

A Racial Equality Strategy for Northern Ireland

2005 - 2010



Office of the
**First Minister and
Deputy First Minister**

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Prepared by the Office of the First Minister

and Deputy First Minister

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Ministerial foreword

Northern Ireland is changing fast, and we must engage with that change. Many minority ethnic families in the Chinese, Indian, Jewish and Irish Traveller communities have lived here for generations and have contributed to society throughout troubled times. Others of all nationalities have come in recent years, bringing valuable skills, to help us rebuild after many years of civil unrest.

This is a chance to welcome new participants for the skills, new ideas, and fresh perspectives that they bring to the life of Northern Ireland. And while many have welcomed these new arrivals, a small minority in Northern Ireland society have subjected minority ethnic people who live and work among us to racially motivated intimidation and violence. Racism here has hit the headlines locally and internationally, and reports of racist incidents and racist crime are on the increase.

Racism, in any of its manifestations, is an evil that can have no place in Northern Ireland. Government has made its determination to stamp out racism very clear, and has acted accordingly. The new hate crime legislation that became law in September 2004 deals with crimes motivated or aggravated by hatred based on race, religion, disability or sexual orientation.

If we are to stamp out racism, in all its manifestations, we need to go beyond legislation and law enforcement, important as that is. We need to foster an attitude of “zero tolerance” towards racism in all its forms – across the whole community. And we need to achieve a society where different racial groups live together, not just side by side.

This strategy provides a framework that will allow us

- to tackle racial inequalities in Northern Ireland and to open up opportunity for all;
- to eradicate racism and hate crime; and
- together with *A Shared Future – Policy and Strategic Framework for Good Relations in Northern Ireland* (“*A Shared Future*”), to initiate actions to promote good race relations.

And the strategy should benefit all who live in Northern Ireland. The actions set out in it will act as a driver to raising policy standards and service delivery and deliver real gains for all of us.

I would stress that the action we need to take to stamp out racism is not just for Government. It is for all sections of our society. I hope that all sections of society can sign up to the vision and the aims and work towards them. Government alone cannot eradicate the racism and the inequalities suffered by minority ethnic people in Northern Ireland. Combating racism and racial inequalities is an issue for all sections of society. Each and every one of us has a responsibility and a part to play in achieving the vision we have set out. And there is a need for leadership to combat racism. Leadership is needed at the political, civic and community levels.

The strategy fits closely with the Government’s approach in Great Britain to racial equality and is underpinned by strong equality legislation in Northern Ireland that has already effected substantial change.

I should like to record my gratitude to all those people who have been involved in helping us to develop the strategy, in particular minority ethnic representative organisations – especially those on the Racial Equality Forum - for the valuable comments and suggestions that they have made. A spirit of partnership informed

the development of the strategy and I am confident that the implementation of the strategy will take place in the same spirit.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jeff Rooker". The signature is written in a cursive style and is underlined.

Jeff Rooker

Minister of State for Northern Ireland

Chapter 1

Introduction and background

The purpose of this strategy

1.1 This strategy establishes a framework

- to tackle racial inequalities in Northern Ireland and to open up opportunity for all;
- to eradicate racism¹ and hate crime; and
- together with *A Shared Future*², to initiate actions to promote good race relations.

1.2 It sets out a long term, high level vision of the society that we are working to achieve:

A society in which racial diversity is supported, understood, valued and respected, where racism in any of its forms is not tolerated and where we live together as a society and enjoy equality of opportunity and equal protection.

The strategy also sets out six strategic aims that Government will pursue in eradicating racism and tackling racial inequalities. It also sets out the principles that Government will observe in pursuing these aims.

¹ The term racism is used throughout this Strategy as shorthand for all forms of racial intolerance and discrimination including Islamophobia, anti-Semitism and sedentarism. See the glossary for a fuller explanation of both racism and sedentarism

² *A Shared Future* - published on 21 March 2005. Available at <http://www.asharedfutureni.gov.uk/>

SIX SHARED³ AIMS***Elimination Of Racial Inequality***

To eliminate racism, racial inequality and unlawful racial discrimination and promote equality of opportunity in all aspects of life, including public life, for people of different ethnic backgrounds in Northern Ireland.

Equal Protection

To combat racism and provide effective protection and redress against racism and racist crime.

Equality Of Service Provision

To ensure equality of opportunity for minority ethnic people in accessing and benefiting from all public services.

Participation

To increase participation and a sense of “belonging” of people from minority ethnic backgrounds in public, political, economic, social and cultural life.

Dialogue⁴

To promote dialogue between, and mutual understanding of, different faiths and cultural backgrounds, both long standing within Northern Ireland and recent arrivals to these shores, guided by overarching human rights norms.

Capacity Building

To build capacity within minority ethnic communities to develop a vibrant and sustainable minority ethnic sector at both local and regional level and to help minority ethnic people to fulfil the Government’s aim of a shared future for Northern Ireland.

³ The aims are described as “shared”, because they have been developed in consultation with minority ethnic representatives as being appropriate not just for Government but for all of Northern Ireland society

⁴ This shared aim is drawn directly from *A Shared Future*, page 13

1.3 The strategy will have significant implications for the way that Northern Ireland departments and the Northern Ireland Office carry out their business. It draws together evidence and provides a coherent and consistent framework for action by individual departments and agencies and for Government action across departments, the public services and more widely. It also sets out how Departments will work collaboratively – together and with non-governmental organisations - in pursuit of the strategic aims. It is a strategy for all sections of society in Northern Ireland, not just for Government.

1.4 The document sets out the structures that will ensure that the strategy is implemented and that the aims are achieved. To ensure that the strategy goes beyond mere words on paper and translates into actions that make a real difference to the lives of minority ethnic people⁵ in Northern Ireland, it will be underpinned by effective delivery mechanisms. These will ensure that accountability and ownership sits with those who can make a difference. The delivery mechanisms that are put in place will be robust and transparent to address the particular challenges. Finally, it maps out how we will measure the success of the strategy in achieving its aims.

1.5 Increasingly, departments, agencies, the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland, the Community Relations Council, the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission and public authorities have made progress towards the aims outlined in the strategy. Actions vary according to specific areas of departmental/statutory body responsibility. However, much remains to be done.

⁵ The Race Relations (Northern Ireland) Order 1997 recognises Irish Travellers as a racial group within the meaning of the law. It defines the Irish Traveller community as “a *community of people commonly so called who are identified (by themselves and others) as people with a shared history, culture and traditions, including, historically, a nomadic way of life on the island of Ireland.*” Any reference in this document to “members of minority ethnic communities” includes Irish Travellers.

Origin and development of the strategy

1.6 The Belfast (or Good Friday) Agreement recognised “the right to equal opportunity in all social and economic activity, regardless of class, creed, disability, gender or ethnicity.”⁶ The Government’s Priorities and Budget 2005-08 makes it clear that the Government will “put in place co-ordinated actions to tackle racism and racial inequalities”⁷.

1.7 The strategy is the product of extensive consultation⁸ with minority ethnic people and wider civil society. It draws on recent experience in Northern Ireland where minority ethnic people and migrant workers have been increasingly subjected to racially motivated violence and intimidation. It is shaped by the debate that has surrounded these shocking events. It is informed also by the debate of the Northern Ireland Grand Committee on 9 December 2004, in Westminster, and the report of Northern Ireland Affairs Committee *The Challenge of Diversity: Hate Crime in Northern Ireland*⁹. It is also set against the terrible events of the terrorist bombings in London of 7 July 2005, which resulted in the death of over 50 people and injuries to over 700 people.

Who is the strategy for?

1.8 The strategy is concerned with issues that affect **all** people in Northern Ireland – from majority and minority communities. However, a key focus is naturally minority ethnic people.

⁶ The section on *Rights, Safeguards And Equality Of Opportunity* paragraph 1

⁷ *Priorities and Budget 2005-2008* – can be viewed at <http://www.pfgni.gov.uk/fulldoc.pdf>

⁸ See Annex 1

⁹ *The Challenge of Diversity: Hate Crime in Northern Ireland*, 9th Report of Session 2004-05, HC 548-1 – can be viewed at <http://www.parliament.the-stationery-office.co.uk/pa/cm/cmniaf.htm>

1.9 It is **not** about putting everyone from minority ethnic communities into one category and those from the majority community into another. This would be to fuel the politics of division. Nor is it about privileging minority ethnic people over the members of the wider community. Rather, it is about getting much better at identifying and responding to the specific needs of different people and different communities and **ensuring that everyone within Northern Ireland is accorded her or his human rights.**

1.10 The Government recognises that positive action will be required in certain circumstances to meet the particular needs of certain communities - to redress the existing disadvantage that these communities have suffered. This approach is in line with the EU Racial Equality Directive¹⁰.

The role of Government

1.11 The strategy is, first and foremost, for Government and it will lead on implementation. But Government alone cannot eradicate the racism and the inequalities suffered by minority ethnic people in Northern Ireland. Combating racism and racial inequalities is an issue for all sections of society. Each and every one of us has a responsibility and a part to play in achieving the vision we have set out. And there is a need for leadership to combat racism at the political, civic and community levels.

1.12 Government alone does not have all the answers. It is important that we have an honest and robust debate about how we respond to the challenges that face us as an increasingly diverse society. And it is important that this debate is properly informed. There is a need to dispel recurring myths that “do the rounds”

¹⁰ Preamble 17 of the Directive provides that “The prohibition of discrimination should be without prejudice to the maintenance or adoption of measures intended to prevent or compensate for disadvantage suffered by a group of persons of a particular racial or ethnic origin, and such measures may permit organisations of persons of a particular racial or ethnic origin where their main object is the promotion of the special needs of those persons.”

and can be dangerous in creating a climate of mistrust and misunderstanding – both among minority ethnic people and indigenous “host” communities - if left unchallenged. Government will play its role here.

1.13 To achieve the six shared aims will require us to engage, and work in partnership with, individuals, communities and organisations across society – and to spur others into action. The strategy acknowledges and seeks to build on the efforts of many individuals and organisations who are working in their neighbourhoods, places of worship and work places to tackle racism. The vision and strategic aims have been developed through discussion and consultation with minority ethnic people and wider society. We believe that they are aims that we can and should all work towards.

The Legislative Framework¹¹ and how the Strategy fits

1.14 The Racial Equality Strategy will, of course, operate within the context of existing and proposed anti-discrimination legislation in this area, including the Race Relations (Northern Ireland) Order 1997¹², as amended, and Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998.

1.15 Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act already requires public authorities (including appropriate UK departments operating in Northern Ireland and district councils) *“in carrying out their functions relating to Northern Ireland, to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity” between persons of different ... racial group... and to “have regard to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different ...racial group”*.

¹¹ This is summarised at Annex 2

¹² For further details see paragraphs 2.10 to 2.13 below

1.16 The strategy is underpinned by, and intended to complement, the existing and developing legislative framework and the statutory duties set out in Section 75. It will be implemented within the legal framework and proposed legislation in this area.

1.17 In developing the strategy, we have had regard to the obligations assumed by the Government of the United Kingdom under the UN Convention for the Elimination of all forms of Racial Discrimination and other relevant international standards, including the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action and the EU Racial Equality Directive. We have drawn on developments internationally, and within Great Britain and the Republic of Ireland, in particular the Republic's National Action Plan Against Racism¹³, in combating racism and racial inequalities. We will continue to draw on developments as we implement the strategy through links with the Home Office, the Scottish Executive, the National Assembly for Wales and the Government of the Republic of Ireland.

1.18 It is important, however, to bear in mind that racism in our society is, to an extent, shaped by sectarianism and while there is much to learn from other jurisdictions in addressing racism, the context for racism here is perhaps different from that in Great Britain or the Republic of Ireland. The conflict in Northern Ireland over the past 35 years has created patterns and attitudes – such as residential segregation and heightened territorial awareness - that now impact upon minority ethnic communities.

¹³ *Planning For Diversity- The National Action Plan Against Racism (2005-2008)* – available at [http://www.justice.ie/80256E010039C5AF/vWeb/flJUSQ696JJX-en/\\$File/NPARen.pdf](http://www.justice.ie/80256E010039C5AF/vWeb/flJUSQ696JJX-en/$File/NPARen.pdf)

Duration of the strategy

1.19 The strategy will last for five years initially. Working with minority ethnic people and their representatives through the Race Forum (to be renamed the Racial Equality Forum), we will develop an action plan to implement it. During the life of the strategy, progress towards meeting the strategic aims will be measured and evaluated. Progress will be reviewed and reported on annually and a formal review will be held in 2008.

Relationship of the strategy with Good Relations Policy and Strategic Framework

1.20 This strategy and the Good Relations Policy and Strategic Framework that was published on 21 March 2005¹⁴ are complementary. The Good Relations Policy and Strategic Framework aims to eliminate both racism and sectarianism. It acknowledges that Northern Ireland is no longer a bipolar society (if it ever was), but that it is enriched by its increasing cultural diversity. It outlines “how the practical steps and actions, based on common fundamental principles, can be co-ordinated across Government and throughout civic society to ensure an effective and coherent response to sectarian and racial intimidation with the aim of building relationships rooted in mutual recognition and trust”. The policies and mechanisms being put in place to implement the Good Relations Policy and Strategic Framework are not just about the scourge of sectarianism. They apply equally to tackling racism and promoting good race relations.

1.21 Actions to implement this strategy and the Good Relations Policy and Strategic Framework will be carefully co-ordinated.

¹⁴ *A Shared Future*, OFMDFM, March 2005 – can be viewed at <http://www.asharedfutureni.gov.uk/>.

Multiple identities and multiple discrimination and disadvantage

1.22 We recognise that people's identities are complex and that an individual's identity may be made up of several factors such as gender, age, religion, disability, ethnicity and sexual orientation. We acknowledge that some people may, therefore, face multiple discrimination.

1.23 We recognise the need to address issues of multiple identity and multiple discrimination. We need to maintain clear linkages between the racial equality strategy and other anti-discrimination policies and strategies as they are implemented. We will ensure effective links between the implementation of this strategy and other policies and strategies to tackle inequalities. Specific attention will be paid to the multiple identities, multiple discrimination and inequalities experienced by minority ethnic people in the development, implementation and monitoring of the Action Plans. We will include where appropriate the development of specific actions, shared actions with other strategies and the development of associated performance indicators. An important strand will be to collect disaggregated data to enable the measurement of the impact of actions on multiple discrimination and disadvantage.

Relationship with the UK Government's Strategy on Race Equality and Community Cohesion and the National Action Plan Against Racism

1.24 The Home Secretary launched the Government's strategy to increase race equality and community cohesion¹⁵ on 19 January 2005. This cross-governmental strategy states that it is "a strategy for Great Britain and will apply in Northern Ireland only to those matters that are reserved or excepted under the provisions of the Northern Ireland Act 1998. It acknowledges that race equality and community relations are matters for the Northern Ireland Administration" and refers to this strategy and the Good Relations Policy and Strategic Framework. The cross-governmental strategy further states that it "reinforces the implementation of our obligations under the International Convention for the Elimination of all forms of Racial Discrimination. It also meets our commitments to actions agreed at the 2001 UN World Conference Against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance, including the development of a National Action Plan Against Racism".

1.25 We have consulted the Home Office about the Racial Equality Strategy for Northern Ireland (as they consulted the Northern Ireland Administration about their strategy). We have sought to ensure that the strategies are complementary, allowing for the different circumstances and legislation. We consider that the present strategy reinforces the implementation of United Kingdom obligations under the International Convention for the Elimination of all forms of Racial Discrimination. We further consider that it contributes appropriately to meeting the UK Government's commitments to actions agreed at the 2001 UN World Conference Against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance, including the development of a National Action Plan Against Racism.

¹⁵ *Improving Opportunity, Strengthening Society: The Government's Strategy to Increase Race Equality and Community Cohesion*, Home Office January 2005. This strategy can be viewed at <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/docs4/raceequality.htm>

Equality Assessment

1.26 We have included, at Annex 1, an assessment of the equality impact of the strategy. It is an overarching and high-level strategy which, when implemented, is intended to generate a range of departmental and cross-departmental policies and actions, and actions within wider civil society. In line with their equality schemes, the relevant department or departments will consider these policies and actions for their respective Equality Impact Assessment(s).

1.27 We believe that the proposals developed to implement this strategy will promote racial equality and will result in specific actions in this area. They will foster good relations and thus promote greater social cohesion and equality of opportunity for everyone in Northern Ireland.

Chapter 2

Racism and racial inequalities: the scale of the challenge

2.1 We should not underestimate the size of the challenges posed by racism in Northern Ireland. Nor should we be under any illusions as to the urgency of the task. As *A Shared Future* puts it “Continued ...racism...act[s] as a cancer that eats at the body of Northern Ireland. [It acts] as a significant barrier to social and economic progress...[It] lower[s] morale and prevent[s] communities taking advantage of opportunities to build a better future”¹⁶. Racism “hinders the development of its victims, perverts those who practise it, divides nations internally, impedes international co-operation and gives rise to political tensions between peoples...”¹⁷

2.2 Racism in Northern Ireland manifests itself in a variety of ways, both subtle and overt. It can range from snubs and exclusion through to discrimination, the creation of barriers to inclusion that can emerge at all levels in public and private institutions, to acts of intimidation and violence.

2.3 The statistics for racial incidents¹⁸ show that reports of these incidents and racially motivated crime in Northern Ireland have increased significantly. Reports of racially motivated incidents and crimes rose from 453 in 2003-04 to 813 for 2004-05. These figures present a deeply disturbing picture. There can be little doubt that they represent a substantial real increase in the number of racial incidents and racist attacks in Northern Ireland. In Northern Ireland, as

¹⁶ Paragraph 1.3.6

¹⁷ Article 2(2) of the UNESCO Declaration on Race and Racial Prejudice, 1978

¹⁸ A ‘racial incident’ means any incident with a race dimension – and covers both crimes and non-crimes (to use the McPherson phrase). While it includes attacks on people and property it also includes incidents which would not normally result in criminal proceedings.

elsewhere, there can also be little doubt that there is substantial under-reporting of these incidents.

2.4 The evidence of racial inequalities and exclusion suffered by minority ethnic people continues to mount as further research is carried out into their experiences in Northern Ireland¹⁹.

2.5 Government has put on record its abhorrence of all forms of intolerance and has stressed its commitment to tackle racism in all its forms.

2.6 For the purposes of this strategy, we have identified four main manifestations of racism (although these manifestations are often inter-linked and overlapping):

- racist harassment (including assaults, racist graffiti, threatening behaviour, and incitement);
- discrimination;
- stereotyping; and
- systemic (or “institutional”) racism.

¹⁹ Details of some of these reports are given at Annex 6

Racist harassment²⁰ (including assaults, threatening behaviour, and incitement)

2.7 For many people from minority ethnic communities racial harassment is a persistent factor in their life in Northern Ireland. Incidents have been reported involving men, women, children and older people. Incidents have been reported in rural and urban areas as well as cities, in the home, place of work, and the street, in bars and in leisure centres. Incidents occur throughout the year and at all times of the day and night²¹.

2.8 Racial harassment, from offensive graffiti and name calling through to physical assault, reminds minority ethnic people that they are excluded from aspects of wider Northern Ireland society and reinforces that exclusion. It can act as a strong deterrent to many minority ethnic people in applying for certain jobs, choosing to live in certain areas and making use of social and health care services. It can restrict the type of social activities people can engage in and can make people prisoners in their own home.

Discrimination

2.9 The International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination defines 'racial discrimination' as follows: "any distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference based on race, colour, descent, or national or ethnic origin which has the purpose or effect of nullifying or impairing the recognition, enjoyment or exercise, on an equal footing, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural or any other field

²⁰ Article 2 of the Racial Equality Directive defines harassment as "when an unwanted conduct related to racial or ethnic origin takes place with the purpose or effect of violating the dignity of a person and of creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment."

²¹ See *Overview Analysis of Racist Incidents Recorded in Northern Ireland by the RUC 1996-1999* (2002) published by the Office of the First Minister and the Deputy First Minister and available at <http://www.research.ofmndfmi.gov.uk/racistincidents/index.htm>

of public life.”²²

2.10 There are four types of unlawful racial discrimination within the meaning of the existing law in Northern Ireland - the Race Relations (Northern Ireland) Order 1997 (RRO). The RRO was amended by the Race Relations Order (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2003 to give effect to the EU Racial Equality Directive. The Regulations came into effect on 19 July 2003. The four types of unlawful racial discrimination are as follows:

- Direct discrimination arises where one person treats another less favourably, on racial grounds, than he or she treats (or would treat) someone else in the same or similar circumstances;
- Indirect discrimination occurs where a provision, criterion or practice although applied equally to others would put persons of a particular racial group at a particular disadvantage compared with other persons, unless that provision, criterion or practice is objectively justified by a legitimate aim;
- Harassment occurs where there is unwanted conduct which has the purpose or effect of violating one’s dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment; and
- Victimisation is where someone is treated less favourably because they have, for instance, complained of unlawful racial discrimination or have assisted someone else to do so. The law covers relationships that have come to end where the discrimination arises out of and is closely connected to that relationship, such as

²² International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, Article 1 – see http://www.unhcr.ch/html/menu3/b/d_icerd.htm

employment contract.

2.11 The RRO also places a statutory duty on district councils to make appropriate arrangements with a view to ensuring that their various functions are carried out with due regard to the need:

- to eliminate unlawful racial discrimination; and
- to promote equality of opportunity, and good relations between persons of different racial groups

2.12 The Equality Commission for Northern Ireland has a duty to keep under review the working of the Order and, when it is so required by the Department (the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister) or otherwise thinks it necessary, draw up and submit to the Department proposals for amending the Order.

2.13 The new regulations make it unlawful to discriminate on racial grounds in the areas of employment, self-employment, occupation, vocational guidance, vocational training, advanced vocational training and retraining (including practical experience), employment and working conditions (including dismissals and pay), membership of and involvement in an organisation of workers or employers, social protection (including society security and healthcare), social advantages, education, access to and supply of goods and services (including housing). Segregation on racial grounds also constitutes discrimination.

2.14 The regulations, however, do not extend to all the categories covered by the RRO. The EU Racial Equality Directive did not mention “colour” and “nationality” is specifically excluded. Accordingly “colour” and “nationality” are not included in the Race Relations Order (Amendment) Regulations. The discussion

paper on options for a Single Equality Bill for Northern Ireland has committed the Government to rectifying this in any forthcoming legislation²³.

Racial Prejudice and Stereotyping

2.15 Society in Northern Ireland has been bedevilled by stereotypes. People **already know what “themuns” are like – or think that they do.** “Groups are characterised exclusively in terms of what makes them different, and differences are reduced to a few either/or distinctions – a fixed set of oppositions between “us” and “them”, those who belong and those who do not. Difference and inferiority become all but synonymous. Individuals are then seen and judged in terms of the group differences and “we” have the right to exclude “them” from access to scarce material and cultural resources”²⁴.

2.16 We all have prejudices and stereotypes about different groups – and not just racial groups. The less familiar we are with a particular group, the easier it is to carry a stereotyped based, for example, on media images of that group and our own very limited experience of that group. But we must recognise that stereotypes are not reality. They do not account for the fact that human beings are complex and multidimensional, with unique attributes. They can be unfair and misleading. We must have the courage to challenge these stereotypes.

2.17 The impact of this stereotyping is difficult to quantify, but can help to create an environment where assaults, threatening behaviour and discrimination against the community which is subject to stereotypes are more likely to occur. Insensitive reporting by or in the media and ill-judged comments by local community or elected representatives have all too often reinforced these attitudes. There is a need for us all to challenge and combat myths and

²³ *A Single Equality Bill for Northern Ireland: A Discussion Paper on options for a Bill to harmonise, update and extend, where appropriate, anti-discrimination and equality legislation in Northern Ireland*, June 2004 (page 22, paragraph 4). The discussion paper can be viewed at <http://www.ofmdfmi.gov.uk/equality/seb/>

²⁴ *The Parekh Report: The Future of Multi-Ethnic Britain* page 63

misinformation.

Systemic (or “institutional”) racism in public services

2.18 In an increasingly diverse society, meeting the needs of individuals from all communities, including minority ethnic communities, is a fundamental task for Government and for all public services. Racial equality is not an “optional add-on” for public services – it is a statutory duty and it needs to be made integral to their work through “mainstreaming”²⁵. Mainstreaming racial equality into government policy and practice is essential for all departments and public authorities that are responsible for delivering public services. However, before racial equality and good race relations can be effectively mainstreamed, departments and public authorities need to have explicitly recognised and acknowledged the barriers to racial equality and good race relations **and to have taken action to overcome them.**

2.19 It is clear that – despite considerable efforts in recent years – much remains to be done. This is not surprising. As Paul Connolly has written in research that was commissioned by OFMDFM: *“Until fairly recently the dominant view has been that Northern Ireland does not have a ‘race relations’ problem. There are so few minority ethnic people living here, so it has been widely argued, that racism is simply not an issue... Moreover, it has been felt that the political conflict in Northern Ireland has tended to focus people’s minds on relations between just two communities (i.e. Catholics and Protestants) leaving little time to recognise and/or be concerned about any others.”*²⁶ Our public services were developed and evolved in circumstances where racial equality was not even considered.

²⁵ *Mainstreaming* involves the incorporation of racial equality considerations into all policies, programmes, practices and decision making so that at every stage of development and implementation, an analysis is made of the effects on different racial groups and appropriate action taken. Crucially, it involves each organisation and each part of that organisation accepting responsibility for promoting equal opportunity and challenging racism

²⁶ *‘Race’ and Racism in Northern Ireland: A Review of the Research Evidence* – Paul Connolly (2002)

2.20 The strategy recognises the need for all public bodies and others to ensure that they are not blind to, or complacent about, the possibility of institutional racism and to tackle it as a matter of urgency where it exists. The report of the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry defines institutional racism as follows: *The collective failure of an organisation to provide an appropriate and professional service to people because of their colour, culture or ethnic origin. It can be seen or detected in processes, attitudes and behaviour which amount to discrimination through unwitting prejudice, ignorance, thoughtlessness and racist stereotyping which disadvantage minority ethnic people.*

2.21 Institutional racism and the failure to accommodate diversity is often unintentional and can come about through lack of thought, lack of understanding, lack of adequate planning or the persistence of a 'one size fits all approach'. The outcome of these processes can contribute to failure in, or weaker service provision to, cultural and ethnic minorities. This is not to imply that everyone working within an organisation is a racist.

2.22 To quote from a briefing for members and non-executives produced by the Audit Commission in Great Britain about its publication *The Journey to Race Equality: Delivering improved services to local communities*:

“One-third of chief executives told us that race equality was not an issue that significantly affected their organisation or local community. We heard some common assumptions underpinning this perception:

- There aren't very many minority ethnic people in our area so race equality is not really a problem.
- If we prioritise race equality, there will be a 'backlash' from the white community.

- We make a lot of effort to ensure that we treat everyone the same. There are no race equality issues.

These assumptions can contribute to the behaviours and attitudes that characterise institutional racism. They perpetuate the view that race equality is a ‘problem’ that is difficult to address, and are used as rationales to justify continuing the way that things are currently done, or worse, inaction. This means that black and minority ethnic people continue to experience poorer-quality services and unequal outcomes.”

2.23 The damage that can be done by even the isolated display of racial prejudice or stereotyping is incalculable. Therefore, training and awareness initiatives for policy makers and public servants, in particular those in the frontline of service delivery, will focus on eliminating the potential of incidents of “unwitting”, “unconscious” or “unintentional” racism, as well as deliberate and intentional racism.

Chapter 3

Minority ethnic communities in Northern Ireland

The size and diversity of minority ethnic communities in Northern Ireland

3.1 Northern Ireland has been home to minority ethnic people for centuries. Irish Travellers are an indigenous minority ethnic group. There has been a Jewish community here for well over a century. The first members of the Indian community arrived here in the 1920s and 1930s. There have been significant numbers of Chinese people here since the 1960s.²⁷ The 2001 Census, which included a question on ethnicity, provides the first details of the size and make up of the established minority ethnic communities in Northern Ireland.²⁸ Census data quantify the size of minority ethnic population in Northern Ireland as 14,279. However, certain minority ethnic representatives have suggested that the “non-indigenous” population of Northern Ireland is closer to 45,000 people.

3.2 More recently the larger and/or longer established groups such as the Jewish, Chinese, Indian, Pakistani, Sikh and Irish Traveller communities have been joined by minority ethnic people from Great Britain, increasing numbers of migrant workers and a small number of asylum seekers and refugees from many different countries. Northern Ireland is increasingly becoming a multicultural society.

3.3 More and more, people want to visit, to work, to live and to settle in Northern Ireland. More and more migrant workers have moved here in recent times – to provide the skills and labour that we need. There have been significant numbers of Portuguese speaking workers in Portadown and

²⁷ For a fuller account see pages 21-28 of *'Race' and Racism in Northern Ireland: A Review of the Research Evidence* – Paul Connolly 2002

²⁸ Certain minority ethnic representative groups have expressed concern that the Census has not yielded accurate data in relation to certain minority ethnic populations because of low participation rates.

Dungannon for some time. More recently, food processing plants in Ballymena, Coleraine and elsewhere have turned to migrant workers – many from Eastern Europe - to fill the jobs that they cannot fill with local labour. Many health care trusts and private sector health care providers have employed nurses from other countries, primarily the Philippines and India. There is a significant number of highly skilled migrant workers working here in a variety of professions. There are migrant workers from a wide range of different countries working right across Northern Ireland. For example, in 2002-2003 work permit holders from 66 different countries came to Northern Ireland. There are few towns of any size in Northern Ireland where migrant workers are not living and working.

3.4 Minority ethnic people, including migrant workers, are welcome here. They have made, and will continue to make, a significant contribution to social, public, economic and cultural life in Northern Ireland. As our economy continues to grow, we will become more and more dependent on attracting workers from elsewhere. Not only do minority ethnic people including migrant workers make an important contribution to the economy, but also they more than pay their way. Recent research²⁹ by the Institute for Public Policy Research for the UK as a whole shows that “immigrants make an important fiscal contribution to the UK and pay more than their share. They are not a drain on the UK’s resources.”

3.5 But minority ethnic people are welcome here not just for the economic contribution that they can make. They make an important contribution to the social, public and cultural life of Northern Ireland. They also have a genuinely leavening effect on a society that has long been frozen in its “two traditions” divide.

²⁹ *Paying their way: the fiscal contribution of immigrants in the UK* by Dhananjayan Sriskandarajah, Laurence Cooley and Howard Reed, IPPR (April 2005). This can be viewed at www.ippr.org/publicationsandreports

3.6 The strategy provides the framework for tackling racism and racial inequalities experienced by all people living in Northern Ireland, consistent with the requirements of the United Kingdom policy on immigration.

Asylum seekers and refugees³⁰

3.7 There are conflicting estimates of the number of asylum seekers and refugees in Northern Ireland. As at 1 June 2005, there were 141 asylum seekers being supported by the National Asylum Support Service, although there may be others who are self-supporting. No data is held centrally on these people. One group³¹ has estimated that there are around 2,000 refugees in Northern Ireland. While they share many of the problems of other minority ethnic people, research has pointed to particular problems suffered by asylum seekers and refugees. These are mainly financial, educational, health-, accommodation-, and communication-based. Asylum seekers and refugees are often also faced with legal issues relating to their residence status.

3.8 Immigration, including policy on asylum seekers, is an excepted matter under paragraph 8, Schedule 2 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 and therefore the responsibility of the Home Office. However several Northern Ireland departments are responsible for providing services to asylum seekers in areas such as education (including adult education) and healthcare. There is a need therefore for good co-operation and co-ordination to ensure that the needs of asylum seekers are addressed.

3.9 The National Asylum Support Service (NASS), a Home Office body, chairs a co-ordinating group that includes Northern Ireland departments, or their appropriate non-departmental public bodies with responsibility for services to

³⁰ An asylum seeker is a person from overseas who has come to the United Kingdom and claims asylum from persecution in their home country. While the claim is being assessed the person is considered as an asylum seeker. Once the Home Office has made a decision on the claim, the person is either granted permission to stay (becoming known as a refugee) or is refused permission to remain in the United Kingdom. A refugee is generally entitled to the same services as a citizen of the United Kingdom.

³¹ Refugee Action Group – see “*Forced to Flee: Frequently asked questions about refugees and asylum seekers in Northern Ireland*”

asylum seekers and refugees and concerned voluntary and community sector representatives. This represents an important mechanism to address specific issues and more generally to facilitate a “joined-up” approach to service provision by NASS and Northern Ireland departments.

Migrant Workers

3.10 Migrant workers have become increasingly visible within Northern Ireland over the past few years. However, until recently, little was known about the number of people moving to Northern Ireland to work, or indeed about the areas of work that were attracting migrant workers. Moreover little was known about the demands these changes placed upon statutory bodies or about the specific problems faced by migrant workers as they came to live here.

3.11 Accordingly OFMDFM commissioned research³² to address some of the gaps in our knowledge about migrant workers. This research provides baseline data, identifies gaps in information and service provision and identifies social problems and personal needs experienced by people moving to Northern Ireland to take up employment.

³² *Migrant Workers in Northern Ireland* - Kathryn Bell, Neil Jarman and Thomas Lefebvre, Institute for Conflict Research (June 2004)

3.12 The research indicates the difficulty in identifying the total number of migrant workers in Northern Ireland with any degree of accuracy. In particular, nationals from countries of the European Economic Area (EEA) and family members of EEA nationals are exempt from immigration control and have a right to enter, reside and work in the UK without the permission of any UK authority. Thus there is no central body that records their migration to Northern Ireland. Migrant workers from outside the EEA are allowed to work here under work permit arrangements that are regulated by the Home Office.

3.13 The 2001 Census indicates that there were 5,940 people in Northern Ireland who were born in EU countries (excluding the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland) and 20,719 people born in non-EU countries. This gives a figure of 26,659 people who could be classified as migrant workers or dependants of migrant workers.

3.14 The Home Office has responsibility for immigration matters, the issue of work permits and enforcement action against illegal working. However, there are many important issues around the provision of services to migrant workers that fall to individual Northern Ireland departments and agencies to consider. Workers' lack of knowledge of their rights (on both immigration and employment) can allow them to be exploited. This is an issue that needs to be addressed in a coordinated manner by both the statutory and voluntary sector. There is also the issue of relations between growing numbers of migrant workers and local residents in certain locations, which will require attention.

3.15 The speed and extent of the increase in numbers of migrant workers in Northern Ireland - and the sheer diversity of the people involved - pose complex challenges for Government and society alike.

Chapter 4

Vision, key strategic aims and principles

Vision

4.1 Central to the delivery of the Racial Equality Strategy is the following vision:

A society in which racial diversity is supported, understood, valued and respected, where racism in any of its forms is not tolerated and where we live together as a society and enjoy equality of opportunity and equal protection.

This high level, long-term, vision will act as a constant reference point for our work on tackling racism and promoting racial equality.

Shared strategic aims

4.2 Taking account of the research evidence and the results of the consultation, we have identified six shared aims that will point the strategic direction for action by departments, agencies and other organisations, working individually and together, to make a significant difference to the lives of people from minority ethnic backgrounds.

4.3 This chapter also commits Government to additional cross-departmental work on helping refugees to integrate into society and to meeting the challenges posed by increasing numbers of migrant workers.

SIX SHARED³³ AIMS

Elimination Of Racial Inequality

To eliminate racism, racial inequality and unlawful racial discrimination and promote equality of opportunity in all aspects of life, including public life, for people of different ethnic backgrounds in Northern Ireland.

Equal Protection

To combat racism and provide effective protection and redress against racism and racist crime.

Equality Of Service Provision

To ensure equality of opportunity for minority ethnic people in accessing and benefiting from all public services.

Participation

To increase participation and a sense of “belonging” of people from minority ethnic backgrounds in public, political, economic, social and cultural life.

Dialogue

To promote dialogue between, and mutual understanding of, different faiths and cultural backgrounds, both long standing within Northern Ireland and recent arrivals to these shores, guided by overarching human rights norms.

Capacity Building

To build capacity within minority ethnic communities to develop a vibrant and sustainable minority ethnic sector at both local and regional level and to help minority ethnic people to fulfil the Government’s aim of a shared future for Northern Ireland.

³³ The aims are described as “shared”, because they have been developed in consultation with minority ethnic representatives as being appropriate not just for Government but for all Northern Ireland society

4.4 This chapter of the strategy sets out a number of **illustrative** actions that will contribute towards the six shared aims. We recognise that to achieve the aims will require action not just by Government but also by individuals and organisations within the community. All the illustrative actions are underscored by the equality duty under Section 75 (1) and the good relations duty under Section 75 (2) of the Northern Ireland Act 1998. These and many other actions will be incorporated in the first action plan that will be published by 31 March 2006.

Elimination Of Racial Inequality

To eliminate racism, racial inequality and unlawful racial discrimination and promote equality of opportunity in all aspects of life, including public life, for people of different ethnic backgrounds in Northern Ireland.

4.5 The protection and vindication of human rights for all set out in the Belfast Agreement requires us to ensure that all people, **regardless of their origin**, enjoy the same rights and opportunities. The Government acknowledges that the continued occurrence of racism, unlawful racial discrimination, racial inequality, social exclusion and negative stereotyping of people from minority ethnic communities must be addressed.

4.6 To eliminate racism, unlawful racial discrimination, racial inequality and social exclusion, we need a comprehensive approach. Government has put in place a robust legislative and policy framework:

- Legal protection: acts of racism and unlawful racial discrimination, including incitement of racial hatred and racist attacks are serious violations of human rights and should be combated by all lawful means;

- Policies and practices: develop racial equality policy and practice which aims at action, including mainstreaming the fight against racism in policies and acting in partnership with civil society;
- Policies and practices: to tackle the underlying issues which give rise to conditions where racism can take root; and
- Education and awareness raising: Encourage the introduction of human rights education, including promoting anti-racism, in the school curriculum and in institutions of higher education.

4.7 While many of the elements of the framework are already in place and operational, we recognise that there needs to be a stronger focus on achieving tangible results and making a clear difference to the lives of people.

4.8 To eliminate racism and racial inequality requires an approach that is structured around real world problems. These problems are rarely aligned to the boundaries of Government departments. It is essential for departments to think and work together – and to work with the full range of external stakeholders (including representatives of minority ethnic communities). We will ensure that we have the appropriate mechanisms in place to achieve this.

Actions

- In line with the need to involve the full range of external stakeholders, we will expand the membership of the Racial Equality Forum to include representatives from business and the Trades Unions;
- We will also consider how best we can use the Forum to focus on problems faced by people in their everyday lives;

- On legislation, we have already noted that the Regulations introduced on 19 July 2003 to give effect to the EU Race Directive do not extend to all the categories covered by the original Race Relations (Northern Ireland) Order 1997: specifically, they do not cover colour and nationality. The Government will explore legislative options to rectify this anomaly as soon as possible; and
- Also ‘the Community Relations (Amendment) (Northern Ireland) Order 1975’ under which community relations activity is promoted and funded, is almost 30 years old. As promised in *A Shared Future*, that legislation will be reviewed to ensure that it is fit for purpose and takes account of the statutory duty on good relations.

Equal Protection

To combat racism and provide effective protection and redress against racism and racist crime.

4.9 All forms of intolerance and violence based on racism, sectarianism or any other extremism are abhorrent in a democracy. There are norms and behaviours within society that are acceptable and those that simply are unacceptable.

4.10 We, as a society, need to acknowledge the level of racism and racial harassment in Northern Ireland society and act to combat it. The new hate crime legislation that became law in September 2004³⁴ will deal with crimes motivated or aggravated by “hatred based on” race, religion, disability or sexual orientation.

4.11 The legislation includes a statutory requirement for judges to treat racial and religious aggravation and hatred of sexual orientation as well as disability, as an aggravating factor when sentencing. This gives judges greater powers in

³⁴ Criminal Justice (No. 2) (Northern Ireland) Order 2004, which was commenced on 28 September 2004

sentencing where aggravation is proven. For example, the legislation increases the maximum penalty for criminal damage increase from 10 to 14 years and for putting someone in fear of violence from five to seven years. **In short, the legislation introduces much needed changes to enhance the law to tackle crime motivated by hatred. It gives judges crucial powers to hand down sentences which fit the seriousness of the crime.**

4.12 Also, other statutory and community measures are addressing anti-social behaviour within communities. The Government expects enforcement by the police and action by the criminal justice system to deal firmly with behaviour that is not consistent with what is expected in a normal society.

4.13 While the statistics provided by the PSNI for reports of racial incidents are undoubtedly shocking, these figures are “only the tip of the iceberg” and many racial incidents go unreported. If we are to combat racism and racist harassment and violence in Northern Ireland effectively, it is essential that we obtain a much better picture of the scale and nature of these incidents. This will allow appropriate deployment of resources and targeted interventions.

4.14 While we recognise the considerable efforts made by the Police Service in recent years, there remain substantial and persistent issues surrounding relationships between minority ethnic community members and the Police Service of Northern Ireland and the confidence that minority ethnic community members have in the Police Service. We will continue to work to build trust and confidence that minority ethnic people can have in the Police Service.

Actions

- We will introduce a system to record and monitor details of “hate incidents” (including racist incidents). This will allow third party reporting through a range of statutory bodies and voluntary groups and should give a much better picture of incidents motivated by hatred across Northern Ireland. It will provide the detailed evidence base and an early warning system to allow us to take appropriate action;
- We will pilot work with local communities through the South Belfast Roundtable on Racism on developing a community response to racism including “early warning” systems, and “good neighbour” schemes;
- We will pilot work with organisations in Belfast in developing a “zero tolerance” zone for racism;
- Continue to build on measures introduced by the PSNI to increase confidence that members of minority ethnic communities have in the Police Service;
- Carry out an audit of training arrangements and course content within the PSNI to ensure that training is credible, supported and appropriate. The audit would consider the involvement of minority ethnic groups in the development and delivery of training and the consistency of training across the service;
- Consider ways to increase the number of recruitment applications by minority ethnic people to the PSNI; and

- The PSNI will continue to identify and publish “good practice” to ensure that an effective and consistent response is provided to minority ethnic people and when dealing with hate incidents (including race hate incidents).

Equality Of Service Provision

To ensure equality of opportunity for minority ethnic people in accessing and benefiting from all public services.

4.15 If minority ethnic people are to play a full part in our society, it is essential that their rights to have equal access to, and to benefit equally from, all public services, including health, education, policing, training and employment are acknowledged and acted on. There is a very substantial body of evidence from Great Britain³⁵, and growing evidence from Northern Ireland, that some minority ethnic people suffer an “ethnic penalty”. Some members of minority ethnic communities are already doing well in Northern Ireland today. But many still suffer from particularly poor outcomes in education, employment, health and other life chances for a mixture of reasons including racial discrimination, lack of opportunities, inadequate thought in how public services address the different needs of different communities and cultural factors.

4.16 Service providers do not always respond appropriately to all the needs of people from minority ethnic backgrounds. Minority ethnic people may not know about their entitlement to services. They may be reluctant to approach service providers for various reasons. They may have difficulty in understanding what is said or written to them, or in saying what they require. They may be forced to rely on their children or others to act as interpreters often limiting or inhibiting discussion of sensitive topics. They may find that health, education and other

³⁵ See *Improving Opportunity, Strengthening Society: the Government's strategy to increase race equality and community cohesion* pages 17-19 in particular for a summary of the evidence. This is available at <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/docs4/raceequality.htm>

services do not take account of their cultural or religious needs. They may find that they are automatically perceived as being ineligible or having some lesser entitlement. Public sector staff may not have knowledge and understanding of the issues affecting minority ethnic people. This strategy should be a way of ensuring that structures and services are flexible enough – and staff are informed enough - to respond to the needs of minority ethnic people.

4.17 A “colour-blind, one size fits all” approach is not appropriate. The fundamental need is not to treat people all the same, but **to treat people equally and to treat them with due respect for difference**. There is significant diversity of needs and problems both across and within minority ethnic communities in Northern Ireland. Minority ethnic people in Northern Ireland will be among some of the richest – and the poorest. There will be minority ethnic representatives among some of the best qualified – and those with no qualifications. We need to be conscious of ethnic diversity and of the multiple identities of minority ethnic people, too.

4.18 There has been a growing amount of research undertaken in recent years about common issues and problems faced by the main minority ethnic communities.

4.19 Dr Paul Connolly’s report “‘Race’ and Racism in Northern Ireland: A Review of the Research Evidence” provides a helpful, comprehensive and accessible overview. While the report acknowledges that much research still needs to be done, it identifies particular “cross-cutting”³⁶ issues relating to service

³⁶ By “cross-cutting” issues we mean issues that involve more than one Department or agency

provision that disproportionately affect the minority ethnic population. These issues need to be addressed. They are:

The language barrier –a proportion of people from minority ethnic communities do not have English as a first language. Poor or no English causes particular problems for these people in relation to access to services such as health, education and training and employment;

Lack of information – there is a lack of information accessible to minority ethnic people about the services that are available to them or to which they are entitled;

Training needs of staff – lack of understanding or cultural sensitivity among public sector staff of the needs of minority ethnic people when trying to access public services; and

The cultural needs of minority ethnic people –the need within public services (for example, hospitals, schools etc.) to recognise and provide for the basic cultural needs of minority ethnic people, especially in terms of catering for diet and religious observance.

4.20 In research terms, many service areas have not been covered. This also applies to the needs and difficulties of smaller minority ethnic communities in accessing services. As the report states³⁷: *“the diversity and complexity of the needs identified draw attention to the importance of developing a systematic system of research, monitoring and evaluation in order to maintain an understanding of the differing needs of each community and of the effectiveness of existing programmes of intervention”*.

³⁷ 'Race' and Racism in Northern Ireland: A Review of the Research Evidence – Paul Connolly 2002 - page 63.

4.21 Ethnic monitoring (the process used to collect, store, and analyse data about people's ethnic backgrounds) by service providers of key aspects of their services is essential to achieve racial equality. To have a racial equality policy without ethnic monitoring has been likened to aiming for good financial management without keeping financial records. A proper system of ethnic monitoring will allow service providers to:

- highlight possible inequalities;
- investigate their underlying causes; and
- remove any unfairness or disadvantage.

It will let service providers know which groups are using their services, and how satisfied they are with them. They can then consider ways of reaching under-represented groups and making sure that their services are relevant to those groups' needs, and provided fairly. Of course, many service providers already carry out ethnic monitoring.

4.22 During the consultation on the draft racial equality strategy, we took the opportunity to canvass views from the minority ethnic communities as to priority areas for action in service provision. The results are given at Annex 4 of the strategy.

4.23 "Mainstreaming" is the key to ensuring equality of services. Mainstreaming involves the application of equality proofing, guidelines, participation of groups experiencing racism, positive actions, data collection, proactive monitoring and impact assessment. It involves each organisation accepting its own responsibility for promoting racial equality and challenging racism.

4.24 Responding to the concerns of all minority ethnic communities will mean that services improve overall. Most of their needs and aspirations are no different to the rest of the population. They do not inevitably require special or separate treatment. But they do need to be clearly understood and the specific requirements of different groups reflected in the way that services are managed and delivered. Local priorities that accurately address their specific concerns will be of benefit to the community as a whole.

4.25 Public services need to have a clear vision for improvement to deliver local racial equality outcomes that benefit the whole community. It must be based on a good understanding of current inequalities and the needs and aspirations of their minority ethnic communities. Public services face a significant challenge in moving beyond the legacy of negativity and discomfort around race.

Actions

- Government will develop tailored approaches to meeting the needs of specific minority ethnic communities, and focus on those groups who still suffer particular disadvantage, rather than treating all minority ethnic groups as having the same needs. A key element of this will be appropriate ethnic monitoring of service delivery;
- The Racial Equality Unit in OFMDFM will work with departments and service providers to help them to ensure that ethnic monitoring is carried out appropriately on key areas of service provision. This will be informed by the guidance on monitoring which is to be published by the Equality Commission by December 2005;
- The Racial Equality Unit in OFMDFM will work with departments to help them to assess their current performance in racial equality and to identify and challenge the barriers preventing progress, using, for example, such tools as the self-assessment tool developed by the Audit Commission in Great Britain: *The journey to race equality*:

*Self-assessment tool*³⁸; and

- We will focus on identifying and tackling “real problems” - not what an individual department or agency, acting on its own, can do, but what departments and agencies, acting together, **need** to do to tackle these problems. The starting point will be the issues identified by minority ethnic people themselves during the consultation on the strategy. Annex 4 provides a list of the key issues identified.

Participation

To increase participation and a sense of “belonging” of people from minority ethnic backgrounds in public, political, economic, social and cultural life.

4.26 It is essential that we achieve equal opportunities for individuals regardless of their origin and that a person’s life chances are not dictated by their race. However, the Government’s vision for Northern Ireland is about more than that. If we are to create a genuinely “shared society” we need to foster a sense of belonging to society as a whole by people from all backgrounds. Minority ethnic people need to have a share in society and this needs to be reflected in all areas of public, political, economic, social and cultural life.

4.27 Government must and will take the lead - by ensuring that public institutions and public services reflect the communities that they serve. Clearly, they do not currently do so. Out of 30,590 permanent staff in the Northern Ireland Civil Service those declaring that they have an ethnic minority community

³⁸ Available at <http://www.audit-commission.gov.uk/>

background - 32 - account for less than 0.1%³⁹. This is less than one eighth of the proportion that one would expect from the most recent census data.

4.28 Minority ethnic people are also under-represented in public appointments. As OFMDFM's Public Appointments Annual Report for 2003/2004 notes "None of the 456 appointments made during 2003/2004 were from an ethnic minority background. This compares with 2 appointees in the previous reporting period".⁴⁰ Of the 844 applications received during 2003/2004, 0.2% came from minority ethnic communities in Northern Ireland. This clearly raises questions for both Government and for the minority ethnic communities themselves.

4.29 There are also undoubtedly issues concerning participation by minority ethnic people in the labour market – not least their occupational segregation, especially the Chinese and Bangladeshi communities in the catering industry. There are little or no systematic data for minority ethnic people's levels of economic activity. The only accurate and reliable data regarding levels of economic activity and the occupational class distributions of the minority ethnic population are to be found in Irwin and Dunn's 1996 study⁴¹.

4.30 If we are to understand the issues around minority ethnic people's participation in the labour market, much less to tackle them, we need to have a much clearer (and up-to-date) picture of what is happening.

4.31 There are also issues for political parties in Northern Ireland to encourage the participation of minority ethnic people at all levels within the political process.

³⁹ *Equal Opportunities in the Northern Ireland Civil Service – 8th Report* by the Equal Opportunities Unit in the Department of Finance and Personnel. See <http://www2.dfpni.gov.uk/pdfs/eou/eighth.pdf>

⁴⁰ Paragraph 3.27. Can be viewed at <http://www.ofmdfmi.gov.uk/publicappointments/report0304.pdf>

⁴¹ *Ethnic Minorities in Northern Ireland*: Greg Irwin and Seamus Dunn, Centre for the Study of Conflict, University of Ulster (February 1997)

4.32 The media has played an important role in raising awareness of cultural diversity and racism in Northern Ireland and reporting issues that are of genuine public interest. However, there has been concern, including concern expressed within the media industry itself, that some examples of reporting has not reflected the realities of minority ethnic people's contribution to, and participation in, life in Northern Ireland. There have also been instances of reporting that have perpetuated stereotypes about minority ethnic people and damaged race relations.

4.33 There are barriers that we all need to break down. This may involve outreach initiatives and devising new and innovative ways of engaging with people and involving them. Government will act in an enabling role, helping to develop the potential for greater participation and engagement while simultaneously promoting and where appropriate, providing opportunities for minority ethnic people to be fully involved in civil society.

4.34 Government and others will also work to create the social conditions necessary for the effective participation of people from minority ethnic backgrounds in public, political, economic, social and cultural life.

Actions

OFMDFM will bring forward proposals to address these issues. In particular, it will:

- examine ways to increase significantly applications by people from minority ethnic backgrounds to public bodies (including the Police Service for Northern Ireland, as we have already mentioned) and for public appointments; and

- with the media, examine ways in which the diversity of people in Northern Ireland can better be reflected.

Dialogue

To promote dialogue between, and mutual understanding of, different faiths and cultural backgrounds, both long standing within Northern Ireland and recent arrivals to these shores, guided by overarching human rights norms.

4.35 In the past, Northern Ireland community relations policy has tended, for obvious reasons, to focus on relations between the two main communities within Northern Ireland. The need to develop good relations between the majority community/ies and minority ethnic communities has tended to be overlooked.

4.36 The present strategy and *A Shared Future* address this oversight. *A Shared Future* recognises that Northern Ireland is no longer a “bipolar” society, and that it is enriched by its increasing cultural diversity.

4.37 If we are to achieve the vision of “A society in which racial diversity is supported understood, valued and respected...” then we must learn the lessons of multi-ethnic societies that work well. To quote from *A Shared Future*, these societies “recognise that the complex make-up of each individual is what gives us our unique ‘identity’ - rather than the latter being a blunt label attached to whole groups. And this identity is something that also evolves over time, as we go through life experiences and relate to others - not something unchanging which seals us off from those who are ‘different’”⁴². As *A Shared Future* envisages “A shared society [which] ... is at ease with wide individual diversity, from which dynamism and vitality stem. It is held together by a willingness to engage in dialogue, on a basis of equality, and by a commitment to the common good - by a culture of tolerance”.

⁴² *A Shared Future*, paragraph 1.1.3 page 7.

4.38 We all have a part to play in initiating, encouraging and developing the dialogues that will allow mutual understanding to develop. Where diversity is recognised and valued there can be a sense of shared belonging and identity for all. Where it is ignored there is misunderstanding and mistrust leading to exclusion. This undermines people's sense of belonging and their capacity to contribute.

Actions

- We will actively promote local dialogue involving elected representatives, minority ethnic people, community leaders, police and other stakeholders to reduce and eliminate displays and manifestations of racial aggression, using such models as the Belfast City Council Good Relations panel or the South Belfast Round Table on Racism.

Capacity Building

To build capacity within minority ethnic communities to develop a vibrant and sustainable minority ethnic sector at both local and regional level and to help minority ethnic people to fulfil the Government's aim of a shared future for Northern Ireland.

4.39 We recognise the social exclusion, disadvantaged position and racism experienced by many people of minority ethnic backgrounds. We also recognise the need for capacity building measures and resources required to enable minority ethnic people to participate fully in public, economic, social and cultural life.

4.40 We also recognise that minority ethnic communities – in particular recent arrivals to Northern Ireland - may need to focus on building a sense of community and the community "infrastructure" to provide mutual support for people from similar cultural backgrounds. This activity must take place, however, in the context of an approach that recognises and addresses the need for integration and relationship building with the wider community.

4.41 Capacity building is not just or even primarily about the provision of funding. It includes aspects of training, organisational and personal development and resource building. It may also involve working with communities to develop the capacity of members of those communities to help themselves.

4.42 Government has recognised the vital role played by minority ethnic voluntary organisations in supporting people from minority ethnic backgrounds and the vital opportunities that they provide for involvement not only within their “own communities”, but also within the wider community.

4.43 In line with the commitment made in the Northern Ireland Executive’s Programme for Government 2001-2004, a fund was set up to support minority ethnic groups and projects that will contribute to the promotion of good relations between people of different ethnic groups. This fund which is managed by the Racial Equality Unit within the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister has been renewed for a further three years (2005-06 to 2007-08) and will provide almost £1.7m over the next three years.

4.44 Government has also recognised that capacity building for racial equality and good race relations is not just an issue for minority ethnic communities. It is an issue for the majority community, too. Accordingly, Government has injected an additional £0.3m into this fund over the next three years specifically targeted at helping local communities to work with minority ethnic people and organisations to foster integration.

Actions

- We want community development and good relations work on race issues to become an integrated programme of activities. In this regard there must be much **closer working together of government agencies responsible for community development and good relations**. Accordingly the Community Relations and Racial Equality Units in OFMDFM and the Voluntary and Community Unit in DSD will increasingly develop linked strategies.

We will seek to identify best practice in the development of coherent community development and good race relations practice. Funded projects will in future be tested in relation to the quality of the outcomes and its ability to promote the building of good relationships;

- The triennial action plan to implement *A Shared Future* will include detailed proposals setting out how the Government will progress an integrated approach to community development, good relations and reconciliation. The action plan will draw together measures influenced by the best practice in reducing division and building relationships; and
- Best practice will be drawn from the practitioners in community development, good relations and reconciliation, including those who have worked on a north-south and east-west axis.

Migrant Workers

4.45 Migrant workers have become increasingly visible within Northern Ireland over the past few years. However, there are considerable gaps in our knowledge about the numbers of migrant workers and where they are living and working. We also need to know more about the specific problems faced by migrant workers as they came to live here - so that statutory bodies meet their responsibilities.

4.46 There are many important issues around migrant workers eligibility for services and the accessibility of these services. There is also the issue of relations between growing numbers of migrant workers and local residents in certain locations, which will require attention. These issues need to be addressed in a coordinated manner by both the statutory and voluntary sector.

Actions

- Government, working with the Equality Commission, trades unions and employers, will improve information on the flows of migrant workers into Northern Ireland to ensure that statutory authorities can respond appropriately to the needs of migrant workers;
- Government, working with other statutory bodies, employers and the community and voluntary sector, will identify gaps in the provision of information to migrant workers, and work to plug these gaps. It will also examine the scope for setting minimum standards for information provided to migrant workers; and
- Government departments will ensure that front line statutory service providers are informed about migrant workers' eligibility.

Refugees

4.47 The number of refugees - that is people who have been granted permission by the Home Office to stay in the UK because of a well-founded fear of persecution due to race, religion, nationality, political opinion or membership of a social group - in Northern Ireland is, by all accounts, small. Nevertheless, it is in the interests of wider society as well as the refugees themselves – however many there may be – that we empower them to achieve their full potential as members of society, to contribute to the community, and to become fully able to exercise the rights and responsibilities that they share with other residents. Moreover, refugees do have very specific needs as a result of their experiences and circumstances, and service providers must identify these needs and develop ways of meeting them.

4.48 Accordingly, the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister, working with other Government departments and the community and voluntary sector, will develop a refugee integration strategy for Northern Ireland.

Action

- OFMDFM will take the lead, through the co-ordination group that is chaired by the National Asylum Support Service, in developing a refugee integration strategy for Northern Ireland. The Racial Equality Forum will also consider this strategy. It will draw on the strategies for England and Scotland that have been developed by Government.

Guiding Principles of the Strategy

4.49 The Racial Equality Strategy is underpinned by a set of principles that will influence all the steps taken in delivering the strategy. All Northern Ireland Government departments, the Northern Ireland Office, agencies and other relevant organisations commit themselves to:

- respect and respond appropriately to the needs of all people including people from minority ethnic communities;
- plan to take account of need, and respond flexibly to identified need (“need” should be identified and articulated by the people themselves);
- recognise and appreciate diversity within minority ethnic communities in terms of, for example, age, gender, disability, sexual orientation, religious observance and life choices, and take account of it;

- identify and recognise the needs of individuals and avoid stereotyping on the basis of group characteristics;
- promote a partnership approach in which departments, agencies, statutory bodies and voluntary organisations can work productively together;
- target efforts and available resources towards those experiencing greatest disadvantage;
- strengthen and build on the work which departments are taking forward in the context of the obligations placed on them by Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998;
- recognise the need for meaningful, 'culturally appropriate', consultation with the minority ethnic sector, and conduct work appropriately; and
- provide equal opportunity and anti-racism training for staff, starting with staff involved in designing and providing front line services.

Chapter 5

Making it happen: implementing the Racial Equality Strategy

Ministerial responsibility for the strategy

5.1 While the Northern Ireland Assembly and other institutions are suspended Rt Hon Lord Rooker, Minister of State for Northern Ireland, has responsibility for equality issues, including this strategy. He, together with his Ministerial colleagues, will have responsibility for driving forward work on the strategy and its implementation action plan within the departments and agencies for which they have responsibility.

Structures and responsibilities

5.2 We are determined that the strategy should be more than mere “words on paper”. It must result in action across Government and wider civic society to tackle racism and racial inequalities on the ground. For this to happen there must be clear lines of responsibility and accountability. There must also be appropriate structures in place to achieve a joined-up, targeted approach.

5.3 This chapter sets out responsibilities and accountability and describes the structures that have been or will be put in place, including the Race Forum (which will now be known as the “Racial Equality Forum”) which Ministers have set up to oversee the detailed work on the implementation of the strategy.

Action at a regional level

The Racial Equality Unit

5.4 A Racial Equality Unit has been set up within the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister to promote racial equality and good race relations. This unit has central policy responsibility for overseeing the implementation of the strategy.

5.5 The Racial Equality Unit will provide the secretariat for, and chair, the Racial Equality Forum (formerly known as the Race Forum). It will have responsibility for challenging obstacles to the implementation of the Racial Equality Strategy and supporting the chair in ensuring that the forum achieves its objectives.

Racial Equality Forum

5.6 The Racial Equality Forum has been set up to help draw up an action plan to implement this strategy and to monitor and review progress. It also has responsibility to monitor and review progress on the implementation of the response to the recommendations in the PSI Working Group Report on Travellers⁴³.

5.7 Membership of the forum includes representatives from both the statutory sector and the community/voluntary sector. It will be expanded to include representatives from the trades unions and from business.

5.8 The forum fulfils its remit as necessary through issue-based thematic groups, to explore issues in more detail. These thematic groups, which may be time-limited, comprise representatives from departments, statutory and voluntary/community organisations and other knowledgeable individuals as agreed by the forum. The forum will agree membership, terms of reference, chair and reporting arrangements for any thematic groups.

5.9 Currently there are three thematic groups operating under the aegis of the Racial Equality Forum: on Travellers issues (which oversees the implementation of the response to the recommendations in the Promoting Social Inclusion Working Group Report on Travellers); on language; and on racial incidents.

5.10 The agreed terms of reference and membership are at Annex 3.

⁴³ <http://www.newtsnri.gov.uk/travellers/>

Departments and agencies

5.11 While OFMDFM will take the lead in implementing the overall strategy, relevant departments and agencies will take a range of practical measures.

5.12 Delivering racial equality and good race relations potentially affects every aspect of public service delivery. It can only be achieved by rethinking the way that things are done. This requires good change management, which depends upon leadership. Each department will appoint a racial equality “champion” – a senior member of staff with visibility and credibility throughout the organisation. This champion will ensure that messages about the importance of racial equality and good race relations are consistent and visible to all staff. S/he will be responsible for demonstrating commitment through action – to scrutinise and challenge progress in implementing the racial equality strategy. Racial equality will be integrated into departmental targets, competencies and behaviours of staff.

5.13 Departments, with the assistance of the Racial Equality Unit and the advice of the Racial Equality Forum, will identify appropriate actions, consistent with the strategy’s principles, that will contribute to the achievement of the aims of the strategy as priorities for inclusion in the strategy’s action plan.

5.14 Departments will ensure that all the policies and operational practices of their department and agencies take account of the aims and principles of the strategy

5.15 Departments will communicate to all staff the strategy and the department’s commitment to it and ensure that members of staff have an awareness and understanding of racial equality and issues arising for specific action within the department’s policy and operational areas.

5.16 Departments will cascade the strategy to non-departmental public bodies and other service providers and encouraging them and/or working with them to ensure its effective implementation. They will also share knowledge, expertise and good practice with others. These are in line with departments' work to meet their obligations under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998.

5.17 The Racial Equality Unit in OFMDFM will work with departments to help them to assess their current performance in racial equality and to identify and challenge the barriers preventing progress, using, for example such tools as the self-assessment tool developed by the Audit Commission in Great Britain: *The journey to race equality: Self-assessment tool*⁴⁴. In line with *A Shared Future*⁴⁵, this challenge role will be backed up by research capacity, monitoring and evaluation. The help and advice provided by OFMDFM will take full account of the different legislative context in Northern Ireland, including Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998.

Working together and working in partnership

5.18 There is much that can be achieved, and has already been achieved, by departments working independently. However full and effective implementation of this strategy will only be achieved by departments working together and, where appropriate, in partnership with the voluntary and community sector and other elements of civic society.

5.19 By working together and in partnership, departments and other organisations can make the best use of inevitably limited resources and can share examples of best practice. The Racial Equality Forum, which was established in 2003 and which has already done much to guide the work of departments and others, will have a key role in this partnership working.

⁴⁴ Obtainable at <http://www.audit-commission.gov.uk/>

⁴⁵ Section 3.1

Developing an implementation action plan

5.20 As a first step towards implementing the strategy, departments working with minority ethnic people and their representatives and others through the Racial Equality Forum will, building on actions proposed earlier, develop an action plan by 31 March 2006. It will include, where appropriate, contributions from agencies and non-departmental public bodies. The action plan will be co-ordinated by the Racial Equality Unit within the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister and will include contributions from individual departments covering their specific areas of responsibility.

5.21 The action plan will fit with the principles set out in chapter 4. It will list the actions to be taken by the department or departments, and how the actions will contribute to achieving the strategic aims that are set out in chapter 4. Each action will have a target date for completion. Where possible, an action will have a target output measure. A possible pro forma for the action plan is included at Annex 7. The action plan will be submitted to Ministers for approval.

5.22 It is expected that new actions will be added to the action plan throughout the life of the strategy. It will have input from the Racial Equality Forum. The Forum will monitor and assess progress on implementation of the action plan, in the context of the Racial Equality Strategy. The Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister will report annually to Ministers, the Northern Ireland Assembly or the Northern Ireland Affairs Committee, in the absence of devolution, on the implementation of the action plan, taking account of the forum's comments.

Action at the local level

5.23 The Race Relations (Northern Ireland) Order 1997 (RRO) places a statutory duty on district councils to make appropriate arrangements with a view

to ensuring that their various functions are carried out with due regard to the need:

- to eliminate unlawful racial discrimination; and
- to promote equality of opportunity, and good relations between persons of different racial groups

5.24 The Policy and Strategic Framework for Good Relations in Northern Ireland commits Government to developing an **enhanced, permanent programme for the promotion of good relations** through district councils. This scheme – the Good Relations Challenge Programme - will formally enhance the civic leadership function of district councils. Each district council will be required to prepare a good relations action plan covering employees and local residents. Councils that have not already begun to prepare good relations action plans or strategies will be encouraged to do so.

5.25 The good relations action plans will, of course, cover good race relations. They will be informed by local dialogue and must be seen to inform other local planning processes. All councils are now required to develop Community Support Plans that identify how the councils will support their local voluntary and community sector. The Community Support Plans should also identify how councils' good relations plans inform community development and support the voluntary and community sector.

5.26 The good relations plans will be submitted to the Community Relations Council. The plans along with recommendations will be forwarded to OFMDFM for approval and the subsequent release of funding by CRC. Community Support Plans are reviewed by the Voluntary and Community Unit of DSD. If a good relations plan or the community support plan is unsatisfactory, respective funding may be withheld. Good Relations Plans will be reviewed annually to ensure satisfactory progress is being achieved towards agreed targets and outcomes.

Satisfactory progress will trigger the release of subsequent tranches of funding. Should a council consistently fail to meet its agreed targets and objectives in relation to its good relations plan the Community Relations Council may recommend to the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister that resources are withheld and, following discussion with the department, to initiate agreed action.

5.27 Good relations – including good race relations - cannot be developed through the delivery of events alone, or by narrow service delivery. **Local councils need to demonstrate political and administrative agreement on local policies and plans for good relations.** Community/good relations' officers should be central to council priorities and directly accessible to the Chief Executive. For these arrangements to take root it will be important for the community/good relations officers to have the support to develop innovative programmes and networks external to the council. They should also have access to support from the enhanced Community Relations Council.

5.28 Full details, including guidance, of the proposed new scheme will be the subject of consultation with councils during 2005 / 2006. **The triennial action plan will provide greater detail and clarity on the arrangements at the local level.**

Information

5.29 Ministers and departments will keep the public well informed of major developments and achievements on this strategy by way of Ministerial announcements, press releases and speeches, as well as through the Racial Equality Forum.

Chapter 6

Resourcing implementation of the Racial Equality Strategy

6.1 The Government's *Priorities and Budget*⁴⁶ reflects the social and economic priorities of government policy. It represents the spending needed to put policy into practice. The Central Finance Group of the Department of Finance and Personnel (DFP) is responsible for providing advice to Ministers in relation to Budget proposals with the Economic Policy Unit within OFMDFM providing advice to Ministers in relation to developing priorities and Public Service Agreements. This advice focuses on the spending priorities at a strategic level and on the total amounts to be allocated to programmes; for example, schools, health and public transport.

6.2 Racial equality and good race relations are already taken into account during the whole process of policy development in all of the government functions, and in the subsequent implementation review and evaluation of that policy. As part of the annual process of developing policy priorities and budgets, DFP and OFMDFM consult widely on how the Budget proposals may impact on different Section 75 equality categories including racial groups. The organisations consulted include the Equality Commission and groups representing minority ethnic people. This process of mainstreaming the racial equality perspective has a number of benefits, one of which is promoting better customer-focused government.

6.3 Where necessary, departments will bid for resources for specific racial equality initiatives. These bids will be assessed against the competing priorities within Government, while taking into account the Government's commitment and duty to promote equality of opportunity across the Section 75 equality categories.

⁴⁶ available at <http://www.pfgni.gov.uk/>

6.4 The strategy will require the deployment of current mainstream funding more effectively to tackle racial inequalities and to promote good relations. In the long run, mainstreaming of racial equality and good race relations should lead to a more effective and efficient delivery of public services.

6.5 The immediate effect on current funding will be largely neutral and will only become apparent following the development of the action plan. However, action to promote racial equality should be readily aligned with the process of existing policy development in areas such as education, regional strategic planning, urban and rural regeneration and culture, arts and leisure. Also, action to promote good relations should be a priority within existing funding programmes.

6.6 Government recognises the vital role played by minority ethnic voluntary organisations in supporting people from minority ethnic backgrounds and the vital opportunities that they provide for involvement not only within their own communities, but also within the wider community. Government also acknowledges the key role that the community and voluntary organisations have to play in working towards meeting the key aims of the strategy.

6.7 Accordingly Government has renewed its support for minority ethnic communities and projects that will contribute to achieving these aims. The Racial Equality Unit within the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister manages the fund, worth almost £1.7m over the next three years. Government has also injected an additional £0.3m into this fund over the next three years specifically targeted at helping minority ethnic groups and other groups in the wider community to work together to foster integration.

Chapter 7

Monitoring and reviewing progress

7.1 The fact that ethnic monitoring is key to achieving racial equality in service provision has already been highlighted in Chapter 4 of the Strategy. It is also essential in employment – for employers to examine the ethnic make-up of their workforce and of applicants and appointees.

7.2 However, as well as ethnic monitoring within individual service areas, we need to put in place arrangements to monitor and evaluate progress towards achieving the vision and the six shared aims set out in this Strategy.

7.3 Departments already hold an extensive amount of data on individuals, but the information currently held about people from minority ethnic backgrounds is incomplete. Departments are working together to improve the quality and scope of the information available in relation to Section 75 categories generally and to share information with each other. To this end, the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA) maintain a database of data sources, indicating whether they include information on each of the Section 75 categories (Equality Data Sources 2003, www.equality.nisra.gov.uk/publications/).

7.4 But we need information that is relevant to the strategy. There are a number of aspects to this. Firstly we need to establish baselines. This will involve assessing the information that is currently available and its relevance to the Strategy vision and aims and identifying gaps in the information needed to assess progress towards the vision and shared aims and how best to address these gaps. It will also involve considering whether data on ethnic minorities is fit for purpose and if not, why not. It is also possible that some of the monitoring data currently collected are not being put to full use.

7.5 We will work to improve administrative data in areas such as housing, education, employment, health, etc. and where possible, enhance surveys to provide a specific focus on minority ethnic people. Improving the information

base on minority ethnic people in Northern Ireland must itself be a target. In filling the information gaps and providing a useful and complete picture of ethnic minorities that relates to the strategy a holistic approach will be taken.

Administrative data throughout the civil service creates a lot of duplication. For instance filling in forms at different points of entry to the health service or education system will record similar information. A relatively small number of information sources, if they capture ethnic background, can provide a complete picture, although there will be limitations.

7.6 A complete picture of progress towards achieving the shared aims cannot rely simply on administrative data. We need information on attitudes and perceptions both on how minority ethnic people feel they are being treated and on how the general population view them. Obtaining sound quantitative data about the attitudes and perceptions of minority ethnic people presents considerable difficulties: the still relatively small proportion of minority ethnic people within Northern Ireland means that surveys that rely on sampling are unlikely to yield reliable results. Accordingly we will adopt a twin track approach with targeted studies of minority ethnic communities; and sample surveys of the Northern Ireland population.

7.7 The 2001 Census provided the first details of the current size and make up of the minority ethnic communities in Northern Ireland.⁴⁷ However current ethnic monitoring classifications (as used in the 2001 census) are not well adapted to “capture” the people now living and working in Northern Ireland. For example the category “White” will not distinguish between someone born and bred in Northern Ireland or, say, an Eastern European migrant worker. Potential models for ethnic monitoring classifications that are better adapted to reflect the reality of Northern Ireland today will be examined in the context of the study currently being undertaken for the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister by the

⁴⁷ Organisations within the sector have voiced concern that the Census may not yield accurate data in relation to certain minority ethnic populations because of low participation rates.

Centre for Cross Border Studies: *How public authorities provide services for ethnic and immigrant groups within the prescribed legal framework in three jurisdictions: Northern Ireland, the Republic Of Ireland and Scotland.*

7.8 The Racial Equality Forum will wish to draw attention to, and make recommendations concerning data gaps and monitoring in the context of the Cross-Departmental Equality and Social Need Research and Information Strategy that was published on 16 December 2003⁴⁸ and the forthcoming guidance on monitoring to be published by December 2005 by the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland.

7.9 *A Shared Future*⁴⁹ sets out how Government will use periodic evaluations, surveys and research to show the trends that will allow us to piece together a broad understanding of how life is changing for everyone in Northern Ireland, including the development of good race relations. To this end *A Shared Future* commits OFMDFM to establish a group with representatives from relevant departments, other organisations and external stakeholders to develop meaningful, measurable and relevant indicators.

7.10 *A Shared Future* commits the revamped Community Relations Council with preparing a triennial assessment of the status of relationships between and within communities in Northern Ireland. This assessment will cover race relations.

7.11 We will also draw on social surveys that periodically monitor the attitudes of the population. Surveys such as the Northern Ireland Life and Times Survey and the Northern Ireland Omnibus Survey have carried questions asking people their opinions on racism and race relations. Future surveys will be reviewed to ensure consistency with this strategy. Survey data will be supplemented by other data derived from research including qualitative studies designed to gather

⁴⁸ *Cross Departmental Equality and Social Need Research and Information Strategy* – this can be viewed at www.research.ofmdfmi.gov.uk/crossdept.pdf

⁴⁹ www.asharedfutureni.gov.uk/

detailed information on subjects such as minority groups that cannot be gained through population surveys.

7.12 Monitoring and evaluation of the good relations policy will draw on experience from the policy agenda known as 'Community Cohesion', increasingly being used in inner city areas of Great Britain. Community cohesion is the policy response to the riots in Oldham, Burnley and Bradford.

7.13 It will also be essential to continue monitoring progress on good race relations at project or programme level. It is here, where the work is being carried out, that an individual's attitudes and behaviours can be changed and where relationships can be built at the local level with local understanding. It is important to capture this picture so that practice can inform policy and the evolution of good race relations policy.

7.14 Six strategic aims have been proposed for the strategy. We would propose correspondingly high-level, aspirational and challenging measures should be set in respect of each of these within the limitations of existing base-line information. Departmental specific output indicators will supplement the high-level measures. These will be created by individual departments and outlined in the action plan to be developed for publication with the finalised strategy. Departments will liaise with the Racial Equality Forum in the development of the action plan.

Setting high-level measures

7.15 The following table is intended to suggest possible areas in which measures could be set to monitor success in achieving the strategic aims and the sort of measures that might be set (although unrelated factors may have a significant impact on these targets). Final measures will be set in the light of the departmental targets contained within the action plan.

Strategic Aims of the Racial Equality Strategy and Possible High-Level Measures	
Aim	Measures of success in achieving aim
<p>ELIMINATION OF RACIAL INEQUALITY</p> <p>To eliminate racism, racial inequality and unlawful racial discrimination and promote equality of opportunity in all aspects of life, including public life, for people of different ethnic backgrounds in Northern Ireland.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ % age increase/decrease in tribunal cases on racial grounds ▪ % age increase/decrease in cases brought to ECNI on racial grounds
<p>EQUAL PROTECTION</p> <p>To combat racism and provide effective protection and redress against racism and racist crime.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Implementation of legislation – Hate Crime legislation; development of a Single Equality Bill ▪ % reduction in racially motivated crime ▪ to determine the scale and nature of racist bullying in schools ▪ to develop measurable targets for reduction in racist bullying in schools ▪ pro rata level of racially motivated crime/incidents per head compared to parts of GB
<p>EQUALITY OF SERVICE PROVISION</p> <p>To ensure equality of opportunity for minority ethnic people in accessing and benefiting from all public services.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ % of public service staff receiving anti-racist training, and awareness training around minority ethnic issues ▪ Applications for, and offers of, appointment ▪ Baselining current levels of utilisation of benefits/services by minority ethnic people; monitoring and evaluating change (this will apply to most Depts and will take time)
<p>PARTICIPATION</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Attitude surveys within minority and majority

<p>To increase participation and a sense of “belonging” of people from minority ethnic backgrounds in public, political, economic, social and cultural life.</p>	<p>communities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ % increase in minority ethnic representatives gaining public appointments; on board of governors, tribunals, etc ▪ % increase in number of minority ethnic people undertaking volunteering ▪ % increase in participants from minority ethnic sector in sporting/leisure activities (may be difficult to get figures – may need to sponsor specific events instead)
<p>DIALOGUE</p> <p>To promote dialogue between, and mutual understanding of, different faiths and cultural backgrounds, both long standing within Northern Ireland and recent arrivals to these shores, guided by overarching human rights norms.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Number of events supported to highlight diversity ▪ Impact of a public awareness and education initiative to accompany this Strategy ▪ Implementation of Good Relations Policies arising from the “Shared Future” ▪ % reduction in racial prejudice recorded through public attitude surveys ▪ Impact of Good Relations policies
<p>CAPACITY BUILDING</p> <p>To build capacity within minority ethnic communities to develop a vibrant and sustainable minority ethnic sector at both local and regional level and to help minority ethnic people to fulfil the Government’s aim of a shared future for Northern Ireland.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increase in coverage of voluntary and community organisations developing initiatives around minority ethnic issues ▪ Increase in geographical coverage of minority ethnic voluntary organisations throughout Northern Ireland

Annex 1

Equality considerations

Background

1. The consultation on the Racial Equality Strategy was launched on 25 February 2003. The consultation document included a consideration of equality impact as an annex.
2. This consideration used the format recommended in the Equality Commission's Practical Guidance on equality impact assessment. It invited consultees to consider if the proposals had any positive or negative impacts on any of the groups included within Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, and whether there were alternative approaches to the promotion of equality of opportunity, and if so what these were. Consultees were also advised that, taking account of the public consultation, the consideration of equality impact would be completed and taken into account prior to final decisions being made, and that a report would be published along with the Racial Equality Strategy.

Consideration of available data and research

Consideration of impact

3. The consideration of the equality impact within the consultation document stated that on the basis of an analysis of research findings, available data and consultations, there was evidence that the negative effects of racism, racial attitudes and social exclusion impact differentially on persons of different racial groups. It drew on relevant research that had been commissioned by the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister and others (see Annex 6). It went on to say that the disadvantage currently experienced by the minority ethnic community in Northern Ireland had to be addressed. It stated that the strategy should have a positive impact on equality of opportunity for persons of different racial groups. It also stated Government's belief, that as the strategy was built on Section 75(ii), it should promote good relations between people of different racial groups. It also stated that an improvement in relationships, within and between

communities, which was a main policy aim of this strategy, should promote greater social cohesion and equality of opportunity for everyone in Northern Ireland.

Consultation

4. During the consultation period a series of public seminars were organised throughout Northern Ireland by the Racial Equality Unit within OFMDFM. These seminars were facilitated and recorded by an independent consultant. Additionally, a range of culturally specific facilitated workshops was convened with members of minority ethnic communities. In addition to the views expressed at the public seminars, 43 written responses were received from a range of individuals, groups and organisations. A proportion of these responses were informed by the results of the culturally specific facilitated workshops with members of minority ethnic communities.

5. Those who responded to the consultation agreed with the assessment of equality impact and the importance of the strategy for the promotion of good relations between people of different racial groups. They raised a range of issues that, in their view, were priority areas for action. These priority areas for action have been included within the strategy (see Annex 4 for details). Those responses that commented specifically on the Annex on equality considerations within the consultation document endorsed these. In addition, several responses stressed the importance of multiple identities, and that the strategy – and its implementation - should take account of the different Section 75 categories. This point was well made, and the strategy has been adapted to reflect more fully the range of identities experienced by minority ethnic people at different times in their lives. Implementation of the strategy will take specific account of multiple identities.

Decision

6. Taking account of this consideration of the equality impact and consultation carried out in relation to proposals for improving relations in Northern Ireland the Department has concluded that proposals outlined in the Racial Equality Strategy for Northern Ireland will make a positive contribution to the promotion of equality of opportunity and good relations for everyone in Northern Ireland.

Publication of Results of equality impact consideration

7. This consideration of equality impact will be published on the OFMDFM's web site at www.ofmdfmi.gov.uk/ and copied to those listed in the Equality Scheme.

Annex 2

The legislative and institutional framework

The Racial Equality Strategy will, of course, operate within the context of existing legislation and proposed legislation in this area⁵⁰. This is summarised below.

Race Relations (Northern Ireland) Order 1997

The Race Relations (Northern Ireland) Order 1997 defined “racial groups” as “a group of persons defined by reference to colour, race, nationality or ethnic or national origins”. It explicitly defines Irish Travellers as a “racial group” in that they are “a community of people commonly so called who are identified by themselves and by others) as people with a shared history, culture and traditions, including historically a nomadic way of life on the island of Ireland.

The Order made it unlawful to discriminate, either directly or indirectly on racial grounds in the areas of employment and training; education; the provision of goods, facilities or services; the disposal and management of premises and advertisements. It also placed a statutory duty on district councils to make appropriate arrangements with a view to ensuring that its various functions are carried out with due regard to the need:

- (a) to eliminate unlawful racial discrimination; and
- (b) to promote equality of opportunity, and good relations, between persons of different racial groups.

⁵⁰ This section is intended to describe succinctly key elements of the legal framework within which the Racial Equality Strategy operates. It is not intended to be a comprehensive account of all the relevant legislation. Other legislation, such as the Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995 and the Public Order (Northern Ireland) Order 1987, is relevant here.

The Northern Ireland Act 1998

Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 requires departments and other public authorities (including appropriate UK departments operating in Northern Ireland and district councils) in carrying out their functions relating to Northern Ireland to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity:

- between persons of different religious belief, political opinion, **racial group**, age, marital status or sexual orientation;
- between men and women generally;
- between persons with a disability and persons without; and
- between persons with dependants and persons without.

In addition, without prejudice to the obligation above, departments and other public authorities, in carrying out their functions relating to Northern Ireland, must have regard to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion or **racial group**.

Equality Commission for Northern Ireland

The Northern Ireland Act 1998 also provides for the Commission for Racial Equality (Northern Ireland); which was set up under the 1997 Race Relations Order, to be dissolved and for its functions to be exercised by the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland.

With regard to racial equality, the three principle duties of the Equality Commission are:

- to work towards the elimination of discrimination;
- to promote equality of opportunity and good relations between persons of different racial groups generally; and
- to keep under review the working of the Order and, when it is so

required by the Department⁵¹ or otherwise thinks it necessary, draw up and submit to the Department proposals for amending the Order.

The Single Equality Bill

Government is committed to a single Equality Bill for Northern Ireland and continues to develop proposals and to build on the preparatory work commenced during devolution. The objective of the legislation is to have all our anti-discrimination and equality law in one Bill, which is harmonised as far as practicable, extending and updating where appropriate to make it relevant to Northern Ireland's needs. The levels of protection afforded by existing legislation will not be reduced.

Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission and the proposed Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland

The Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission (NIHRC) was established as a result of the 1998 Belfast Agreement. Its powers and functions were set out in the Northern Ireland Act 1998, and it started work on 1 March 1999. Equality, including racial equality, is a central theme of human rights law, and many areas of the NIHRC's work reflect its commitment to non-discrimination and equal access to rights. An important example is its work on a possible Bill of Rights. Although the Human Rights Act 1998 brought into domestic law many of the protections in the European Convention on Human Rights, the NIHRC is required to advise Government on what additional rights might need to be defined for Northern Ireland. The right to equal opportunity in all social and economic activity, regardless of ethnicity is specifically referred to in the Belfast Agreement. The NIHRC intends that the Bill of Rights will contribute significantly to equality of opportunity and to outcomes for people, regardless of ethnicity, living in Northern Ireland.

⁵¹ The Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister

Human Rights Act 1998

Under the Human Rights Act 1998, it is unlawful for a public authority to act in a way that is incompatible with a person's human rights under the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR).

The Racial Equality Strategy will help to secure the human rights of all people, regardless of racial group under the ECHR and the UK's other international obligations.

Annex 3**Racial Equality Forum: Terms of reference and membership structure**

These terms of reference are intended to be a living document. They will be kept under review by the forum, which can suggest amendments to Ministers at any time.

The Racial Equality Forum will:

- promote the aims and principles of the Racial Equality Strategy;
- monitor and review progress on the implementation of the Racial Equality Strategy, including actions arising from the *Response to the Recommendations in the PSI Working Group Report on Travellers* and report annually to Ministers;
- facilitate a partnership approach and joint working between Government departments, statutory bodies, voluntary/community organisations and other agencies, so as to help participating organisations avoid duplication of effort and share resources;
- provide an arena for exchange of information, identification of best practice and lessons learned, suggesting possible areas where more research is needed; and
- keep the effectiveness of current provision to the minority ethnic sector under review and make recommendations for further policy and strategy as appropriate.

In fulfilling these terms of reference the racial equality forum will take account of relevant legislation and the wider policy environment.

Frequency of meetings

The forum will generally meet three times a year (not summer) but can meet more or less often depending on need.

Thematic groups

The forum will fulfil its remit as necessary through issue-based thematic groups, which will explore issues in more detail. These thematic groups may comprise representatives from departments, statutory and voluntary/community organisations and other knowledgeable individuals as agreed by the forum. Membership, terms of reference and reporting arrangements for the thematic groups will be suggested by the forum and have Ministerial agreement before the thematic group is established. It is expected that one of the thematic groups will be concerned with the overseeing the implementation of the *Response to the Recommendations in the PSI Working Group Report on Travellers*.

Chair

A senior official from the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister will chair the forum.

Meetings with Ministers

Representatives of the forum will meet the Minister on a regular basis to report on progress and share issues of concern.

Support

The Racial Equality Unit in the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister will support the chair in ensuring that the forum fulfils its terms of reference. It will provide the secretariat to the forum. Part of its role will

include the drafting of reports and other documents on behalf of the forum.

When recommending the creation of a thematic group, the forum will also make a recommendation as to which organisation would be most appropriate to chair and support the particular thematic group.

Review

The forum's operation and role will be reviewed as part of the general review of the Racial Equality Strategy. An assessment will be made of the need to continue operation of the forum. The forum will, of course, be expected to have input into the assessment process.

Membership

Members of the forum will include officials from Government departments and of key statutory organisations and representatives of voluntary organisations. Members will be sufficiently senior to speak on behalf of their organisations and to commit them to action. The forum will review its membership from time to time.

Where the forum agrees individuals may be seconded on to either the forum or a thematic group for a limited period. The Minister must approve all suggestions for membership to either the forum or the thematic groups.

Annex 4

Priority areas for action identified during the consultation

Research evidence and consultation of minority ethnic people on the draft racial equality strategy has also identified a range of issues that relate to specific service areas and have implications for particular Government departments or agencies. Examples of the particular issues raised, under main topic headings, are listed below.

The issues are listed as those who responded to the consultation on the strategy communicated them to OFMDFM. Government departments and agencies are aware of these issues and are pursuing actions to address them, for example, in respect of Traveller accommodation, a programme of Traveller specific accommodation schemes is being progressed and the provision of transit sites for Travellers is being given priority.

Training and employment:

- the occupational segregation of the minority ethnic population;⁵²
- need for English language courses at different levels;
- childcare arrangements;⁵³
- vocational training and guidance for minority ethnic young people;
- mentoring and job placement for minority ethnic young people;
- long-term unemployment of Irish Travellers; and
- recognition of foreign qualifications.

⁵² Especially the Chinese and Bangladeshi communities in the catering industry

⁵³ Difficulties over language, cultural appropriateness and unsociable working hours

Housing and accommodation;

- overcrowding;⁵⁴
- provision of care and/or sheltered accommodation to meet the needs of minority ethnic elderly people; and
- the provision of Traveller sites.

Health;

- the need for Traveller specific health strategies;
- the issues and needs of minority ethnic people in the area of mental health;
- the employment rights and protection from harassment of overseas nurses working in the health sector;
- low levels of GP registration among some minority ethnic communities; and
- the psychological needs of refugees and asylum seekers.

Education;

- the need for additional support for children who have English as a second language;
- a multi-cultural and anti-racist curriculum;
- relations between teachers and parents (difficulties of language and meeting times); and
- serious underachievement of Traveller children.

The criminal justice system;

- mistrust between the police service and minority ethnic communities, particularly Irish Travellers;
- low levels of prosecution of racially motivated crime; and

⁵⁴ Need for research into nature and cause of higher levels of overcrowding among minority ethnic communities.

- standards of interpretation within the criminal justice system.

Immigration, asylum and migrant workers.

- travel costs for asylum seekers to attend asylum interviews;
- exploitation of migrant workers; and
- care of asylum seekers in detention areas.

The specific needs of minority ethnic people in relation to these particular areas have to be taken together with the general issues outlined above in chapter 4 of the Strategy.

Annex 5**Glossary of Key Terms and Concepts**

Listed below are some of the key terms and concepts used in the strategy.

Racism

There are a number of different definitions of racism. For the purposes of this strategy we have used the definition set out in Article 2(1) and (2) of the UNESCO Declaration on Race and Racial Prejudice, 1978. *Any theory which involves the claim that racial or ethnic groups are inherently superior or inferior, thus implying that some would be entitled to dominate or eliminate others, presumed to be inferior, or which base value judgements on racial differentiation, has no scientific foundation and is contrary to be the moral and ethical principle of humanity.*

Racism includes racist ideologies, prejudiced attitudes, discriminatory behaviour, structural arrangements and institutionalised practices resulting in racial inequality as well as the fallacious notion that discriminatory relations between groups are morally and scientifically justifiable; it is reflected in discriminatory provisions in legislation or regulations and discriminatory practices as well as in anti-social beliefs and acts; it hinders the development of its victims, perverts those who practise it, divides nations internally, impedes international co-operation and give rise to political tensions between peoples; it is contrary to the fundamental principles of international law and, consequently, seriously disturbs international peace and security.

Sedentarism

Sedentarism relates to all of those ideas and practices that are based upon and tend to reproduce sedentary modes of existence as the norm. The effect

of such is that those who adopt more nomadic ways of life, such as Travellers, tend to be disadvantaged. This is particularly the case where policies, practices and services are developed which do not take into account their appropriateness for those with a nomadic lifestyle.

Sedentarism can be defined as a specific form of racism in that its effects are to disadvantage a particular racial group, in this case Irish Travellers. Moreover, given that sedentarism is often used to refer to the broader policies and practices of organisations and agencies, it can also be appropriate to view these aspects of sedentarism as a particular form of institutional racism.

Community/ies

The strategy uses the term “minority ethnic community” or “minority ethnic communities” frequently - meaning “a group of people having cultural, religious or other characteristics in common”. However, as the Parekh report⁵⁵ states: *‘Community’ is a tricky term. To speak of ‘the black community’, ‘the Irish community’, ‘the Bangladeshi community’, and so forth, is to refer accurately to a strong sense of group solidarity. But it may also imply a homogeneous set, with fixed internal ties and strongly defined boundaries, and this is a hopelessly misleading picture of a complex, shifting multicultural reality. Post-migration communities are distinct cultural formations, but they are not cut off from the rest of [...] society. It is true that maintaining tradition is critical to their self-identities, but their sense of community owes as much to how they are treated as to where they came from.*

These communities are not, and have never aspired to be, separate enclaves. They are not permanently locked into unchanging traditions, but interact at

⁵⁵ *The Future of Multi-Ethnic Britain* – Report of the Commission on the Future of Multi-Ethnic Britain – Chair: Bhikhu Parekh (2000) – page 27

every level with mainstream social life, constantly adapting and diversifying their inherited belief and values in the light of the migration experience. 'Minority cultures in Britain', concluded a substantial research project in the 1990s, 'are... constantly changing and rewriting themselves through fusing their traditions of origin [which in any case were not monolithic] with elements of the majority culture. The process of mixing and hybridisation will increasingly be the norm where rapid change and globalisation have made all identities potentially unstable.'"

Asylum seekers and refugees

An asylum seeker is a person from overseas who has come to the United Kingdom and claims asylum from persecution in their home country. While the claim is being assessed the person is considered as an asylum seeker. Once the Home Office has made a decision on the claim, the person is either granted permission to stay (becoming known as a refugee) or is refused permission to remain in the United Kingdom. A refugee is generally entitled to the same services as a citizen of the United Kingdom.

Annex 6**Key OFMDFM and departmental research on the situation of minority ethnic people in Northern Ireland⁵⁶***Migrant Workers in Northern Ireland*

Kathryn Bell, Neil Jarman and Thomas Lefebvre, Institute for Conflict Research

(June 2004)

<http://www.research.ofmdfmi.gov.uk/migrantworkers.pdf>

Racist Harassment in Northern Ireland

Neil Jarman & Rachel Monaghan

(April 2004)

<http://www.research.ofmdfmi.gov.uk/racism.pdf>

Analysis of Incidents of Racial Harassment Recorded by the Police in Northern Ireland

Neil Jarman and Rachel Monaghan, Institute for Conflict Research

(September 2003)

<http://www.research.ofmdfmi.gov.uk/racial.pdf>

Minority Ethnic Groups in Northern Ireland: Experiences and Expectations of English Language Support in Education Settings

Ulf Hansson, Valerie Morgan, Seamus Dunn

(December 2002)

<http://www.research.ofmdfmi.gov.uk/ethnic/index.htm>

Tackling Racial Inequalities in Northern Ireland: Structures and Strategies

Dr Paul Connolly and Dr Michaela Keenan University of Ulster

(December 2002)

<http://www.research.ofmdfmi.gov.uk/racereport4/index.htm>

'Race' and Racism in Northern Ireland: A Review of the Research Evidence

Paul Connolly

(May 2002)

<http://www.research.ofmdfmi.gov.uk/raceandracism/index.htm>

Overview Analysis of Racist Incidents Recorded in Northern Ireland by the RUC 1996- 1999

Neil Jarman, Community Development Centre

(February 2002)

<http://www.research.ofmdfmi.gov.uk/racistincidents/index.htm>

⁵⁶ This Annex is not intended to be a comprehensive list of all Departmental research.

The Hidden Truth: Racist Harassment in Northern Ireland

Paul Connolly & Michaela Keenan

(October 2001)

<http://www.research.ofmdfmi.gov.uk/thehiddentruth.doc>

Barriers to Access to Essential Services

Independent Research Solutions

(December 2001)

www.research.ofmdfmi.gov.uk/barriers.htm

Northern Ireland Census 2001

www.nisra.gov.uk/census/start.html

(Census outputs include 'themed' tables that allow the comparison of the social, economic and demographic position of minority ethnic people and households with other groups in addition to enabling a view on the diversity and experience of minority ethnic people compared to the majority population)

Travellers Accommodation Needs Assessment in Northern Ireland 2002

Northern Ireland Housing Executive

www.nihe.gov.uk/publications/reports/travellers2003.pdf

(While it is primarily about the accommodation needs of the Traveller community, the report contains additional social and demographic information on Travellers in Northern Ireland)

Annex 7

Possible Action Plan Proforma for the implementation of the Racial Equality Strategy

Strategic Aim	Action	Lead Department	How action contributes to Strategic Aim	Target date for completion	Output measure	Evaluation? Y/N If Yes, Results	Key contact details
<p>ELIMINATION OF RACIAL INEQUALITY To eliminate racism, racial inequality and unlawful racial discrimination and promote equality of opportunity in all aspects of life, including public life, for people of different ethnic backgrounds in Northern Ireland.</p>							
<p>EQUAL PROTECTION To combat racism and provide effective protection and redress against racism and racist crime.</p>							
<p>EQUALITY OF SERVICE PROVISION To ensure equality of opportunity for minority ethnic people in accessing and benefiting from all public services.</p>							

<p>PARTICIPATION To increase participation and a sense of “belonging” of people from minority ethnic backgrounds in public, political, economic, social and cultural life.</p>							
<p>DIALOGUE To promote dialogue between, and mutual understanding of, different faiths and cultural backgrounds, both long standing within Northern Ireland and recent arrivals to these shores, guided by overarching human rights norms.</p>							
<p>CAPACITY BUILDING To build capacity within minority ethnic communities to develop a vibrant and sustainable minority ethnic sector at both local and regional level and to help minority ethnic people to fulfil the Government’s aim of a shared future for Northern Ireland.</p>							

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