

County Kildare Integration Strategy 2020 - 2026



Comhairle Contae Chill Dara
Kildare County Council



Kildare Integration Network



County Kildare
LEADER PARTNERSHIP

Contents

Foreword.....	1
Introduction	2
Vision of the National Migrant Integration Strategy	4
Developing the Strategy.....	5
Profile of Kildare’s Population	7
EU, National and Local Policy Context	11
Consultation and Action Planning Process	15
Consultation Findings.....	18
Implementation	36
Action Plan	37
Appendices.....	52

Foreword

The publication of County Kildare’s second Integration Strategy is the culmination of a lengthy consultation process with key agency stakeholders, local representatives, members and groups from our diverse migrant population. The 2016 Census informs us that 10.6% of Kildare residents described themselves as non-Irish nationals and a key part of the consultation process focused on this cohort. In fact, 36 nationalities took part in the 11 focus groups.

This Integration Strategy has built on the good work undertaken by Kildare’s Integration Strategy 2014-2019. Other documents which influenced the development of this Strategy are: The National Migration Integration Strategy, A Blueprint for the Future, 2017 – 2020 and the Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty enshrined in the Irish Human Rights and Equality Act 2014.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank all those who engaged with us in the preparation of this document. A particular word of thanks to Sara Stephens for coordinating the consultation process and for drafting the Strategy, and to Kildare Integration Network for playing a key role in supporting community participation. Our thanks also to those agencies and groups who have committed to actions set out within the Strategy. The ultimate litmus test for the success of this document will be if the actions contained in it are implemented within the lifetime of the Strategy.

Kildare County Council along with its partner County Kildare LEADER Partnership are fully committed to ensuring the implementation of this Strategy over the next five years. We look forward to continued collaboration with other agencies, public bodies and community/voluntary groups to ensure the support and inclusion of people from ethnic minorities and new communities living, working, or studying in County Kildare.



Sonya Kavanagh,
Interim Chief Executive,
Kildare County Council



Cllr. Aoife Breslin,
Chair,
Kildare Interagency Integration Committee



Cllr. Naoise Ó Cearúil,
Cathaoirleach,
Kildare County Council

Introduction

County Kildare has developed its second county-wide Integration Strategy to support the inclusion of people from ethnic minority and new community backgrounds living, working or studying in Kildare.

The first County Kildare Integration Strategy covered the period 2014 – 2019. It acknowledged that Irish society generally, and Kildare in particular, had changed over the preceding 20 years and that many people from different backgrounds had made the county their home. A variety of groups and initiatives were set up to create a more inclusive and integrated society for all who consider Kildare to be their home – both publicly funded and voluntary initiatives. The first strategy aimed to pull together these various strands and weave a county-wide integration strategy.

This second strategy, covering the period 2020 to 2026, aims to build on the first strategy. It also acknowledges the national developments since the first strategy including ‘A Blueprint for All’, the National Migrant Integration Strategy 2017 - 2020, and the Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty, published in 2014.

Integration: is the ability to participate to the extent that a person needs to and wishes in all of the major components of the society without having to relinquish his or her own cultural identity.

A Blueprint for the Future: The National Migrant Integration Strategy 2017 - 2020

The National Migrant Integration Strategy defines an integrated society as being one in which migrants are facilitated to play a full part in Irish society – a society in which migrants have the opportunities necessary to lead full lives, to enjoy the benefits of living in Ireland and to contribute to Irish life and society.

The ethnic minority and new communities’ population is highly diverse in terms of nationality, ethnicity and religious belief and non-belief. It includes people of different ages, genders and sexual orientation. The situations of people from ethnic minority and new community backgrounds in Kildare varies considerably; some come to Kildare on a short-term basis, others have made their home here.

The use of ‘ethnic minority and new communities’ for the purpose of this strategy is broad and includes people who have moved to Ireland, the Irish-born children of those who have moved to Ireland as well as those who have become Irish citizens as they may continue to face challenges. This includes EU citizens and third country nationals, international protection applicants, international students, refugees and those with leave to remain.

The specific needs of members of the Traveller and Roma communities in Kildare, as ethnic minority communities,

If Kildare, during Census 2016, was reduced to the size of a small village (100 people), 89 would have Irish nationality, 3 would be Polish, 2 would have UK nationality, 1 would be Lithuanian and the remaining 5 would have over 85 nationalities between them.

are not addressed by the Integration Strategy as they fall within the remit of the County Kildare Traveller and Roma Inclusion Strategy 2019-2023.

The aim of this strategy is to work towards creating an inclusive and intercultural society where all residents of the county are valued equally. The actions included in this strategy involve a range of stakeholders from statutory agencies, community and voluntary organisations and members of ethnic minority and new communities. The actions aim to address some of the barriers to full participation as identified by these stakeholders.

Vision of the National Migrant Integration Strategy

The vision of the National Migrant Integration Strategy, *A Blueprint for the Future*, is that migrants are facilitated to play a full role in Irish society, that integration is a core principle of Irish life and that Irish society and institutions work together to promote integration. This vision underpins the work of the Kildare Interagency Integration Committee and wider community in producing the Kildare Integration Strategy.

Vision

The basic values of Irish society are respected by all.

Migrants are enabled and expected to participate in economic life – in employment and self-employment.

Migrants interact with the host community and participate with them in cultural, sporting and other activities while preserving also their own traditions as they wish.

Migrants have language skills sufficient to enable them to participate in economic life and in the wider society.

Migrants have a knowledge of Ireland, its history and culture.

Migrants, and particularly their children, benefit fully from the education system.

Migrants are enabled to celebrate their national, ethnic, cultural and religious identities, subject to the law.

Migrants participate in politics and public life as provided for by law.

Integration policies and measures are mainstreamed in the work of all Government Departments and agencies, local authorities and other public bodies and organisations.

Positive action measures are undertaken where appropriate to address the specific needs of migrant groups.

Migrants and migrant representative groups, contribute to policy and service development.

Migrants get support to access and navigate public services.

Department of Justice and Equality: 'The Migrant Integration Strategy, A Blueprint for the Future' p. 10.

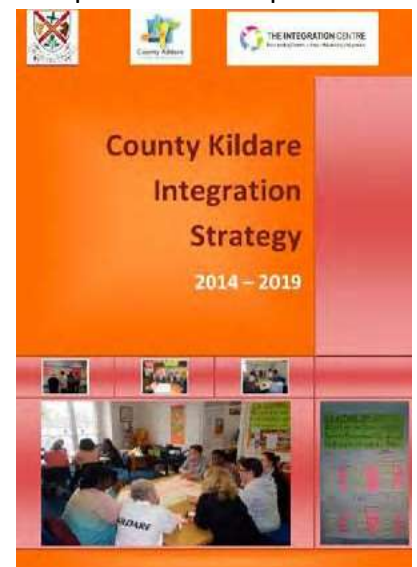
Developing the Strategy

International and national policy promote social inclusion and integration, but it is at the local level that the day-to-day experiences and issues associated are best addressed. Integration can only flourish with the support and commitment of local authorities and local communities.

County Kildare Integration Strategy 2014 – 2019

An ambitious first strategy, *County Kildare Integration Strategy 2014 – 2019* included 22 actions and 53 outcomes under four headings: Education and Employment; Social Inclusion; Active Participation; and Recognition of Diversity. A review of the first strategy took place in 2018 and some of the positive outcomes were: better communication and more collaboration between service providers; an increase in community events which helped to develop relationships and demonstrate the positives of Kildare being an intercultural society and dedicated resources, particularly with the Social Inclusion Community and Activation Programme team. The strategy led to the creation of an Integration Worker post; the development of a signed Diversity Charter for service providers; Direct Provision related actions including more awareness and understanding of Direct Provision amongst the wider population; increased supports for those exiting Direct Provision and a commitment by service providers to campaign for the end of Direct Provision.

The review also highlighted some lessons learnt from the first strategy including the need for actions to be achievable; the importance of commitment to actions from senior management within the agencies, the need for accountability to be built into the implementation and an agreed response if actions are not progressing.



Guiding Principles of the second Integration Strategy

The development of the strategy was underpinned by a set of guiding principles including:

- People from ethnic minority and new community backgrounds should play a lead role in the development of the strategy; thus, the process should be underpinned by participatory consultation.
- The success of the strategy will rely on interagency partnership working, therefore statutory, community and voluntary service providers should contribute to the process alongside people from ethnic minority and new community backgrounds.
- The strategy should focus on achieving outcomes. Those outcomes should be informed by people from ethnic minority and new community backgrounds.

Structures to support the Integration Strategy development

Membership of the Kildare Interagency Integration Committee:

Cllr. Aoife Breslin (Chairperson)
Cllr. Carmel Kelly
Cllr. Vanessa Liston
Kildare County Council
County Kildare LEADER Partnership
Kildare Integration Network
Kildare Children & Young People's Services Committee
Kildare County Childcare Committee
Kildare Wicklow Education Training Board
An Garda Síochána
Maynooth University
Health Service Executive (HSE)
TUSLA
Department of Social Protection
Citizens Information Service
Kildare Volunteer Centre
Kildare Public Participation Network
Teach Tearmainn

Establishment of the Kildare Interagency Integration Committee:

This group brought together service providers and community representation from Kildare Integration Network. Kildare Integration Network is made up of multiple intercultural groups across the county. The Kildare Interagency Integration Committee meets quarterly and oversaw the development of the strategy.

Appointment of an External Consultant:

An External Consultant was appointed to facilitate consultation with ethnic minority and new communities through a participatory consultation process, to liaise with the Kildare Interagency Integration Committee, to facilitate outcomes-focused planning and to develop the final strategy document.

Establishment of the Kildare Integration Working Group:

Made up of representation from Kildare County Council, County Kildare LEADER Partnership, Kildare Integration Network and An Garda Síochána to oversee the day-to-day development of the strategy.

Stages of development



Profile of Kildare's Population

Kildare usually resident population

The 2016 Census of Population recorded the total population of Kildare as 220,693. From 1996 to 2016, Kildare experienced a 64.8% (+87,512) increase in its population base - the second highest rate in the State. This is explained by high levels of natural increase (birth rate) and a strong performance in estimated net migration.

Nationally, 535,475 people, 11.4% of the usually resident population, described themselves as non-Irish nationals in Census 2016. An additional 104,784 identify as dual Irish and other nationalities. Dual nationals are recorded in the Census as Irish nationals.

Within Kildare, 23,333 people described themselves as non-Irish nationals in Census 2016, 10.6% of the county's population. This rate is slightly lower than the State average (11.4%). As was the trend throughout most of Ireland, Kildare's non-Irish population decreased from 11.8% to 10.6% between 2011 and 2016. However, much of this reduction can be explained by the increase in dual nationality across Ireland in the last five years. 5,225 people identified as dual Irish and other nationalities. The most common Irish dual nationals are Polish, American, UK and Nigerian.

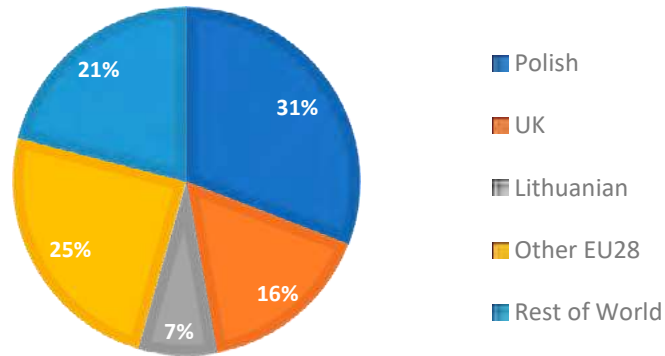
Figure 1: Census 2016: Usually resident population by nationality

		Non-Irish Population	Dual Nationals	Total usually resident	% of non-Irish nationals
State	Persons	535,475	104,784	4,689,921	11.4%
	Male	267,088		2,320,460	
	Female	268,387		2,369,461	
Kildare	Persons	23,333	5,225	220,693	10.6%
	Male	11,790		109,661	
	Female	11,543		111,032	

Population breakdown by nationality

Of the usually resident population in Kildare, 86% indicated Irish nationality only and 2.4% dual Irish and other nationalities. As with Census 2011, the largest non-Irish nationality groups in Kildare in 2016 are Polish (3.3% or 7,199), UK residents (1.7% or 3,789) and Lithuanians (0.8%, 1,696). Citizens from other EU member states (other EU28 in the graph) make up 2.5% (5,732) of Kildare's population and 2.2% (4,892) of the county's population is from the rest of the world. 1% did not state their nationality, including those with no nationality.

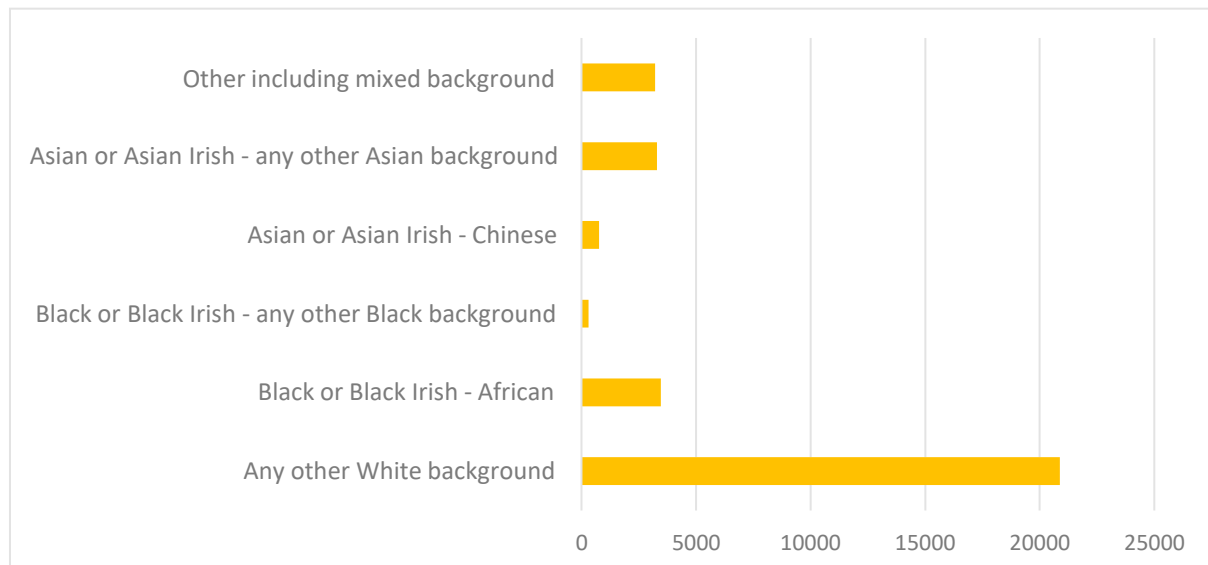
Figure 2: Census 2016: Kildare Non-Irish National Population by Nationality



Ethnic or Cultural Background

According to the Census 2016 question on ethnic or cultural background, 3.5% of the population of Kildare identify as Black, Black-Irish, Asian and Asian- Irish (7,842). 20,881 people identify as Any other White background, 9.5% of the population.

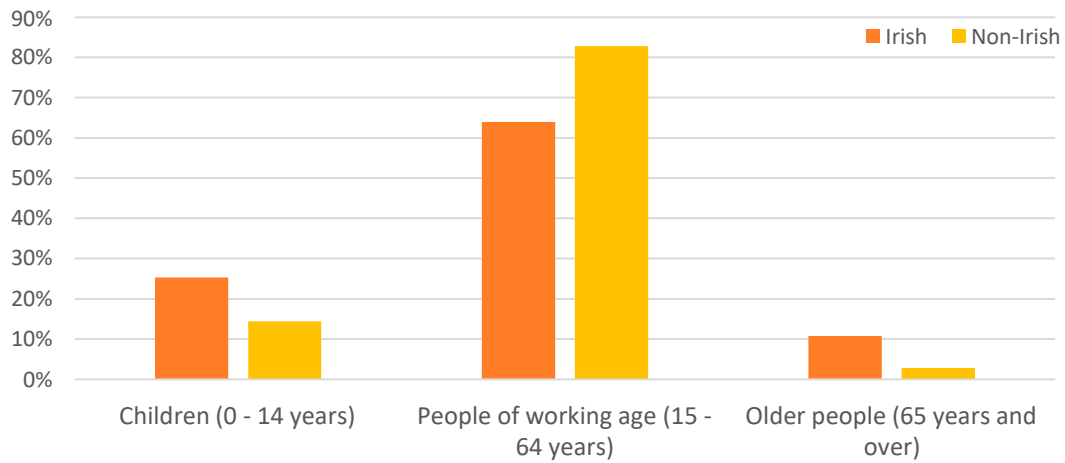
Figure 3: Census 2016: Ethnic or Cultural Background excluding White Irish, White Irish Traveller and Not Stated



Kildare's population by age

The age structure of the non-Irish community in Kildare is significantly different to that of the overall population, with almost 82.8% of the population in the working ages compared to 64% of the overall population. This is consistent with the pattern across Ireland.

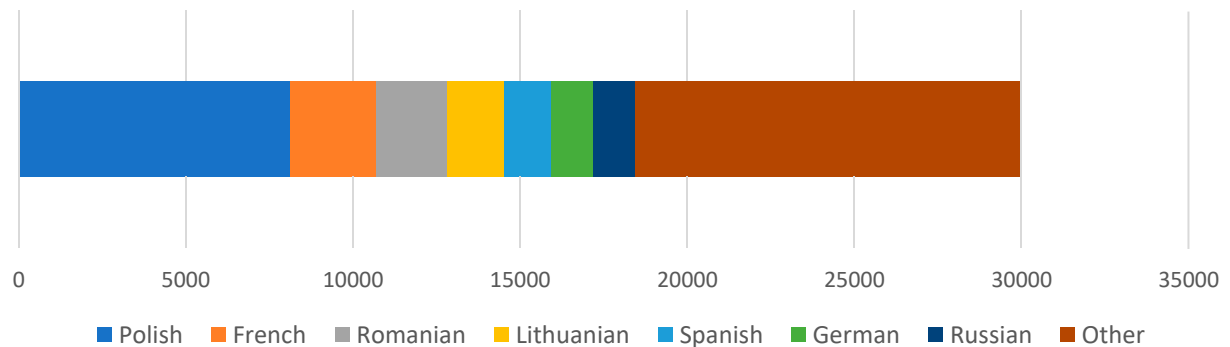
Figure 4: Census 2016: Population of Kildare by age



Languages

The graph below charts the main other languages (excluding Irish and English) spoken by those residing in Kildare. In total, there are more than 50 other languages spoken in Kildare. 29,957 (13.6% of the usually resident population stated that they speak foreign languages). Of those who speak foreign languages, the single language spoken by the highest proportion is Polish.

Figure 5: Census 2016: Other languages spoken (Kildare)

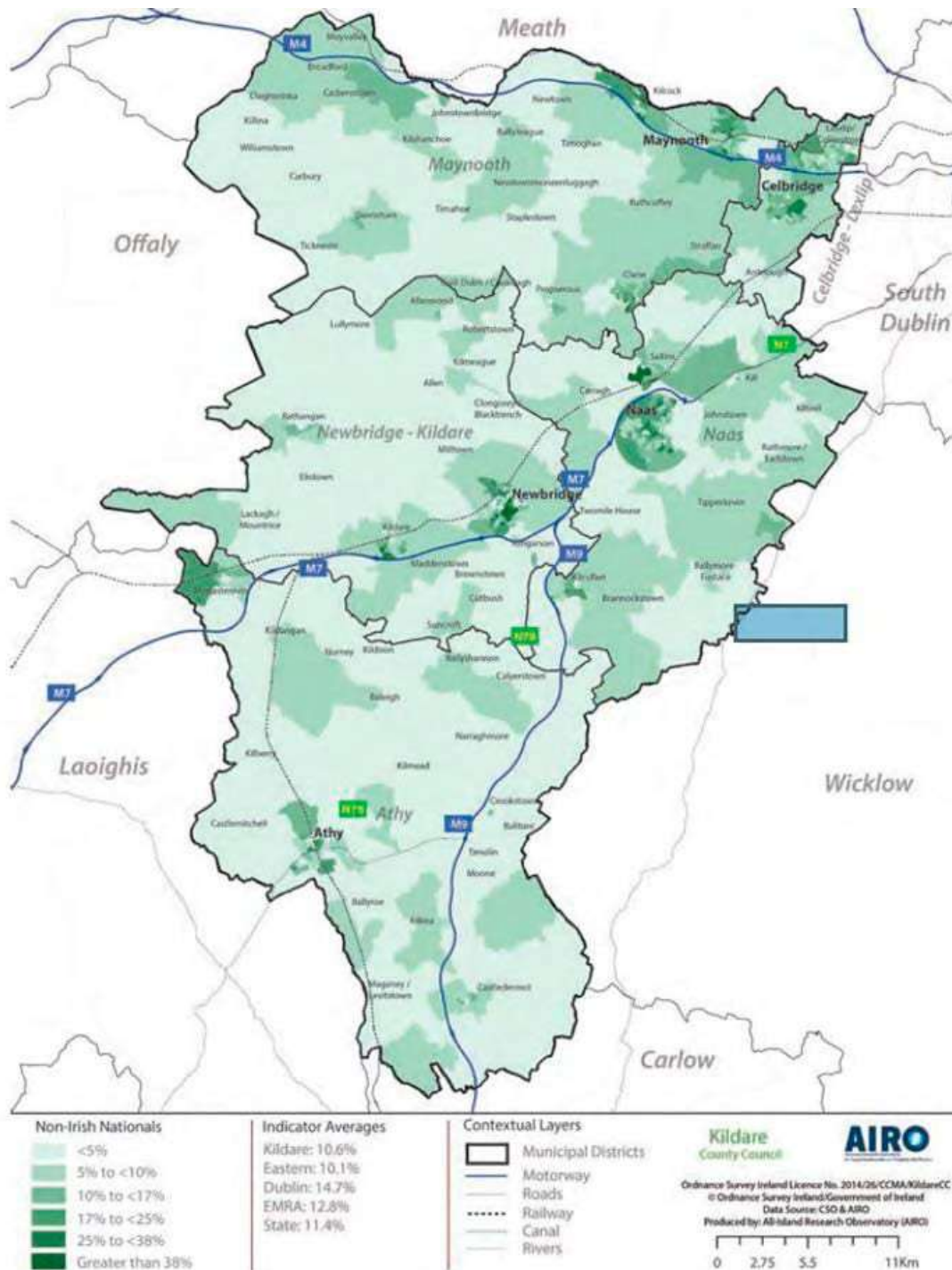


Kildare Register of Electors

Entitlement to vote is based on citizenship. Only Irish citizens (resident in the state) can vote in presidential elections and referendums. Residents of the state who are Irish citizens or British citizens may vote in elections to Dáil Éireann. Residents who are citizens of any EU state may vote in European Parliament elections, while any resident who has been resident in Ireland for more than six months, regardless of citizenship, may vote and run in local elections. The Kildare Register of Electors has a total of 151,560 citizens. 1,755 are UK citizens,

1,915 are registered as EU citizens (1,237 as Potential Europeans¹) and 1,454 are neither UK nor EU.

Figure 6: Census 2016: Geographic concentrations of non-Irish national population



¹ As EU citizens may vote in the European Parliament Elections in either in their Member State of residence or in their home Member State, there is a system of information exchange between Member States to prevent double voting. EU citizens are setup as 'Potential European' and are required to make a statutory declaration of their intention to vote only in their Member State of residence before the Local Authority can amend their details on the Register of Electors to 'European'.

EU, National and Local Policy Context

Integration Policy at European Level

Common Basic Principles for Immigrant Integration Policy in the EU

The Common Basic Principles for Immigrant Integration Policy were agreed by all EU member states in 2004. The principles offer a framework for the development of policy to promote integration and to assist member states in formulating integration policies. They were reaffirmed by the European Council Conclusions of 2014.

Common Basic Principles for Immigrant Integration Policy in the EU

Integration is a dynamic, two-way process of mutual accommodation by all immigrants and residents of Member States

Integration implies respect for the basic values of the European Union

Employment is a key part of the integration process and is central to the participation of immigrants, to the contributions immigrants make to the host society and to making such contributions visible

Basic knowledge of the host society's language, history and institutions is indispensable to integration; enabling immigrants to acquire this basic knowledge is essential to successful integration

Efforts in education are critical to preparing immigrants, and particularly their descendants, to be more successful and more active participants in society

Access for immigrants to institutions, as well as to public and private goods and services, on a basis equal to national citizens and in a non-discriminatory way is a critical foundation for better integration

Frequent interaction between immigrants and Member State citizens is a fundamental mechanism for integration. Shared forums, intercultural dialogue, education about immigrants and immigrant cultures, and stimulating living conditions in urban environments enhance the interactions between immigrants and Member State citizens

The practice of diverse cultures and religions is guaranteed under the Charter of Fundamental Rights and must be safeguarded, unless practices conflict with other inviolable European rights or with national law

The participation of immigrants in the democratic process and in the formulation of integration policies and measures, especially at the local level, supports their integration

Mainstreaming integration policies and measures in all relevant policy portfolios and levels of government and public services is an important consideration in public policy formation and implementation

Developing clear goals, indicators and evaluation mechanisms are necessary to adjust policy, evaluate progress on integration and to make the exchange of information more effective

European Ministerial Conference on Integration: Zaragoza Declaration (2010)

At the EU Ministerial Conference held in Zaragoza, Spain in April 2010, a declaration on integration was made which resulted in the drafting of the Zaragoza Declaration. A comprehensive list of European Council conclusions, principles, agendas, pacts and communications dating back to 2002 are outlined in this declaration.

Ministers from all EU Member States committed to “further develop the core idea of integration as a driver for development and social cohesion...[and] promote integration as a driver for development and social cohesion by incorporating integration issues in a comprehensive way in all relevant policy fields”.

The Declaration gives particular attention to the areas of education, employment, comprehensive participation and an evaluation of integration policies based on the following core indicators: Employment, Education, Social inclusion and Active Citizenship. Employment is a vital part of the integration process, and efforts in education are essential in helping people from ethnic minority and new community backgrounds to become successful and more active participants in society. Social inclusion is important not only for access to the labour market, but also for entry into society more generally. The participation of people from ethnic minority and new community backgrounds in the democratic process as active citizens supports their integration and enhances their sense of belonging.

In terms of participation, the declaration emphasises “the role of local authorities and cities in dealing with intercultural challenges and developing and implementing integration programmes”, as well as managing diversity and combating racism more effectively.



Conference: Naas Gardaí and the Islamic Community of Naas
Held in the Council Chambers, the conference brought together the local Muslim community in Naas and An Garda Síochána (AGS). Speakers included members of Muslim communities in Dublin and the Sergeant of the Garda Diversity Office. The event demonstrated AGS’s commitment to serve all communities and affirmed the Muslim community as part of Irish society that give AGS its mandate and legitimacy. The event was attended by the Ceann Comhairle and Assistant Commissioner Fanning.

Integration and related policy at National Level

A Blueprint for the Future: The National Migrant Integration Strategy 2017 – 2020

In February 2017, the government launched Ireland’s Migrant Integration Strategy, ‘A Blueprint for the Future’. The strategy was the first detailed policy on migrant integration since 2008² and it outlines 76 actions spread across government departments and agencies, six of which specifically mention Local Authorities. These include the updating of integration

² *Migration Nation* was the first national policy statement on integration strategy and diversity management, published in 2008.

strategies and actions to increase migrant representation in local authority structures such as the Joint Policing Committee.

Actions applicable to all Government Departments include the provision of information to migrants in language-appropriate formats, ongoing intercultural awareness training for all frontline staff and making people aware where interpretation is available.

This strategy gives us a national definition of integration as the ‘ability to participate to the extent that a person needs and wishes in all of the major components of society without having to relinquish his or her own cultural identity’.

It goes on to say that integration recognises the right of migrants to give expression to their own culture in a manner that does not conflict with the basic values of Irish society as reflected in Ireland’s Constitution and in law.

The national strategy recognises that integration is a two-way process, it involves change for Irish society and institutions so that the benefits of greater diversity can be fully realised – this is in line with the EU Common Basic Principles on Integration.

Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty

All public bodies in Ireland have responsibility to promote equality, prevent discrimination and protect the human rights of their employees, customers, service users and everyone affected by their policies and plans. This is a legal obligation, called the **Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty**, and it originated in Section 42 of the Irish Human Rights and Equality Act 2014.

The Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty places equality and human rights at the heart of how a public body fulfils its purpose and delivers on its strategic plan. It imposes a statutory obligation on public bodies to eliminate discrimination and to promote equality of opportunity and treatment of its staff and the persons to whom it provides services. It is obliged to protect the human rights of its members, staff and the persons to whom it provides services.

It acknowledges that certain people or groups of people may be more at risk than others of experiencing discrimination or human rights violations. Ensuring equality of opportunity may mean catering for the specific needs of people or groups of people who experience disadvantages in society.

Sector Specific Integration Strategies

HSE Second National Intercultural Health Strategy 2018-2023

This strategy aims to address the many unique, health and support needs experienced by the increasing numbers of HSE service users from diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds and who live in Ireland. Five main goals are outlined in the strategy:

- Enhance accessibility of services to service users from diverse ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds.

- Address health issues experienced by service users from diverse ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds.
- Ensure provision of high quality, culturally responsive services to service users from diverse ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds.
- Build an evidence base.
- Strengthen partnership working to enhance intercultural health.

An Garda Síochána: Diversity and Integration Strategy 2019-2021

This strategy aims to provide for a strategic approach by the Gardaí to diversity and integration. The Strategy's themes are focused on protecting the community, developing robust data systems and upskilling members of the force, working in partnership and visibly communicating to members of the public that their complaints will be taken seriously.

These themes aim to ensure that all groups and communities in a diverse society have the confidence they are seen, valued and feel safe, whatever their ethnic or national origin or belief.

Integration references in Local Policy

Kildare Local Economic and Community Plan 2016 – 2021

The purpose of the Local Economic and Community Plan is to set out the objectives and actions needed to promote and support the economic development and the local and community development of a local authority area.

The Kildare Local Economic and Community Plan 2016 – 2021 is committed to supporting the implementation of strategies responding to the needs of vulnerable groups. It includes reference to the Kildare Integration Strategy. More broadly, the Plan commits to promoting and supporting a fully inclusive Kildare that proactively responds to the needs of the most excluded citizens of the county.



Consultation and Action Planning Process

The aim of the consultation process was to ensure that the voices of people from ethnic minority and new community backgrounds were central to the development of the strategy.

A participatory consultative approach was used in this process. A participatory consultative approach encourages active participation and buy-in. Those who engaged in the process were asked to identify the obstacles they saw to integration in County Kildare and were given the opportunity to propose solutions. Participatory consultation was used at the initial consultative stage and at the action planning stage to ensure that the strategy captures and addresses the needs identified by community members.

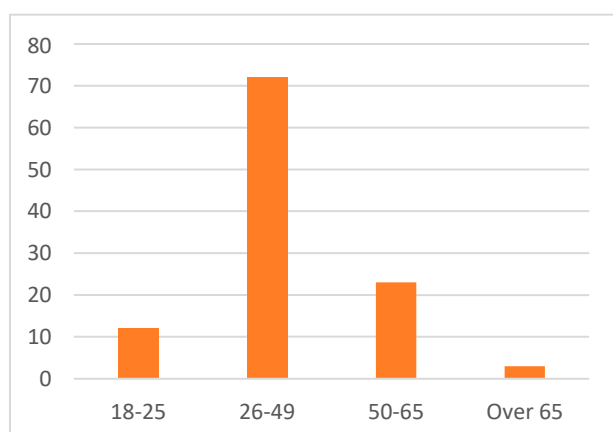


Community member with the poster (in multiple languages) promoting the consultation survey

Initial Consultation

Surveys: Two surveys were designed, one aimed at people from ethnic minority and new community backgrounds living or working in Kildare and the other aimed at service providers. Due to Covid-19 public health restrictions in place throughout the consultation period, surveys were exclusively online but, where appropriate, phone support was provided to assist in completing the surveys. A community outreach approach was used and individuals in existing networks were contacted and invited to complete the survey in addition to the online promotion.

Age profile of community survey respondents



Community member survey: The survey for community members was translated into ten languages; Polish, Lithuanian, Slovak, Romanian, French, Portuguese, Russian, Ukrainian, Georgian and Arabic. A total of 110 people, of 36 different nationalities, completed this survey. 70% of those who completed the survey were women. The survey can be found in Appendix 3.

Community survey responses: What is your ethnic or cultural background?



- Asian or Asian Irish
- Black or Black Irish
- White, Any other White background
- White, Irish or Irish Traveller
- Other/did not answer

Service Providers survey: Service providers were invited to complete a survey on their experiences of providing services to people from ethnic minority and new community backgrounds. This survey was completed by 53 service providers including services specific to people from ethnic minority and new community backgrounds and general services. It was completed by a wide range of service providers covering health, education, employment supports, policing, volunteering and community development.

Both surveys, and the translated versions, were hosted on the websites of County Kildare LEADER Partnership and Kildare County Council from November 2020 to February 2021.

Focus groups: Due to Covid-19 public health restrictions in place throughout the consultation period, focus groups took place online. These focus groups were aimed at people from ethnic minority and new community backgrounds in Kildare.

A new Kildare Integration Strategy is being developed and we want to hear your voice.

Members of migrant communities are invited to participate through completing an online survey or attending an online consultation focus group.

For more information visit:
www.countykildarelp.ie/kildare-integration-strategy-2020/

Comhairle Contae Chill Dara
Kildare County Council

County Kildare
LEADER Partnership

Eleven focus groups were held between November 2020 and February 2021. Six focus groups were open, one was specific to women, one specific to Direct Provision residents, three with secondary school students, one with Comhairle na nÓg members and one with Maynooth University students. A total of 116 people attended these focus groups.

Consultation promotion: The surveys and focus groups were advertised on social media (Kildare Community Stories and CKLP's social media), through posters in local businesses (other services were closed due to Covid-19 restrictions) and on Kildare FM.

Action Planning Phase

Following on from the consultation process, a series of action planning workshops took place to address the issues that were identified through the process. In each action planning workshop, the findings from the consultation process were presented and participants were then asked to consider how their organisation could address the identified issues. Ten action planning workshops were held. Some of the workshops dealt with topics with participants limited to those working in the area while others were broader. These participants included members of the Kildare Interagency Integration Committee and other service providers. Kildare Integration Network was central to both the consultation process and action planning.

Based on the discussions generated at these workshops, a series of actions were developed in response to the issues identified in the initial consultation.



Kildare Interagency Integration Committee Action Planning Workshop

Final Community Consultation

Participants from the initial consultation phase were invited to take part in a final community consultation meeting which took place in July 2021. This meeting started off with a presentation on the consultation findings followed by discussion on each draft action. Participants were invited to give their opinions and suggest changes. This feedback was then shared with the relevant leads on the actions.



Participants at the Community Consultation Meeting

Consultation Findings

Four main themes were identified based on the qualitative data gathered from the focus groups and the open-ended questions in the surveys. Each theme has several actions associated with it and these can be found in the Action Plan. A more detailed set of the consultation findings can be found in Appendix 4.

Theme 1: Information, Communication and Services

Access to information

Needs identified: Throughout the consultation process, participants stressed the importance of being able to access the appropriate information to help them navigate the sometimes quite complex health, social protection and education systems. A lack of awareness of services available is a key challenge in providing and accessing services. People need appropriate information and signposting about how and where to access these services. There is a need to empower people to navigate these services.

Proposed solutions: Provision of clear information on how to access services and where to go for additional support. The creation of the post of a dedicated Integration Worker to provide information, signpost services and function as a bridge between those from ethnic minority and new community backgrounds and service providers, this would be based on the model of the Integration Worker to those leaving Direct Provision Centres.

Benefit: Having information in appropriate formats about how to access services and a knowledge of a person's rights and responsibilities as residents in Kildare is crucial to the effective integration of people from ethnic minority and new community backgrounds as it empowers them to engage fully.

Communication

Needs identified: Participants highlighted the need to be able to communicate with service providers to address their basic needs and to take part in the social and cultural life of their communities. For some people from ethnic minority and new community backgrounds, there is a need for translation and interpretation services. For others, it is the need for forms to be written in Plain English. For those with low levels of digital literacy and/or English language, having to use online portals to access services is a barrier.

Proposed solutions: The provision of information about services in appropriate formats. Appropriate formats include the translation of documents and guides and the use of Plain English for all forms and correspondence. Professional interpretation services need to be available, accessible and promoted to service users - particularly for sensitive matters such as health or reporting a crime. In parallel to accessing services through online portals, in person or paper-based

“The sign in Arabic, at the medical service, was written backwards and the letters detached – making it illegible.”
- Focus group participant

services should still be available to those with low levels of digital literacy and/or English language.

Benefit: The provision of accessible and high-quality interpretation and translations services and the use of Plain English on forms and correspondence will improve communication and benefit both service providers and service users.

Responding to service users' needs

Needs identified: Many service providers are not aware of the needs of service users from ethnic minority and new community backgrounds with their diverse cultural and religious traditions. For example, people who come from countries that do not use the Latin alphabet can end up with various spellings of their name due to different transliterations which can result in confusion or suspicion from service providers.

Proposed solutions: Unconscious bias and intercultural awareness training are essential for frontline staff to improve their understanding of the needs and experiences of service users from ethnic minority and new community backgrounds. Consultation with service users can support the development of initiatives to improve the accessibility of services and ensure that appropriate supports are being offered.

Benefit: Better understanding of the experience of service users from ethnic minority and new community backgrounds will avoid unnecessary conflict and frustration at the service interface. A more inclusive and connected community for everyone in Kildare when people can articulate their needs and have them met.

Case Study: Kildare Library Service

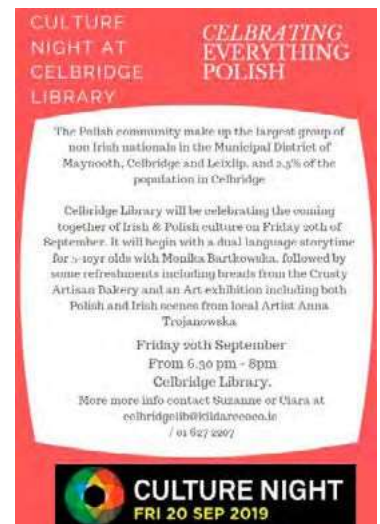
The Library Service has developed initiatives across the county to promote inclusion and integration.

Newbridge Library: Newbridge Library have developed a relationship with the Eyre Powell Direct Provision Centre and collaborated on several projects and events.

In 2019, they provided special on-on-one CV tutorials for residents from the Eyre Powell Direct Provision Centre with one-to-one sessions to support participants to improve their CVs.

Prior to Covid-19, library staff visited the Eyre Powell Centre for a special monthly Storytime & Craft session. The session incorporated an initial reading of a storybook followed by a craft session based on the theme of the book. Based on their experiences at this session, children from the Eyre Powell began visiting the library on a regular basis attending the weekly story time and weekly arts and crafts club as well as availing of the various resources that the library collection offers. Since the outbreak of Covid 19, the library prepared Grab and Go craft packs containing instructions and materials to complete craft projects.

Celbridge Library: Celbridge Library hosts the ShareRing Skills weekly group – a volunteer led community group of all skills’ levels including participants with special needs from the local St John of God’s and heavily focused on integration. The group shares creative skills, including art and crafts and knitting, in an informal setting over a cup of tea. Celbridge Library got funding for the group to run some arts, crafts and gardening classes online when they could not meet in person due to Covid. The group have engaged with KWETB Community Education to bridge the gap in ICT skills and support them in re-connecting with their membership. ShareRing Skills are now on Facebook, have a website and have recently launched an online Annual Art, Craft & Intercultural Exhibition.



Polish Pottery from Polish Culture Night

As part of 2019 Culture Night, the library ran a Celebrating All things Polish Culture event. The event included Polish story time and Polish crafts and food as well as Irish traditional music and had 30 attendees – it was an opportunity to celebrate Polish culture and to introduce others to it!

Leixlip Library: A creative writing workshop was organised for residents of the Direct Provision Centre in Leixlip in late 2019. The 4-day workshop was an opportunity for participants to develop writing skills and their children were also in attendance in a connecting room where library staff provided art & craft classes and storytelling.

Case Study: Kildare Community Stories

Kildare Community Stories is a Facebook page by the Community & Cultural Section of Kildare County Council. The platform is a safe and inclusive space for all Kildare residents, including those from ethnic minority, new community and intercultural backgrounds. It supports individuals and communities by:

- Communicating in a style that is simple and jargon-free.
- Providing access to information on public services at local and national level.
- Posting public health messages in up to 12 languages.
- Signposting volunteering, training and employment opportunities.
- Promoting integration events, consultations and policy development.
- Offering a gateway to Irish culture and customs.
- Showcasing different cultures and customs.
- Challenging stereotypes by posting positive profiles.



Integration principles are also embedded in their offline work, providing visibility, professional opportunities and peer support to Kildare residents from Direct Provision backgrounds by supporting their work placements and engaging their professional services.

Kildare Community Stories is a warm, positive and active online community. Joining it at an early stage can provide new residents with an immediate sense of belonging, as well as a virtual roadmap to many aspects of local life. Kildare Community Stories believe in the potential of those from ethnic minority, new community and intercultural backgrounds to contribute to the fabric of Kildare life and are committed to making that contribution visible and valuable to all.



Theme 2: Language, Education and Employment

Language acquisition

Needs identified: Consultation participants identified the acquisition of language skills as fundamental to fully participate in life in Kildare. When asked what prevents people from feeling part of the community, language was one of the most common reasons. Language barriers create a range of issues including difficulties accessing services, limited employment opportunities and a lack of confidence to engage with others, all affecting a person's ability to integrate.

Proposed solutions: Wider promotion of available language supports. The provision of different types of English language supports including English for the workplace, conversational English and intensive English language programmes.

Benefit: Proficiency in English language allows people to access services and employment and build relationships with the wider community.

Education

Needs identified: For people from ethnic minority and new community backgrounds, understanding the Irish schooling system can be difficult. Some children from ethnic minority and new community backgrounds require additional support for English and Irish language. The bi- and multi-lingual skills of children from ethnic minority and new community backgrounds are often neglected. There is a lack of diversity in lesson plans, the school curriculum and amongst the teaching staff. Participants of the consultation process raised concerns that some teachers are uninterested or unwilling to address racism and that other teachers may want to address racism but do not feel they have the skills to initiate these conversations.

Proposed solutions: Provision of information to parents from ethnic minority and new community backgrounds on the school system explaining various aspects including enrolment procedure and state examinations. Additional assistance for children from ethnic minority and new community backgrounds, including English and Irish language supports and the provision of homework clubs. Unconscious bias and intercultural awareness training for teaching staff.

Benefit:

Supporting parents and students will lead to children from ethnic minority and new community backgrounds having better outcomes in school. Celebrating diversity and promoting awareness of interculturalism in schools will encourage greater integration and help to dispel myths.

"It's important for our children to understand diversity and other cultures so that they understand that its ok to be different."

- Focus group participant

Employment

Needs identified: People from ethnic minority and new community backgrounds face multiple barriers accessing employment including discrimination, immigration/citizenship status and a lack of local connections. Underemployment (the underuse of a worker because a job does not use the worker's skills or is part-time) is also an issue due to foreign qualifications not being recognised, work experience from abroad not being considered and local references being required. Within some workplaces, there is stereotyping and prejudice around languages and accents. Policies on anti-discrimination and equality are not consistently enforced.

Proposed solutions: Provision of accessible information about qualification recognition, adult education, volunteering opportunities and employment supports to make people aware of the available opportunities. Engagement with employers on issues facing people from ethnic minority and new community backgrounds including immigration status and the right to work, work experience and qualification recognition and how to address discrimination in the workplace.

“Migrants often have to start from scratch on the employment ladder as their qualifications, if obtained abroad, are not always recognised.”

- Focus group participant

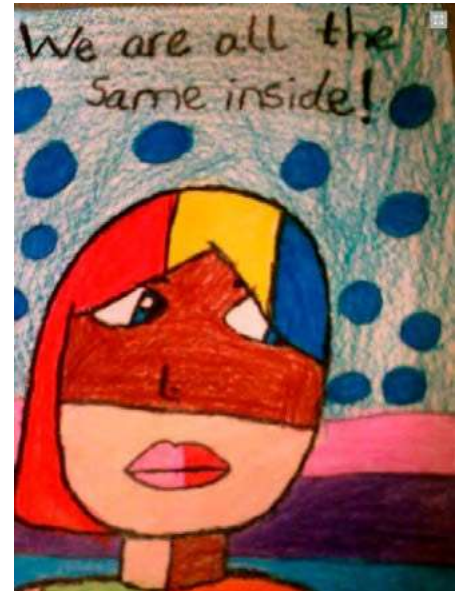
Benefits: Good education and training opportunities increase the likelihood of good well-paid jobs, assisting people from ethnic minority and new community backgrounds to avoid poverty and improve their health, wellbeing and economic prosperity. Volunteering, work placements and employment schemes can offer pathways into longer-term employment and can help to build connections with the wider community.

Case Study: The Yellow Flag Programme

The Yellow Flag Programme (YFP) is a practical programme that uses a whole school approach to support primary and secondary schools to become more inclusive of all cultures and ethnicities, celebrate diversity and challenge racism and discrimination.

The YFP has eight steps that the school progresses through with support from the Yellow Flag team. The eight steps involve the establishment of a diversity committee; an Intercultural Review survey with students and parents of the school community; an 'Introduction to Intercultural Awareness - CPD' for school staff; the development of an action plan from survey findings; embedding intercultural education in the classroom; spreading the inclusion and diversity work of the school out to the local community and involving community representatives in the programme and finally the development of a youth-led diversity code, with a comprehensive policy review that involves the development of an inclusion and anti-racism policy for the school.

In the early stages, the school sets up a diversity committee that includes teaching staff, students, parents and a couple of community representatives (e.g. individuals from Family Resource Centres, youth services or faith groups). The Diversity Committee carries out an intercultural review with students, staff and parents asking questions including "What does inclusion look like at the moment?" and "Is there racism in the school?". This review informs the work of the diversity committee and informs the action plan.



Madalina Cirlig, 2nd Class, Scoil an Linbh Iosa, Prosperous - Art Competition Winner 2014



Schools exhibition before Yellow Flag awards ceremony

In later stages of the programme, the school looks at the curriculum and the classroom to establish how inclusive, or exclusive, it is to ethnic minority voices and experiences, and to find ways to incorporate more perspectives. The programme also supports the development of lesson plans which introduce human rights and development education.

Holy Child Ballycane National School was one of the first schools in Kildare to complete the programme. Former principal, Miriam Nolan, describes the programme as useful, because it gave the school a structure to work within as they moved through the steps. Some of the outcomes of the programme include, involving parents from ethnic minorities with the diversity committee, giving the staff the tools to have age-appropriate conversations

with children on topics such as racism, and acknowledging and celebrating differences through the marking of Intercultural Days and events.

The Yellow Flag Programme has recently been rolled out in St Conleth's, and the school has been working to promote inclusion across the board within the school and the community.

According to one teacher: "Having diversity is something to be celebrated and explored and the Yellow Flag programme has made such a positive influence in our aim to celebrate our diversity. The impact of inclusion of diversity within the curriculum has changed the dynamic within the school which will filter out into the wider community".



The Yellow Flag Programme Development Worker describes the programme as the starting point of a conversation. It is about creating brave spaces in school and the classroom where people can explore their chosen identities and differences, and discuss issues like racism and discrimination in a safe way. All young people can reach their full potential in education, but to do so, they have to see themselves, their chosen identities, and their culture reflected in the classroom curriculum and celebrated throughout daily school life.

Theme 3: Cultural awareness, anti-racism and gender justice

Engagement with young people

Needs identified: Consultation participants raised concerns regarding a lack of intercultural awareness amongst those working with youth and children. Schools and extra-curricular activities are important spaces for supporting integration but, if discrimination or racism is not addressed, it can lead to marginalisation.

Proposed solutions: Intercultural awareness and anti-racism training for service providers engaging with youth and children in school and extra-curricular activities.

Benefits: Enhanced understanding and knowledge of inclusion and integration issues can ensure youth from ethnic minority and new community backgrounds are not subject to discrimination and do not become marginalised within communities.

Engagement with community leaders from all backgrounds

Needs identified: There is substantial misinformation in the wider community about people from ethnic minority and new community backgrounds, particularly asylum seekers. This misinformation leads to acts of discrimination and racism. For example, focus group participants shared racist incidents that took place during the Covid-19 pandemic linked to the perception that they were more likely to be infected with the virus.

Proposed solutions: Raise awareness among policymakers, the media and the wider community about the benefits and opportunities that arise from migration and integration. Challenge misinformation and myths around migration.

Benefits: Community leaders have a key part to play in addressing misperceptions and in creating opportunities for the creation of a greater sense of belonging. Information about and support to engage in initiatives that can help build community relations between communities from all backgrounds can build cohesion and integration where everyone feels a sense of belonging. This can reduce isolation and segregation.

Victims of sexual- and gender-based violence and coercive control

Needs identified: People from ethnic minority and new community backgrounds, particularly women, face more barriers when dealing with sexual- and gender-based violence and coercive control. They are often unaware of their rights in Ireland and may not have familial or community structures that they can turn to for support. Some have concerns reporting a crime if they are undocumented or their immigration status is linked to their partner's.

Proposed solutions: Awareness raising around the laws relating to sexual- and gender-based violence and coercive control. A separation of criminal and immigration responsibilities (a victim of a crime or witness to a crime should be able to come forward with the knowledge that this will have no negative impact on their immigration situation/status). Intercultural awareness and unconscious bias training for all service providers dealing with victims from ethnic minority and new community backgrounds.

Case Study: Kildare Integration Network

Kildare Integration Network (KIN) was developed as an action committed to in the first Integration Strategy, to “facilitate and adequately resource a county-wide integration network to bring together local intercultural groups and those interested in integration”.

KIN is bound together with the common purpose of advancing and promoting integration across the five Municipal Districts of County Kildare. Since 2014 KIN has met on a quarterly basis. KIN is represented on Kildare Integration Strategy Implementation Steering Group to further progress the implementation of the actions contained in the first strategy and subsequent Kildare Integration Strategies.

As the representative organisation for ethnic minority and new community voices KIN is the conscience for the Integration Strategy, ensuring that these voices are central to strategy planning and implementation. KIN is able to do this because of its far-reaching work within communities. There is a considerable wealth of experience amongst members of the network. A positive although unintended outcome is the peer support amongst KIN member organisations. KIN is supported by SICAP staff with support and a meeting space.

Membership of the Kildare Integration Network:

Women’s Integrated Network (WIN),
Athy
ShareRing Skills Celbridge
Focolare, Prosperous
Integrated Platform Sallins
Leixlip Intercultural Friends Group
Newbridge Asylum Seekers Support
Group
Faith Family Initiatives (FFI), Kilcock
Connect Communities, Naas

Women's Integrated Network (WIN), Athy

Launched to the public over fourteen (14) years ago; WIN, was founded to address identified integration issues in Athy and Co. Kildare. In-roads/successes are viewed through WIN’s five identified key components of Positive Integration namely: labour-market-mobility (educational/economic empowerment), Political/civic participation, Spiritual/mental wellbeing, social security & inclusion and Equality of space, participation & outcome. WIN endeavours to actualise, measure and champion positive integration by quality information provision, advocacy, training, networking, social inclusion activities/projects, workshops/seminars, potential development, intercultural events etc. For more, see Fig 1 (KIN’s Chart) and www.womensintegratednetwork-win-athy.org

ShareRing Skills (SRS), Celbridge

As a voluntary group practices, shares knowledge and skills through art/crafts. Aims: promote inclusion, diversity, access to affordable creative and artistic activities. Members are local and international, young adult and mature, those with disabilities and other health/life challenges. Operating on a low/no-cost basis SRS provides volunteer skilled tuition, and materials. SRS are proud of their participation in Kildare Integration Network (KIN) and value social engagement, activities and the benefits of wellness created in our communities.

Leixlip Intercultural Friends Group

Formed in Oct 2002 following a ‘Welcoming the Stranger’ tree planting ceremony which included an Interdenominational Service, welcoming people from all over the world, to put down their roots here. The aim of the group is to help to build a more inclusive and integrated community where all people would feel welcome and accepted. The activities that the group organise are an Annual Interfaith Celebrations, English Conversation Sessions, an Annual International Family Party. All projects were part-funded by Kildare County Council.

Integrated Platform Sallins

This group was formed in 2017 and is a platform to promote inclusion, integration and celebration diversity for the 3 groups within Integrated Platform. The group meeting in Castlefen Community Centre in Sallins and one of the group members is on the local residents’ committee. Activities include: The group members organise programmes and events for youths and families, build confidence by participating in communal activities. Volunteer within the Sallins area. Organise further education and training. Hold annual events such as African Carnival. One of the three groups is called DDI, and they hold a diversity Fashion Show annually and the work is designed and made by the by DDI sewing group members.

Faith Family Initiative (FFI) Kilcock

The organisation works with women and family to create awareness on Group work and integration through one-to-one mentoring, outreach programmes, training and workshops/seminars/ad hoc meetings, annual celebrations (Christmas); and international ceremonies. This group is now inactive since Covid restrictions began.

Newbridge Asylum Seekers Support Group

Newbridge Asylum Seekers Support Group (NASSG) was established in 2003 by Newbridge Resource Centre. The aim of NASSG is to support the inclusion and positive integration of the asylum seekers living in Eyre Powell Direct Provision Centre through a range of supports and actions and to reduce the sense of isolation and exclusion experienced by people/families living under the Direct Provision system. Prior to Covid 19 NASSG met bi-monthly in the Riverbank Theatre in Newbridge. Membership of the group is made up of residents of the Direct Provision Centre and agencies providing services to residents of Eyre Powell DPC. County Kildare LEADER Partnership has continuously supported the work of NASSG and in 2017 hosted the first Integration Support Worker providing transition supports to residents who have received permission to remain in the State.



Focolare, Prosperous

The Focolare is a movement of spiritual and social renewal founded in Trent, Italy, in 1943, during the Second World War. It is now present in 182 nations and more than 2 million people share closely in its life and work. The Focolare community in Ireland began in 1971. Its aim is to spread the message of unity worldwide and its goal to promote universal brotherhood and achieve a more united world in which people respect and value diversity. In March 2019, as part of the KIN's Intercultural Festival the Focolare hosted an Intercultural Party at their centre in Curryhills, Prosperous, at which the various Kildare community networking groups worked together as part of a team towards the goal of providing and improving county-wide integration. The show had a large number from various intercultural and nationality groups, many in their national dress and sharing their native country food. Included in the event was a slide show of Ireland's history and culture, a concert of music by Irish musicians, a performance of Irish set dancing and traditional songs, a dance by a Peruvian family, a fashion show of African hand-designed clothing and laughter yoga by a professional teacher.

KIN'S CHART SHOWING UNIQUE DIVERSE SHAPES WORKING TOGETHER FOR AN INTEGRATED CONTINUUM SHAPE AT THE CENTRE



Theme 4: Developing Inclusive Communities

Supporting new communities to self-organise

Needs identified: Participants in the consultation process highlighted the importance of new communities celebrating their own traditions, cultures and languages and ensuring that children grow up with a sense of their parents' culture. There is a need for spaces for new communities to gather.

Proposed supports: Intercultural spaces in the community for educational and cultural activities. Supports for new communities to continue to self-organise and to advocate for their own needs.

Benefits: Celebrating culture and tradition is crucial to ensuring that children from ethnic minority and new community backgrounds feel proud of their heritage. The celebration of new communities' cultures and traditions strengthens individuals' sense of identity and gives them the option to share these with the wider community. The whole community benefit through the vibrancy and connectedness that comes from embracing and celebrating interculturalism.

“It is crucial to me that my children understand their Nigerian heritage so that they can be proud to be both Irish and Nigerian.”

- Focus group participant

Supporting intercultural communities

Needs identified: In the consultation process, there was a correlation between people feeling part of the wider community in Kildare, and people participating in community activities such as library and cultural events, churches and sports teams. Active inclusion of people from ethnic minority and new community backgrounds in the wide variety of activities and structures, from residents' associations to Council committees, across the county is needed

for them to be representative. People need to feel they have been given opportunities to articulate their voices and express their views openly and that these voices have been listened to and acted upon fairly, in any structure that impacts them.

“When you meet someone from a different county on the street it's very important to greet and smile - passing interactions are important. New communities have got to get involved in community groups. We hear their stories and get behind the families, can point them in the right direction, create connections, friendships, and social engagement. Send people towards the community group. The services are important but there is more to it in achieving a feeling of being a part of the community.”

- Focus group participant

Proposed supports: Improving representation and enhancing participation of people from ethnic minority and new community backgrounds in community and voluntary activities at a local level. Encouraging, supporting and facilitating engagement with the wider community through capacity building and other activities.

Benefits: In strong communities, people experience security and safety regardless of background or ethnic identity. Participative democracy is an important aspect in the creation of an integrated and cohesive community. Active participation in community and democratic

activities can help to combat discrimination and build positive relations between different communities. It can also put in place the structures to address racism and hate crime where they arise.

Political participation and media representation

Needs identified: There is a lack of representation of people from ethnic minority and new community backgrounds in politics and the media. There are also low levels of voter registration amongst new communities in Kildare. There is a lack of knowledge regarding who is entitled to vote (and in which elections) and how to register.

Proposed solutions: Promotion of information regarding who is entitled to vote (and in which elections) and how to register. Information sessions for new communities to learn more about the Irish political system. Registration clinics held at community events (such as in the library).

Benefit: Seeing people from ethnic minority and new community backgrounds in political and media roles contributes to others feeling more included and demonstrates the diversity of County Kildare. When new communities are aware of their rights and responsibilities they can participate fully in society. Having a political system at local and national level that reflects an intercultural Irish society is beneficial.

“There are no politicians that look like me, and I think that if someone [who looked like me] ran in politics, I doubt that they would get elected.”

- Secondary school focus group participant

Case Study: Africa Day

Africa Day, designated by the African Union as an annual celebration of the continent's unity, falls on 25th May each year. Celebrations of African unity, the variety of African cultures, languages and peoples take place across the globe around this time.

Africa Day is supported by Irish Aid, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, to promote a positive view of Africa in Ireland. Former Chair of Kildare Integration Network

(KIN) describes Africa Day as “an opportunity to demonstrate the strengths, cultures, beauties of Africa that people do not always get to see. The day creates a space to acknowledge the experiences that Ireland and many African countries share having been colonised. Furthermore, it seeks to build on the community and cultural links between Ireland and the Continent of Africa. It also provides a window of opportunity to reflect on the progress made and to look for solutions to ongoing challenges.”

Four Africa Day events were held in County Kildare in recent years; face-to-face events in Newbridge and Athy in 2017 and 2019 and virtual celebrations in 2020 and 2021. Africa Day 2019 took place at Athy Recreational Community Hall and was hosted by Kildare County Council in conjunction with Kildare Interagency Integration Committee and Kildare Integration Network (KIN).

This public event had a packed programme including headscarf artistry, face-painting, jewellery making, and drumming to an interactive dance performance with the Cameroon

Dancers. Attendees from Cameroon, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, South Africa and Zimbabwe dressed to impress in their very best national styles. Custom-made headscarves were fitted on site at one of the event's many workshops. Henna tattoos and rainbow braids were also offered. Traditional food, music and dance filled every inch of the venue's cubic capacity. It was a truly joyful celebration of shared history, heritage and pride.



Africa Day Poster designed by Leena Bashir Omer

“The 2019 poster represents the shape of Africa to me. Not just the physical shape but the wildlife, the colours, the clothes. All of these things suggest Africa or people's idea of Africa.

I added lots of detail to the map of Africa to show people that Africa is not just one big continent - there's intricacy in each country. I hope people have a positive feeling towards Africa when they see my work.”

- Leena Bashir Omer, an Irish-Sudanese graphic artist



Leena Bashir Omer



Issues specific to Direct Provision residents

In addition to the issues that other people from ethnic minority and new community backgrounds face in Kildare, those who reside in Direct Provision centres face additional issues. A specific focus group was held with Direct Provision residents and residents were also welcome to attend the open focus groups.

Needs identified: The Direct Provision system can be incredibly damaging to those who go through it: the time spent waiting, the indefinite nature of that wait, the overcrowding, the lack of privacy, obstacles to cooking (due to a communal kitchen) or to live a normal family life, the idleness, the isolation, the difficulty accessing services – all combine to make Direct Provision a difficult, and in many cases, very painful experience. These conditions can lead to trauma and impact negatively on mental health.

As Direct Provision centres are run as privately owned, for-profit businesses, there is limited external scrutiny on the conditions in the centres. Centre management often act as gatekeepers which makes it more difficult for residents to build trust and good relationships with service providers. There can be a lack of dignity and respect for those in the Direct Provision system and they can face discrimination and unequal treatment from service providers.

There are specific barriers to daily life that impact residents in Direct Provision centres (international protection applicants) including restrictions to accessing bank accounts and driving licenses. Living in a Direct Provision centre makes it hard to be a part of the wider community with difficulty accessing education and employment opportunities. This is exacerbated by a lack of recognition of previous qualifications and work experience which limits the opportunities to build relationships outside of the centres.

Many of these issues continue after an individual gets status. They then face other difficulties including accessing housing due to racism and a lack of previous landlord references and permanent employment.

Though there is a government plan to end Direct Provision, the anticipated timeline is for all Direct Provision centres to be closed by the end of 2024.

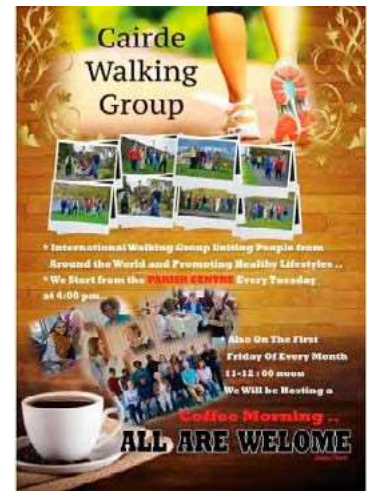
Proposed solutions: Supports to engage in community activities. Opportunities to volunteer. Initiatives to allow the community to hear Direct Provision residents' stories (for those that want to share). Wider engagement between people who have come through Direct Provision and those still there. Advocacy for improvements to the Direct Provision system while it remains in place and to ensure that any new system puts human rights and integration at the forefront of its development.

Benefits: As Direct Provision residents engage in community activities, volunteering, education and employment opportunities, they build relationships and get to know the wider community. This helps to challenge misconceptions and to support the Direct Provision residents to feel a sense of connection and belonging.

Case study: Cairde Walking Group

Newbridge Parish Centre began holding coffee mornings in October 2016. They prepared invitations for the residents of the Eyre Powell Direct Provision Centre and many residents started to attend these monthly meetings. These meetings were an opportunity for conversation and, at one, Zack, a resident in Eyre Powell, suggested setting up a walking group and this idea was met with great enthusiasm.

Posters were designed to promote the walking group in both the Parish and Eyre Powell Centre, and it was given the name “Cairde Walking Group”. The first outing took place in November 2016 and the group met one afternoon each week - weather dependent!



As a result of the group, relationships were built between residents of the Direct Provision Centre and Parish members. Sister Eileen, who is involved in the Parish, described the group as giving members of the wider community an opportunity to get to know residents of the Centre and for the residents to get to know the wider community. Zack, who had proposed setting up the walking group, sees the group as being important for challenging the



perceptions of the local community towards those in Direct Provision, “Once you interact with a person, get to know the type of person they are, you realise that they are much more than their circumstances. There are more than 130 people in Eyre Powell at any one time and each person is different”.

As a result of the coffee morning and walking group, other activities were organised including cinema outings, Christmas parties and celebrations and day trips to Carlow,

Glendalough and even to see the Pope in Phoenix Park. “Cairde” is the Irish word for friendship and that is what the walking group created the space for.

Implementation

This strategy offers an ambitious series of actions that, collectively, will lead to delivery of positive outcomes for people from ethnic minority and new community backgrounds living in Kildare. The implementation of the strategy will be driven by the Kildare Interagency Integration Committee, and is dependent on:

- The cooperation and collaboration of all agencies that interact with, engage with and provide services for people from ethnic minority and new community backgrounds
- Access to additional resources

To ensure that the strategy delivers practical and real change for the people it represents, the following key implementation arrangements are proposed:

- The Kildare Interagency Integration Committee will be chaired by the Local Authority, and this will provide a link to the Strategic Policy Committee where reports are provided and also to the full Council.
- Quarterly meetings of the Kildare Interagency Integration Committee will be convened to review and oversee the implementation of action plan.
- The Integration Coordinator (based in CKLP) will support the implementation of the County Kildare Integration Strategy.
- Kildare Integration Network will represent the voices of people from ethnic minority and new community backgrounds on the Kildare Interagency Integration Committee.
- The Integration Strategy should be subject to annual review; this will offer a regular opportunity to update the plan based upon new/emerging priorities. It is acknowledged that this is not a fixed and rigid strategy, moreover it represents the first stage in achieving meaningful change and moving towards the inclusion of people from ethnic minority and new community backgrounds.

Action Plan

THEME 1: Information, Communication and Services

#	Objective	Proposed Action	Lead	Partners	Resources Required	Timeframe	Expected Outcomes
1.1	To support service users with limited English	Use Plain English for all locally generated material including forms, correspondence, and signage	All KIIC members	NALA, All KIN groups	Staff time, professional services	Ongoing	Increased usage of Plain English
1.2		Introduction of translation services and greater promotion to staff and service users	All KIIC members		Cost of translation services	Ongoing	All clients where possible, but particularly those experiencing an immediate vulnerability, would be given an appropriate language response
1.3		Develop a list of languages available within the workplace, promote the languages available and make arrangements for staff to be able to provide language support where appropriate	All KIIC members	KCC, Citizens Information, An Garda Síochána	Staff time	2022 onwards	List of languages developed and updated annually Grading tool for level of language for service provision
1.4		Create a “letter of authority” template covering all organisational requirements	KCC, DSP	Citizens Information, other statutory services		2022	A document acceptable to all departments within the LA allowing clients to be represented by an appropriate representative.
1.5	To provide information on the supports and services available	Hold Information Fairs targeting new communities in the County	CKLP	All KIIC members	SICAP staff	Annually	Individuals from ethnic minorities and new communities supported to participate in Information Fairs

1.6	To provide clear information on how to access services and where to go for additional support	Use existing outreach channels to disseminate information to ethnic minority and new communities	All KIIC members	Citizens Information, KCC Community Workers, KCC, Kildare Community Stories, CKLP, An Garda Síochána	Staff time	Ongoing	Greater and more accessible channels of information available to ethnic minority and new communities
1.7	To support the implementation of this strategy	Support the implementation of this strategy by continuing to finance an Integration strategy implementation coordinator and to promote integration in the County	KCC, CKLP		Staff time, financial resources	Annually	Integration Strategy Coordinator in place
1.8a	To provide additional support	Source funding for employment of an Integration Worker for the County.	CKLP	KCC	Staff time	2022 onwards	Source funding for this role
1.8b		Create point of contact to work with the Integration Worker, subject to 1.8a	All KIIC members		Staff time	Dependent on 1.8a	Point of contact in place
1.9	To signpost people on how to access services and where to go for additional support	Signpost people to access services and where to go for additional support	KIN (as an umbrella network) Intercultural groups affiliated to KIN	KCC CKLP	Volunteers time	2022 onwards	Services to be signposted by KIN members
1.10	To provide transitional supports to those exiting Direct Provision on receipt of status	Integration Project Worker for Direct Provision supports individuals prepare for and transition from Direct Provision	CKLP	KCC	Funding Supports sources	Annually	Individuals from Direct Provision supported to transition to mainstream society
1.11	To support the end of Direct Provision	Support the transition towards the end of Direct Provision	All KIIC members		Staffing	As required	The end of Direct Provision and transition to a new model that prioritises integration.

1.12	To support service providers to mainstream the needs of new communities in their service delivery	Work with other partners to combat social exclusion and promote social inclusion of people from ethnic minority or new community backgrounds groups in Kildare e.g. training, consultations	KIN (as an umbrella network) Intercultural groups affiliated to KIN	KCC CKLP An Garda Síochána	Volunteers time	2022 onwards	Close collaboration with partner agencies and impact in policy making and implementation
1.13	To remove perceived barriers to Garda assistance	Explore policies for migrants to confidently seek Garda assistance without concerns relating to immigration status	An Garda Síochána	Maynooth University, Teach Tearmainn	Staffing time	Q1 2022 - Q3 2024	To study current legislation and current policies and, as necessary, implement changes at local level and propose changes nationally
1.14	To consider alternative additional supports for those who face barriers engaging with services	Consider potential opportunities and, if appropriate, conduct a Needs Analysis to consider the development of a Family Befriending Volunteer Service	KVC	KWETB	Staffing time, funding	As required	Needs Analysis conducted to consider the development of a Family Befriending Volunteer Service
1.15	Design, promote and implement a multi-language, one stop/page of Information Services that are available in the County.	Consult with Kildare PPN registered Social Inclusion Groups i.e., headings and content of the information page.	Kildare PPN	Kildare PPN Social Inclusion Groups & (Multi Agencies) as required.	Staff Time & Funding.	Launch during Social Inclusion Week (SIW) 2021	To have a Go-to page on Kildare PPN website in a number of languages (If budget allows) which will be accessible to people who are new to Kildare. Services will include: Schools, childcare, Transport, Emergency Services etc.
1.16	To provide information on access to childcare.	Disseminate information to families of new, Roma and Traveller communities in relation to access to childcare in the county and the relevant government subsidy schemes.	KCCC			Ongoing	Target communities are informed around access to ECCE and relevant Government schemes.
1.17	To make information available to parents and families in an accessible way.	An event/initiative specifically targeting ethnic minority and new community parents & families with information available in relation to the range of Tusla services and supports e.g Meitheal, Education Support Service, Domestic Violence Services, PPFS, Child Protection & Welfare.	Tusla	CYPSC member organisations	Worker Time	2023	Enhanced awareness amongst ethnic minorities and new communities of services and supports provided by Tusla. Enhanced level of engagement of ethnic minorities and new

							communities with supports and services provided by Tusla.
1.18	To make information available to local service providers through the CYPSC and PPFS structures about supports available to migrant communities.	An annual input for members of CYPSC Subgroups and Tusla Child & Family Support Networks (CFSNs) in relation to supports available to ethnic minorities and new communities	Tusla	CYPSC & CFSN member organisations	Worker Time	2023	Enhanced awareness amongst local service providers of supports available to ethnic minorities and new communities
1.19	To support the work of the CYPSC Direct Provision Working Group to connect asylum seekers to available supports. To support and engage with the Friends of the Centre structures linked to Direct Provision Centres.	Development of communication plan by CYPSC Direct Provision Working Group to provide information to residents of Direct Provision Centres about available supports in the community. Provision of a range of social and developmental opportunities for Centre residents in response to identified need.	Tusla	CYPSC Direct Provision Working Group member organisations	Worker Time	2022	Enhanced awareness amongst asylum seekers living in Direct Provision Centres of supports and services available in the community. Enhanced level of engagement of asylum seekers with supports and services available in the community.
1.20	To support the dissemination of Fostering Campaign information to migrant communities	Identification of key mechanisms for dissemination of fostering campaign information to migrant communities.	Tusla	CYPSC member organisations	Worker Time	2023	Enhanced level of awareness amongst ethnic minorities and new communities of opportunities to become foster carers. Increased numbers of fosters carers from ethnic minorities and new communities

THEME 2: Language, Education and Employment

#	Objective	Proposed Action	Lead	Partners	Resources Required	Timeframe	Expected Outcomes
2.1	To address gaps in English language provision	Identify gaps in English language provision across the county. Organise a meeting of all language providers (formal and non-formal) to discuss findings and explore new opportunities for collaboration and promotion of services.	KWETB	Fáilte Isteach, CKLP, KIN etc	Support to assist KWETB centre staff to identify appropriate participants.	Ongoing enrolment in language classes as participants present to FET centres; Feb 2022 to identify gaps; August 2022 to meet other language providers to collaborate.	Gap analysis findings and recommendations; increased English language provision throughout the county.
2.2	To increase the number of people from ethnic minority or new community backgrounds involved in volunteering	Promotion of the benefits of volunteering for getting involved in the community, language acquisition and gaining work experience	KVC	KIN, An Garda Síochána, Civil Defence		Q4 2021 and every six months after	Promotion of the benefits of volunteering to people from ethnic minority and new community backgrounds Hold joint recruitment Open Days with AGS and Civil Defence, support applications from applicants from diverse backgrounds

2.3	To increase awareness of educational and training opportunities	Promote the formal and informal adult education and training programmes delivered throughout the county	KWETB	CKLP	Internal KWETB ABE, Guidance, Community Education and other staff; publicity costs.	Ongoing throughout the timeframe of the Strategy.	Increased awareness of English language provision throughout the county.
2.4	To increase the number of people having foreign qualifications recognised	Promote the foreign qualification recognition services provided by Quality and Qualifications Ireland to support employment opportunities	KWETB	DSP, CKLP	Adult Guidance Service training, publicity costs.	Ongoing throughout the timeframe of the Strategy.	Increased numbers achieving recognition for FQ through KWETB.
2.5	To increase the number of people from ethnic minority or new community backgrounds in quality work placements	Provide opportunities for work experience and placement on Employment Schemes	CKLP	DSP	TUS and CE scheme placements	Annually	Increased opportunities for work experience and placement on Employment Schemes
2.6	To support people to access quality employment	Develop customised employment programme to include recognition of prior learning and work placements	CKLP	DSP, KWETB	SICAP staff and non staff costs including subcontracting , KWETB staff costs	Annually	Development of customised employment programme

2.7	To increase the number of people from ethnic minority or new community backgrounds in public sector employment	Survey the number of people from ethnic minority or new community backgrounds in each agency's workplace, where possible, and assess and examine the barriers to employment with an aim to increasing the number, in line with Action 44 of the National Migrant Integration Strategy commitment to "increase the number of persons from an immigrant background working at all levels in the civil service and wider public service"	Public sector members of KIIC	Other KIIC members	Staff time	2022 onwards	Survey of numbers of people from ethnic minority or new community backgrounds in workplaces of KIIC members with a commitment to the Public Sector Duty Increased number of people from ethnic minority or new community backgrounds in workplaces of KIIC members
2.8	To increase the number of people from ethnic minority or new community backgrounds in employment	To promote recruitment opportunities widely	All KIIC members		Staff time	Q4 2021 onwards	Promotion of recruitment opportunities widely
2.9	To promote cultural diversity and intercultural awareness amongst teachers	Share consultation findings (from Kildare Integration Strategy) with university staff, particularly those involved in teacher training (Froebel, Early Childhood Education, Turn to Teaching) Encourage heads of MU departments to include training on racism in their programmes	MU Department of Adult and Community Education	MU Access Office	Staff time	2022	Consultation findings (from Kildare Integration Strategy) to be shared with university staff, particularly those involved in teacher training (Froebel, Early Childhood Education, Turn to Teaching) Inclusion of training on racism in MU departments
2.10		Support schools to identify and access intercultural awareness and anti-racism training which could be provided to teachers as part of their in-service training	Integration Strategy Coordinator	SICAP Goal 2 MU KWETB	Staff time	2022 onwards	Support schools to identify and access intercultural awareness and anti-racism training
2.11	To promote cultural diversity and intercultural awareness in schools	Ensure schools are made aware of available resources and programmes that promote diversity and intercultural awareness in schools	KWETB	An Garda Síochána	KWETB Schools staff and non-pay costs	Ongoing throughout the timeframe of the Strategy.	Intercultural diversity events in schools.

2.12	Roll-out the Yellow Flag Programme in Kildare Schools each year	CKLP/SICAP Goal 2	KCC Community & Culture	Funding	Annually	Yellow Flag Programme will be run in 1 or 2 Kildare based schools each year for the duration of the Strategy
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THEME 3: Cultural awareness, anti-racism and gender justice

#	Objective	Proposed Action	Lead	Partners	Resources Required	Timeframe	Expected Outcomes
3.1	To increase intercultural awareness amongst service providers	Deliver training for staff on intercultural awareness, anti-racism, unconscious bias and the Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty in order to enhance the intercultural competencies of staff	All KIIC members		Staff time, training costs	2022 onwards	Staff to be trained on intercultural awareness, anti-racism, unconscious bias and the Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty More appropriate service delivery for people from ethnic minority and new community backgrounds
3.2	To increase intercultural awareness amongst elected representatives	Offer training to councillors on intercultural awareness, anti-racism and unconscious bias	KCC		Training costs	2021	Councillors to have been offered intercultural awareness, anti-racism and unconscious bias training
3.3	To increase intercultural awareness amongst communities and employers	Deliver Anti-Racism & Interculturalism Awareness Training to community/voluntary NGOs and an information programme for employers	CKLP	KCC Kildare Integration Network	SICAP sub-contracting, funding for employers' information programme	2022 - 2025	A number of training workshops will be run each year
3.4	To encourage reporting of incidents of racial discrimination	Ensure information on how to make a complaint of racial discrimination by a member of staff or service user is displayed in all public offices and that there is a clear complaints procedure	All KIIC members		Staff time	2022 onwards	Information on how to make a complaint of racial discrimination is clearly displayed and in multiple languages Each organisation will have a clear complaints procedure in place
3.5	To increase awareness of rights and supports in relation to sexual- and gender-based violence and coercive control	Provide information on the rights and supports in relation to sexual- and gender-based violence and coercive control including in multiple languages	An Garda Síochána (DPSU and ComPol)	Teach Tearmainn	Interagency partnership, translation	Ongoing	Multi-lingual campaign including pop up information sessions in public spaces and information provision through social media and other networks

3.6		Promote the availability of interpretation services to victims and witnesses of sexual- and gender-based violence and coercive control	An Garda Síochána (DPSU and ComPol)	Teach Tearmainn	Community policing staff time, translation services to deliver outcomes	Completed by Q4 2022	Examine good practice and develop and communicate a front-facing policy and procedure for all frontline members to respond
3.7		Use the annual 16 Days of Activism against Gender-based Violence campaign to highlight the issues of sexual- and gender-based violence and coercive control	Teach Tearmainn	FRC Newbridge, An Garda Síochána	Staff time	2022 onwards	Increased awareness of rights and services available amongst women from ethnic minority and new community backgrounds
3.8		Intercultural training for staff on supporting people from ethnic minority or new community backgrounds who have been victims of sexual- and gender-based violence or coercive control	An Garda Síochána, Teach Tearmainn		Training costs, staff time	2022 onwards	Women from ethnic minority and new community backgrounds to receive a more culturally sensitive service Staff to have a better understanding of the barriers facing women from ethnic minority and new community backgrounds and are better equipped to support them
3.9	ECCE services in Kildare have an Inclusion Co-Ordinator in place.	Promote the Leadership for Inclusion Programme to all ECCE services.	KCCC			Ongoing	Each ECCE in Kildare has an Inclusion co-ordinator
3.10	Two staff members from each ECCE service in Kildare are trained in EDI.	Continue to provide training to ECCE services on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion	KCCC			Ongoing	All ECCE services have at least two staff trained in EDI.

3.11	<p>To provide an opportunity for service providers to reflect on their practice through the CYPSC and PPFS structures.</p> <p>To provide an opportunity for service providers to avail of continuous professional development in the area of culturally competent practice through the CYPSC and PPFS structures.</p>	<p>A facilitated session for members of CYPSC Subgroups and Tusla Child & Family Support Networks (CFSNs) to reflect on their practice in supporting and engaging ethnic minorities and new communities.</p> <p>Provision of cultural competence training through CYPSC and CFSNs.</p>	Tusla	CYPSC & CFSN member organisations	Worker Time	2023	Enhanced knowledge, understanding, skills and confidence of service providers in relation to culturally competent practice
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THEME 4: Developing Inclusive Communities

#	Objective	Proposed Action	Lead	Partners	Resources Required	Timeframe	Expected Outcomes
4.1	To develop and expand Kildare Integration Network	Conduct a Needs Analysis and develop annual Workplans and a 3-year Strategic Plan in response to those needs for KIN countywide	KIN	KCC SICAP	Volunteer & Staff time	2022 onwards	Strengthening KIN and support integration of individuals and communities countywide
4.2		Ensure KIN has sustainable funding to be able to plan ahead.	KIN	SICAP KCC	Ringfenced funding, staff time	2022 onwards	Capacity development and leadership skills to facilitate countywide integration activities. Consolidation of previous achievements.
4.3		Support the development of Kildare Integration Network to act as a representative body for ethnic minorities and new communities, asylum seekers and refugees	CKLP/SICAP	Kildare County Council Community & Cultural	SICAP staff and sub-contracting	Annually	Support will be provided to KIN Intercultural Groups to grow and develop the current Network
4.4	To strengthen intercultural groups in Kildare	KIN and individual Intercultural Groups sustained and funded for activities including intercultural events; training; and outreach activities	KIN (as an umbrella network) Intercultural groups affiliated to KIN	KCC SICAP	Funding through specific integration grants. Volunteers' time	Q3 2021 onwards	Promoting integration and positive attitudes countywide. Increased Social Inclusion.
4.5	To promote inclusion and integration through art	Promote Creative Art to spread the message of inclusion and integration	KIN (as an umbrella network) Intercultural groups affiliated to KIN	KCC Arts Office KCC Library Services KWETB	Tutor hours/Grants Volunteer time	2022 onwards	Reduction of negative stereotypes. Promoting unity through Arts. Encouraging creativity through art.
4.6	To support community groups to meet	Facilitate intercultural and ethnic minorities and new community groups to find suitable meeting spaces	KCC	An Garda Síochána, FRCs, all KIIC members		Ongoing	Provide appropriate meeting spaces where required.

4.7	To support community groups to grow and advocate for own needs	Support the development of groups from ethnic minorities and new communities or those with a focus on intercultural relations	CKLP SICAP	KCC, An Garda Síochána	Staff Time	2022	New ethnic minority or new community groups and groups supporting interculturalism will be supported in their development
4.8	To support integration amongst community groups	Support integration through the provision of training to PPN members	PPN	CKLP SICAP		Q4 2021 onwards	Provision of training to support integration to PPN members
4.9	To increase the participation of people from ethnic minority and new community backgrounds across the county	Include representation of people from ethnic minority and new community backgrounds on the Joint Policing Committee	KCC, An Garda Síochána			2022	KIN representative on the JPC
4.1		Support local residents' associations to encourage participation by people from ethnic minority and new community backgrounds	KCC	CKLP SICAP		Ongoing	Greater number of ethnic minorities taking part in community associations
4.11		Community grant applications to be linked to actively involving ethnic minorities and new communities	KCC			2021	Greater number of ethnic minorities taking part in community associations
4.12	To increase the participation of young people from ethnic minority and new community backgrounds across the county	Conduct an assessment of organisational practices and capacities to increase engagement with young people from ethnic minority and new community backgrounds	in sync		Staff / Board time only	Audit complete by end of 2021	A timed action plan will be developed and actions will be progressed through 2022 and 2023
4.13	To celebrate Kildare's interculturalism	Expand existing library service initiatives to encourage intercultural activities and promote a "sense of place" for all communities Consider becoming "Libraries of Sanctuary"	KCC Library Services	An Garda Síochána		2021	Increased intercultural activities Consideration of libraries becoming "Libraries of Sanctuary"

4.14	To increase the number of people of migrant origin on the Electoral Register	Develop a voter registration campaign to raise awareness within ethnic minority and new communities about the entitlement to vote and how to register to vote	KCC	An Garda Síochána, CKLP		2021	Larger numbers of people from ethnic minority and new community backgrounds on the register
4.15	To encourage civic engagement amongst ethnic minority and new communities	Promote and source funding for a training programme on Political Participation and Representation for ethnic minorities and new communities	KCC	KWETB	Support to assist KWETB centre staff to identify appropriate participants. Funding for training programme.	2023	Political Participation and Representation programme developed and delivered to ethnic minority groups.
4.16	To increase media representation amongst ethnic minority and new communities	Organise and fund training programme on Media Skills for ethnic minorities and new communities	KWETB		Support to assist KWETB centre staff to identify appropriate participants.	1st course delivered by May 2022.	Media Skills programme developed and delivered to ethnic minority groups.
4.17	To support families living in socially disadvantaged setting, including new communities to participate in Sports Camps	To deliver Summer Sport Camps for Children highlighted as at risk of social exclusion or disadvantage in Kildare. (Specifically targeting families who may not be in a position to engage in mainstream Summer Camps offered by NGO's or Sports Clubs).	Kildare Sports Partnership	County Kildare LEADER Partnership. Interested NGO's and Community Support Organisations.	Sports Equipment. Suitable Venue with Sports Hall and Outdoor playing area. Participant Goodie Bags. Catering. Camp Leaders	Ongoing	Increased participation in Sport and Physical Activity amongst Children coming from a socially disadvantaged or socially excluded circumstance.

4.18	To support sport as a mode of integration in Kildare	To offer support as needed to ethnic minorities and new communities in the form of physical activity/sports module	Kildare Sports Partnership	County Kildare LEADER Partnership	Sports Tutor	Ongoing	Increased opportunities from people from ethnic minority and new community backgrounds to get involved in sports.
4.19	To increase participation and promote inclusion for women from ethnic minority backgrounds in sport	To offer a variety of programmes designed to promote inclusion, integration and participation for women from ethnic minority backgrounds in the sporting environment	Kildare Sports Partnership	Triathlon Ireland. HSE. Athy Water Sports Hub. Local Sports Clubs.	Tutors and Venue	Ongoing	More women from from ethnic minority backgrounds becoming involved in sport in Kildare

Appendices

Appendix 1: Glossary of terms

Direct Provision: Support system for asylum-seekers where all accommodation costs, together with the cost of meals and snacks, heat, light, laundry, and maintenance are paid directly by the State. Asylum seekers in Direct Provision have a limited right to work depending on the length of time they have waited for a decision. The rate of the allowance is €38.80 per week for an adult and €29.80 per week for a child.

Discrimination: Unfair treatment of a person or group based on prejudice, bias, favouritism, bigotry, intolerance.

Ethnicity: Shared characteristics amongst a group of individuals based on common geography, culture, language, religion, traditions and ancestry which contribute to a person's identity. Ethnic groups are not easy to define – people can, and usually do, come from several different ethnic groups.

Integration: Integration is a long-term multidimensional and dynamic process starting from the moment of arrival in Kildare. It aims at ensuring respect for diversity and equal opportunities for the participation of all residents of Kildare irrespective of cultural or religious background, age, gender, disability or nationality. Integration takes place through the interaction of people and implies mutual understanding as well as shared rights and responsibility.

International Protection applicants: A person who seeks to be recognised as a refugee by Ireland's Department of Justice and Equality under the 1951 Geneva Convention, also known as an asylum seeker.

Nationality: The status of belonging to a particular nation by birth, origin or naturalisation.

Racism: A particular form of exclusion faced by ethnic minority groups based on the false belief that some 'races' are inherently superior to others because of their skin colour, nationality, ethnic or cultural background.

Refugee: A person who has been granted the legal right to stay in Ireland by the Department of Justice and Equality because they or their family would face persecution if they returned to their own country.

Third country national: A person who is neither from the EU country in which they are currently living or staying, nor from other member states of the European Union.

Appendix 2: Abbreviations

AGS	An Garda Síochána
CKLP	County Kildare LEADER Partnership
CYPSC	Children and Young People's Services Committee
DSP	Department of Social Protection
EU	European Union
FRC	Family Resource Centre
HSE	Health Service Executive
KCC	Kildare County Council
KCCC	Kildare County Childcare Committee
KIIC	Kildare Interagency Integration Committee
KIN	Kildare Integration Network
KVC	Kildare Volunteer Centre
KWETB	Kildare and Wicklow Education and Training Board
PPN	Public Participation Network

Appendix 3: Consultation Survey



Comhairle Contae Chill Dara
Kildare County Council



Consultation for County Kildare's Integration Strategy

Introduction

County Kildare LEADER Partnership and Kildare County Council, with the support of other agencies, is developing a second Integration Strategy and invites you to take part in a county-wide consultation. This County Kildare Integration Strategy builds on the first strategy which covered the period 2014 – 2019.

According to Census 2016, more than 10% of Kildare's population are of migrant origin. In this survey, integration refers to an individual participating fully in Irish society, while still valuing his/her own cultural identity.

Aim of the Consultation

This consultation aims to understand how best to support integration when delivering services and working in communities. The information gathered in this survey will be used to develop Kildare's Integration Strategy.

Your participation

Your participation in this survey is voluntary, you do not have to fill the survey out. You can withdraw from the consultation at any time. You have the option of completing the survey anonymously or only providing your information to be kept informed of future events. Your comments and input will be treated confidentially.

Consent

When you complete this survey, you show that you understand why the consultation is taking place and that you agree to take part in it.

Thank you for agreeing to fill out this survey.

Kildare Integration Consultative Survey

Age: 18-25 26-49 50-65 Over 65

Gender: Female Male Other Rather not say

What is your nationality (please tick all that apply)?

- Irish
- Other nationality (write in) _____
- No nationality

What is your ethnic or cultural background?

White

- Irish
- Irish Traveller
- Any other White background

Black or Black Irish

- African
- Any other Black background

Asian or Asian Irish

- Chinese
- Any other Asian background

Other, including mixed background

- Other (write in description) _____

Please choose which of the following describes your relationship with Kildare (please tick all that apply):

- I live here
- I work here
- I study here
- I live/work nearby
- I have friends/family here
- Other (write in description) _____

Do you feel a part of the wider community in County Kildare?

Based on your experiences, what helps people feel included in the local community?

What prevents you, your family, or members of your community from feeling part of the local community?

What are the barriers and challenges that prevent you, your family, or members of your community accessing and engaging fully in each of the following areas?

Education:

Employment:

Health:

Accommodation:

Transport:

Public Services (e.g. Social Welfare, Social Housing, Medical):

Access to An Garda Síochána and the Court Service:

Garda National Immigration Bureau (GNIB):

Childcare:

Children and Youth Services:

What could be done to address these barriers and challenges?

**Have you been involved in community and voluntary groups, sporting clubs or religious groups?
Tell us about your experience:**

Are you registered to vote: Yes No I'm not sure

Have you had engagement with local politics? Tell us about your experience:

Is there anything you would like to share that has not been addressed above?

If you would like to be informed of the next consultative meetings of the Kildare Integration Group, which will be held on Zoom (technical assistance can be provided, if required). Please click here <https://tinyurl.com/kisregform>

Appendix 4: Findings from the Consultation Process

Health

1. Lack of services, costs and long waiting lists
 - a. Difficulty accessing information on healthcare services
 - b. Limited mental health and addiction services
 - c. Difficulty registering with GPs
 - d. Cost of GP services
 - e. Long waiting lists
 - f. Encouraged to go private – cost of private healthcare
2. Racial bias and discrimination in the healthcare profession
 - a. DP residents' issues not being taken seriously
 - b. Discrimination towards some patients based on skin colour
 - c. Lack of cultural awareness and sensitivity from some healthcare professionals
3. Cultural and language barriers
 - a. Difficulty accessing interpretation services
 - b. Varying standards within interpretation services
 - c. Language aids sometimes wrong e.g. Arabic written backwards
 - d. Difficulties communicating with healthcare services e.g. complicated letters or procedures to confirm or rearrange appointments
 - e. Lack of cultural awareness and sensitivity from some healthcare professionals
4. Other
 - a. Traditional information transmission channels (e.g. local newspapers, local and national radio) not reaching ethnic minority and new communities
 - b. Access to healthcare hindered by poor public transport
 - c. People travelling to home countries to access healthcare services
 - d. Complexity of the healthcare system makes it difficult to navigate
 - e. Cost of dentistry

Housing

1. Difficulty accessing private rental housing
 - a. Cost of rent
 - b. Discrimination against HAP recipients
 - c. Discrimination based on a person's name
 - d. Racism when a person attends a viewing
2. Difficulty accessing social housing
 - a. Long waiting lists
3. Barriers due to language and access to information
 - a. Limited English makes engaging with housing services and landlords more difficult

- b. Difficulty completing forms and providing the required documentation (but this has vastly improved in the last several years)
- 4. Other
 - a. Difficulty of those with status leaving Direction Provision in accessing housing (dependence on the Integration Worker for support)
 - b. Shortage of one bedroom accommodation options
 - c. Unwillingness to ask landlord to address problems for fear of being evicted

Transport

- 1. Issues with public transport
 - a. Lack of public transport in rural areas
 - b. Limited hours (starts late and finishes early) does not suit many workers
 - c. Difficult to access information about public transport
 - d. Cannot be relied on
 - e. Cost of public transport
 - f. Racial abuse on public transport from fellow passengers and bus drivers
 - g. Having to purchase a car due to the limited public transport options
- 2. Other:
 - a. Cost of car insurance
 - b. Limited public transport affects access to essential services, supports, education and employment

Childcare

- 1. Shortage of places in childcare
 - a. Long waiting lists for a place
 - b. Enrolment policies exclude people new to an area or without the appropriate information
 - c. Not available in every area
- 2. Limited length of childcare schemes and cost of childcare
 - a. Difficult for parents (particularly mothers) to access employment
 - b. Cost of childcare can mean it is not financially beneficial to have employment
 - c. Stay at home parents from ethnic minority and new communities are often quite isolated
- 3. Limited cultural awareness of childcare providers
 - a. Different traditions and cultures tend not to be acknowledged
 - b. Schooling system is very Western centric
 - c. Hesitation on how to support children and parents with limited English

Education

- 1. Lack of additional supports for children from ethnic minority and new community backgrounds
 - a. English as a Foreign Language

- b. Irish
 - c. Availability of afterschool/homework clubs varies
- 2. Difficulties for parents trying to support their children
 - a. A lack of understanding on how the school system works
 - b. May not have the language skills (English and/or Irish) or knowledge to provide support
- 3. Some parents are wary of engaging with the schools
 - a. Feeling that school and teaching staff treat them in a patronising manner
 - b. Some schools do not take the parents' issues seriously
- 4. School enrolment policies
 - a. Lack of information about the procedure
 - b. Many prioritise parents as past pupils or having siblings in the school, difficult for people who have less "connection" to the area
- 5. Lack of information on the Irish school system
 - a. Different enrolment procedures from school to school
 - b. The school system (Transition Year, Junior and Leaving Certification) is unique to Ireland, so parents often do not understand it
- 6. Lack of diversity and cultural awareness amongst teaching staff
- 7. Lack of diversity in school curriculum or lesson plans
 - a. Difference is often ignored instead of being acknowledged and celebrated
 - b. Bilingual/Multilingual skills are often ignored, instead of being encouraged to develop
 - c. Students do not see people like them in their books or lessons
 - d. Schooling system is very Western centric
- 8. Racism and discrimination in schools
 - a. Teachers questioning the "Irishness" of students from ethnic minority and new community backgrounds
 - b. Differing treatment towards students from ethnic minority and new community backgrounds (particularly towards Black students)
 - c. Focus on extreme examples of racism - some schools ignore incidents of daily or systematic racism
 - d. Teachers unwilling/uninterested in addressing racism or discussing issues
 - e. Many teachers who might want to address the racism do not have the skills to initiate these subjects
 - f. Need for anti-racism as a social education topic to be included in the curriculum

Language

1. Acknowledgement that English is crucial to fully participating in life in Kildare

- a. Difficulty engaging with services
 - b. Language barriers limit ability to integration
2. Need for more language supports for accessing services
 - a. Use of Plain English on forms and correspondence
 - b. Translation of information
 - c. Access to interpreters
 3. English language supports for work
 - a. Language a barrier to people using their skills and qualifications
 - b. Standard English classes not always appropriate to their specific needs
 4. Need for wider provision of different types of English classes
 - a. Free English classes
 - b. Conversational English classes
 5. Experiences of discrimination around language and accents
 - a. Services can be prejudice towards those with limited English or a different accent

Adult Education/Training opportunities

1. English language supports for work
 - a. Language a barrier to people using their skills and qualifications
 - b. Standard English classes not always appropriate to their specific needs
2. Need for wider provision of different types of English classes
 - a. Free English classes
 - b. Conversational English classes
3. Availability of adult education opportunities
 - a. Limited availability particularly in rural Kildare
 - b. Trainings for employment e.g. manual handling, health and safety and first aid
4. Other barriers to education
 - a. Cost of education (some people falling slightly above the grant threshold)
 - b. Some Direct Provision residents get places on courses but cannot get financial support for books and transport
 - c. Lack of internet or IT skills for online classes
 - d. Lack of information of opportunities and how to access them
 - e. Lack of transport and cost of transport
 - f. Level of English language

Employment

1. Barriers to access employment
 - a. Discrimination in the hiring process

- b. Issues relating to immigration/citizenship status
 - c. Employment opportunities through local connections – difficulty accessing these
- 2. Difficulty accessing employment matching level of skills/High levels of underemployment
 - a. Issue of qualifications not being recognised
 - b. Work experience from outside Ireland not being considered
 - c. Local references are often required
- 3. Employers not enforcing workplaces policies on discrimination and equality
 - a. Prejudice around language and accents
 - b. Stereotyping and judgement are common
 - c. Lack of cultural awareness leads to issues
- 4. Difficulties developing skills or reskilling
 - a. Difficulty accessing information on education and training opportunities
 - b. Qualifications not recognised by employers but cannot access support (SUSI) for levels of qualifications already held
- 5. Lack of people from ethnic minority and new community backgrounds working in the public sector (except the health sector)
 - a. Often unaware of how to enter civil service or public sector employment
 - b. Lack of diversity affects the provision of services
- 6. Other
 - a. Lack of transport limits employment opportunities
 - b. Lack and cost of childcare exclude some from employment
 - c. No/limited access to employment if a person is seeking asylum

Service providers/access to information

- 1. Difficulty accessing information on services
 - a. Difficulty understanding how to navigate the systems
 - b. Information often fails to reach intended audience
 - c. Traditional information transmission channels (e.g. local newspapers, local and national radio) not reaching ethnic minority and new communities
- 2. Need for more language supports for accessing services
 - a. Use of Plain English on forms and correspondence
 - b. Translation of information
 - c. Access to interpreters
- 3. Lack of diversity amongst service providers
 - a. Means that services are less aware of cultural difference
- 4. Lack of cultural awareness amongst service providers

- a. Need for training on dealing with asylum applicants is necessary to help service providers understand their needs and situation
 - b. Need for training on how to work with interpreters
 - c. A cultural awareness would allow services to be better suited to users' needs
5. Experiences of racism and discrimination from some service providers
 - a. Training on cultural awareness and anti-racism is necessary
 - b. Need for clear procedures for service users to report racist or discriminatory experiences and to know they will not be penalised for this
 - c. Need for organisational policies to address discrimination in the workplace to staff and service providers
 6. Experiences of the use of discretion from service providers
 - a. Discretion is not available to everyone – can depend on how you look, if you are articulate etc
 7. Need for service providers to engage with service users whilst developing services and to request feedback
 - a. Engagement with service users would ensure more appropriate services
 8. Other
 - a. More services moving online – difficult to engage with for people with limited English language or IT literacy
 - b. Long waiting times for services (e.g. to get a PPS number or Social Protection payment)

An Garda Síochána

1. Difficulty accessing the Gardaí and action and follow up can be limited
 - a. Often the phone is not answered
 - b. Sometimes they say that there is no car available, they cannot help with a particular issue, or they show up too late (e.g. the following day)
2. Gardaí are not cooperative with some ethnic minority and new communities
 - a. The Gardaí are more suspicious of people of ethnic minority and new communities
 - b. Complaints not always taken seriously when made by non-Irish people
 - c. Some issues based on cultural differences
 - d. Some Gardaí have negative perceptions of asylum seekers, Gardaí need training on this and to build relations to understand this community.
3. Garda National Immigration Bureau
 - a. Only accessible by telephone and not good at returning people's calls
 - b. Long delays in waiting for appointments for Irish Residency Permit cards which impacts many other services
 - c. No written proof that a person has applied for an Irish Residency Permit card which means they cannot access Social Protection and other services

- d. Staff appear to have discretion over the length of time an Irish Residency Permit is valid for
 - e. Lack of cultural awareness of officers
 - f. Clients are kept waiting for scheduled appointments
 - g. No public toilet facilities
4. Victims of sexual- and gender-based violence and coercive control
- a. People from ethnic minority and new communities, particularly women, face more barriers when dealing with sexual- and gender-based violence and coercive control
 - b. People from ethnic minority and new communities are often not aware of their rights in Ireland
 - c. Migrants may have concerns reporting a crime if they are undocumented or their visa is linked to their partner's visa
 - d. People from ethnic minority and new communities may be less willing to engage with the Gardaí
 - e. People from ethnic minority and new communities may not have familial or community structures that they can turn to for support
5. Other
- a. Family or community members should be used to provide translation in only exceptional cases
 - b. Direct Provision Centre management threaten the Gardaí on residents making residents wary of engaging with the Gardaí

Direct Provision

1. The Direct Provision system is incredibly damaging to those who go through it
 - a. The length of time in Direct Provision and the conditions can lead to trauma and mental health difficulties
 - b. Lack of dignity and respect for those in the Direct Provision system
 - c. Experiences of discrimination and unequal treatment from service providers
 - d. Lack of understanding amongst service providers of the experiences of those in Direct Provision and why they are in Kildare
2. Asylum Seekers face additional barriers to daily life
 - a. Cannot access bank accounts
 - b. Cannot access driving licences
 - c. Limited opportunities to access language, educational or training opportunities
 - d. When accepted for training opportunities, cannot access financial support for transport or books
3. Direct Provision impacts on peoples' ability to integrate
 - a. Living in a Direct Provision Centre makes it difficult to be a part of the wider community
 - b. Lack of education and employment opportunities limits the opportunities to build relationships outside of the Centres

- c. The wider community has limited knowledge about asylum seekers and the Direct Provision system
4. Need for more supports to get Direct Provision residents involved in wider community
 - a. Opportunities to volunteer
 - b. Engagement in community activities
 - c. Measures to allow the community to hear Direct Provision residents' stories, where residents are happy to do so
 - d. Educate Direct Provision residents about their rights and support them to be able to speak out
 - e. Wider engagement between people who have come through Direct Provision and those still there
 5. Other
 - a. Direct Provision residents are not supposed to contact GPs directly but go through the Centre reception
 - b. Direct Provision Centre management threaten the Gardaí on residents

Community

1. Communities are central to meaningful integration
 - a. Community relationships ensure people feel included and significant
 - b. In strong communities, people experience security and safety regardless of background or ethnic identity
 - c. If people feel safe (physically and psychologically) and included, it will enrich the community
 - d. Building relationships at community level challenges stereotypes
 - e. Community activities (library and cultural events, community walks, coffee mornings, sports etc) and churches are important for people building social connections
2. Importance of celebrating own culture and traditions
 - a. Supports for communities to self-organise and advocate for their needs
 - b. Celebration of own culture ensures children are proud of their heritage and their Irishness
 - c. Need for "Sunday schools" (language classes for children in their mother tongue)
 - d. Allows communities to share and explain their histories and traditions to others
3. Importance of celebrating multicultural society
 - a. Many different cultures visible in the St Patrick's Day parade
 - b. Need for more on-the-ground initiatives to remove barriers and build relationships

- c. Poetry, arts and dance can be used it to help integration and create a sense of connection
 - d. Need for the creation of intercultural spaces in the community for education and cultural activities
 - e. Need for more acknowledgement of the benefits of a multilingual society
 - f. An informal way of educating the host community about different cultures
 - g. Acknowledgement and celebration of diversity can lead to a sense of solidarity
 - h. Dialogue sessions could allow for better understanding and a structure to address misinformation
4. Need for wider integration and outreach
- a. Volunteering can increase interaction with the host community and build relationships
 - b. Residents' Associations often have the same few members but have the potential to be an excellent vehicle for addressing issues locally
 - c. Need for sports clubs and community groups to be encouraged to actively engage with people from ethnic minority and new community backgrounds
5. Access to information/specific supports for people from ethnic minority and new community backgrounds
- a. If people are unaware of community events they cannot participate
 - b. Need for a single source hub for information provision
 - c. Need for an integration worker to provide a service to people of migrant origin that provides information, signposts services and can liaise with service providers as appropriate (housing, qualification recognition etc)

Women

1. Women are more likely to be socially isolated
 - a. Often end up responsible for childcare
 - b. Lack of women's only community spaces
 - c. Limited supports for those with limited English language
2. Sexual- and gender-based violence and coercive control
 - a. Women from ethnic minority and new community backgrounds often face more barriers than Irish women when dealing with sexual- and gender-based violence and coercive control
 - b. Women are often not aware of their rights in Ireland
 - c. Migrant women may have concerns if their visa is linked to their partner's visa
 - d. Women from ethnic minority and new community backgrounds may be less willing to engage with the Gardaí
 - e. Women from ethnic minority and new community backgrounds may not have familial or community structures that they can turn to for support

Political participation, civic rights and media

1. Lack of representation of people from ethnic minority and new community backgrounds in politics
 - a. Some people feel that this is not a space for people from ethnic minority and new community backgrounds
 - b. Concern that candidates from ethnic minority and new community backgrounds would only be seen to represent people from ethnic minority and new community backgrounds
 - c. More diverse representation would mean more inclusive policies

2. Low levels of registration amongst people from ethnic minority and new community backgrounds in Kildare
 - a. Lack of knowledge as to who can vote and when
 - b. Lack of information around how to register to vote
 - c. The complex procedure of changing address means that updating one's voter registration is more burdensome on those who move frequently
 - d. Cost of citizenship a barrier to people naturalising which limits their right to vote

3. Lack of representation of people from ethnic minority and new community backgrounds in media
 - a. Need for people from ethnic minority and new community backgrounds to be heard and seen
 - b. Need for positive stories from ethnic minority and new communities to be covered
 - c. Need for positive dialogue about ethnic minorities and new communities and people seeking asylum and any conversation to include these voices