

Report of the

High Level Group on Traveller Issues

March 2006

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Executive Summary

Report of the High Level Group on Traveller Issues

This report summarises the current situation in relation to the provision of services to Travellers in the key areas of accommodation, health, education and employment. This Executive Summary gives the Conclusion and Recommendations of the High Level Group. These include general structural and strategic issues as well as matters specific to particular sectors.

The report examines the extent to which data on Travellers is available. The report also reviews the two local pilot projects operated in South Dublin County Council and Clare County Council. The objective of these projects was to bring all of the agencies working with Travellers together in partnership, to tackle local issues at a local level. It was envisaged that adopting an inter-agency approach would yield more focused results, whilst avoiding duplication of effort and resources. Effective consultation with local Travellers was essential to the success of these projects.

Priority Issues

- PRT 1** To promote a coordinated interagency approach to the delivery of services and supports for Travellers. Integrated Strategic Plans for service delivery should be drawn up for all cities and counties with Traveller populations, following the recommendations derived from the Pilot Projects described in this Report.
- PRT 2** To ensure effective consultation between Travellers, Traveller Organisations and statutory bodies to support the development of interagency cooperation and to facilitate improved communications, including conflict resolution, at national, regional and local level.
- PRT 3** To ensure that law enforcement is included as part of the proposed integrated approach.

General Conclusion and Recommendations

- GEN 1** The High Level Group considers that to achieve successful outcomes for Travellers there is a need for institutionalised inter-agency co-ordination at national and local level. The positive experience of the pilot projects initiated by the Group and managed by Clare County Council and Dublin South County Council serve as a useful template for replication on a wider scale. There is also a need for continuing commitment at senior political and official level. The High Level Group notes that already many of the building blocks for the successful delivery of integrated strategies are now in place. In the area of accommodation, 2005 marks the beginning of the second local authority Traveller accommodation programmes (2005–2008). Annual targets for Traveller accommodation will be set. Preparation of a Traveller Education Strategy is at an advanced stage. The first period of the Traveller Health Strategy ends this year. A sub-committee of the High Level Group, under the leadership of the Department of

Enterprise, Trade and Employment is working towards the preparation of an employment and training plan for Travellers.

GEN 2 The High Level Group recommends that a Traveller Data Collection Strategy is needed, to supply policy makers and service providers with the means of assessing need, future planning, bench-marking, target-setting and quantifying progress. The development of this Strategy should be embarked upon as soon as possible.

GEN 3 The High Level Group recommends that the structure of the Cabinet Committee on Social Inclusion, supported by the Senior Officials Group on Social Inclusion be used so that Ministers can monitor the implementation of strategies and plans for Travellers. The High Level Group is a useful forum for policy makers and service providers. It should continue in being as a sub-committee of the Senior Officials Group on Social Inclusion to

- Drive the implementation of the recommendations in this report across the various sectors at national and local level
- Monitor progress and seek to resolve any implementation difficulties which arise
- Report regularly on progress to the Senior Officials Group on Social Inclusion

GEN 4 The existing Monitoring Committee on the Implementation of the Recommendations of the Task Force on the Travelling Community, chaired by the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform and made up of Government Departments, social partners and Travellers organisations has provided a useful forum for consultation at national level. That Committee is charged with monitoring the implementation of the 1995 Report of the Task Force. However, there is a need to review the effectiveness of this consultation particularly in light of the various sectoral consultative mechanisms (such as the National Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee) established in the interim. The Monitoring Committee is aware of this situation and a review of it's role and structures is currently under way. The High Level Group will monitor progress on this review.

GEN 5 It is recommended that the High Level Group be maintained to oversee the implementation of the integrated strategies proposed in this Report, and to report periodically to the Cabinet Committee on Social Inclusion on progress made.

Pilot Projects

Conclusions and recommendations of the High Level Group (PLT)

PLT1 The High Level Group would first of all like to thank most sincerely the managers and staff of Clare and South Dublin county councils and the leaders and staff of the other agencies for their unstinting commitment to the delivery of better outcomes to Travellers in their areas. It is clear that without absolute commitment, firm leadership, staff and time resources, success in this endeavour cannot be achieved.

- PLT 2** The High Level Group considers that these two projects in particular have confirmed their belief that the solution to the problem of securing better outcomes for Travellers lies locally. It is only by engaging all the relevant agencies in a focused way on the needs of individual sites, estates and even families, that the multiple disadvantages that many Travellers face can be overcome.
- PLT 3** The High Level Group conclude that the strategic planning approach adopted in Clare, using the County Development Board structure, and making particular efforts to consult with the local Travellers themselves in a positive way is complementary to the systematic approach undertaken in South Dublin. All counties with a Traveller population should develop an inter-agency plan, in consultation with the local Travellers themselves. The implementation of such plans can profitably follow the site-focused approach piloted in South Dublin. These plans must set targets, costs, deadlines and expected outcomes. Specific responsibility for the implementation of each action under the plan must be assigned to the appropriate agency or agencies.
- PLT 4** The High Level Group recognises that meeting the accommodation needs of Travellers is essential. It is clear, however, that accommodation provision is not some golden key which when turned will unlock all the barriers to Traveller social integration. Travellers in permanent accommodation, like those in unauthorised sites, can also have very limited education achievements, suffer poor health, and be in long term unemployment.
- PLT 5** An integrated approach to the provision of services to Travellers occupying greenfield sites has been successfully piloted by South Dublin in the Kiltipper project. In it, the relevant agencies were able to line up services (GP, education etc.) for the Travellers in advance of their arrival. This model ought to be replicated nationwide. In addition, the project showed that the geographical integration of Traveller-specific housing with social and private housing can be achieved.
- PLT 6** The need to integrate a law enforcement response with other regulatory and remedial responses to sites in difficulty was the main lesson from the Oldcastle Park project. Without tackling lawlessness, remedial expenditure would be in vain. It is clear that the primary victims of illegality and criminality in the Traveller community are Travellers themselves. Travellers have as much right to a safe, clean and law-abiding living environment as everyone else. All agencies need to co-operate in dealing with anti-social behaviour. While An Garda Síochána should continue to work to develop good relations with the Traveller community and support, in a planned way, the responses of other agencies, the law enforcement aspects of the issue cannot be ignored.
- PLT 7** The local authorities, agencies and Government Departments themselves are in many cases ideally placed to provide training and employment opportunities to Travellers. All agencies should create work experience places for Travellers and take positive action to improve Traveller employment prospects. South Dublin County Council have researched best practice in devising selection and recruitment

procedures which would not be a deterrent to Travellers. These could be copied elsewhere.

- PLT 8** Consultation with Travellers has to be made more effective. It is necessary that Travellers be consulted so that their real needs are identified and addressed. However, consultation processes are not ends in themselves and consultation does not convey a veto over proposals. In both South Dublin and in Clare we have examples of effective consultation. In South Dublin, the design of service pods for the Oldcastle Park upgrading project was modified in the light of consultations with Travellers. In Clare, the use of local agencies supplying services to Travellers as a network for consultation with Travellers is innovative as is the Outreach programme to consult with Travellers in their homes.
- PLT 9** There is a need to have relevant data to monitor progress in service delivery for Travellers. The two Local Authorities have tried to address the deficiency in data for their own areas. Clare is planning to hold a local census of Travellers, using Travellers as enumerators. However, a national strategy on data in respect of Travellers is necessary if proper monitoring is to be achieved. National standards in terms of definitions, privacy, data protection and the use of administrative records are needed urgently.
- PLT 10** Integrated strategic plans for service delivery for Travellers should be drawn up in all counties.
- PLT 11** The County Development Board structure, which has a statutory basis and on which the most relevant agencies are represented, is the most appropriate planning mechanism for this task.
- PLT 12** The strategies should address needs in the following areas: health, education/training, income/employment/economy, accommodation, culture, law and order. They should also be closely aligned with local Traveller accommodation programmes.
- PLT 13** All relevant agencies, statutory and voluntary, should be involved. Full meaningful consultation with travellers in the area must be part of the process.
- PLT 14** The strategies must be based on meeting the identified needs of local Travellers
- PLT 15** Co-ordination and monitoring structures should be established as an integral part of strategic plans.
- PLT 16** A six month deadline for the drafting of the strategic plans should be set.
- PLT 17** The Institute of Public Administration could be well placed to assist agencies in this initiative.

- PLT 18** Periodic national seminars for exchanging experience and identifying best practice should be organised under the aegis of the Department of Justice, Equality & Law Reform.

Accommodation

Conclusions and Recommendations of the High Level Group (ACC)

- ACC 1** The High Level Group welcomes the fact that all housing authorities have adopted with minimum difficulty their Traveller Accommodation Programmes for 2005 to 2008. The implementation of these programmes should be geared towards ensuring that the current needs of Travellers are met within the timescale of the programmes and that additional needs arising during the programmes are dealt with as quickly as possible.
- ACC 2** The High Level Group also notes with satisfaction that the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government requires annual targets for the implementation of these programmes.
- ACC 3** The High Level Group considers that, in the light of experience with the South Dublin Kiltipper Project, all relevant agencies should assist the housing authority in planning and providing services for Traveller families moving into new accommodation.
- ACC 4** The High Level Group notes the increasing trend of Travellers accessing private rented accommodation and the significant number of Travellers who meet their own accommodation needs privately.
- ACC 5** The High Level Group would like to see more use being made of the Voluntary Housing model by Travellers and calls upon local authorities to work closely with the Irish Council for Social Housing and Traveller organisations, with a view to establishing a pilot scheme in this area.
- ACC 6** The High Level Group notes that improved provision of transient halting sites is a matter of priority and this is being studied by the NTACC

Employment

Conclusions and Recommendations of the High Level Group (EMP)

- EMP 1** Departments and State agencies should be directed to make work placement opportunities available for Travellers by the summer of 2006.
- EMP 2** The Department of Finance should develop within one year, in consultation with Traveller organisations and the Public Appointments Service, initiatives to assist Travellers to obtain public service employment. The public service trade unions should co-operate in facilitating positive action measures to secure public service employment for Travellers. Such initiatives could encompass work experience opportunities, building on the model provided by the Department of Communications, Marine and Natural Resources.
- EMP 3** Local Authorities, the Office of Public Works and other State employers of manual workers should pursue the possibility of employing Travellers

and engage with FAS in relation to appropriate training programmes in manual skills. The work of South Dublin County Council would be of particular relevance in this regard.

- EMP 4** Employer organisations should be approached with a view to developing initiatives for training, work experience and employment for Travellers. This should be done at local and national level. The Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment and FAS would have an important role in this regard.
- EMP 5** The work of the Sub-Group of the High Level Group on Employment and Training of Travellers will continue. It should be the focus for the development of interdepartmental co-operation on Traveller employment and training issues.
- EMP 6** The State, as employer, is capable of making a significant impact on Traveller employment.
- EMP 7** The Department of Communications, Marine and Natural Resources and South Dublin County Council are to be commended for their initiatives in providing training, work experience and employment opportunities for Travellers.
- EMP 8** At a time of full employment, there are significant economic sectors with labour shortages, such as construction, transport, tourism, childcare, health services, where Travellers have relevant skills.
- EMP 9** Travellers have had a traditional preference for self-employment and display entrepreneurial skills. The State agencies ought to develop programmes to enable Travellers to generate income from self employment in a manner compliant with regulations.
- EMP 10** Travellers are discouraged from seeking mainstream employment by discrimination, hostility and the fear of rejection.
- EMP 11** Apprehension about seeking employment is reinforced by the lack of personal experience of a wage economy among Travellers.

Education

Conclusions and Recommendations of the High Level Group (EDN)

- EDN 1** The High Level Group welcomes the drafting of the Traveller Education Strategy. A number of factors extraneous to the education system can have a positive or a negative impact on educational attainment. These factors include cultural issues, housing standards, health, childcare and parental employment status.
- EDN 2** The High Level Group notes that
- There are a considerable range of supports and expenditure provided for Traveller education over and above the mainstream provision in this area

- It is expected that a report with recommendations for a five year Traveller Education Strategy will be presented to the Minister for Education & Science early in 2006.

EDN 3 The High Level Group recommends that Education should be part of the proposed integrated approach at local level, developing links between schools, training and employment opportunities

EDN 4 The High Level Group recommends that in the implementation of the Traveller Education Strategy, procedures for inter agency co-operation between the various actors in the education sector on the one hand and local authorities, health authorities, FAS, the Gardai and other agencies be developed.

Health

Conclusions and Recommendations of the High Level Group (HLT)

HLT 1 The High Level Group welcomes the forthcoming review of the outcomes of the key actions in the National Traveller Health Strategy.

HLT 2 The High Level Group fully supports the conduct of the Travellers' All-Ireland Health Study which is an essential mapping exercise to properly inform the future direction of health service provision for Travellers.

HLT 3 The implications of Health Service Reform for the provision of services to Travellers should be kept under review.

Law Enforcement

Conclusions and Recommendations of the High Level Group (LAW)

LAW 1 The High Level Group recommends that a pilot Youth Diversion Project aimed at young Travellers be specifically funded to identify the reasons why general projects are less effective with Travellers, and to propose amendments.

LAW 2 The Group recommends that the Department of Justice, Equality & Law Reform should initiate a process with An Garda Síochána, and where appropriate, the Department of Social & Family Affairs, and in conjunction with the relevant local authorities to identify sites/locations to which access by State agencies is problematic and to develop suitable responses.

LAW 3 The Group recommends that law enforcement actions be integrated in county strategies. The active involvement of Travellers and other agencies should be sought.

LAW 4 The Group recommends that early intervention approaches to lawlessness on Traveller sites be developed to prevent the emergence of "no-go areas".

LAW 5 The Group welcomes the integrated approach focused on the prevention of fraud and abuse of the social welfare system. It endorses the need to ensure that Travellers are able to access the same level of

service as other members of the community without fear or intimidation either to themselves or to the service providers.

Community Development

Conclusions and Recommendations of the High Level Group (CDV)

CDV 1 The High Level Group consider that targeted supports for the Travelling Community have an important role in ensuring that the Traveller interests and concerns have a voice with Government agencies. Representative organisations have an important role in ensuring Traveller rights are listened to and respected. However, the Group believes that the role of these groups needs to be more than just an advocacy role, particularly in view of the significant state funding which they receive. The Group believes that in addition to their role as advocates of the Traveller viewpoint it is desirable that these organisations play a more explicit role in terms of service delivery to Travellers in areas such as education, training, employment or childcare. These groups should also play an important role in facilitating conflict resolution in regard to Traveller issues, both in terms of improving state agency understanding of Traveller issues and concerns, and in terms of ensuring Traveller understanding of state agency concerns. The High Level Group will consider how best to pursue these matters.

Data Issues

Conclusions and Recommendations of the High Level Group (DAT)

DAT 1 Improved data on travellers is a key requirement for the future development of policy and monitoring of progress. In particular, it will inform the identification of target outcomes across a range of areas, progress against which can be monitored over time.

DAT 2 At a strategic level work is continuing, under the guidance of the Senior Officials Group on Social Inclusion (SOGSI) and the National Statistics Board to develop a comprehensive framework for social and equality statistics to respond to the evolving data needs of policy-makers. The Office for Social Inclusion is also working to address data gaps, focusing particularly on vulnerable groups, in the context of the development of a data strategy to underpin the National Anti-Poverty Strategy (NAPS).

DAT 3 Therefore the High Level Group proposes that a subset of this work might involve the establishment of a small working group comprising the CSO, the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform, the Office for Social Inclusion, and other relevant Departments to develop a Travellers' Data Strategy. This should identify priority information gaps at national and local level and how to improve data availability in each case, drawing on existing and potential sources.

Introduction

Background – Task Force on the Travelling Community

Current policy on travellers dates from the Report of the Task Force on the Travelling Community published in 1995. The Task force was set up by the Government in 1993 and its report contained 341 recommendations on accommodation, health, education and training, employment, and development of a Traveller economy, relationships with the settled community, culture, discrimination, role of Traveller women, and the need for co-ordination and monitoring.

Traveller Monitoring Committee

In 1998, the Committee to Monitor and Co-ordinate the Implementation of the Recommendations of the Task Force on the Travelling Community was convened and chaired by the Department of Justice Equality and Law Reform with membership comprised of representatives from the Social Partners, Traveller organisations and relevant Government departments. The terms of reference of the Committee are:

- To co-ordinate and monitor the implementation of the recommendations on the Report of the Task Force on the Travelling Community which have been accepted by the Government or by Ministers;
- To draw up and submit to the Government from time to time, starting in 1999, a progress report on the implementation of the recommendations, including proposals for acceleration or prioritisation of implementation of recommendations;
- To re-examine recommendations where necessary in the light of changes in Government policy and practice and of legislative, demographic, social and economic change;
- To serve as a forum for consultation on current issues of national importance affecting the Travelling community.

The First Progress Report of the Committee was published in December 2000 and the main positive developments outlined in that Report are:

Equality

Legal measures to outlaw discrimination were introduced. The Employment Equality Act, 1998 provides legal protection against harassment and discrimination in the workplace on nine grounds, including membership of the Traveller community. The Equal Status Act, 2000 protects against harassment and discrimination outside of the workplace in the delivery of goods and services on the same nine grounds. Both Acts are supported by the establishment of the Equality Authority and the Office of the Director of Equality Investigations.

Awareness and Information

- To increase awareness and develop relationships between Travellers and the settled community, £900,000 was allocated by Government over a three-year period, 1999 - 2001, to fund an information campaign, "Citizen Traveller."
- The Report also acknowledges the ongoing work by Traveller organisations in building links with the settled community.

- Financial support was provided by the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform towards a Traveller Mediation Service operated by Pavee Point, Traveller Centre.

Accommodation

- A National Strategy for Traveller Accommodation was adopted in March 1996 followed by the establishment of a dedicated Traveller Accommodation Unit in the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government.
- To oversee the implementation of the National Strategy a National Traveller Accommodation Consultative Group was set up under the aegis of the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government. (In April, 1999, this Group was established on a statutory basis as the National Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee).
- The Housing (Traveller Accommodation) Act was enacted in 1998.
- Local Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committees were subsequently established in each local authority area.
- Early in 2000, local authorities adopted their five-year local Traveller accommodation plans.

Health

- A Traveller Health Advisory Committee was established in the Department of Health and Children in 1998.
- A Traveller Health Unit was established in each of the health boards and the Eastern Region Health Area.
- A Co-ordinating Committee on Traveller Education was formed in the Department of Education and Science in 1996.

Education

- An Advisory Committee on Traveller Education was established in 1998.
- The Visiting Teacher Service was expanded significantly during 1999 and 2000.
- Other developments in education which will have a positive impact on Travellers' education are: the coming into operation of the National Education Psychological Service in September, 1999; the publication of the White Paper on Early Education in December, 1999; the publication of the document entitled: "A New Deal - a Plan for Educational opportunities"; the Education (Welfare) Act, 1999 and the White Paper on Adult Education, published in August, 2000.

Community Development

The inclusion of Travellers in the Community Development Programme and in the Local Development Programme is also a significant development and it has allowed for the emergence of a stronger organisational infrastructure in the Traveller community.

However, the Government is concerned that the Task Force Committee found that, in general, improvements on the ground in the position of Travellers since the publication of the Task Force Report had been disappointing. More specifically, the Committee found that the monitoring of progress was difficult due to the lack of good quality data on the numbers of Travellers availing of services, such as, education and health services and main stream employment. The Committee highlighted the need

for reliable information, on an annual basis, on the numbers of Travellers at schools and colleges, in employment, accessing health services, or taking up accommodation in houses, if progress is to be measured. The Committee also identified a number of other issues affecting progress, such as, the difficulties in translating policy into action; the need to understand and accept the distinct culture and identity of Travellers; resources for Traveller organisations; developing the Traveller economy; difficulties in complying with the Control of Horses Act, 1996; and the gender dimension of policies affecting Travellers.

The Second Progress Report was published on 13 December 2005. The Report details progress made in respect of high level issues, together with an update on recommendations contained in the First Progress Report. It is evident that progress has been made in many areas since the publication of the First Report in 2001. However, the gap between the Travelling and settled communities' standard of living remains apparent.

High Level Group

A further initiative to increase focus on Traveller issues was taken when, in December, 2003 at the request of the Taoiseach, a High Level Group on Traveller issues was established under the aegis of the Cabinet Committee on Social Inclusion. Its remit is to ensure that the relevant statutory agencies involved in providing the full range of services to Travellers, would focus on improving the integrated practical delivery of such services.

The High Level Group which is chaired by Mr. Bob Browne, Assistant Secretary, Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform, comprises members of the Senior Officials' Group on Social Inclusion and other senior public servants with key responsibility for the delivery of Traveller specific services and is a short term initiative to improve outcomes. The Group has also explored best practice with a view to addressing the social exclusion which Travellers may experience. The first meeting of the HLG took place on 7 December, 2003 and the Group have met on 10 occasions since its establishment.

Presentations made to the Group concerned;

- Central Statistics Office publication Irish Traveller Community, Volume 8 which resulted from the 2002 Census – Gerry O'Hanlon, Director, CSO.
- Traveller Education - Seamus McLoughlin, Social Inclusion Unit Dept. Education
- Travellers and Employment Opportunities,
Deirdre McRory, Civil Service Equality Unit, Dept. Finance
Bryan Andrews, CEO Public Appointment Service
Sara White, Deputy Secretary, D/Communication, Marine & Natural Resources
Niall Crowley, Equality Authority
- Pilot Projects – County Managers, Clare County Council and County Manager, South Dublin Co. Council
- National Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee, led by its Chair, Mr. Chris Flood, and including representatives of Pavee Point Traveller Centre, the Irish Traveller Movement and the National Traveller Women's Forum

Main items discussed by the Group were:

- Pilot Projects and interagency approach to delivery of services
- Traveller Accommodation
- Social Economy
- Traveller Education
- Travellers and Employment Opportunities
- Barriers for Travellers accessing paid employment . An Interim Report was presented to the Cabinet Committee on Social Inclusion on 20 October, 2004.

The present report of the High Level Group gives details of the work done by local authorities - Clare County Council and South Dublin County Council – who lead two projects which operate under the aegis of the High Level Group with the aim of promoting an interagency approach to the planning and delivery of services at local level. Local authorities were selected to lead these projects because they have statutory responsibility for the provision of Traveller accommodation within their jurisdiction. This report concludes that the two pilot projects, in their complementary ways, together provide a template for inter-agency co-operation in the delivery of services to Travellers at local level.

The report highlights certain themes which, in the view of the High Level Group, require further consideration. It recommends concrete actions in the short term and proposes a structure for the co-ordination of the development and implementation of policy and services to Travellers at national level.

Cross-cutting issues

National Anti-Poverty Strategy

The National Anti-Poverty Strategy (NAPS) highlights the importance the Government places on tackling the levels of disadvantage faced by the situation of the Traveller community. Key commitments include improving the life experience of Travellers through the appropriate education, health and housing services and removing any remaining barriers to the full participation of members of the Traveller community in the work and social life of the country.

NAPS was reviewed under the national partnership agreement, the Programme for Prosperity and Fairness (PPF). The overall objective in relation to Travellers is to improve the life experience through the provision of appropriate education, health and accommodation services and to remove any remaining barriers to the full participation of members of the Traveller community in the work and social life of the country. The National Anti-Poverty Strategy set key targets for Travellers. These were :

- To reduce the gap in life expectancy between the Traveller community and the whole population by at least 10 per cent by 2007;
- To achieve age appropriate placement of all Travellers in primary schools by 2003;
- To increase the transfer rate of Travellers to post-primary schools to 95% by 2004; for each third-level institution to double the participation by mature disadvantaged students, including Travellers and refugees, by 2005 (within the 15% quota);

- All Traveller families identified in the local authority five-year Traveller accommodation programmes process as being in need of accommodation will be appropriately accommodated by the end of 2004.

This report of the High Level Group includes some updated information in relation to these issues.

Conclusion

The Government is aware that many Travellers feel that the Traveller community has suffered a number of high profile reversals such as the amendment of the public order legislation through the Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2002, the removal of discrimination cases involving licensed premises from the Equality Tribunal to the District Court and failure to achieve recognition as an ethnic minority. The Government considers that there is no linkage between these developments; that each of the legislative provisions referred to is justified in itself and that the original Task Force Report on the Travelling Community 1995 did not define Travellers as an ethnic minority. These issues should not overshadow the considerable progress which has been made as outlined above. In this regard the development of a Traveller Health Strategy and the imminent completion of the Report on Recommendations for a Traveller Education Strategy are particularly notable. Such developments represent an opportunity to drive forward Traveller issues in a comprehensive and strategic way in two key areas.

However, while this report shows that much has been achieved, there is much that still needs to be done to make Ireland a better place for Travellers. The report includes a set of conclusions and recommendations which will support the Government's ongoing efforts to meeting this challenge.

Part I

Background information

A special report on Travellers of the Census was published in 2004. This contained results relating to the Irish Traveller Community, covering the main demographic and socio-economic topics distinguished in the census.

The key trends were as follows:

Population

	Total Population	Total Pop. Births per 000 women aged 15-49	Travellers Population	Travellers Births per 000 women aged 15-49
1986	3.54 million	73	15,888	180
2002	3.92 million	54	23,681	116
% Change	10.6		49	
Annual % change	0.6		2.5	

Note: 1986 figures above based on the Report of the Task Force on the Travelling Community (1995) may not be entirely comparable to Census data.

The Traveller population has been increasing rapidly, at an average of 2.5% per annum compared with 0.6% for the population as a whole. Travellers now make up 0.6% of the total population, up from 0.45% in 1986. The fertility rate of Traveller women has declined by 35.5% between 1986 and 2002, a steeper fall than for women of child-bearing age generally (-26%). However, Traveller women still have more than twice the fertility rate of women generally.

Electoral Division	Number of Travellers	Percentage
Ballybeg South, Waterford City	84	31.7
Rathkeale Urban, Limerick County	331	24.3
Blanchardstown/Abbottstown, Fingal	502	19.8
Killoran, Co Galway	49	15.2
Killure, Co Galway	98	13.7

Location

Travellers are more urbanised than the population generally. Three quarters are located in urban areas, compared with 60% for the population as a whole. One half of all Travellers are located in Dublin, Cork, Limerick or Galway. Longford (1.8%), Galway city (1.6%) and Galway County (1.4%) have the highest proportions of Travellers in their populations. Kildare, Cork County and Waterford County (all 0.3%) have the lowest. The Electoral Divisions with the highest concentrations of Travellers were:

Electoral Division	Number of Travellers	Percentage
Rathkeale Urban, Co. Limerick	331	24.3
Blanchardstown/Abbotstown, Fingal	502	19.8
The Ward, Fingal	167	12.8
Priorswood B, Dublin City	373	11.3
Taghmon, Co. Westmeath	104	10.0

Two-thirds of the 3,440 Electoral Divisions in the country had no Travellers in 2002.

Accommodation

Of the 23,700 Travellers enumerated, 20,000 lived in exclusively Traveller households. 11,100 lived in permanent accommodation and 7,400 lived in temporary accommodation (both of these figures relate to private households).

Travellers classified by residence, Census 2002

Total Travellers enumerated	23,681
Travellers usually resident in private households containing Travellers only - permanent dwellings	11,098
Travellers usually resident in private households containing Travellers only - temporary dwellings	7,365
Travellers usually resident in private households containing Travellers only - type of dwelling not stated	1,512
Travellers usually resident in private households containing Travellers and others	2,439
Enumerated in communal establishments	739
Remainder = Enumerated visitor Travellers (not usually resident in private households or enumerated in communal establishments)	528

Travellers do not appear to be particularly mobile in relation to their usual place of residence, although the Census question did not allow for short term or seasonal mobility. The Census data indicated that 90% lived at the same address one year ago, 92 % of those in permanent accommodation and 88% for those in temporary accommodation. Of those who changed address 60% lived in the same county one year ago.

Age structure

Travellers	Population as a whole
Under 15 years: 42 %	Under 15 years: 20%
Aged 65+: 3.3%	Aged 65+: 11.1%
Median age: 18 years old	Median age: 32 years old

In other words one half of all Travellers are under 18¹.

Educational attainment

Two-thirds of Traveller respondents left education before the age of 15. This compares with 15% of the population in general. Two-thirds of Traveller respondents gave Primary education as the highest level of education which they attained. Only 1.8% of Travellers whose full-time education has ceased have a third level qualification compared to 24.7% of the population in general.

Employment characteristics.

The outstanding characteristics are the unemployment rates for Travellers of 73% for men and 63% for Traveller women. This compares to overall unemployment rates of 9% for men and 8% for women.

Central Government expenditure on Travellers

Travellers benefit from general social expenditure programmes, such as education, housing, health and social welfare programmes. The amount of such mainstream expenditure which is spent on Travellers is not known. There are, in addition to mainstream programmes, a number of Traveller-specific programmes across Government Departments. The following table shows estimated expenditure on such programmes in the current year.

Traveller Specific Funding Budget for 2005 **(Exclusive of mainstream funding e.g. welfare payments)**

Department of Health & Children	1,000,000
Department of Justice, Equality & Law Reform	622,000
Department of Social & Family Affairs	373,854
Department of Enterprise, Trade & Employment	6,532,000(approx)
Department of Community, Rural & Gaeltacht Affairs	1,817,710
Department of Environment, Heritage & Local Government	50,600,000 (Capital 45m Current 5.6m)
Department of Education & Science	47,500,000*
Total	108,445,564

* The Department of Education & Science figure covers the school year Sept 2003 – Aug 2004

¹ The actual median age is 18 years and some number of months and days (CSO)

Part II

Pilot projects

South Dublin County Council

South Dublin County according to the 2002 Census has 1,824 resident Travellers, an increase of 743, or 69%, from 1996. 61% of South Dublin's Traveller population live in 5 Electoral Districts, two of which are designated RAPID areas. The Traveller population represents 0.75% of the total population of the County. 120 Traveller families live in standard Council housing while 105 Traveller families are in permanent Traveller specific accommodation. 126 Traveller families are in temporary/emergency accommodation awaiting the development of permanent accommodation. The current Traveller Accommodation Programme 2005 - 2008 will permanently accommodate these Travellers. Three of these developments (at Hayden's Lane, Hazel Hill and St Aidan's) are in the process of being developed. The remainder will be developed within the life of the current programme.

Background to Inter-agency co-operation model

The establishment of the High Level Group on Traveller Issues provided an impetus for an integrated approach to be developed at local level. The County Development Board, bringing together all of the agencies and partners in the county, provided a means by which this national structure could be replicated at county level. Three of the key agencies from the Development Board - the Council, Gardai and the then South Western Area Health Board - conducted some initial research to establish the extent of services being provided to Travellers and specifically who in each agency had responsibility for this work. Leading on from this first piece of work the agencies then brought together the front-line staff from each of the agencies to debate the issue of Traveller specific services and to investigate the most appropriate means by which to provide these services in a more integrated manner to Travellers.

The County Development Board in considering the identification of a key target group upon which to focus used this work as the foundation for developing an integrated services model that would benefit a key disadvantaged target group. It was following the naming of Travellers as that grouping that the Traveller Services County Management Group was established. This grouping, comprising the senior management of the state agencies (also the representatives on the CDB) has as its key role the removal of any barriers to the delivery of integrated services. It feeds back to the County Development Board in progressing actions for the Boards Action Plan. In addition sub-structures comprising middle management and front-line staff of the agencies as well representatives of the Traveller Support Groups feed issues up to the County Management Group for resolution.

Establishing the Structures

The organisation of the seminar 'Accommodation and Beyond' was the first time that state agencies as a full grouping had an opportunity to discuss their experiences of the provision of services to Travellers and to identify key opportunities for co-operative working. Examples of approaches included the sharing of information; joint visits to Traveller families, time-lining the accommodation provision, identification of gaps in services etc.

Kiltipper Operational Group

The development of a new Traveller Group Housing Scheme at Kiltipper provided the impetus for the first of the action plans to be developed. The Kiltipper development is

a first for the Council. It is an integrated development, which has five Traveller bungalows bordered by social housing, affordable housing and private housing, providing a unique opportunity to build a community, which transcends traditional divides.

The transition of Travellers to their new accommodation coincided then with a full range of services being offered. This included registering with GPs, Dentists, visits to new schools and engagement with the Visiting Teachers. Pre-Tenancy Courses involving the Gardai and the Health Service were also provided.

This model is now being replicated for the development of all new accommodation and the emerging Tenant Liaison Groups working in conjunction with their neighbours and growing from the Pre-Tenancy Courses has been put in place. These Tenant Liaison Groups are also now being developed retrospectively in all existing Traveller Developments and will meet as the need arises.

Oldcastle Operational Group

An older site experiencing a range of complex challenges called for a different approach. The existing Tenant Liaison Committee was formalised with new agencies signing on to the approach. The illegal dumping that was impinging hugely on the families living there was tackled through the provision of CCTV. An Garda Síochána, after meeting with residents of the site, proposed a form of neighbourhood watch scheme for Oldcastle Park. New service units that had been under discussion for some time were re-designed with the residents. The service utility pods are in the process of being installed on a phased basis. There are a further six service pods to be provided and work will be completed on their installation by mid October. A number of site residents have expressed a wish to retain the existing units. An assessment of the condition of the units is being undertaken and where possible they will be refurbished.

A sub-committee of the Oldcastle Park Operational Group has been set up to examine educational initiatives operating in Labre Park (Dublin City Council) to determine if they could be of benefit in Oldcastle Park. Another sub-group has been set up to look at the issue of early school-leavers on this site. Clondalkin Travellers Development Group organised a seminar on Traveller customs and culture for the agency members of the Operational Group.

The Initiatives

South Dublin County Council in consultation with the County Management Group and the CDB have taken other innovative initiatives to improve environmental outcomes for Travellers. These include innovations in the provision of Traveller specific accommodation and related matters:

- Fast tracking the delivery process for Traveller accommodation using prefabricated methods
- Development of a Traveller Tenant Participation / Estate Management Initiative
- Delivery of Traveller Awareness and Anti Racism Training to all front line Council staff and to staff in areas where Travellers are employed

The Steering Group has now identified three further areas for priority action and has selected a lead agency for each as follows:

Juveniles Health Service Executive
Older Males South Dublin County Council
Illegal Money lending Department of Social and Family Affairs

South Dublin Traveller Employment and Training Initiative

The County Council investigated and put in place a template for affording employment and training opportunities for Travellers. The Council initiated a programme of creating direct employment opportunities which enabled on-the-job training and support. There has always been a difficulty in sourcing progression opportunities for Travellers once they undergo training and this initiative was piloting an alternative approach by placing the employment up-front and developing the training from this. The support of FAS in the development of this initiative was a key element to its success. In addition the close working relationship with County Dublin VEC was invaluable in identifying Travellers for the office based programme.

General Operative Programme

Travellers have been recruited to fill 10 General Operative posts in South Dublin. 8 of these are now completing the programme. Best practice in selection procedures was researched and consultations held with St Basil's Training Centre, Local Employment Services and Pavee Point to ensure that barriers to recruitment were removed. A new recruitment and selection procedure has been put in place. The Travellers worked two days per week with training being provided on the other three days. There are a number of Travellers in this programme who are performing to a high standard and for whom the establishment of their own small enterprises or sourcing permanent employment will not be difficult. This will then create vacancies for further Travellers to avail of this on-going programme.

Administration and Clerical Programme

Six Travellers have been employed in the mainstream administrative staff of the Council. All six employees received induction training and specific on-the-job training. These staff are working in areas such as IT, Customer Care, Libraries and HR. In addition two Travellers were employed as part of the summer student programme and are working as temporary clerical officers. Supports were provided to the staff and it was interesting to note that these supports were different to those normally offered and included such things as setting up bank accounts to enable a salary to be paid.

Education Initiatives

The Council is working with the other authorities in the field of education to improve and integrate service delivery. While a number of programmes including breakfast clubs, homework clubs, the School Completion Programme already operate within South Dublin schools, a new programme of initiatives is being developed.

A particular second level school, with a high Traveller population in one of the RAPID neighbourhoods has been identified as a pilot for particular interventions. Meetings with the Principal, Deputy Principal and Teachers have identified an environment that would benefit from and be open to a new approach.

It has been agreed to develop a programme that will combat e-exclusion among the pupils and also provide a programme to reduce some of the pressures on Traveller students to leave school. This programme will operate across all of the first year and not just for Traveller students. The primary objective is to create a school

environment which bring it the status of 'best school in Ireland' making this a school of choice for local parents rather than one where there are concerns from parents at the high Traveller population within the school. Work on this initiative has commenced.

South Dublin County Council will also work with the school, principal and staff to develop and expand other programmes aimed at assisting the retention and achievement levels of the students.

Operating Environment of Structures

The creation of the CDB structure at county level provided a forum for agencies to come together and identify ways of working that would bring about a significant change in the quality of life of residents of the County. The establishment of the Traveller Services County Management Group from that forum has been a powerful vehicle in driving the agenda of integrated Traveller Services. Meeting straight after each CDB meeting it enables issues raised by the Operational Groups to be dealt with quickly and has led to new initiatives being developed and fast-tracked.

The Council members working through the Strategic Policy Committees and the Corporate Policy Group have fully endorsed and supported the work of the Inter-Agency Co-operation model. This was demonstrated by the Elected Members unanimous adoption of the new Traveller Accommodation Programme 2005- 2008. In addition the first three developments from that Programme were carried unanimously in the Chamber on their first presentation ten weeks later.

Summary of Progress and Outcomes of South Dublin Approach

- High Level Group Established
- Research on Traveller Services being provided in the County
- Seminar 'Accommodation and Beyond' organised for front-line service providers
- Traveller Services County Management Group developed out of County Development Board Structure
- Operational Structures Put in Place
- Integrated Action Plan Developed for State Services in the County
- County Development Board designate Travellers as Key Target Group
- Service Plan in Place for Families moving to new permanent accommodation
- Model developed for transition to new housing and Tenant Liaison Committee Programme commences
- Employment Opportunities Identified within South Dublin County Council
- Training to Complement Employment developed by FAS
- Traveller Employees identified and Recruited and training commences

Clare County Council

County Strategic Planning model

In the case of Clare County Council, an alternative approach was adopted. This involved using the machinery of the County Development Board (CDB) structure (on which all relevant agencies are represented) to prepare a County-wide Integrated Strategy for Travellers. The Social Inclusion Measures Group (SIM) of the County Development Board was tasked with preparing the Integrated Strategy.

The outputs expected from the County Development Board approach are as follows:

- An Integrated Strategy at County Level
- Meaningful Performance Indicators to assess progress
- Clarity in relation to Inter-Agency responsibility
- An Operational Plan which will identify the actions required by each agency
- More active involvement of Voluntary sector.

An essential part of preparing the Strategy was the development of a Consultation Plan to ensure full, meaningful consultation with Travellers in Clare. Four discussion groups were organised around the 4 themes of:

- Health
- Education/Training
- Income/Employment
- Accommodation

Each discussion topic explored the questions of economy and culture.

A number of development agencies have 'captive' audiences where a total of approx. 100 Travellers are in regular contact. These agencies include: St. Joseph's Training Centre, Clarecare, Ennis West ADM, Ennis CDP, Shannon Family Resource Centre and Ennistymon Family Resource Centre. This network is being used to broadcast user-friendly information to outline to Travellers what is entailed in the process of developing a strategy. These agencies are organising a weekly one-hour discussion time slot for each of the four themes. The members of the working groups will attend and record the discussion, paying particular attention to new issues raised by Travellers which had not yet been picked up by the formal working groups.

An Outreach programme has been established to get the views of Travellers who are not regularly attending the various agencies and who are only accessible on sites, housing estates and temporary accommodation. This involves holding a total of 25 discussions/meetings with these Travellers in their own homes. In this way it is hoped to get the views of an additional 100 Travellers. Moreover, these meetings will also aim to build representational capacity among Travellers.

Information-gathering and Baselineing

Clare County Council considers it essential to document the current situation of Travellers in terms of education, health, accommodation and employment. In addition, it is considered important to benchmark other indicators of well-being such as cultural, social and family life, sense of control, participation in decision-making, access to information, uptake of services etc. Because of the small population of Travellers in Clare (715 individuals in 2002), a sample survey would be

unrepresentative, so a complete census will be undertaken. This work will be carried out by employing Travellers as enumerators under supervision and with training. This census will be carried out after the actions have been identified, with a view to providing baseline information relevant to the actions themselves, as well as other key socio-cultural information.

Traveller Parallel Working Groups

On completion of the discussion groups, four Traveller Working Groups were formed around the four themes. Travellers were drawn from either the Discussion Groups or the Outreach groups. They initially met on their own. Subsequently they were integrated into the main working groups to advance a final set of proposals to the Steering Group. Eight Travellers (two from each Working Group) joined the Steering Group at which a draft Strategy was completed and actions agreed. The Strategy was finalised by the relevant agencies.

The Strategy

The final document entitled "Strategy for the co-ordination of Public Services to the Traveller Community in Clare 2005 - 2008 - Strengthening the Integration of Settled and Travelling Communities" was published in June 2005. A copy of the Strategy is attached at Appendix II.

The Strategy sets out 5 strategic aims, as follows:

1. Strengthen the Culture of the Traveller Community
2. Strengthen the self-governance capacity of the Traveller Community
3. Enhance the Quality of Life of the Traveller Community
4. Identify and address gaps in the current provision of public services
5. Co-ordinate and monitor the delivery of the Strategy.

Under each aim are set out a number of objectives, 26 objectives in all. For each objective a number of Actions are listed and a Lead Agency is named for each Action. There are 90 separate Actions in total.

Summary of progress and outcomes in Clare approach

Progress

- Strategic Planning approach leading to an Integrated County Strategy.
- Use of existing planning structures e.g. CDB and SIMS.
- Consultation Plan to ensure full meaningful consultation with Travellers.
- Use of network of agencies in regular contact with Travellers to organise discussion forums.
- Outreach programme to consult with Travellers in their homes.
- Integration of Travellers into drafting process

Outcomes

- An Integrated Strategy at County Level
- Clear assignment of responsibility for Actions
- Active involvement of voluntary as well as statutory sector
- Priority given to community development and leadership within Traveller Community
- Monitoring structure

Pilot Projects

Conclusions and recommendations of the High Level Group (PLT)

- PLT1** The High Level Group would first of all like to thank most sincerely the managers and staff of Clare and South Dublin county councils and the leaders and staff of the other agencies for their unstinting commitment to the delivery of better outcomes to Travellers in their areas. It is clear that without absolute commitment, firm leadership, staff and time resources, success in this endeavour cannot be achieved.
- PLT2** The High Level Group considers that these two projects in particular have confirmed their belief that the solution to the problem of securing better outcomes for Travellers lies locally. It is only by engaging all the relevant agencies in a focused way on the needs of individual sites, estates and even families, that the multiple disadvantages that many Travellers face can be overcome.
- PLT3** The High Level Group conclude that the strategic planning approach adopted in Clare, using the County Development Board structure, and making particular efforts to consult with the local Travellers themselves in a positive way is complementary to the systematic approach undertaken in South Dublin. All counties with a Traveller population should develop an inter-agency plan, in consultation with the local Travellers themselves. The implementation of such plans can profitably follow the site-focused approach piloted in South Dublin. These plans must set targets, costs, deadlines and expected outcomes. Specific responsibility for the implementation of each action under the plan must be assigned to the appropriate agency or agencies.
- PLT4** The High Level Group recognises that meeting the accommodation needs of Travellers is essential. It is clear, however, that accommodation provision is not some golden key which when turned will unlock all the barriers to Traveller social integration. Travellers in permanent accommodation, like those in unauthorised sites, can also have very limited education achievements, suffer poor health, and be in long term unemployment.
- PLT5** An integrated approach to the provision of services to Travellers occupying greenfield sites has been successfully piloted by South Dublin in the Kiltipper project. In it, the relevant agencies were able to line up services (GP, education etc.) for the Travellers in advance of their arrival. This model ought to be replicated nationwide. In addition, the project showed that the geographical integration of Traveller-specific housing with social and private housing can be achieved.
- PLT6** The need to integrate a law enforcement response with other regulatory and remedial responses to sites in difficulty was the main lesson from the Oldcastle Park project. Without tackling

lawlessness, remedial expenditure would be in vain. It is clear that the primary victims of illegality and criminality in the Traveller community are Travellers themselves. Travellers have as much right to a safe, clean and law-abiding living environment as everyone else. All agencies need to co-operate in dealing with anti-social behaviour. While An Garda Síochána should continue to work to develop good relations with the Traveller community and support, in a planned way, the responses of other agencies, the law enforcement aspects of the issue cannot be ignored.

- PLT 7** The local authorities, agencies and Government Departments themselves are in many cases ideally placed to provide training and employment opportunities to Travellers. All agencies should create work experience places for Travellers and take positive action to improve Traveller employment prospects. South Dublin County Council have researched best practice in devising selection and recruitment procedures which would not be a deterrent to Travellers. These could be copied elsewhere.
- PLT 8** Consultation with Travellers has to be made more effective. It is necessary that Travellers be consulted so that their real needs are identified and addressed. However, consultation processes are not ends in themselves and consultation does not convey a veto over proposals. In both South Dublin and in Clare we have examples of effective consultation. In South Dublin, the design of service pods for the Oldcastle Park upgrading project was modified in the light of consultations with Travellers. In Clare, the use of local agencies supplying services to Travellers as a network for consultation with Travellers is innovative as is the Outreach programme to consult with Travellers in their homes.
- PLT 9** There is a need to have relevant data to monitor progress in service delivery for Travellers. The two Local Authorities have tried to address the deficiency in data for their own areas. Clare is planning to hold a local census of Travellers, using Travellers as enumerators. However, a national strategy on data in respect of Travellers is necessary if proper monitoring is to be achieved. National standards in terms of definitions, privacy, data protection and the use of administrative records are needed urgently.
- PLT 10** Integrated strategic plans for service delivery for Travellers should be drawn up in all counties.
- PLT 11** The County Development Board structure, which has a statutory basis and on which the most relevant agencies are represented, is the most appropriate planning mechanism for this task.
- PLT 12** The strategies should address needs in the following areas: health, education/training, income/employment/economy, accommodation, culture, law and order. They should also be closely aligned with local Traveller accommodation programmes.

- PLT 13*** All relevant agencies, statutory and voluntary, should be involved. Full meaningful consultation with travellers in the area must be part of the process.
- PLT 14*** The strategies must be based on meeting the identified needs of local Travellers
- PLT 15*** Co-ordination and monitoring structures should be established as an integral part of strategic plans.
- PLT 16*** A six month deadline for the drafting of the strategic plans should be set.
- PLT 17*** The Institute of Public Administration could be well placed to assist agencies in this initiative.
- PLT 18*** Periodic national seminars for exchanging experience and identifying best practice should be organised under the aegis of the Department of Justice, Equality & Law Reform.

Part III

Sectoral developments

Traveller accommodation

Following the publication of the Task Force on the Travelling Community in 1995 the then Minister for the Environment published the strategy for implementing the reports recommendations as they affected accommodation. The legislative and administrative framework was then put in place culminating in the enactment of the Housing (Traveller Accommodation) Act 1998. Accommodation continued to be provided for Travellers by, and with the assistance of, local authorities in the period 1995 to 2000. During this time a total of 516 additional families were accommodated

The Housing (Traveller Accommodation) Act 1998 sets out Government policy for Traveller accommodation. It requires housing authorities to adopt as respects their functional area an accommodation programme, and to specify in the accommodation programme the accommodation needs of Travellers and the provision of accommodation required to address those needs. Under the 1998 Act local authorities were required to adopt Traveller accommodation programmes to cover the period 2000 to 2004.

The annual 2004 count of Traveller families showed a total of 6,991 Traveller families in the State, an increase of 1,433 families from 5,558 at the start of the programmes. Over 5,100 families now reside in accommodation provided by, or with the assistance, of local authorities.

The key Traveller accommodation achievements at the end of the first local authority Traveller accommodation programmes are:

- a reduction of over 50% in the number of families on unauthorised sites - down by 606 families from the high of 1,207 at the inception of the programme to 601 at the end of 2004.
- 1,371 additional families provided with permanent, secure accommodation.
- 486 families have accessed private rented accommodation.
- An estimated 464 families living in houses provided from their own resources.
- A reduction in the number of Travellers sharing accommodation, down from 598 to 546 during 2004.

All local authorities have adopted new Traveller accommodation programmes to cover the period 2005-2008. For the first time, these programmes contain specific annual targets for the provision of Traveller accommodation. This will facilitate monitoring of progress and early identification of problems arising.

During this period (2000 to 2004) a total of €130 million was invested in the provision of new Traveller specific accommodation and in refurbishing existing Traveller specific accommodation. The capital allocation for Traveller specific accommodation for 2005 is €45million. This is a significant increase on the €35.7 million spent in 2004. This allocation is in addition to the expenditure on standard local authority and voluntary sector accommodation in which Traveller families are also accommodated.

The National Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee (NTACC) is the statutory advisory body on Traveller accommodation set up to advise the Minister in relation to any general matter concerning accommodation for Travellers, and any matter referred to it by the Minister. It has 12 members, four of whom are Travellers or Traveller representatives. It carried out a review of the operation of the Housing (Traveller Accommodation) Act 1998. The NTACC made 36 recommendations, all of which were accepted by the Minister.

The Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government expects that the rate of progress made under the first Traveller accommodation programmes (2000–2004) will be improved on in the new local authority programmes (2005–2008). The relevant Minister has identified a number of issues to be addressed under the new programmes and has taken steps to ensure implementation of the recommendations contained in the NTACC report. The full list of recommendations is attached at Appendix I. The main recommendations are:

- Annual targets for Traveller accommodation
- Better participation and consultation
- Improved operation of Local Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committees
- Better co-ordination with social housing
- Improved provision of Transient sites

It is expected that the implementation of these recommendations as well as the continuing high level of investment in the provision of accommodation for Travellers, will improve the rate of accommodation provision.

The Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government provides further assistance to local authorities by recouping 90% of the cost to local authorities of employing housing welfare officers and Social Workers who provide services to Travellers in relation to accommodation issues. In addition, subject to certain limits, support is provided to local authorities in providing caretakers for Traveller specific accommodation and for expenditure on routine management and maintenance.

Provision of Transient Sites

There has been no published study of Traveller nomadism, at least since the Task Force report was published, on which to base current policies. It is clear that nomadism continues to be practiced by, at the very least, sections of the Traveller community. Provision therefore needs to be made for transient accommodation. The Minister for Housing and Urban Renewal has stated that he wishes to see progress on this issue under the new programmes and the NTACC have set up a working group to advise on practical approaches to addressing the issue. The High Level Group will monitor progress on this issue.

Accommodation

Conclusions and Recommendations of the High Level Group (ACC)

- ACC 1** The High Level Group welcomes the fact that all housing authorities have adopted with minimum difficulty their Traveller Accommodation Programmes for 2005 to 2008. The implementation of these programmes should be geared towards ensuring that the current needs of Travellers are met within the

timescale of the programmes and that additional needs arising during the programmes are dealt with as quickly as possible.

- ACC 2** The High Level Group also notes with satisfaction that the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government requires annual targets for the implementation of these programmes.
- ACC 3** The High Level Group considers that, in the light of experience with the South Dublin Kiltipper Project, all relevant agencies should assist the housing authority in planning and providing services for Traveller families moving into new accommodation.
- ACC 4** The High Level Group notes the increasing trend of Travellers accessing private rented accommodation and the significant number of Travellers who meet their own accommodation needs privately.
- ACC 5** The High Level Group would like to see more use being made of the Voluntary Housing model by Travellers and calls upon local authorities to work closely with the Irish Council for Social Housing and Traveller organisations, with a view to establishing a pilot scheme in this area.
- ACC 6** The High Level Group notes that improved provision of transient halting sites is a matter of priority and this is being studied by the NTACC.

Traveller Employment

Initiatives to expand employment prospects for Travellers

The 2002 Census indicates that 2,257 (30%) of Irish Travellers are employed; compared with 5,144 (70%) who are unemployed. This latter category consists of 823 Travellers seeking work for the first time, and 4,321 seeking subsequent employment. In addition, research and studies into the economic activities of the Travellers' culture established that there is an emphasis on income generation, rather than wage employment. This preference for self-employment allows members of the Traveller Community to engage in economic activity in a flexible manner, and avoid potentially discriminatory employee-manager-other employee relationship. However, with increasing regulation and enforcement in work areas associated with Travellers [e.g. recycling, waste disposal, horse trading], opportunities to continue self employment have become more difficult. Priority needs to be given to sourcing opportunities for mainstream employment, in both the private and public sector, in addition to self employment opportunities for Travellers. Additionally, general vocational training and employment services need to adapt and become more accessible to unemployed Travellers, with a view to facilitating their access to the labour market on an equal footing with the rest of citizens.

Since 1994, Pavee Point, in partnership with the HSE (formerly Eastern Health Board), has helped develop a primary health care project for Travellers. Part of this project has been to train Traveller women to work as health care workers in their own communities. Currently 40 Primary Health Care for Travellers Projects are run nationally, with 15 participants in each programme. Training varies from three to five years, and an average 9 participants are placed into health related areas as a result of the programme. This project is currently funded through the HSE, and FAS pays the Training Allowance. Additionally, FAS funds 5 Community Employment Schemes focused exclusively on the needs of Members of the Traveller Community and small number of Travellers are employed under the Social Economy Programme.

A number of initiatives based in Galway City involve a number of community, voluntary and statutory organisations including FÁS, The Galway City Partnership, Galway City LESN, Galway City Council, Western Health Board, Department of Social and Family Affairs, the Galway Travellers Support Group. For example, the Acceder Project which is funded by FÁS, is modelled on a successful approach in Spain and utilises coaching and mentoring in a very creative way and has the objective of facilitating Travellers access to mainstream training and employment through the implementation of a number of adapted and integrated employment mechanisms. The initial target population will be the 18 to 21 year old males. The pilot which will last 18 to 20 months and plans to engage with 20 to 25 participants with the target of progressing some 60% to the active labour market.

Because of increasing regulation and formalisation of the Irish economy it is getting difficult for Travellers to maintain their involvement in economic activities traditionally associated with the Traveller economy. Efforts are being made to build on the current skills and traditional entrepreneurship of the Traveller community and to eliminate the barriers that hold them back from fully participating in the Irish Labour Market. To achieve this, an additional €0.5m has been allocated in the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment Estimates for 2005 to provide funding for Traveller Initiatives. This fund will be directed at a number of initiatives aimed at supporting training and employment for Travellers.

Travellers' organisations, and research by the Equality Authority, have identified a number of barriers or disincentives relevant to Traveller's access to the labour market. These include:

- **The educational standard** which is required for many of the jobs in the workplace places Travellers at a disadvantage in accessing organised employment.
- **Lack of role models** within the Travellers who are engaged as employees in the public or private sectors and who have successfully completed the second/third level education cycle.
- **Legal and Infrastructure restrictions:** Traditionally there has been a cultural preference for self employment among the Traveller community. Increasing legal and infrastructure restrictions are making it increasingly difficult for Travellers to continue in this area of economic activity.
- **Opportunity Cost of employment:** there is a need to balance the costs of participation in paid employment versus self employment/unemployment
- **Discrimination in the Labour Market**
- **Recognition of the Travellers Culture** including culturally appropriate programme content and increased diversity training among providers and employers.
- **Appropriate, Flexible and Accredited Training Provision**
- **Mediated or Supported Transition from Training into Employment**

In line with these concerns a series of additional measures are being explored by the Department of Enterprise, Trade & Employment to enhance their employment prospects. To facilitate this process, a Sub-Group of the High Level Group on Traveller Issues on Employment and Training of Travellers was established in April, 2005 with a remit to develop an Employment and Training Plan for Travellers, to generate activity in this area and encourage greater co-operation among the relevant statutory agencies in the implementation of the initiatives arising from the Plan. The Sub-Group which is chaired by the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment comprises of representatives of relevant Government Departments and FÁS.

Concurrent with this process, a review of FAS provision for Travellers will be conducted later this year. Specifically, the study will involve a consumer survey of Travellers who have participated, and are currently participating, on FAS programmes. This process will also involve consultation with organisations representative of Travellers. Arising from the findings, specific interventions and supports for Travellers will be identified and enacted.

The Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment wants to provide Travellers with additional opportunities to attain professional qualifications and access to work contracts within the Local Government contracting system so that they can compete on an equal footing in the area of waste management and environmental works, both areas in which Travellers have extensive experience and knowledge.

Discussions have taken place with a number of Local Authorities to examine progress to date and to plan for a greater involvement of Travellers in the Waste Management Cycle, Maintenance of Traveller Sites and Contracted Environmental Works.

Travellers and Public Service Employment Opportunities

In recent years, the Civil Service has been involved in a number of initiatives relating to the recruitment/work placement opportunities for Travellers in the Civil Service. In 2002 the Equality Unit, D/Finance along with the Civil Service Commission [renamed the Public Appointment Service] were involved with a number of other Departments and Pavee Point Travellers Centre in a project to recruit Travellers to the Clerical Officer grade in the Civil Service. Five candidates sat the exam – none were successful. While the method of entry was via the standard competitive exam for the grade, a number of initiatives were put in place to encourage and familiarise potential candidates from the Traveller community to participate in the exam. Pavee Point assisted in identifying and encouraging potential candidates, information events, familiarisation visits to Civil Service offices with an opportunity to talk to COs about their jobs, assistance in preparing for the exam and a concession was given to enable Traveller candidates to sit the exam in the Pavee Point Travellers Centre. The Departments involved in the project group gave a commitment to employ successful candidates and provide the necessary job training. There was no follow up to this initiative due to lack of manpower resources in the Equality Unit at the time. The D/Finance would be interested in any future similar initiatives.

The Public Appointment Service was involved with the D/Education and Science in its Star Pupil Programme which assists young Travellers with CV and interview preparation along with work experience placements. Following the last programme all trainees found employment including one who was recruited into a fulltime mainstream position with South Dublin County Council. It is noted that while preparation is the key to accessing employment opportunities, it is not sufficient on its own. Mentoring is vital to provide guidance in the job and progression up through the grades. The Public Appointment Service is willing to investigate the possibility of marketing a recruitment drive among Travellers in preparation for selected future exams.

The Department of Communications, Marine and Natural Resources operated a work placement scheme for three Travellers and others at CO level for a number of weeks in the summer of 2004. Pavee Point identified Travellers who were interested in participating in the work placement scheme. The D/CMNR strongly endorses the placement programme as a positive opportunity for increasing the confidence and capacity of the Traveller trainees to engage in work in a realistic work environment. A similar scheme operated for three Travellers in 2005.

Given the low rates of completion at primary and second level education by Travellers, it is unlikely that a significant number of Travellers will be equipped to succeed at the standard competitive Civil Service entry exams for some time without special assistance. Providing work experience through work placement schemes may be one practical route to employment opportunities generally and breaking down the barriers to participation in the labour market. Term time replacements are currently being covered mainly by students and may offer another source of opportunities. Entry through the Services Officer grade should also be considered as an option for accessing work experience in the Civil Service.

The Minister for Finance has considered these issues and has stated that his Department would be happy to work with the representative bodies of Travellers to put in place a selection process to comply with the requirements of the Civil Service recruitment procedures. The limited success of the recruitment campaign to the Civil Service for Travellers organised in 2002 highlighted the need for proper planning and co-ordination with interested parties to ensure successful outcomes. The Minister for Finance will put the issue of mainstream civil service employment for Travellers on the Agenda for discussion at the Equality sub-committee of the Civil Service General Council. On the question of temporary placements, the Minister for Finance would be happy to go directly to Departments with any proposals for summer 2006 that emerge from the consultation process and that can be incorporated into the current arrangements for temporary placements in the Civil Service.

It is also apparent that there is significant potential for local authorities and other public bodies to provide enhanced employment opportunities for Travellers. The experience of Dublin South County Council indicates that this potential exists both for manual operative jobs and administrative posts.

Discrimination in the labour market.

The Equality Authority is of the view that discrimination is a significant factor for Travellers in the workplace. While 2% of the casework under the Employment Equality legislation relates to the Traveller ground, anecdotal evidence suggests that the figure is significantly higher. They noted that this is in contrast to the number of cases taken by Travellers under the Equal Status Act. A possible explanation may be that Travellers may feel they have nothing to be gained by taking a case. If there are work difficulties, many may find it easier to walk away. The lack of reliable information regarding Travellers in the workplace makes it difficult to monitor workplace incidents. The 2002 Census now provides a baseline to monitor Traveller employment in the future.

Private Sector Employment Opportunities

The focus needs to concentrate where gains can be made most quickly, such as the Public Sector - Travellers are already employed in the Community Sector in community development work. However, the importance of the Private sector cannot be underestimated particularly in areas which are expanding and where Travellers are already associated with - such as waste disposal, landscaping and cobble locking. It is possible that conditions need to be created which would encourage Travellers to engage in the first place. Important bridges into mainstream employment are through apprenticeships and work experience. The Employment Equality Act 1998 - 2004 is key to overcoming discrimination for Travellers in the workplace in that it allows Positive Action.

The widely acknowledged labour supply issues which affect sectors such as construction transport, tourism, childcare and health care present a further opportunity for broadening employment opportunities for Travellers. Therefore dialogue should be pursued at national level with IBEC, CIF and other employer bodies to identify options for achievable progress. There should be a similar dialogue with Chambers of Commerce and other local stakeholders to identify opportunities at local level so as to ensure proper follow up from the national discussions.

Employment

Conclusions and Recommendations of the High Level Group (EMP)

- EMP 1** Departments and State agencies should be directed to make work placement opportunities available for Travellers by the summer of 2006.
- EMP 2** The Department of Finance should develop within one year, in consultation with Traveller organisations and the Public Appointments Service, initiatives to assist Travellers to obtain public service employment. The public service trade unions should co-operate in facilitating positive action measures to secure public service employment for Travellers. Such initiatives could encompass work experience opportunities, building on the model provided by the Department of Communications, Marine and Natural Resources.
- EMP 3** Local Authorities, the Office of Public Works and other State employers of manual workers should pursue the possibility of employing Travellers and engage with FAS in relation to appropriate training programmes in manual skills. The work of South Dublin County Council would be of particular relevance in this regard.
- EMP 4** Employer organisations should be approached with a view to developing initiatives for training, work experience and employment for Travellers. This should be done at local and national level. The Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment and FAS would have an important role in this regard.
- EMP 5** The work of the Sub-Group of the High Level Group on Employment and Training of Travellers will continue. It should be the focus for the development of interdepartmental co-operation on Traveller employment and training issues.
- EMP 6** The State, as employer, is capable of making a significant impact on Traveller employment.
- EMP 7** The Department of Communications, Marine and Natural Resources and South Dublin County Council are to be commended for their initiatives in providing training, work experience and employment opportunities for Travellers.
- EMP 8** At a time of full employment, there are significant economic sectors with labour shortages, such as construction, transport, tourism, childcare, health services, where Travellers have relevant skills.
- EMP 9** Travellers have had a traditional preference for self-employment and display entrepreneurial skills. The State agencies ought to develop programmes to enable Travellers to generate income from self employment in a manner compliant with regulations.

- EMP 10*** Travellers are discouraged from seeking mainstream employment by discrimination, hostility and the fear of rejection.
- EMP 11*** Apprehension about seeking employment is reinforced by the lack of personal experience of a wage economy among Travellers.

Traveller Education

Traveller Education Strategy

Work commenced in autumn 2003 on developing a five-year Traveller Education Strategy. An external expert was appointed to lead the process. A Joint Working Group drawn from the Educational Disadvantage Committee and the Advisory Committee on Traveller Education was established. The draft Strategy from the Joint Working Group is expected to be finalised by autumn 2005. On completion the draft Strategy will be submitted to the Department's Advisory Committee on Traveller Education and to the Educational Disadvantage Committee which is responsible for advising on broader issues of educational disadvantage many of which are relevant to Travellers. Subject to approval, it will be presented to the Minister as a submission of the Educational Disadvantage Committee early in 2006.

The main focus of the Traveller Education Strategy exercise has been to review/evaluate existing activities, the wide range of inputs, the quality of outcomes and the experience of Traveller learners within the education system from pre-school through to adult and further education. The recommendations in the Report of the Task Force on the Travelling Community (1995) and the First Progress Report (2000) have been considered by the Joint Working Group.

To further inform the process experts from different relevant areas have made presentations to the Joint Working Group; reports written on different aspects of Traveller education have been evaluated - for example, the National Evaluation Report on Pre-Schools for Travellers (2003), the Guidelines on Traveller Education in Primary Schools and also in Second-level schools (2002). The Department's Inspectorate has briefed the Joint Working Group on its Survey of Traveller Education Provision. The report of this survey is due in early 2006. Over 40 public submissions have been received as has a Report on the Consultations with Traveller Learners and Parents which presents the findings of six consultation seminars (five regional and one national). These six seminars were arranged by Traveller organisations.

The Traveller Education Strategy will provide recommendations on the way forward in relation to Traveller education. One of the core issues it is addressing relates to how existing targeted educational supports for Traveller children might best be integrated, on a phased basis, into an enhanced mainstream provision. It is expected that the Traveller Education Strategy will be submitted to the Minister for Education and Science early in 2006.

A senior official from that Department has been appointed as the designated High Level Official for Traveller education.

Other Policy documents

The Department of Education and Science published a new DEIS Action Plan for Educational Inclusion in May, 2005. Early school leaving was considered, amongst many issues, in the development of the Action Plan. The Action Plan will provide a standardised system for identifying levels of disadvantage. It will also put in place a new integrated School Support Programme that will bring together and build upon some ten existing policy interventions and initiatives for schools and school communities with a concentrated level of disadvantage.

The new Action Plan represents a shift in emphasis away from individual initiatives, each addressing a particular aspect of educational disadvantage, with the new plan adopting a multi-faceted and more integrated approach. This is the first time that an integrated educational inclusion strategy has been developed for 3 – 18 year olds in Ireland.

About 600 primary and 150 second level schools will be included in the new School Support Programme. The Action Plan will be implemented on a phased basis over the next 5 years and will involve an additional annual investment of some €40m on full implementation. It will also involve the creation of about 300 additional posts across the education system generally.

The Inspectorate of the Department of Education and Science undertook a Survey of Traveller Education Provision during 2004. It is expected that the report of the survey will be published in early 2006.

The recommendations of the Inspectorate's Survey along with the Action Plan and the recommendations for the Traveller Education Strategy will all complement each other in suggesting the best way forward for Traveller education provision.

Current situation in the provision of services to Travellers

In the Department of Education and Science the Social Inclusion Division is responsible for improving co-ordination of service delivery by various sections of the Department on all aspects of Traveller education provision. A designated High Level Official in the Social Inclusion Division leads the coordination of service delivery.

A National Education Officer for Travellers was appointed in 1992. The National Officer identifies the educational needs of Travellers in pre-schools, primary and post-primary schools, provides advice on policy and educational provision and is actively involved in the implementation of the Department's policy on integrated provision. On a day-to-day basis the National Officer works very closely with the Visiting Teacher Service for Travellers and with the High Level Official.

Visiting Teacher Service for Traveller Education

There are forty Visiting Teacher posts for Traveller Education. Visiting teachers are located throughout the country and are working with approximately 8,000 Traveller children in 2004/2005 in pre-schools, primary and post-primary schools. In 1995 there were only eleven but this number has increased very significantly as recommended in the 1995 Task Force report. The Visiting Teacher Service through its knowledge, experience and understanding of Travellers and their issues with education, seeks to provide opportunities for Traveller parents, their children and schools, to engage in a process of development that maximises participation and attainment levels and promotes an intercultural education for all. Visiting teachers work collaboratively with all the education partners to facilitate the realisation of achieving equality of access, equality of participation, equality of educational status and equality of outcomes for Traveller learners.

Pre-schools for Travellers

There are 48 pre-schools for Travellers located throughout the country. In addition some Traveller children attend community childcare facilities and also Early Start pre-schools. The Department of Education and Science carried out a National Evaluation of the pre-schools for Travellers. The report of the evaluation was published in 2003. The report provides recommendations on how the early childhood education of very

young Travellers can be improved. Attendance at pre-school gives the young children a valuable educational experience and prepares them for primary education.

Primary and post-primary education

It is important to stress that Traveller students enrolled in both primary and post-primary schools are entitled to the same education provision as all other students. Traveller students are also entitled to learning support and resource support in the same way as other students in response to identified educational needs. The Learning Support Guidelines published by DES in 2000 provide guidelines to primary schools to ensure that all children achieve appropriate levels of literacy and numeracy during the course of their primary education.

In designing and revising School Plans, schools must affirm minority groups such as Travellers. This requirement is explained in a booklet entitled "Schools and the Equal Status Act" which was launched in September 2003. "Schools and the Equal Status Acts" a second edition of the pamphlet was published in 2005 to reflect changes in the legislation. The pamphlet was prepared jointly by the Department of Education and Science and the Equality Authority to assist schools to meet their legal obligations.

Primary school level initiatives

The following additional resources are provided to assist with the education of Traveller pupils in primary schools.

- 540 Resource Teachers for Travellers are in place throughout the country in primary schools in 2004/2005 to provide additional learning support to Traveller pupils
- An enhanced capitation grant is provided for each Traveller pupil enrolled in primary schools that have the services of a Resource Teacher for Travellers
- A Visiting Teacher Service is available to Traveller families (40 Visiting Teacher posts) throughout the country. Part of their remit is to encourage and motivate pupils and their parents to have high expectations of their education experience
- A number of schemes and programmes to combat disadvantage are in place including for example, Giving Children an Even Break and Home/School Community Liaison Scheme and Traveller children are included where such schemes are available.
- In accordance with the National Anti-Poverty Strategy's target that age appropriate placement of all Travellers in primary schools be achieved by 2003, the best information available, collated annually by the National Education Officer for Travellers, indicates that the vast majority of Traveller children are already in age appropriate classes.
- The publication of the Guidelines on Traveller Education in primary schools (2002) gives information and helps schools to increase their understanding of Travellers culture and educational needs.
- The enactment of legislation, in particular the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, provides an entitlement for every child in the State to a certain minimum

education to 16 years of age or the completion of 3 years of Junior Cycle, whichever is the later. Education Welfare Officers from the National Educational Welfare Board act as advocates for and support all children and their parents (Travellers and others) if there is a difficulty with school attendance. Poor school attendance can be a cause of poor academic achievement.

- The National Council for Curriculum and Assessment published its Guidelines on Intercultural Education in Primary Schools in May 2005. As with the Guidelines on Traveller Education (2002), the Guidelines on Intercultural Education will provide information and help schools to increase their understanding of diversity. These Guidelines on Intercultural Education have adopted a whole school cross-curricular approach.
- The Department of Education and Science published an evaluation by its Inspectorate of “Literacy and Numeracy in Disadvantaged Schools: Challenges for Teachers and Learners” in April 2005. The recommendations in this report outline ways to improve the literacy and numeracy levels of primary pupils.

Special schools for Travellers

There is now only one special primary school for Travellers. A special school located in inner city Dublin closed in June, 2005. The remaining special school is located in Bray. There are no special classes for Traveller students in mainstream schools since June 2004.

Post-primary school Initiatives

The transfer rate to post-primary level was 85 per cent in 2004. There are approximately 1,850 Traveller students in mainstream second level schools at present out of a possible 4,000 i.e. 46 per cent of all Traveller students of post-primary school age. The following additional resources are provided to assist with the education of Traveller students in post-primary schools:

- The provision to each post-primary school of an additional 1.5 ex-quota teaching hours per week for each Traveller student enrolled.
- A supplementary capitation grant is available for each Traveller student enrolled at post-primary level
- A Visiting Teacher Service is available to Traveller families (40 Visiting Teachers) throughout the country. The Visiting Teachers address issues not only at post-primary but at all levels of education; Visiting Teachers, parents and staff in primary and post-primary schools collaborate to ensure the successful transfer of Traveller children from primary to post-primary schools. As part of their remit they are also involved in encouraging students to remain in school.
- The provision of a number of schemes and programmes to combat disadvantage including for example, the Home /School Community Liaison Scheme and the School Completion Programme. The School Completion Programme targets individual “at risk” young people of school going age, both in and out of school and arranges supports to address inequalities in education access, participation and outcomes. The programme includes, for

example, home work clubs and holiday activities. Approximately 2,000 Traveller children are currently targeted by this initiative in primary and post-primary schools.

- The National Educational Psychological Service has considered issues related to the assessment and post-primary placement of Traveller students.
- The publication of Guidelines on Traveller Education in second-level schools (2002) gives information and helps schools to increase their understanding of Travellers culture and educational needs.
- The implementation of the policy of age appropriate placement of all students, including Traveller students, is in place in most post-primary schools
- Curricular/ programme choice including the Junior Certificate School Programme and the Leaving Certificate Applied make school more relevant to Traveller students
- The enactment of legislation in particular the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 provides an entitlement for every child in the State to a certain minimum education to 16 years of age or the completion of 3 years of Junior Cycle, whichever is the later. The Education Welfare Officers from the National Educational Welfare Board act as advocates for and support all children and their parents (Travellers and others) where there is a difficulty with school attendance.

Junior Education Centres for Travellers

There are three Junior Education Centres. Two are located in Dublin and a further one is located in Athlone. They cater for Traveller students aged 12 – 15 years. Students are provided with door to door transport, breakfast and lunch, are not required to wear a uniform and their parents are not required to provide any financial support for the students attending the centres.

Youthreach

In December 2004 a census of Youthreach trainees was taken. There were 2746 trainees in Youthreach and of these 325 were Travellers.

Adult and Further Education

- ***Senior Traveller Training Centres***

There are 33 Senior Traveller Training Centres (STTC) located throughout the country and 3 outreach centres. At 31st December 2004 there were 981 trainees enrolled in the centres. There were 799 female and 182 male trainees who ranged in age from 15 upwards. There is no upper age limit. There were 248 trainees under 18 years attending STTCs. The majority were aged between 18 and 45 years. This “no upper age” policy has been taken to attract adults who may have previously had negative experiences of mainstream education. These centres provide a programme of general education, vocational training, work experience and guidance/ counselling/ psychological services. A National Co-ordinator for the STTCs promotes and monitors the development of the network of STTCs. Trainees are paid a training allowance while involved in the centres.

- **Literacy**

All adult literacy programmes are open to Travellers and of the 33 Vocational Education Committees, nineteen have specific adult literacy programmes for Travellers as part of their overall suite of literacy options.

Financial support for Traveller Education

In 2003/2004 there was €47.5m spent on Traveller education for pre-schools, primary, post-primary and Senior Traveller Training centres above and beyond what was spent on mainstream education.

Third level Access

The National Office for Equity of Access to Higher Education was established in August 2003 following a decision by the Minister for Education and Science. The National Office recently published "Achieving Equity of Access to Higher Education in Ireland – Action Plan 2005 – 2007". The National Office will develop and agree national and institutional targets for each under-represented group. Travellers are a target audience of this plan.

The National Office also intends to evaluate existing access programmes to develop a national framework of policies, initiatives and successful partnerships to widen access and support the subsequent participation of all under-represented groups in higher education.

Education

Conclusions and Recommendations of the High Level Group (EDN)

EDN 1 The High Level Group welcomes the drafting of the Traveller Education Strategy. A number of factors extraneous to the education system can have a positive or a negative impact on educational attainment. These factors include cultural issues, housing standards, health, childcare and parental employment status.

EDN 2 The High Level Group notes that

- There are a considerable range of supports and expenditure provided for Traveller education over and above the mainstream provision in this area
- It is expected that a report with recommendations for a five year Traveller Education Strategy will be presented to the Minister for Education & Science early in 2006.

EDN 3 The High Level Group recommends that Education should be part of the proposed integrated approach at local level, developing links between schools, training and employment opportunities

EDN 4 The High Level Group recommends that in the implementation of the Traveller Education Strategy, procedures for inter agency co-operation between the various actors in the education sector on the one hand and local authorities, health authorities, FAS, the Gardai and other agencies be developed.

Traveller Health

Traveller Health Strategy

"Traveller Health - a National Strategy 2002 - 2005" was launched in 2002. This strategy operates in the context of the Health Strategy "Quality and Fairness - A Health System for You" which outlines the future direction of health services in Ireland. The National Traveller Health Strategy is aimed at improving the health status of Travellers and its main proposals are:

- Establishment of active partnerships between Travellers, their representative organisations and health service personnel in the provision of health services.
- Provision of awareness training for health personnel in relation to Traveller culture, including Traveller perspectives on health and illness.
- Strengthening of Traveller Health Units comprising Health Service Executive staff and Traveller representatives, with responsibility for planning and implementing the Strategy in each Health Service Executive area.
- Development of initiatives to increase Travellers' awareness of general medical services and to make services more accessible, having regard to the Travellers' lifestyle.
- Provision of designated Public Health Nurses to work specifically with Traveller communities.
- Replication of the successful "Primary Health Care for Travellers Project", which established a model for Traveller participation in the development of health services.
- Establishment of an appropriate liaison arrangement between the Department of Health and Children and the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government and including representatives from Traveller organisations, to address issues of common concern relating to Travellers.

€4.915m has been allocated since 2002 for the implementation of the National Traveller Health Strategy. The figure of €4.915m is in addition to funding provided for mainstream services availed of by Travellers.

The following key actions in the Traveller Health Strategy have been implemented to date:

- Reviews of the Traveller Health Unit in each Health Service Executive area have been carried out to establish a model of good practice
- The Traveller Ethics, Research and Information Working Group (TERIWG) has been established to set standards of conduct and protocols for health research, information and training in relation to Travellers
- Regional Plans for the implementation of the strategy have been prepared by the Health Service Executive in consultation with Traveller Health Units.

- Replication of the successful "Primary Health Care for Travellers Project", which established a model for Traveller participation in the development of health services.
- Establishment of an appropriate liaison arrangement between the Department of Health and Children and the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government and including representatives from Traveller organisations, to address issues of common concern relating to Travellers.
- The Traveller Consanguinity Working Group (TCWG) in the Health Service Executive Eastern Region has produced a position paper entitled 'A Community Genetics Approach to Health and Consanguineous Marriage in the Irish Traveller Community'. This position paper has been examined in the Department of Health and Children and the TCWG has been requested to prepare an implementation plan for the recommendations in the position paper.
- Annual Service Plans by health service providers (Regional Health Boards up to end 2004 and the Health Service Executive from 2005 onwards) are a legislative requirement in Ireland. The suite of Performance Indicators associated with the Service Plans includes performance indicators in relation to health services for Travellers. As with the performance indicators for other services areas in the suite, those for Travellers are subject to an ongoing process of development and refinement as better information systems become available.
- A Traveller Health webpage has been added to the Department of Health and Children's website www.dohc.ie. It provides details of the Traveller Health Advisory Committee and its sub groups. It is also possible to download a copy of "Traveller Health - A National Strategy 2002 - 2005" from the publications 2002 section of the website.

Implementation of all actions proposed in the Strategy will be reviewed in 2005. The Department of Health and Children will seek the advice of the Traveller Health Advisory Committee in relation to the content of any progress report on the implementation of the strategy.

Access to General Practitioners

The issue of providing services, including general practitioner services, for all medical card holders is, by legislation, a matter for the local area of the Health Service Executive. In cases where persons experience difficulty in accessing their doctor of choice under the General Medical Services (GMS) Scheme, the Health Service's local area will arrange to have the patient appointed onto the panel of a GMS participating doctor. That doctor is obliged, under his GMS contract, to accept and treat these patients.

Travellers' All Ireland Health Study

The Department of Health and Children and the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, Northern Ireland are jointly committed to carrying out a Travellers' All-Ireland Health Study to develop and extend the indicators collected in the 1987 study of Travellers' health and to inform appropriate actions required in the area of Travellers' health. The Institute of Public Health in Ireland has designed the Study following an extensive consultation process with Travellers themselves and

other stakeholders. The Traveller Health Policy Unit of the Department is drafting the Request for Tender (RFT) documents in respect of the Study. Prior Information Notices have been placed in the Official Journal of the European Union and it is expected that the Study will commence in 2005. The results of the study will assist in monitoring improvements in life expectancy and whether the National Anti-Poverty Strategy (NAPS) target of reducing the gap in life expectancy between the Traveller community and the whole population is being achieved.

Health Service Reforms and Traveller Health Units

The Traveller Health Units are still operating under the old Health Board area structures. The Department of Health and Children will meet with the new Manager of the Care Group for Social Inclusion in the Health Service Executive to discuss the future of the Traveller Health Units and any impact that the Health Service Reforms may have on them.

The review of the Traveller Health Strategy (to be carried out later in 2005) is likely to include an examination of the outcomes of the key actions in the Strategy implemented to date. The review will also include consideration of possible further action following the completion of the Strategy period. Organisations representing Travellers have advised that any further developments in relation to Traveller Health should await the results of the Travellers' All-Ireland Health Study.

Health

Conclusions and Recommendations of the High Level Group (HLT)

- HLT 1*** The High Level Group welcomes the forthcoming review of the outcomes of the key actions in the National Traveller Health Strategy.
- HLT 2*** The High Level Group fully supports the conduct of the Travellers' All-Ireland Health Study which is an essential mapping exercise to properly inform the future direction of health service provision for Travellers.
- HLT 3*** The implications of Health Service Reform for the provision of services to Travellers should be kept under review.

Law Enforcement

The High Level Group is concerned at reports of violence, intimidation and organised crime (such as drug-dealing and smuggling) involving members of the Traveller community. This is frequently accompanied by a breakdown in traditional authority patterns in Traveller families. In most cases, other Travellers are the primary victims of such lawlessness. Such activities demand a resolute response from the Gardai and the criminal justice system. Traveller organisations have a key role, with the Gardai, in building trust between ordinary Travellers and the Gardai, so that such activities can be controlled and eradicated.

In the case of many Travellers who come into contact with the criminal justice system, they are involved in petty offences. There is evidence that levels of recidivism are very high. There are no accurate statistics on recidivism for the general population and none at all specifically on Travellers. The Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform is considering undertaking research on prisoners in Loughan House which has a large Traveller prisoner population, to identify what factors lead to Travellers being criminalised, as a first step towards addressing the causes.

The Garda Racial and Intercultural Office was established in April 2000 and its role is defined as "responsibility for co-ordinating, monitoring and advising on all aspects of policing in the area of ethnic and cultural diversity." There are one hundred and forty five (145) Garda Ethnic Liaison Officers whom the Garda Commissioner has appointed to liaise with ethnic minorities. There is at least one Ethnic Liaison Officer in every Garda Division. They have received specialist training from personnel attached to Community Relations, the National Consultative Committee on Racism and Interculturalism (NCCRI), Pavee Point Traveller Centre and representatives from ethnic minorities. Despite the fact that Travellers are not recognized in Ireland as an ethnic minority, Garda Ethnic Liaison Officers interact with Travellers in the same manner as they interact with ethnic minorities.

In 2003, a booklet entitled 'Intercultural Ireland Your Changing Community' was distributed to all Garda Division to raise awareness among members of An Garda Síochána of cultural diversity in Ireland, and the additional requirements of policing a multi-cultural society. The first section of this booklet is devoted exclusively to travellers.

A Superintendent from Community Relations Section is the Garda Liaison Officer to Pavee Point and his contact numbers are available to all Pavee Point staff. This facility was made available to Pavee Point after consultations between Pavee Point and Community Relations personnel. Formal structured relations are currently being developed between Pavee Point and the Community Relations Section under which it is proposed to hold bi-monthly meetings between Community Relations personnel and personnel from Pavee Point. This structure will be put in place as soon as possible.

Garda Community Relations have held consultations with representatives from Pavee Point on overcoming perceived cultural and social barriers to Travellers joining An Garda Síochána. It is anticipated that the Irish Traveller Movement will also join this consultative process in the immediate future.

Travellers are included in the J.L.O. and Youth Diversion Projects, in the same way as members of the settled community. However, it must be emphasized that the success rate with Travellers is not as high as with juveniles from the settled community. Every effort is being made to afford Travellers the optimum benefit to the J.L.O. and Youth Diversion Projects.

Pavee Point representatives deliver lectures to all Student Gardai at the Garda College, Templemore. In recent discussions with Pavee Point representatives it has been requested to explore the possibility of reducing the input to student Garda training by Pavee Point in favour of a train the trainers scheme. Pavee Point has advised that it is difficult to make Pavee Point personnel available to lecture at the Garda College on an ongoing basis.

Compliance with tax and social welfare law

Revenue Commissioners

From a tax perspective the Taxes Acts apply equally to all taxpayers regardless of ethnicity or social grouping. All customers are required to meet their obligations to make tax returns and to pay the taxes and duties for which they have a liability. Revenue deals with all its customers on the basis of their trade, profession or employment.

Compliance and audit programmes are risk based. Cases are selected for intervention/investigation audit by reference to the risk(s) identified. Customers who are members of the Traveller community would be included in Revenue's audit and compliance programme in the same way as other taxpayers, i.e. on the basis of the risks identified.

Customer service is provided to customers via a range of channels. These include-

- Telephone (LoCall 1850 numbers are listed in the telephone directory),
- Central Enquiry offices in Dublin and around the country -9.30am -5.00pm

There are no 'Traveller specific' customer service programmes in place. If Pavee Point or other groups representing the Traveller community consider that the provision of specific customised customer services for Traveller customers are required, Revenue would be happy to discuss and explore their requirements in this area.

Department of Social & Family Affairs

The Department has contact with the vast majority of Travellers through the social welfare system by means of the payment of Child Benefit, unemployment payments, disability payments and one parent family payments.

The majority of Travellers are in receipt of means tested payments with insurance based payments only accounting for a very small percentage. This is in keeping with the high rate of unemployment reported among Travellers. There has been a significant increase in applications for one parent family payments due to marriage break-ups; the number of claims in payment has increased for the Traveller community.

Over the years issues have arisen with intimidation towards officials in trying to carry out home visits for the purposes of assessment of income, and verification of personal circumstances. Gradually this has led to a withdrawal of home visits and

the replacement by desk assessments within local offices of the Department. The problems posed as a result have been particularly noticeable in the Greater Dublin area, where other State agencies have also withdrawn from regular on-site contact with Travellers in a number of sites. In such circumstances there is a danger of fraud arising from non-disclosure of relevant information by claimants.

To overcome the impact of this, and to tackle the resulting loss of service to the Traveller community, an initiative on sharing of data across the relevant agencies – DSFA, local authorities, HSE and An Garda Síochána has commenced in Dublin North. The aim of the initiative is to get to know the entire history of each family across all service providers; to ensure that the family composition is confirmed; and that appropriate services are provided as speedily as possible. This approach will also enable the identification of areas of self-employment.

It is hoped that activation measures such as training and work experience can be targeted at those most likely to benefit from them, as a result of this integrated approach.

Law Enforcement

Conclusions and Recommendations of the High Level Group (LAW)

- LAW 1** The High Level Group recommends that a pilot Youth Diversion Project aimed at young Travellers be specifically funded to identify the reasons why general projects are less effective with Travellers, and to propose amendments.
- LAW 2** The Group recommends that the Department of Justice, Equality & Law Reform should initiate a process with An Garda Síochána, and where appropriate, the Department of Social & Family Affairs, and in conjunction with the relevant local authorities to identify sites/locations to which access by State agencies is problematic and to develop suitable responses.
- LAW 3** The Group recommends that law enforcement actions be integrated in county strategies. The active involvement of Travellers and other agencies should be sought.
- LAW 4** The Group recommends that early intervention approaches to lawlessness on Traveller sites be developed to prevent the emergence of “no-go areas”.
- LAW 5** The Group welcomes the integrated approach focused on the prevention of fraud and abuse of the social welfare system. It endorses the need to ensure that Travellers are able to access the same level of service as other members of the community without fear or intimidation either to themselves or to the service providers.

Community Development

Department of Community Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs

The Department of Community Rural and Gaeltacht funds a number of Traveller representative organisations which operate either nationally or regionally:

- Irish Traveller Movement (ITM)
- Pavee Point
- National Association of Travellers Centres (NATC)
- Exchange House Travellers Service
- National Traveller Women's Forum

The funding of these organisations is provided to enable these organisations support the Travelling Community to identify and respond to common interests and needs of the Travelling Community. These groups also provide the Travelling community with practical assistance to community groups such as provision of photocopying, typing, meeting rooms; funding information and assistance with applications; expertise with planning and project development and facilitation. They also assist with education and personal development training and with training in leadership and skills development. They also provide an important service in regard to legal and welfare rights services.

The Community Development Programme

The Community Development Programme was established in 1990 in recognition of the role of community development in tackling poverty and disadvantage.

The emphasis has been broadened to include groups which act as a resource for community development work with particular interest groups and Travellers are among the most important of these. There are currently 20 Traveller Projects which receive €1.7 million per annum.

The Community Development Programme provides the projects with core-funding to cover the cost of staff and overhead costs associated with running a resource centre. The activities vary from project to project but include:

- Providing a voice for Travellers in negotiating with Government and other local agencies.
- Giving practical assistance to community groups such as provision of physical resources of photocopying, typing, meeting rooms; provision of funding information and assistance with applications; expertise with planning and project development and facilitation.
- Running adult literacy, education, and personal development courses.
- Training in leadership and skills development
- Providing childcare services for project users, i.e. crèche and after-school programmes.
- Providing information/welfare rights service.

- Contributing to the policy-making process by campaigning and making recommendations on specific issues.

Other Supports for Traveller Projects

Partnerships

The Department also funds Area Partnerships which operate in the most disadvantaged communities and provide supports which include:

- Services for the Unemployed
- Education & Training Supports
- Community Development Supports

Travellers are one of the key target groups availing of the services and support of the Area Partnerships.

Measures to combat Drug Abuse

There are 3 Local Drugs Task Force projects specifically targeted towards Travellers. The projects seek to address particular needs in local areas.

- Bray – Provides a positive response to misuse of illegal drugs among the Traveller population (2005 allocation €104,186).
- Dublin North East. Northside Traveller Support Group - Employment of a youth worker to develop and deliver Prevention and Education programmes to the Traveller community in the Dublin North East Task Force area (2005 allocation €44,978).
- South Inner City. Traveller Programme (Exchange House) - Funding is to meet the cost of a development worker & programme costs. Exchange House provides a local service to the traveller community with outreach, assessment, counselling & referral services (2005 allocation (€45,224).

It should also be noted that the National Advisory Committee on Drugs (NACD), in collaboration with key agencies working with Travellers, has commissioned an exploratory study of drug use and drug issues among the Traveller community. Using interviews and focus groups with members of the Traveller community, Traveller development groups, and service providers in the Traveller and drug services sectors, the study examines the extent to which members of the Traveller community experiences risk factors for problem drug use and the pattern of drug use and the drug-related risk behaviour that occurs. The study will consider how the needs of the Traveller community are met by drug and related services and will make recommendations for service development based on its findings. A final report of this study is due at the end of October 2005.

Community Development

Conclusions and Recommendations of the High Level Group (CDV)

- CDV 1** The High Level Group consider that targeted supports for the Travelling Community have an important role in ensuring that the Traveller interests and concerns have a voice with Government agencies. Representative organisations have an important role in ensuring Traveller rights are listened to and respected. However, the Group believes that the role of these groups needs to be more

than just an advocacy role, particularly in view of the significant state funding which they receive. The Group believes that in addition to their role as advocates of the Traveller viewpoint it is desirable that these organisations play a more explicit role in terms of service delivery to Travellers in areas such as education, training, employment or childcare. These groups should also play an important role in facilitating conflict resolution in regard to Traveller issues, both in terms of improving state agency understanding of Traveller issues and concerns, and in terms of ensuring Traveller understanding of state agency concerns. The High Level Group will consider how best to pursue these matters.

Part IV

Data Issues

Strategic Context

At the strategic level the National Statistics Board (NSB) and the Senior Officials Group in Social Inclusion (SOGSI) have been working to promote the development of a comprehensive framework for social and equality statistics. This framework must underpin the full range of strategies and policies in place in the social policy arena and respond to the evolving needs of policy-makers and facilitate objective evaluation and monitoring of economic and social progress in Ireland. The Steering Group on Social and Equality Statistics (SGSES) was established in 2002 to progress this work and reported in April 2003. It made a series of recommendations on actions necessary to ensure that Ireland has the statistical information on social and equality issues required to plan policy and monitor progress on social inclusion.

The NSB Strategy 2003-2008 recommends that the provision of adequate statistical information should be regarded as a desired output of administrative data sources in the public sector. The statistical potential of these data sources should be assessed, the potential fully developed where appropriate, and greater consistency in their statistical management should add significantly to their information value.

The CSO carried out a study in 2003 which examined the administrative data holdings of six Government Departments. The exercise highlighted the fact that information on Travellers was not routinely collected. Only 15 of the data sources identified recorded information on Travellers, mostly in education and housing. Major data sources, such as all those of the Department of Social and Family Affairs, the Garda PULSE system and most health data sets do not.

The Office for Social Inclusion (OSI) is developing a data strategy to underpin the National Anti-Poverty Strategy (NAPS). This data strategy will seek to address the lack of adequate sectoral data preventing the measurement of the level of poverty being experienced by vulnerable groups, including Travellers. OSI are currently engaging with Departments in order to identify those areas where deficiencies in data availability persist and to identify how those data gaps can be filled. This work is being done in parallel to the work being coordinated by the CSO to develop a framework for social and equality statistics, which includes the preparation of Departmental Data Strategies.

Assessment of current, planned and potential data sources

2002 Census

The 2002 census included a question relating to the Travelling Community as follows:

Are you a member of the Irish Traveller Community?

1. *Yes*
2. *No*

This question was included after submissions from a number of organisations representing the Irish Traveller Community and various equality groups. Coupled with other questions on the form, it aimed to facilitate a comparison between the demographic and socio-economic characteristics of travellers and those of the population at large. In the 1996 census, the enumerator (not the respondent)

indicated if the household contained Travellers. Therefore the results for 2002 may not be directly comparable with previous years.

Arising from the inclusion of this question, the eighth volume of Census 2002 was published in 2004 containing detailed results relating to the Irish Traveller Community. This publication provided data on the number of travellers, their location, accommodation, age structure, educational attainment and Labour force characteristics.

Plans for 2006 Census

Following successful piloting in April 2004 the Government has decided on the inclusion of a question on ethnic or cultural background in the next census which is in 2006. The question on membership of the Traveller community will be in the context of a general question on ethnic or cultural background, as follows:

14 What is your ethnic or cultural background?
Choose ONE section from A to D, then ✓ the appropriate box.

A White

1 Irish

2 Irish Traveller

3 Any other White background

B Black or Black Irish

4 African

5 Any other Black background

C Asian or Asian Irish

6 Chinese

7 Any other Asian background

D Other, including mixed background

8 Other, write in description

The potential use of administrative records

The extent to which data contained in administrative records could supplement the data provided by the Census needs to be fully gauged. A preliminary assessment focusing on data holdings in the housing, education and health fields is set out below:

1. Housing

The social housing needs of Travellers are separately identified in the triennial assessment of housing needs undertaken by local authorities. The most recent assessment was carried out in March 2005 and the results will be published later in 2005. The count of Traveller families carried out each

November by local authorities provides information on the accommodation position of Traveller families at that date and allows changes in their accommodation position to be monitored.

2. Education

• Primary Schools

If there are Traveller students in the school who are receiving tuition by a recognised Resource Teacher for Travellers (RTT) then the school must fill in a form which identifies the number of pupils taught by the RTT and they must also note how many Travellers are in each class. This information is used to provide enhanced capitation for the Traveller pupils receiving tuition by a recognised RTT. A pupil database is currently being developed. This will provide an opportunity to identify Traveller children individually and to track them through the education system.

The Visiting Teacher service would also provide the Department with information on the number of Traveller children in their particular catchment area each year.

• Post Primary Schools

By 30 September each year all schools must return information for the Department of Education and Science's post-primary pupil database. There is currently no facility for recording a pupil's ethnicity or membership of the Traveller community. While the inclusion of a Traveller indicator has been under consideration, no decision has yet been taken.

A list of Traveller students enrolled in each school is returned to the Department of Education and Science annually. This information is used to allocate ex-quota teaching hours and for capitation purposes.

The Visiting Teacher service would also provide the Department with information on the number of Traveller children in their particular catchment area each year.

3. Health

The Ethnicity Pilot Project is related to Actions 8, 9 and 10 of the Traveller Health Strategy. Its objective is to determine the feasibility of collecting information on ethnicity as a routine feature of health information systems. The Pilot Project has focused on the acute hospital sector and has taken place in one acute and one maternity hospital setting: The Adelaide and Meath Hospitals Incorporating the National Children's Hospital (AMNCH) in Tallaght and the Rotunda Maternity Hospital, Dublin City. Data collection has been completed at the AMNCH and is being analysed. A draft report will be available shortly. Data collection at the Rotunda will continue for several more weeks after which the results will be analysed, and a final report on the project will be produced.

The all-Ireland Travellers' Health Study is expected to get underway later this year. The results of the study will assist in monitoring improvements in life expectancy. The data from the study will also inform the target under the

NAPS of reducing the gap in life expectancy between the Traveller community and the population as a whole.

Data Issues

Conclusions and Recommendations of the High Level Group (DAT)

- DAT 1** Improved data on travellers is a key requirement for the future development of policy and monitoring of progress. In particular, it will inform the identification of target outcomes across a range of areas, progress against which can be monitored over time.
- DAT 2** At a strategic level work is continuing, under the guidance of the Senior Officials Group on Social Inclusion (SOGSI) and the National Statistics Board to develop a comprehensive framework for social and equality statistics to respond to the evolving data needs of policy-makers. The Office for Social Inclusion is also working to address data gaps, focusing particularly on vulnerable groups, in the context of the development of a data strategy to underpin the National Anti-Poverty Strategy (NAPS).
- DAT 3** Therefore the High Level Group proposes that a subset of this work might involve the establishment of a small working group comprising the CSO, the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform, the Office for Social Inclusion, and other relevant Departments to develop a Travellers' Data Strategy. This should identify priority information gaps at national and local level and how to improve data availability in each case, drawing on existing and potential sources.

Part V

Next Steps

Priority Issues

- PRT 1** To promote a coordinated interagency approach to the delivery of services and supports for Travellers. Integrated Strategic Plans for service delivery should be drawn up for all cities and counties with Traveller populations, following the recommendations derived from the Pilot Projects described in this Report.
- PRT 2** To ensure effective consultation between Travellers, Traveller Organisations and statutory bodies to support the development of interagency cooperation and to facilitate improved communications, including conflict resolution, at national, regional and local level.
- PRT 3** To ensure that law enforcement is included as part of the proposed integrated approach.

General Conclusion and Recommendations

- GEN 1** The High Level Group considers that to achieve successful outcomes for Travellers there is a need for institutionalised inter-agency co-ordination at national and local level. The positive experience of the pilot projects initiated by the Group and managed by Clare County Council and Dublin South County Council serve as a useful template for replication on a wider scale. There is also a need for continuing commitment at senior political and official level. The High Level Group notes that already many of the building blocks for the successful delivery of integrated strategies are now in place. In the area of accommodation, 2005 marks the beginning of the second local authority Traveller accommodation programmes (2005–2008). Annual targets for Traveller accommodation will be set. Preparation of a Traveller Education Strategy is at an advanced stage. The first period of the Traveller Health Strategy ends this year. A sub-committee of the High Level Group, under the leadership of the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment is working towards the preparation of an employment and training plan for Travellers.
- GEN 2** The High Level Group recommends that a Traveller Data Collection Strategy is needed, to supply policy makers and service providers with the means of assessing need, future planning, bench-marking, target-setting and quantifying progress. The development of this Strategy should be embarked upon as soon as possible.
- GEN 3** The High Level Group recommends that the structure of the Cabinet Committee on Social Inclusion, supported by the Senior Officials Group on Social Inclusion be used so that Ministers can monitor the implementation of strategies and plans for Travellers. The High Level Group is a useful forum for policy makers and service providers. It should continue in being as a sub-committee of the Senior Officials Group on Social Inclusion to

- Drive the implementation of the recommendations in this report across the various sectors at national and local level
- Monitor progress and seek to resolve any implementation difficulties which arise
- Report regularly on progress to the Senior Officials Group on Social Inclusion

GEN 4

The existing Monitoring Committee on the Implementation of the Recommendations of the Task Force on the Travelling Community, chaired by the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform and made up of Government Departments, social partners and Travellers organisations has provided a useful forum for consultation at national level. That Committee is charged with monitoring the implementation of the 1995 Report of the Task Force. However, there is a need to review the effectiveness of this consultation particularly in light of the various sectoral consultative mechanisms (such as the National Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee) established in the interim. The Monitoring Committee is aware of this situation and a review of it's role and structures is currently under way. The High Level Group will monitor progress on this review.

GEN 5

It is recommended that the High Level Group be maintained to oversee the implementation of the integrated strategies proposed in this Report, and to report periodically to the Cabinet Committee on Social Inclusion on progress made.

Appendix I

Recommendations of the NTACC

- The Annual Count be reviewed with a view to determining a final format for the Count which would allow comparison of figures with the figures currently available
- Local authorities when conducting reviews of their programmes should be required, as a minimum, to involve in a meaningful way both their LTACCs, and all those parties who had contributed to the preparation of their original Traveller accommodation programmes.
- the next accommodation programmes cover the four-year period 2005 to 2008 to be co-terminus with the Social Housing Action Plans.
- Local authorities be required to notify Traveller support groups in their area of their intention to prepare, amend or replace programmes.
- The NTACC should start work on developing a model of consultation which would include an agreed definition of consultation and guidelines for its implementation. This model should then be piloted in two local authorities before distribution to all local authorities.
- Local authorities be required, in their Traveller accommodation programmes, to set realistic and achievable annual targets for the number of units of accommodation to be provided for Travellers in each year of the programmes.
- As effective consultation between the local authority and the prospective tenants play a large part in the success of Traveller specific accommodation schemes local authorities should adopt mechanisms for ensuring the effectiveness of such consultation. The LTACC should be consulted for its advice in relation to determining the appropriate mechanism to be adopted.

This mechanism should, *inter alia*, -

- outline a time scale within which such consultation will be completed
 - provide for specific objectives for each stage of the consultation (e.g. agreeing on type Halting Site or Group Housing)
 - provide for the "signing off" of each stage,
 - Set out the steps by which the local authority will make a final decision on the accommodation to be provided.
- The use of land as a transient halting site for a specified number of weeks per week should be prescribed as exempted development under Section 4 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 subject to satisfactory local arrangements.

- The Guidelines to be issued by the Department of the Environment Heritage and Local Government should provide that development plans should clearly state the local authority policy on the development of halting sites including the development of private halting sites.
- Planning authorities should ensure that their zoning objectives are co-ordinated with Traveller accommodation programme in respect of their area, and should be flexible enough to allow for the development of private halting sites where this does not directly contradict other zoning objectives.
- There should be a greater linkage between the provisions of Part V of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (social and affordable housing), and the Traveller accommodation programmes. For example, a local authority should have some estimate as to the number of social and affordable units which it expects to secure including Traveller specific accommodation. It should then be possible to indicate how many units are to be made available for Traveller accommodation requirements.

Operation of the NTACC. The NTACC should:

- Examine and evaluate the reports' of the LTACCs' on an annual basis and report their findings to the Minister.
- Prepare, for submission to the Minister, an annual report on the implementation of the programmes, having particular regard to the progress towards the annual targets set in the programmes.
- Examine the issues arising around the provision of transient sites with a view to advising on how the lack of such provision can be addressed.
- Examine the issues arising in relation to vacant units, other than casual vacancies, on both halting sites and in group houses, with a view to advising on how the level of such vacancies can be reduced. I
- In the event of the national agency, suggested by the Traveller support groups, not being established, and in the context of the level of progress being made in the implementation of programmes, an expansion of the role of the NTACC in relation to improving the rate of accommodation provision be examined.
- That the 2001 Guidelines on the operation of LTACC's be reissued to local authorities, along with a covering letter, drawing attention to the following:
 - All members of an LTACC should strive to attend all Committee meetings and, if unable to do so on a regular basis, should step down from the Committee. While the practicalities of a nomination process will depend on local circumstances in all cases the process should be inclusive and transparent.
 - In areas where Traveller support groups already exist, it is a matter for such groups to select their own nominees for appointment to LTACC's.

- In functional areas where no Traveller support groups operate, the national Traveller organisations may be of assistance to the local authorities in the nomination process. It is recommended that the national Traveller bodies adopt a policy line in relation to such situations.
- In areas where local Traveller support groups do exist, it is recommended that the local authorities avail of the contacts which such groups have with Traveller families, in relation to the selection of local Traveller representatives.
- LTACC's should meet at least at least four times per annum and more frequently if considered necessary.
- LTACC's should present Annual Reports to their appointing authorities, giving a summary of activities for the period in question.
- Copies of the Annual Reports should be furnished to the NTACC.
- The appropriate Director of Services should report in person to each meeting of the LTACC.
- Each LTACC should formally report biannually to its appointing authority's Manager, and the Manager should formally meet during the year with the LTACC.
- The Department should again bring to the attention of local authorities the requirement, laid down in section 244 of the Local Government Act 2001, that their annual reports detail the activities of their LTACC's.
- The position of Chairperson should be reviewed at the end of the second year of appointment. As the role of Chairperson is crucial to the success of an LTACC, local authorities should consider which option of Chairperson Selection best suits their particular situation.
- The NTACC should examine the issue of developing guidelines around the use of section 10 notices.

Local authorities should, be advised that:

- As far as practicable, not request the Gardai to use their powers under the 1994 Act to remove families who are on local authority lands and are awaiting accommodation from the local authority. Where there are exceptional circumstances and a family has to be moved it should be done under the powers available to the authority under the Housing Acts
- Use of the Public Order legislation is not a ground for and should not result in a family losing its position on the housing list or being removed from it.
- Absence from the local authority area in which a family is on the list resulting from the use of the legislation should not affect the family's position on the list unless another authority accommodates them.

- While there is an onus on families affected by this legislation to maintain contact with the local authority, each local authority should ensure, as far as practicable, that it does not lose communication with a family on their accommodation list who move out of its functional area due to being moved under the 1994 Act unless the family indicates that it no longer requires accommodation within the area.

Appendix II

Strategy for the Co-ordination
Of Public Services
To the Traveller Community in
Clare 2005 - 2008.

- Strengthening the Integration of Settled And Traveller Communities -

SUMMARY OF STRATEGIC AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

1. Strengthen the Culture of the Traveller Community

- 1.1 Develop culturally appropriate enterprises and enterprise training among the Traveller Community.
- 1.2 Promote the Culture of the Traveller Community in Schools.
- 1.3 Increase the Awareness and Understanding of the Culture of the Traveller Community.

2. Strengthen the self-governance capacity of the Traveller Community.

- 2.1 Develop a Traveller Forum.
- 2.2 Develop a mechanism and process among the Traveller Community to advance policy initiatives.
- 2.3 Enhance the capacity of the Traveller Community to manage and govern their own accommodation units and estates

3. Enhance the Quality of Life of the Traveller Community

- 3.1 Develop and implement a consultation mechanism and mediation process.
- 3.2 Provide Information in a user-friendly manner.
- 3.3 Implement a long-term programme of lifestyle choices.
- 3.4 Develop a Traveller Youth Strategy.
- 3.5 Support Travellers to make the best use of their accommodation.
- 3.6 Deliver the Per Cent for Arts Scheme in accommodation units and Group Housing Schemes.
- 3.7 Encourage the establishment of Voluntary Traveller Housing Groups.
- 3.8 Identify accommodation factors and supports that would impact positively on the quality of life.

4. Identify and address Gaps in Current Provision of public services

- 4.1 Identify Gaps in current provision and ensure consistency with relevant National Strategies
- 4.2 Increase the involvement of young members of the Traveller Community in Youthreach.
- 4.3 Develop an integrated model for pre-school care and education for Traveller Children.
- 4.4 Develop Income, Employment and Enterprise opportunities for the Traveller Community.
- 4.5 Assist Travellers. Participation in Job Search, Work Experience and Active Labour Market Programmes.
- 4.6 Address the needs of young Traveller adults who are outside the mainstream education system.

- 4.7. Provide for the childcare needs of participants on Education and Training Programmes.
- 4.8 Develop and implement training programmes of appropriate duration.
- 4.9 Increase School Retention Rates.
- 4.10 Extend training opportunities to all Traveller Communities in the County
- 4.11 Strengthen the “After Schools Programme” and “Homework Club”

5. Co-ordinate and Monitor the delivery of the Strategy.

- 5.1 Establish a bi-annual forum for service providers. staff who have regular contact with the Traveller Community.

1. STRENGTHEN THE CULTURE OF THE TRAVELLER COMMUNITY

Objective 1.1 Develop Culturally appropriate enterprises and enterprise training

Action 1.1.1: Develop the business of Breeding, Training and shoeing horses.

Lead Agency: Members of the Traveller Community.

Action 1.1.2: Implement enterprises and employment training that builds on current skills (e.g. tinsmithing, coppercraft) and which develops them in a market-oriented manner

Lead Agency: St Josephs Senior Traveller Training Centre

Action 1.1.3: Develop, Agree and Pilot models of culturally sensitive employment contracts.

Lead Agency: County Enterprise Board and Traveller Forum

Objective 1.2 Promote the Culture of the Traveller Community in Schools

Action 1.2.1: Develop a module on Traveller Culture to coincide with the delivery of NCCA Guidelines on Intercultural Education.

Lead Agency: Department of Education and Science (Mid-West Region)

Action 1.2.2: Involve the Traveller Community in the design and delivery of the module.

Lead Agency: Department of Education and Science (Mid-West Region)

Action 1.2.3: Inform the Regional Office, DES.

Lead Agency: Department of Education and Science (Mid-West Region)

Objective 1.3 Increase the Awareness and Understanding of Traveller Culture.

Action 1.3.1: Quantify the number and identify the role of frontline public health service staff attending the HSE Mid-West Cultural Diversity training.

Lead Agency: HSE Mid-West

Action 1.3.2: All Statutory, Community and Voluntary agencies will adopt a POLICY of supporting staff attendance at Anti-Racism training.

Lead Agency: All Agencies

Action 1.3.3: All frontline staff of Statutory, Community and Voluntary agencies who deal with the Traveller Community will undertake Anti-Racism training.

Lead Agency: All Agencies

Action 1.3.4: A member of staff, who has undertaken the HSE Mid-West .Cultural Diversity training, will be available in A&E to talk with members of the Traveller Community.

Lead Agency: HSE Mid-West

Action 1.3.5: Provide training in cultural diversity for GPs and pharmacists working in Co. Clare.

Lead Agency: Lead Awaited

2. STRENGTHEN THE SELF-GOVERNANCE CAPACITY OF THE TRAVELLER COMMUNITY

Objective 2.1 Develop a Traveller Forum

Action 2.1.1: Co-ordinate the Traveller Community at county level.

Lead Agency: Ennis CDP

Action 2.1.2: Provide training and support for effective internal communications

Lead Agency: Ennis CDP

Action 2.1.3: Train and support the Traveller Community to engage in effective consultation.

Lead Agency: Ennis CDP

Action 2.1.4: Train and support representatives of the Traveller Community.

Lead Agency: Ennis CDP

Action 2.1.5: Train and support the Traveller Community to identify and bring forward policy initiatives and lobby for change.

Lead Agency: Ennis CDP

Objective 2.2 Develop a mechanism and process among the Traveller Community to advance policy initiatives.

Action 2.2.1: Develop an overall structure to ensure policy initiatives, including bereavement, hospital stay, attendance at A&E, GPs and pharmacists, can be brought to the relevant fora.

Lead Agency: Traveller Forum, Community and Enterprise

Objective 2.3 Enhance the capacity of the Traveller Community to manage and govern their accommodation units and estates

Action 2.3.1: Develop criteria/rules for using caretaker units by Travellers on a pilot basis.

Lead Agency: Clare County Council & Members of the Traveller Community

Action 3.1.2: Pilot the use of caretakers units for purposes other than caretaking on 2 sites.

Lead Agency: Clare County Council & Members of the Traveller Community

Action 3.1.3: Evaluate the pilot and make amendments to the draft criteria.

Lead Agency: Clare County Council & Members of the Traveller Community

Action 3.1.4: Develop criteria/rules to make keys to barriers available to the Traveller Community.

Lead Agency: Clare County Council & Members of the Traveller Community.

Action 3.1.5: Pilot the availability of keys to barriers on 2 sites.

Lead Agency: Clare County Council & Members of the Traveller Community

Action 3.1.6: Evaluate the pilot and make amendments to the draft criteria.

Lead Agency: Clare County Council & Members of the Traveller Community

Action 3.1.7: Each Accommodation unit or estate to appoint its own liaison person as a contact for all service delivery agencies.

Lead Agency: Members of the Traveller Community

Action 3.1.8: Where families are in agreement, caretaking on sites to be entrusted to site residents

Lead Agency: Clare County Council & Members of the Traveller Community

Action 3.1.9: Establish mechanisms to identify rentable land adjacent to Traveller accommodation.

Lead Agency: Members of the Traveller Community

Action 3.1.10 Provide leadership and advocacy training to members of the Traveller Community

Lead Agency: Department Social and Family Affairs

3. ENHANCE THE QUALITY OF LIFE OF THE TRAVELLER COMMUNITY

Objective 3.1 Develop, implement a consultation mechanism and mediation process.

Action 3.1.1: Develop and implement a consultation mechanism and mediation process to minimise incompatibility of residents and improve communication with agencies.

Lead Agency: Traveller Forum, Community and Enterprise (Clare County Council)

Objective 3.2 Provide Information in a user-friendly manner

Action 3.2.1: Provide more literacy friendly signage in the HSE Mid-West hospitals.

Lead Agency: HSE Mid-West and Clarecare

Action 3.2.2: Provide information on medical cards in a Traveller friendly way to all families.

Lead Agency: HSE Mid-West and Clarecare

Action 3.2.3: Train and inform frontline staff so that, where relevant, they can refer Travellers to the agencies dealing with substance misuse, violence and psychological distress.

Lead Agency: Department of Social & Family Affairs

Objective 3.3 Implement a long term programme of lifestyle choices

Action 3.3.1: Design and Implement a long-term programme of healthy lifestyles for men, women and children in the areas of culture, social, health, fitness and nutrition.

Lead Agency: HSE Mid-West

Objective 3.4 Develop a Traveller Youth Strategy

Action 3.4.1: Audit Existing activities available to young Traveller boys and girls.

Lead Agency: HSE Mid-West

Action 3.4.2: Identify current gaps.

Lead Agency: HSE Mid-West

Action 3.4.3: Increase the participation of young members of the Traveller Community in social and sporting activities.

Lead Agency: HSE Mid-West

Objective 3.5 Support Travellers to make the best use of their accommodation.

Action 3.5.1: Provide a programme for Travellers to get the best out of living in their home.

Lead Agency: Clare County Council

Action 3.5.2: Visit newly accommodated Traveller Families on a regular basis for the first six months and more occasionally thereafter.

Lead Agency: Clare County Council

Action 3.5.3: Provide a specific course for newly accommodated Travellers and others to support them to financially manage their situation.

Lead Agency: Money Advice & Budgeting Service

Objective 3.6 Deliver the Per Cent for Arts Scheme in accommodation units and Group Housing Schemes

Action 3.6.1: Identify potential arts projects with Travellers where accommodation is provided.

Lead Agency: Clare Arts Officer

Action 3.6.2: Apply for the Per Cent Scheme

Lead Agency: Clare County Council

Objective 3.7 Encourage the establishment of Voluntary Traveller Housing Groups

Action 3.7.1: Inform the Traveller Community of the Voluntary Housing Programme.

Lead Agency: Clare County Council

Action 3.7.2: Establish the level of interest in progressing the Voluntary Housing option.

Lead Agency: Clare County Council

Action 3.6.2: Apply for the Per Cent Scheme

Lead Agency: Clare County Council

Objective 3.7 Encourage the establishment of Voluntary Traveller Housing Groups

Action 3.7.1: Inform the Traveller Community of the Voluntary Housing Programme.

Lead Agency: Clare County Council

Action 3.7.2: Establish the level of interest in progressing the Voluntary Housing option.

Lead Agency: Clare County Council

Action 3.7.3: Support the potential of Voluntary Housing through the Traveller Forum.

Lead Agency: Clare County Council

Objective 3.8 Identify accommodation factors and supports that would impact positively on the quality of life

Action 3.8.1: Establish if over crowding exists in current housing accommodation and if so build larger houses in new schemes.

Lead Agency: Clare County Council & Members of the Traveller Community

Action 3.8.2 Appoint a liaison Garda to each accommodation unit who will visit and introduce themselves and inform Travellers of services and programmes that Gardai support and introduce initiatives that the Gardai and Travellers may develop.

Lead Agency: Gardai

Action 3.8.3 Appoint a dedicated social worker to work with the Traveller Community.

Lead Agency: Clare County Council

Action 3.8.4 Provide a breakdown of the cost of Traveller accommodation between land acquisition, services/utilities, construction and other associated costs.

Lead Agency: Clare County Council

Action 3.8.5 Identify obstacles to: optimising the match between need for and supply of accommodation; to transferring to appropriate accommodation size (including Special needs and downsizing for older people); to making on-site changes e.g. building extensions, making alterations, painting accommodation; to purchasing own home e.g. on a halting site; to making halting sites more visually attractive; to developing meeting and leisure facilities on site.

Lead Agency: Members of the Traveller Community and Clare County Council

4. Identify and address gaps in current provision of public services

Objective 4.1 Identify Gaps in Current Provision and ensure consistency with relevant

National Strategies

Action 4.1.1: Undertake an Audit of current supports for Traveller men, women and children.

Lead Agency: St. Josephs STTC, Community and Enterprise

Action 4.1.2: Reconcile all education actions with the forthcoming Traveller Education Strategy, of the Department of Education and Science

Lead Agency: Regional Office, DES and Visiting Teacher Service, DES

Objective 4.2 Increase the involvement of young members of the Traveller Community in Youthreach programmes.

Action 4.2.1: Employ a Youth Worker.

Lead Agency: National Association Traveller Training Centre & St Josephs STTC

Action 4.2.2: Appoint a Trainee Youth Worker (Traveller).

Lead Agency: National Association Traveller Training Centre & St Josephs STTC

Action 4.2.3: Affiliate Youth programmes with Clare Youth Service.

Lead Agency: Clare Youth Service

Action 4.2.4: Involve the Traveller Enterprise officer to support and mentor members of the

Traveller Community who are engaged in work related training programmes.

Lead Agency: FAS

Objective 4.3 Develop an integrated model for pre-school care and education for Traveller Children

Action 4.3.1. Draw from the experience of Integration in Carlow and Roscrea.

Lead Agency: Regional Office, DES and Visiting Teacher Service, DES

Action 4.3.2. Enlist the support of National Education Officer for Travellers, Social Inclusion and the Regional Office Dept. Education and Science

Lead Agency: Regional Office, DES and Visiting Teacher Service, DES

Action 4.3.3. To begin the process of integrating the Pre-school for Travellers

Lead Agency: Regional Office, DES and Visiting Teacher Service, DES

Objective 4.4 Develop Income, Employment and Enterprise opportunities

Action 4.4.1: Employ an Enterprise Development Officer

Lead Agency: FAS

Action 4.4.2: Employ an Assistant Enterprise Development Officer from the Traveller Community

Lead Agency: FAS

Action 4.4.3: Provide a countywide support and liaison service for Travellers and Employers that will identify employment opportunities, prepare CVs, support employers and travellers in working together, provide on-going support and mentoring to employees, organise on-the-job skills training or off-site job-related training

Lead Agency: FAS

Action 4.4.4: Seek open market employment opportunities and formalise employment contracts.

Lead Agency: FAS

Action 4.4.5: Assist Travellers in registering as sole traders, street traders and in acquiring the necessary licences and permits.

Lead Agency: FAS

Action 4.4.6: Arrange Work Placements

Lead Agency: FAS

Action 4.4.7: Establish the feasibility of setting up a Clare Traveller Enterprise Agency

Lead Agency: FAS

Objective 4.5 Assist Travellers' participation in Job Search, Work Experience and in Active Labour Market Programmes

Action 4.5.1 Identify members of the Traveller Community interested in open market employment

and Active Labour Market Employment (eg. Community Employment etc.)

Lead Agency: Local Development Agencies

Action 4.5.2 Prepare and centrally collate a profile of Travellers skills

Lead Agency: Local Development Agencies

Action 4.5.3 Identify local vacancies and opportunities

Lead Agency: Local Development Agencies

Action 4.5.4 Support applicants. interview and CV preparations.

Lead Agency: Local Development Agencies

Action 4.5.5 Transfer successful applicants to the Clare Traveller Enterprise Officer for support.

Lead Agency: Local Development Agencies

Action 4.5.6 Develop Work Experience Opportunities

Lead Agency: Local Development Agencies

Objective 4.6 Address the needs of young Traveller adults who are outside the mainstream education and Training system.

Action 4.6.1: Appoint a youth and community mentor.

Lead Agency: VEC

Action 4.6.2: Increase referrals to and uptake of current services

Lead Agency: VEC

Objective 4.7 Provide for the childcare needs of Education and Training participants

Action 4.7.1: Establish a Steering Committee to examine the feasibility of a dedicated Childcare Service to support the training at St. Josephs

Lead Agency: St Josephs STTC

Action 4.7.2: Undertake a feasibility study and make an application for equal opportunity childcare programme funding.

Lead Agency: St Josephs STTC

Action 4.7.3: Investigate other opportunities for Childcare Services for Travellers in the county

Lead Agency: Clare Childcare Committee

Objective 4.8 Develop and implement training programmes of appropriate duration

Action 4.8.1: Determine criteria for establishing the duration of training.

Lead Agency: St Josephs Senior Traveller Training Centre

Action 4.8.2: Adopt relevant criteria from VTOS and Youthreach models.

Lead Agency: St Josephs STTC

Action 4.8.3: Obtain approval from the VEC for the training identified.

Lead Agency: VEC

Action 4.8.4: Standardise measurement, assessment and evaluation approaches.

Lead Agency: St Josephs STTC

Objective 4.9 Increase school retention rates

Action 4.9.1: Train and support members of the Traveller Community to participate on the Steering Committee of the School Completion Programme.

Lead Agency: Completion Programme, Ennis Community College, Scoil Criost Ri

Action 4.9.2: Broaden the School Completion programme to include other schools where members of the Traveller Community are in attendance.

Lead Agency: Completion Programme, Ennis Community College, Scoil Criost Ri

Action 4.9.3: Develop peer led mentoring programmes to support continued participation of members of the Traveller Community in school.

Lead Agency: Completion Programme, Ennis Community College, Scoil Criost Ri

Objective 4.10 Extend Training Opportunities countywide

Action 4.10.1: Conduct an audit of training needs of adult Travellers in Shannon & Ennistymon.

Lead Agency: VEC

Action 4.10.2: Increase the number and duration of the training interventions of local development agencies (LDAs) in Shannon and Ennistymon and strengthen their linkages with any new interventions developed.

Lead Agency: VEC

Action 4.10.3: Develop a transferable model of good practice in addressing the training needs of the Traveller Community including drawing on the experience of St. Josephs STTC.

Lead Agency: VEC

Objective 4.11 Strengthen the “After Schools Programme” and “Homework Club”

Action 4.11.1: Ensure continued funding for Homework Club.

Lead Agency: Ennis CDP & Ennis West Partners

Action 4.11.2: Target children not in any other programme.

Lead Agency: Ennis CDP & Ennis West Partners

Action 4.11.3: Promote the “After School Programme” and “Homework Club”.

Lead Agency: Ennis CDP & Ennis West Partners

4. CO-ORDINATE AND MONITOR THE DELIVERY OF THE STRATEGY

Objective 5.1 Establish a bi-annual forum for service providers. staff who have regular contact with the Traveller Community.

Action 5.1.1: All agencies delivering services to the Traveller Community will mandate their staff, who have direct contact with the Traveller Community, to meet twice yearly to:

- ensure effective delivery of the Strategy (identify targets achieved, blockages encountered, emerging duplication, gaps in provision)
- where necessary, and in consultation with the Traveller Forum, amend the action plans of the following 6 months.

Lead Agency: Community & Enterprise Section.

Action 5.1.2: Annually provide the information necessary to monitor the implementation of the HSE Mid-West Traveller Strategy for County Clare.

Lead Agency: HSE Mid-West

Agencies Members of the Traveller Community Represented on the Joint Working Groups

Health Joint Working Group

Four members of the Traveller Community
Clarecare
Clare Sports Partnership
Clare Haven Services
HSE Mid-Western Area
Department of Social & Family Affairs

Education Joint Working Group

Four members of the Traveller Community
After School Programme – Homework Club
Clare Youth Services
Ennis Community College
Scoil Críost Rí
VEC
Clare County Childcare Committee
Department of Education & Science
Ennis West Partners
St. Joseph's STTC
Visiting Teacher Service, Dept. Education and Science

Income, Work and Employment Joint Working Group

Four members of the Traveller Community
Clarecare
Clare Supported Employment
RAPID
Trasna Equal Project
Clare County Enterprise Board
FAS
Shannon Family Resource Centre

Accommodation Joint Working Group

Four members of the Traveller Community
Arts Officer,
Clare County Council
Ennis Town Council
Garda Síochána
Ennis Community Development Project
Ennistymon Family Resource Centre
Traveller Accommodation Unit, (Clare County Council)
Money Advice & Budgeting Service
The Director of Community and Enterprise chaired the process.
The staff of Community and Enterprise supported each of the Joint Working Groups.