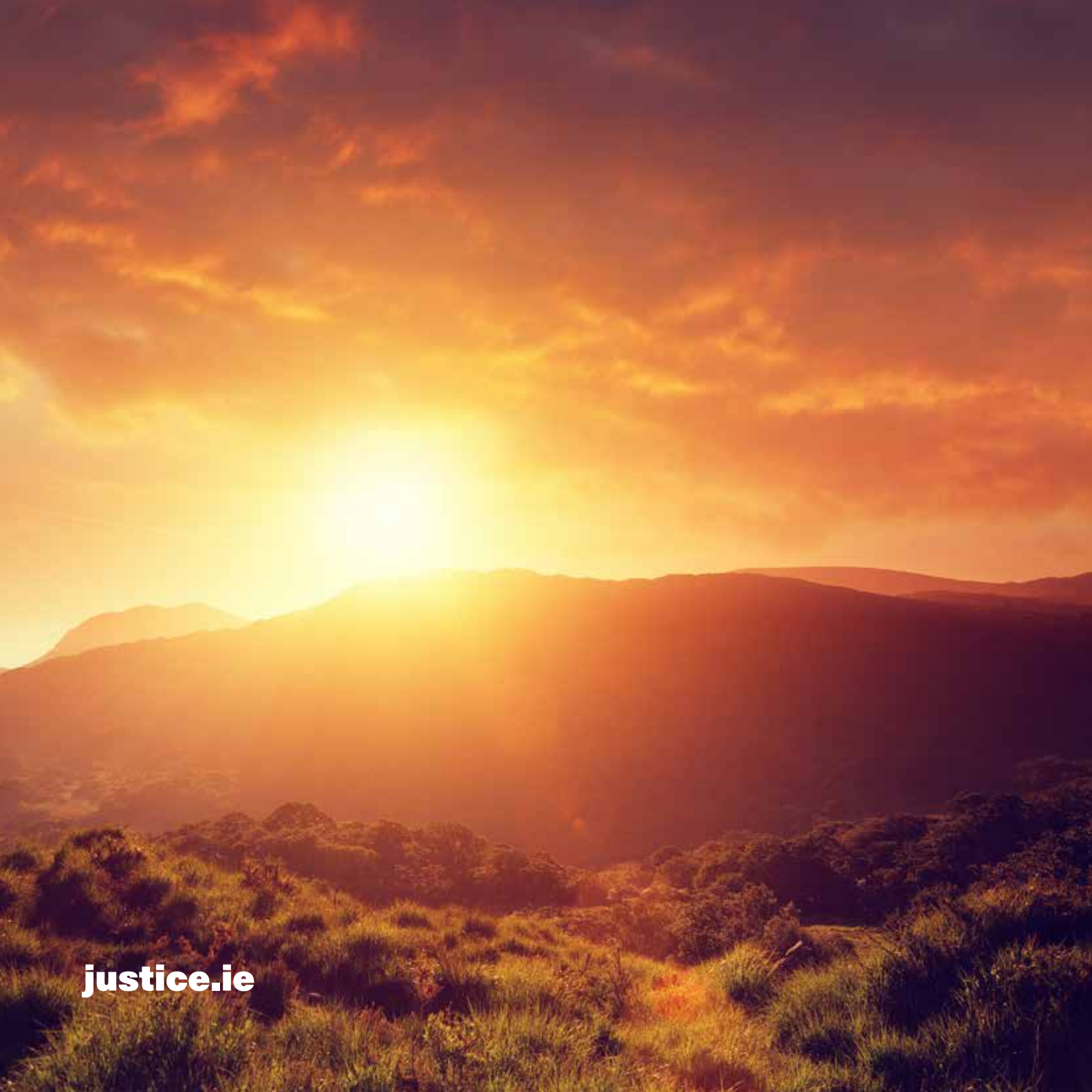
Theme and Objectives	Actions
<p><b>Traveller and Roma organisations should be consulted on and meaningfully involved in the design and delivery of relevant services and programmes that affect them.</b></p>	<p>141. The Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government (and Local Authorities) will ensure that Travellers and Roma are represented on the joint steering groups established to oversee the common economic and community elements of Local Economic and Community Plans.</p> <p>142. The Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government (and Local Authorities) will include consultation with Traveller and Roma representative organisations as part of the consultation processes for the completion of Local Economic and Community Plans.</p>
<p><b>Relevant public services staff should be trained in anti-racism and cultural awareness and understand their obligations under the section 42 (positive duty) in the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act 2014.</b></p>	<p>143. All Departments and relevant agencies will ensure that all relevant public service staff members receive anti-racism and cultural awareness training.</p> <p>144. The Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission, in consultation with Traveller and Roma representative organisations will develop training for Government Departments, statutory agencies and Local Authorities on implementing the Public Sector Duty as a means of systematically pre-empting and addressing equality and human rights issues in their daily work in relation to Travellers and Roma communities.</p>
<p><b>Public services should be provided in a way that is non-discriminatory and respectful of Traveller and Roma culture and identity.</b></p>	<p>145. All Departments, statutory agencies and Local Authorities will ensure the ten common basic principles on Roma inclusion adopted by the European Commission underpin the strategic and operational activities of all Government Departments, statutory agencies and Local Authorities.</p>
<p><b>Data disaggregated by ethnicity and gender should be collected across all Government Departments and statutory agencies to monitor and evaluate the impact of existing policies and strategies and to support evidence-based policy making.</b></p>	<p>146. The Department of Justice and Equality will chair a cross-Departmental working group, with involvement from Traveller and Roma representatives, with a view to developing a methodology for the introduction of an ethnic identifier on all data sets to facilitate the monitoring of access, participation and outcomes to services for Travellers and Roma.</p> <p>147. The Department of Justice and Equality (Irish Prison Service) will pilot an initiative to better capture information on Travellers on committal.</p> <p>148. All Departments and agencies will explore the development of a system for capturing data on the participation of Travellers and Roma (as well as other minority ethnic groups) across all Government Departments and statutory agencies in all thematic areas and actions within their remit.</p> <p>149. All Departments and agencies will explore the introduction of stratified sampling to gather statistically significant data on Travellers and Roma.</p>



*Note: the addition of another column (“progress to date”) will convert the above table into the annual report on progress. The Inclusion Strategy itself will be a living document with further consultation processes in future years building on progress and leading to publication of revised versions.*

*NB This document constitutes Version 1 of this Inclusion Strategy - June 2017.*





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