

NICEM (Northern Ireland)

**Employment, Employability and
Workplace Discrimination**

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Nicosia, 27th May 2015



About us



- **Northern Ireland Council for Ethnic Minorities**
- **NGO established in 1994. Race Relations Order (NI) 1997.**
- **Umbrella organisation – 28 BME-led member groups**
- **Grassroots engagement, action research, strategic advocacy**
- **From local to international**
- **Since 2012 – three regional offices**
- **Expand on NICEM footprint in regions**
- **Strong evidence base on priority issues**
- **Supporting and promoting leadership and engagement**

- 1. To raise awareness, with statutory and non-statutory organisations, of the institutional barriers to full participation in the labour market faced by Third Country Nationals**

- 1. To raise awareness, with employer and employee bodies, of workplace discrimination experienced by migrant workers.**

DEMOGRAPHIC

- **Census 2011, total usual resident population of Northern Ireland stood at just over 1.8 million residents.** About 4.5% of those residents (81,314) were born outside of the UK or the Republic of Ireland.
- **Residents born outside Northern Ireland accounted for 11.0% of the population (202,000) which was a 2.0% increase from 2001 (151, 000).**
- This increase was mainly driven by migration from people born within the 12 EU accession countries as figures indicated the largest two groups were Polish (19,700) and Lithuanian (7,300).
- **Third Country Nationals account for (25, 820).** Largest populations India (4,800), Philippines (2,900) and China (2223).

POLITICAL AND POLICY CONTEXT

- Pilot is informed by a review of key NI policy and strategy documents, NICE M policy and research work and EU thinking around integration.
- No agreed Racial Equality Strategy for Northern Ireland, with the draft strategy failing to include any specific strategic objectives to deliver the Northern Ireland Executive's national and international obligations to protect and fulfill the human rights of BME
- No attempt to address multiple discrimination or encourage strategic inter-departmental working at government policy level.

POLITICAL AND POLICY CONTEXT

- UK Social Integration Commission completed a piece of work in early 2014 with a focus on social grade, ethnicity and age. ‘Nationwide’ survey, no consideration of the Northern Ireland context.
- 2011 Joseph Rowntree Foundation report on the ‘Economic and Social Mobility of BME in NI’. BME are at a particular risk of in-work poverty and that ‘government policy and action are the largest influences on rates of poverty’.

POLITICAL AND POLICY CONTEXT

- **NICEM Evidence Base**
- NICEM have developed a strong evidence base in the last two years that has progressed grassroots issues to European and International policy level through action research with communities.
- These works provide a significant evidence base to inform the NICEM INTEGRO pilot project in an integrated way, identifying crosscutting issues that impact on the employment and employability concerns of TCN.

MAPPING INTEGRATION REALITY

- Voices for Change ‘Integration and a Sense of Belonging’
- Context of Racial Equality Strategy development 2014-24
- Key integration indicators: Employment, Education, Active Citizenship, Social Inclusion and welcoming society
- 650 responses. 48 responses TCN. 72 participants focus groups
- **Employment emerged as key theme for pilot project**
- Potential is lost - under-utilise their skills. Frustrating and de-motivating, de-skilled – expertise lost over time
- Urgent need to address the dearth and quality of affordable and accessible English language tuition.
- Fear and intimidation at work, discrimination, a lack of employment rights and poor and sometimes unsafe working conditions

MAPPING INTEGRATION REALITY

- **Recognition of qualifications and work experience, discrimination in workplace and glass ceiling for ethnic minorities**
- Stakeholder Exchange event with TCN. ENAR and peer review. *'Voices of Change'*, mapping integration reality in Northern Ireland: focus on key European Integration indicators identified through a 2011 Eurostat pilot and the Zaragoza Declaration. 1st INTEGRO roundtable consultation and Stakeholder Exchange events (Tasks 3.3/3.4).
- **Implementation actions:** three awareness-raising and participatory family-friendly community events; a national policy seminar, and mediation training. These concrete activities would be supported by outreach sessions with wider and difficult to reach stakeholders and coordinated across the three regional NICEM offices. They would be supported by a print and social media activities.

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STAKEHOLDER ADVISORY GROUP

- Inform and support the implementation of the project. The Advisory Group met three times (Nov 20th 2014, Jan 15th 2015 and May 20th 2015). Membership included:
- Department for Employment and Learning (Dpt for Employment and Learning)
- NIC-ICTU (Trade Union) Migrant Worker Project
- UNISON (Trade Union) Migrant Workers Project
- Race Equality Unit (Office of First Minister Deputy First Minister)
- Northern Ireland Strategic Migration Partnership (NISMP)
- Derry City Council Community Relations
- Newry and Mourne District Council
- Belfast City Council Good Relations
- GEMS NI (Employment and Employability interventions)

IMPLEMENTATION ON NORTHERN IRELAND PROJECT

- **L/Derry – 21st February 2015.** *'Glass Ceiling for Ethnic Minorities'*. 12 participants. Opening address from Deputy Mayor of Derry City. Speaker from NICEM.
- **Craigavon – 4th March 2015.** *'Working Conditions'*. 38 participants. Facilitated jointly by NICEM Project Officer, NIC-ICTU and UNISON.
- **Belfast – 7th March 2015.** *'Recognition of Qualifications and Work Experience'*. 42 participants. Opening address from Deputy Lord Mayor of Belfast. Speakers from NICEM, Volunteer Now and employer All State NI.
- **INTEGRO National Policy Seminar. Belfast 19th March 2015.** 29 attendees. Keynote Speaker, Dr Evelyn Collins CBE, Chief Executive of the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland and Speech from Mr John McKeown, Head of Employment Relations Policy and Legislation Branch with the Department for Employment and Learning.

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IMPLEMENTATION ON NORTHERN IRELAND PROJECT

- There were two parts to the seminar: *'Employment and Employability, a Policy Context'* and *'Setting a Context for Change'*.
- *How can the Department for Employment and Learning and the Equality Commission encourage employers to recognise the qualifications, work and voluntary experiences gained abroad as well as in UK and Ireland in line with the current employment and anti-discrimination law?*
- *What do you think the Government can do to address discrimination in the workplace, including glass ceiling for ethnic minorities? How can the Government promote positive action measures and/or programmes on English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) and vocational English for industry to open up equality access to training due to language barriers?*

IMPLEMENTATION ON NORTHERN IRELAND PROJECT

- **Mediation training. 21st and 22nd March 2015.** *'Challenging Racism, Promoting Rights'* was delivered in partnership with the NIC-Irish Congress of Trade Unions over two days for 19 community activists and migrant workers from Third Country National backgrounds across Northern Ireland.
- Outreach and dissemination continues with a wide range of harder to reach stakeholders. 112 additional stakeholders reached as of May 2015.

OUTCOMES

- **Outcome 1** At least 20 TCN community leaders and employer representatives from public and private sector will have accessed leadership and development opportunities that take a rights-based approach to address and challenge workplace discrimination.
- **Outcome 2** Improved awareness of INTEGRO project across national area and within wider community through regional office events. A minimum of 120 people reached through regional events (February-April 2015). *46 people reached through 1st roundtable (June 2014), with 85 people reached through 2nd roundtable (November 2014). 110 people were engaged through outreach and dissemination events and 140 through the implementation activities.* *In total, INTEGRO events had a reach of 381 participants.*

OUTCOMES

- **Outcome 3** Existing projects and community-led activities will be expanded and supported by the INTEGRO project. *Action Research and BME Parliament initiative. All Party Group for Ethnic Minority Communities at the NI Assembly. Forthcoming NICE M research into structures and levels of English language provision in NI.*
- **Outcome 4:** Opportunity for political engagement will be promoted by inviting local MLAs to roadshow events and closing policy seminar (February-April 2015). *A total of 4 political representatives actively engaged in the NICE M INTEGRO pilot project.*
- **Outcome 5:** Strong regionalised evidence base on employment and employability needs with recommendations that will inform regional events and national policy seminar. *A total of 650 respondents informed the Voices for Change report, with 42 participating in 1st Roundtable and 85 in 2nd Roundtable event.*

OUTCOMES

- **Outcome 6:** A minimum of 120 participants are better informed about their rights and employers about their obligations. *Total participants in the implementation events totaled 140 – with 19 of these TCN taking a specific two-day training on ‘Challenging Racism and Promoting Rights’.*
- **Outcome 7:** 4 key employment/employability issues are identified to take forward from regional events to national policy seminar.

OUTCOMES

- **Outcome 8:** 120 people attend national policy seminar. *29. This is not seen as a weakness of the project, the national policy seminar was preceded and followed by strong stakeholder engagement over a short time period (February and March 2015).*
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- **Outcome 9:** 2000 leaflets/postcards printed and distributed via dissemination plan to inform on INTEGRO and at least two specific employability issues related to regional and national events. *2000 leaflets and postcards were distributed in the lifetime of the project, focusing on 3 employment issues and linking directly to research for long term impact and engagement with the INTEGRO themes.*

CHALLENGES

- Political climate
- Funding Non-Government Organisations
- Employer Associations and private sector employers
- Monitoring data
- National contact point for integration

SUCSESSES

- Targeted focus on key employment themes
- Bottom up approach engagement and ownership
- Wide stakeholders base
- Social partner involvement/balance – trade unions
- Grassroots policy engagement
- Department for Employment and Learning and Equality Commission NI willingness to progress issues raised
- Momentum continues into INTEGRO forum

NEXT STEPS

- INTEGRO Forum: ESOL as designated Essential Skill & NARIC
- Continued work with private sector employers
- DEL, Equality Commission and Trade Union support: shared aims in tackling exploitation, reducing disadvantage, ESOL and rights awareness. Race Equality Academy and awareness raising on NARIC.

Discussion



Contact us



www.nicem.org.uk

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recommendations - DEL

- conduct research:
 - economic impact
 - mapping migrant workers' fit with needs of NI economy
 - identify progression and promotion barriers
- improve work related language tuition
- promote:
 - apprenticeship schemes
 - NARIC scheme
 - understanding of equivalency re qualification/voluntary experience
 - knowledge and protection of employment rights



recommendations - ECNI

- encourage positive action among employers
- support employers to improve recruitment practice
- raise awareness of employment rights and access to advice



recommendations - other

- DETI
 - develop entrepreneurship
- DE
 - Careers Service promote apprenticeships and vocational training
- OFMDFM
 - address BME childcare needs
- ICTU
 - strengthen trade union support
- NICEM
 - tools to assess value of voluntary experience gained abroad

