

Minutes of the 4th Meeting of the Migrant Integration Strategy Monitoring and Co-ordination Committee

Thursday 17th May 2018: Atrium, St Stephen's Green

Attendees: Minister David Stanton T.D. (Chair, D/Justice and Equality)
Ms. Úna Ni Dhubhghaill (OPMI, D/Justice and Equality)
Mr. Shane O'Connor (OPMI, D/Justice and Equality)
Dr. Fran McGinnity (ESRI)
Ms. Shamsun Wahar Chowdhury (AkidWa – on behalf of Alwiye Xuseyn)
Mr. Barnaba Dorda (ICTU)
Mr. Benny Cullen (Sport Ireland)
Ms. Breda Farrell (D/Transport, Tourism and Sport) (*Standing in for Olive Walsh*)
Ms. Fiona Finn (NASC)
Mr. Nick Henderson (Refugee Council)
Ms. Valerie Hayes (Cork County Council, on behalf of the CCMA)
Sgt. Dave McInerney (An Garda Síochána)
Ms. Fiona Ward, (D/Business, Enterprise and Innovation)
Mr. Garry Boon (D/Employment Affairs and Social Protection)
Mr. Joe O'Brien (Immigrant Council of Ireland)
Ms. Rachael Bermingham (Doras Luimní)
Mr. John Gilbane (D/Children and Youth Affairs)
Ms. Michelle Noone (Public Appointments Service)
Ms. Danielle McLaughlin (Crosscare – on behalf of Richard King)
Ms. Tinu Achioya (Cultúr)
Ms. Tonya Myles (Cáirde)
Mr. Alejandro Valderrama (New Communities Partnership)
Mr. Michael Williams (OPMI, D/Justice and Equality)

Apologies: Ms. Diane Nurse (Health Service Executive)
Mr. John Orme (D/Rural and Community Development)
Ms. Dairearca Ní Néill (D/Health)
Mr. Mark Shannon (on behalf of Mr. John Burke – D/Public Expenditure and Reform)
Mr. Declan Smyth (Central Statistics Office)
Ms. Helen Lowry (Migrant Rights Centre Ireland)
Ms. Fatma Msumi (New Communities Partnership)
Ms. Judy Howard (RIA)
Ms. Patricia Sheehan (D/Education and Skills)
Mr. Paul Lemass (D/ Housing, Planning and Local Government)
Ms. Saoirse Brady (Children's Rights Alliance)
Mr. David Lawler (D/Defence)
Ms. Fiona Maloney (ETB)
Mr. Kevin Clarke (INIS, D/Justice and Equality)

1. Opening remarks

Minister Stanton opened proceedings and welcomed new members and representatives to in the Committee. He also noted apologies from those who could not attend the meeting.

The Minister noted that the implementation of the strategy was now well into its second year, and that an interim report is due to government by the end of the year. The Minister emphasised to the importance of demonstrating to Government the progress that is being made under the Strategy.

The Minister also stated that the meeting was the first to focus on one of the specific themes of the strategy – “Promoting Intercultural Awareness and Combating Racism and Xenophobia”- allowing for a deeper dive into the theme – both to recognise and record progress and to identify and address issues that may be preventing progress.

2. Adoption of Agenda and Minutes of Previous Meeting

The Agenda was adopted without comment. The minutes of the previous meeting were adopted without comment.

3. Presentation and Discussion of ESRI “Attitudes to Diversity” Report, Dr. Frances McGinnity, ESRI

Minister Stanton welcomed Dr. Frances McGinnity to present on the recent Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI) and Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission (IHREC) joint publication – *Attitudes to Diversity in Ireland*.

Dr. McGinnity’s presentation discussed the background of the report, its sources and key findings that emerged and their policy implications. The report focused on the attitudes of the Irish “host” population to diversity, making use of data from the European Social Survey over the period 2002-2014.

A link to the report is provided with these minutes.

4. Thematic Update

4.1. OPMI:

The meeting’s thematic focus was *Promoting Intercultural Awareness and Combating Racism and Xenophobia*. Shane O’Connor (OPMI) led the discussion on progress made under this theme so far.

The thematic sub-committee had met in May 2018 to consider the following:

- Bridging the gap between Local Authorities and the MIS MCC
- Engaging the business sector – Irish Managers Institute and IHREC
- Use of art and culture to stimulate cultural awareness and understanding

An update was provided on the following specific actions:

- **Action 51:** Communities Integration Fund. 360 applications were received and are now being assessed against the selection criteria.
- **Action 54:** Migrant Network – OPMI is working with Dublin City Council to establish this.
- **Actions 56 and 57:** This being progressed through the National Action Plan on Corporate Social Responsibility, and through funded projects such as the EPIC Programme
- **Action 65:** Review is underway by DJE and is due to be completed in 2018
- **Action 68:** Research into the integration experiences of several minority groups commenced in April 2018 as part of an internal review of the refugee resettlement programme in Ireland.

Following Shane O'Connor's presentation, the floor was opened to questions from the committee members.

4.2. Garda National Integration and Diversity Unit:

Sgt. Dave McNerney presented regarding the current efforts by An Garda Síochána to promote intercultural awareness and combat racism and xenophobia. Sgt. McNerney emphasised the importance of avoiding the mistakes that have been made in the past by other European countries and challenging behaviours and attitudes within An Garda Síochána.

On the specific issue of Hate Crime, Sgt. McNerney highlighted that since 2001 to date, there has not been a major rise in the number of hate crimes reported, though the issue of under-reporting is acknowledged.

4.3. County and City Managers Association:

Valerie Hayes, from Cork County Council provided a brief update on behalf of the CCMA regarding the work of local authorities to promote intercultural awareness and combat racism and xenophobia. Areas that were highlighted included the Public Participation Networks which were said to be very active at local authority level.

She stated that there is work happening at local authority level but that it is usually focused on specific actions through particular focus areas such as housing. She also stated that arts officers and libraries could be better utilised in integration process.

Minister Stanton acknowledged the crucial role that local authorities have to play in the integration process.

Minister Stanton excused himself from the meeting (11h46) and Ms. Úna Ni Dhubhghaill (OPMI, D/Justice and Equality) assumed the position of chairperson

5. Tour de Table

Úna Ní Dhubhghaill proposed a change of order in the agenda in order to pass directly to the Tour de Table to provide Departments with an opportunity to update the Committee on their work in thematic area. This change was accepted.

Updates were provided by: the Department of Children and Youth Affairs; Department of Business Enterprise and Innovation; Public Appointment Service; Department of Transport Tourism and Sport; Sport Ireland and Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection.

Immigrant Council of Ireland also provided an update on a report on the Education and Training Boards.

6. Crosscutting Actions

Michael Williams (OPMI, D/Justice and Equality) presented the results of the online survey carried out by OPMI on the current status of progress on cross-cutting actions. He highlighted a number of key areas where significant progress was required, including on the mainstreaming of integration issues into core strategy and policy documents; and the provision of specific training on these issues to staff of departments and agencies.

Departments were encouraged to increase their level of feedback to the next round the survey and to circulate the survey as widely as possible in order to ensure the most accurate analysis can be produced.

7. Communicating the Strategy

Úna Ní Dhubhghaill led the discussion with a presentation regarding communicating the strategy. The presentation highlighted some key developments and issues:

- **OPMI Website:** the website has been relaunched and now features information regarding funding and some information for migrants. Details and updates on the work of the MIS MCC, including minutes of meetings, are published on the website.
- **Funding and the Strategy:** highlighted as an area of importance. She emphasised the need to ensure that funding is clearly linked to the strategy and strategy priorities.

- **Role of the committee:** highlighted the fact that while OPMI has a leading and coordination role for the strategy, communicating integration and the strategy more broadly, both internally and externally, is the responsibility of all committee members.

The floor was then opened for questions and suggestions regarding promoting the strategy and communicating integration more broadly.

8. & 9.: AOB and Next Meeting

AOB:

Benny Cullen (Sport Ireland) highlighted that Sport Ireland will be publishing a report on which will include a section on migrant integration.

Garry Boon (DEASP) highlighted an upcoming event regarding research about employment amongst people of African descent.

Next Meeting:

The next meeting of the MIS MCC will be on the 18th October 2018. Úna Ní Dhubhghaill thanked all members for their attendance and contributions on the day.