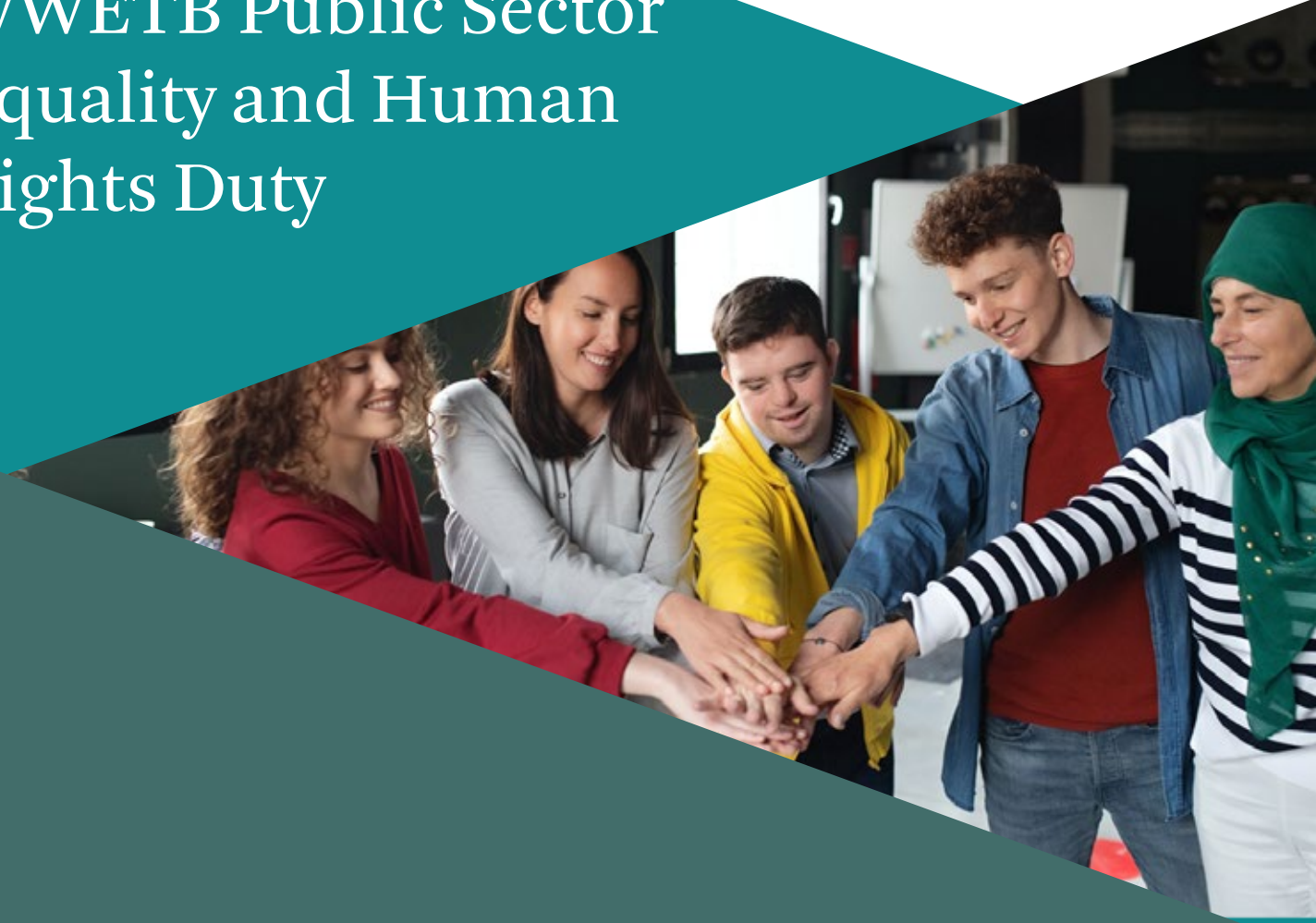




wwetb

Bord Oideachais agus Oiliúna
Phort Láirge agus Loch Garman
*Waterford and Wexford
Education and Training Board*

WWETB Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty



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Access & Inclusion Officer (FET)

1 Waterford and Wexford Education and Training Board

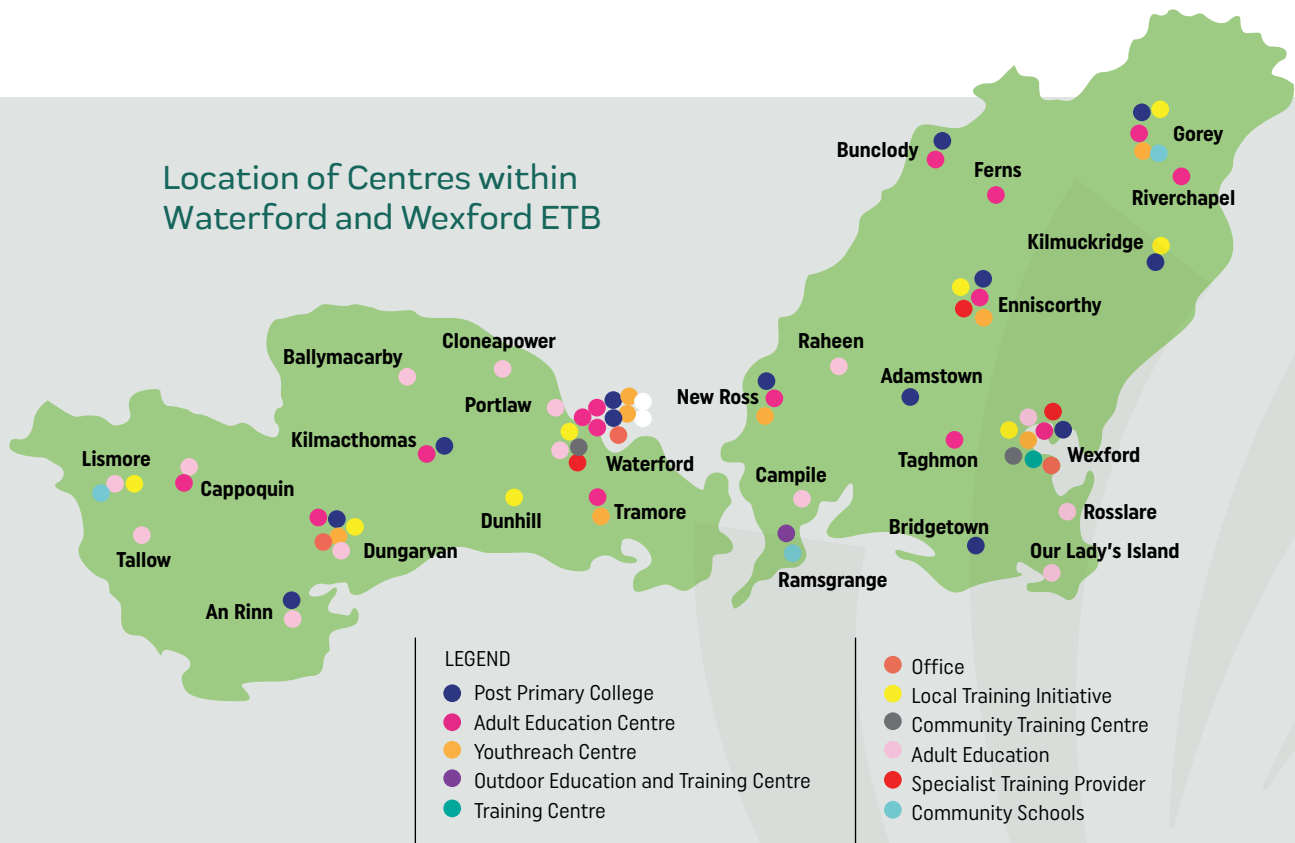
Waterford and Wexford Education and Training Board (WWETB) was established on 1 July 2013. It officially incorporated Solas Training Centres in Waterford and Wexford to its range of services on 1 January 2014.

WWETB provides a comprehensive range of education and training services throughout Waterford and Wexford, and it is the largest education and training provider across both counties through Primary Schools, Second-Level Colleges, Further Education Colleges, Further Education Centres, Outdoor Education, Youth Services and Training Centres. Adult Education programmes and Community Education initiatives also deliver and support education and training in community locations.

With over 1,600 staff WWETB is also a significant employer in the south-east and prides itself on being an employer of choice for prospective employees (WWETB, 2018). Serving a growing catchment population of over a quarter of a million, there are nonetheless key challenges, with some local areas having high deprivation, age dependency levels and lower education levels (SOLAS, 2018).



Location of Centres within Waterford and Wexford ETB



Post Primary Colleges

- Bridgetown College
- Bunclody Vocational College
- Coláiste Abbáin
- Coláiste an Átha
- Coláiste Chathail Naofa
- Creagh College
- Enniscorthy Vocational College
- Kennedy College
- Meánscoil San Níoclás
- Selskar College
- St Declan's Community College
- St Paul's Community College

PLC College

- Waterford College of Further Education

Community Schools where WWETB are joint patrons

- Blackwater Community School
- Gorey Community School
- Ramsgrange Community School

Administration Centres

- Head Office, Ardcavan, Wexford
- Dungarvan Sub-Office
- Waterford Training Centre

Youthreach Centres

- Dungarvan
- Enniscorthy
- Gorey
- New Ross
- Subla Centre Waterford
- Tramore
- Waterford
- Wexford

Further Education and Training Centres

- Bunclody Further Education and Training Centre
- Cappoquin Further Education and Training Centre
- Dungarvan Further Education and Training Centre
- Enniscorthy Further Education and Training Centre
- Gorey Further Education and Training Centre
- Kilmacthomas Further Education and Training Centre
- New Ross Further Education and Training Centre
- Ozanam Street Further Education and Training Centre
- Tramore Further Education and Training Centre
- Wexford Adult Education Centre, Westgate, Wexford
- Wexford Further Education and Training Centre
- Dungarvan Adult Literacy Centre
- Railway Square Adult Education Centre, Waterford
- Waterford VTOS, Durands Court, Waterford
- WCFE VTOS, Burchall House, Waterford
- Waterford Training Centre
- Wexford Training Centre

Outdoor Education and Training

- Outdoor Education and Training Centre, Shielbaggan

Figure 1: WWETB Geographic Spread (SOLAS, 2018) WWETB Strategy Statement

28,400 Students and Learners



1,850 Staff
3,086 Courses



29
Further
Education/
Training Centres

13
Post Primary
Colleges (including
1 PLC College)

1
Community
National
School

3 Community Schools under WWETB Patronage



€147m
Annual
Budget



700
Companies
Supported



65
Apprenticeships
Supported
(incl. 13 in-house)

Figure 2: WWETB in Numbers (WWETB, 2018)

1.1 Our Mission and Vision

WWETB's mission is to provide a wide range of education and training programmes, services and supports for children, young people and adults across the Waterford-Wexford region. WWETB aims to lead learning through the delivery of high quality, inclusive, responsive, and innovative education and training services in our community. (WWETB, 2018)

Human Rights and Equality are central to our commitment to quality and high standards in the provision of education and training and in employment.

- *WWETB will prioritise and respond to the needs and aspirations of the diverse communities and learners in our catchment area and of our staff*
- *WWETB is committed to compliance in regard to its public sector duty (IHREC Act 2014) to eliminate discrimination, promote equality of opportunity and protect human rights in carrying out its functions.*
- *WWETB will embed a concern for equality and human rights in all its programmes and operations.*

WWETB Strategy Statement 2018-2022

(WWETB, 2018)

Waterford & Wexford Education & Training Board Equality Policy

Waterford and Wexford Education and Training Board (hereinafter referred to as WWETB), is committed to providing a working and learning environment that is free from discrimination of any kind and to promoting diversity, fairness, and equity in matters of learning, recruitment, promotion, terms and conditions of employment and access to training and development. This is a requirement under the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act 2014 and the WWETB statement on Human Rights and Equality

(WWETB, Equality Policy, 2019)

1.2 Our Core Values

The core values that we believe each team member should have ownership of and which should permeate all that we do as educators are.

Respect

We respect all those who benefit from our services, those who deliver our services and those who support the work of our organisation in any manner.

Accountability

We are accountable to a wide range of stakeholders; the Board of WWETB, our funders especially SO-LAS, the Department of Education and Skills, Department of Children and Youth affairs. All of our programmes aim to make the best use of the available resources and give value for money (WWETB, 2018).

Learner Focus

We are a needs-based organisation; existing to meet the needs of our learners, both as individuals and within communities.

Quality

We seek to deliver quality services; we do this by delivering programmes that are effective in meeting the needs of their target groups and are efficient in terms of delivery.



Figure 3: WWETB Core Values (WWETB, 2018)

1.3 Organisation Structure

As set out in the Education and Training Boards Act 2013, Waterford and Wexford Education and Training Board is a local statutory, education and training authority with its own corporate structure.

WWETB is governed by a board comprising twenty-one members. This includes twelve representatives from the local City and County Councils of Waterford and Wexford; two members elected from staff; two parent/guardian representatives; and five members with a special knowledge of education and training including a learner representative and a business representative. The work of the organisation is further supported by boards of management in each of WWETB's fourteen schools/ colleges. In accordance with the reserved functions set out under Section 12(i) of the Act, WWETB has established a number of Committees to support its work. There is also a Board of Management for Youthreach.

These are:

- Finance Committee
- Audit Committee
- Youth Work Committee
- Four Area Committees: Waterford City & County, South Wexford, North Wexford (WWETB, 2018).

WWETB functions include three workstreams.

- Schools
- Organisation Structure and Development (OSD)
- Further Education and Training (FET).



1.4 Schools

WWETB's educational and training provision includes 12 post-primary schools and 1 national school as follows:

- Bridgetown College
- Bunclody Vocational College
- Coláiste Abbáin, Adamstown
- Coláiste an Átha, Kilmuckridge
- Dungarvan College – Coláiste Dhún Garbhán
- Creagh College, Gorey
- Enniscorthy Community College
- Kennedy College, New Ross
- Meánscoil San Nioclás, Rinn Ua gCuánach
- Selskar College, Wexford Town
- St. Declan's Community College
- St. Paul's Community College
- Kilnamanagh Community National School

Waterford and Wexford ETB places learning and the learner at the heart of its educational provision and the website provides visitors with an insight into the wide range of programmes and services on offer.

Schools in Waterford and Wexford ETB are inclusive and enable young people to reach their full potential both academically and personally. The schools endeavour to empower students, staff and parents to achieve educational progress in a positive and encouraging environment.

Programmes offered in schools* in WWETB include:

- Junior Cycle
- Junior Certificate Schools Programme (JCSP)
- Transition Year Programme
- Leaving Certificate Established
- Leaving Certificate Applied
- Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme
- Post Leaving Certificate Courses

**Each school offers a unique selection of the courses outlined above.*

WWETB is very proud to include the only Gaeltacht in the South East of Ireland in the group of its post-primary schools. Meánscoil San Nioclás in Rinn Úa gCuanach has been part of the ETB group of schools since the late 1990s. As a Gaeltacht school, its emphasis is on providing Irish language instruction to post-primary students in the area up to, and including Leaving Certificate.

A wide range of subjects are offered in the schools including languages, humanities, creative arts, technologies and science. A varied curriculum is offered at both Junior and Senior Cycle and students are encouraged to take part in all aspects of school life including co-curricular activities such as sport, music, drama, debating, active citizenship and environmental awareness campaigns, to mention but a few. The WWETB Schools consist of Principal, Deputy Principal(s), Assistant Principals, Teachers, SNA's, Ancillary and Administration Staff, each of which is an essential cog on the wheel and is necessary to achieve a positive learning environment for all. Schools also work with key stakeholders to ensure healthy partnerships in education.

1.5 Organisation Structure and Development

Organisation Support and Development or OSD is one of the three directorates within WWETB and is responsible for putting in place the systems and structures necessary to support the delivery of WWETB's education and training services and programmes.

The following services and programmes are delivered through the Organisation Support and Development function:

- Human Resources
- Finance
- Corporate Services
- Music Generation

1.6 Further Education and Training (FET)

WWETB offers Further Education and Training across 33 FET centres, in addition to community outreach locations. In 2021/22 WWETB FET supported over 20,000 learners across an offering of 3,086 courses.

In total, Waterford Wexford ETB employs approx. 875 staff in the FET division. The FET Director coordinates an FET management and support team with around sixty staff covering the following functions:

- QA management and support functions
- Services to Business
- Training centres and provision
- VTOS & BTEI programmes
- Community Education & Training
- Youthreach, CTC and Youth Affairs
- Adult Literacy, Language, Access & Inclusion
- Adult Education Guidance Service (SOLAS, 2018)

Since publication of (SOLAS, 2018), PLCs (Post Leaving Certificate) Programmes have transferred from Schools and now also come under the management structure of the FET section.

1.7 The Equality & Human Rights Committee

Waterford and Wexford Education and Training Board established a steering group to support the implementation of the public sector duty on behalf of the organisation in May 2021. The Steering group consists of a representative from the three workstreams- Schools, Further Education and Training (FET) and Organisation Structure and Development (OSD) and is chaired by the Innovation and Development Manager, Michael O Brien.

As part of the implementation plan, the committee reviewed the progress, documentation and reports from previous WWETB Equality and Human Rights working group and took guidance from IHREC. It was decided that the three-step approach contained within Implementing the Public Sector Equality & Human Right Duty (Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission, 2019) would form the basis of the implementation plan.



2 Introduction to the IHREC Public Sector Duty

All public bodies in Ireland have a legal responsibility to promote equality, prevent discrimination and protect the human rights of their employees, customers, service users and everyone affected by their services, policies and plans.

The Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission (IHREC) is Ireland's national human rights organisation whose purpose is "to promote and protect human rights and equality in Ireland and build a culture of respect for human rights, equality and intercultural understanding in the State."

(IHREC, 2022)

The Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty (the 'Duty') originated in Section 42 of the Irish Equality & Human Rights Act, 2014 and places the statutory obligation on Waterford and Wexford Education and Training Board (WWETB), to put human rights and equality (HRE) in the mainstream across the entire organisation. It requires that HRE be considered in relation to all WWETB key functions, including the development of 'policies, plans, decision making processes, procurement, staff support, service delivery and improving the outcomes for our service users' (IHREC, 2019).

The implementation of the 'Duty' is supported and monitored by The Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission (IHREC). The IHREC has a mandate to give guidance to, and encourage, public bodies in developing policies and good practice in relation to human rights and equality.

All Public Sector staff should be aware of their duty, which is to be proactive in Equality and Human Rights promotion and ensure they do not discriminate in carrying out their function within the public sector. The IHREC have created training for the public sector to understand and uphold their duty in their roles within the public sector.

2.1 Equal Status Acts

The Equal Status Acts 2000-2018 ('the Acts') prohibit discrimination in the provision of goods and services, accommodation, and education. They cover nine specific grounds and a tenth condition 'economic disadvantage' in some circumstances.

1. *Gender*
2. *Marital status*
3. *Family status*
4. *Age*
5. *Disability*
6. *Sexual Orientation*
7. *Race*
8. *Religion*
9. *Membership of the Traveller Community*

(IHREC, 2022)

The Acts prohibit various forms of discrimination, indirect discrimination, discrimination by association, harassment and sexual harassment, and victimisation.

Direct discrimination

This is defined as the treatment of a person in a less favourable way than another person who is in a comparable situation because they differ on any of the nine grounds.

Discrimination by association

This occurs when a person who associates with another person is treated less favourably because that other person differs under any of the specified nine grounds.

Harassment and sexual harassment

These are described as any form of unwanted conduct related to any of the specified nine grounds. Sexual harassment is any form of unwanted verbal, nonverbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature.

Victimisation

This occurs where there is less favourable treatment of one person compared to another because one person has sought redress, attended as a witness, opposed an unlawful act under the Acts, or given notice of an intention to take any of these actions and the other person has not. (HREC, 2020)

Discriminatory advertising is also covered under the Acts. That is, it is specifically prohibited to publish, have on display or cause to be published or displayed, any advertisement which indicates an intention to discriminate, harass or sexually harass or that might reasonably be understood as indicating such an intention. In addition, the Acts allow for positive actions that promote equality for underrepresented and disadvantaged persons or to cater for the special needs of individuals.

2.2 Human Rights

Human rights are protected under International, European and Irish law. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1948 is the cornerstone of international human rights law. The European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, better known as the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) is the basis of the European human rights system. The ECHR was drafted by the Council of Europe in 1950 and has been in force since 1953. All 47 Council of Europe member states have signed the Convention (IHRE, 2015).

Ireland is committed to having human rights both at the heart of both national and foreign policy. The 1937 Constitution of Ireland, Bunreacht na hÉireann, predates both the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the European Convention on Human Rights and contains strong emphasis on fundamental rights, which are in effect, human rights principles by a different name. (DFA, Irish Government, 2022)

Human Rights are:

1. Universally agreed basic standards that aim to ensure that every person is treated with dignity and respect.
2. Interdependent and indivisible, meaning that rights are linked and not protecting one right may impact on another. For example, failure to protect the right to health may affect the right to life.
3. Inherent, meaning they belong to all people without discrimination. The principle of non-discrimination is at the centre of human rights and features in all of the human rights treaties; and
4. Usually set out in law, through international or regional treaties, or national legislation where they form a legal statement of universally accepted principles of how the state should treat its citizens and other people living within its jurisdiction.

Human Rights include:

Civil and Political Rights, such as the right to life, the right to a fair trial and the right not to be subjected to torture; and Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, such as the right to work, to join a trade union, to health, to education, and to an adequate standard of living.

...the state does not give people rights; these belong to everyone.

(IHREC, 2022)

The IHREC Review is undertaken to meet our obligations under The Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act 2014.

2.3 Other Legislation

There are many other legislations that inform this report and our practice, that promote and protect Equality and Human Rights in Ireland including;

- The Education Act 1998
- The Education of Persons with Special Educational Needs Act 2004
- The Disability Act, 2005
- The Employment Equality Acts 1998–2015
- THE Equal Status Acts 2000-2018
- The Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act 2014.
- The Web Accessibility Directive (2019)
- The Youth Work Act, 2001

3 The IHREC Public Sector Duty

The 'Duty' in section 42 a of the Irish Human Right and Equality Commission Act 2014 states that a Public Body shall in the performance of its functions, have regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination.
- Promote Equality of Opportunity and treatment of its staff and to the persons to whom it provides services and
- Protect the Human Rights of its members, staff and the persons to whom it provides its services.

Section 42 b establish three key steps that public bodies should follow, regarding implementing the Duty; **Assess, Address and report.**

The purpose of the duty is to highlight the need for proactivity and positive measures in addressing Equality and Human rights issues within a public sector body. It requires a public body to prepare and publish an assessment of the Equality and Human Rights issues relevant to its functions for identified groups, while keeping a focus on persons included under the nine grounds and of the potential impact of those at risk of poverty or social exclusion.

The Three Step Approach is taken from the publication 'Implementing the Public Sector Equality & Human Right Duty',

(IHREC,2019)

Step 1 Assess

Identify Equality and Human Rights issues relevant to the purpose and functions of an Organisation.

Objective

The objective of step 1 is to undertake an assessment to identify key equality and human rights issues for people to whom an organisation provides services and its staff.

Impact

Undertaking an evidence-based assessment of equality and human rights issues relevant to its purpose and functions assists an organisation to identify a basis from which to consider how to eliminate discrimination and protect human rights.

It also provides a basis from which to consider how to provide for equality of opportunity for diverse groups in the provision of services and in the workplace.

Drawing on the available evidence, including the knowledge and experience of the organisations staff and people to whom it provides services, the assessment informs the strategic cycle of planning, implementing and evaluation.

Take Action

Stages for Conducting a Human Rights and Equality Assessment.

These are set out in figure 1. It involves identifying structures and initiatives in place to support Human Rights and Equality. It involves identifying issues and prioritising areas for Action and proactive measures. It involves reporting on these actions and proactive measures in place or planned for in strategic planning documents that are accessible to the public.

It finally involves annual review of these actions and further actions and proactive measures for each planning cycle.

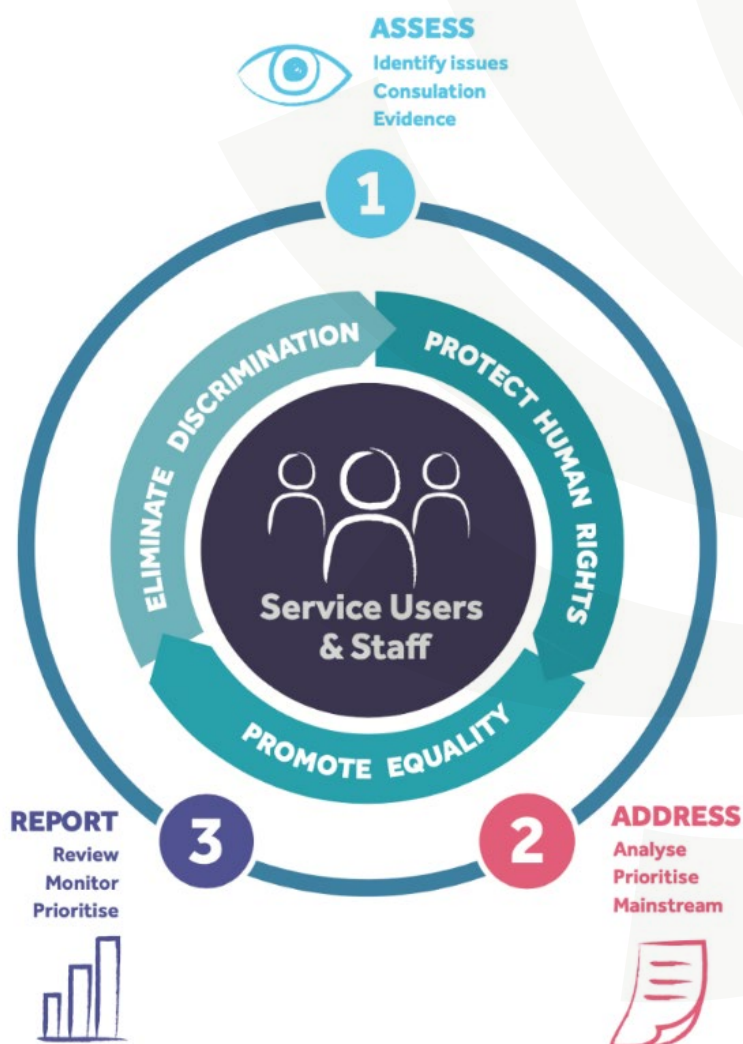


Figure 4: Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission, 2019 p.15

4 Assessment of Human Rights Issues

- Stakeholder (staff) survey
- Desk Based Research
- Report on staff survey
- Staff Consultation on draft report with feedback mechanism to inform report.
- Stakeholder Consultation on Desk Based Research with feedback mechanism to inform final draft of Assess report.
- Final Assess Report to Senior Management Team for to inform the Action Planning for Assess , Address and Report.
- Senior Management Team review and decide on Actions to be taken or that are already being taken in Equality & Human Rights for public reporting.
- Assess Report, Implementation Plan and Action Plan given in draft for SMT.
- Assess, Implementation Plan and Action Plan are published in a way that is accessible to the public.
- The Public Sector Duty to inform strategy and be reported on in key moments of the reporting cycle.



5 Evidence Base for this Assessment

WWETB Assessment of Equality and Human Rights is evidence based as it draws from the following data

- National Strategies
- CSO Data
- Research from IHREC
- Research from National Advocacy Agencies
- Solas Research
- ETBI Research
- Local Research

The 9 grounds covered by Equality legislation are **gender, marital status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race and membership of the Traveller community**. Another area that has implications for Equality is economic disadvantage. The aim of the assessment is to outline the situation and experience of disadvantaged and minority groups and barriers they are facing in society **in order to consider the plans that are in place or need to be put in place to address those issues**.

The fundamental rights that all people have which are held in Human Rights legislation are based on shared values such as **dignity, fairness, equality, respect, and independence**. These values are defined and protected by law.



Figure 5: IHREC Principles, HIQA 2021

Section 42 of the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act 2014 imposes a statutory obligation on public bodies in performing their functions to have regard to the need to eliminate discrimination; promote equality of opportunity and treatment for staff and persons to whom it provides services; and protect the human rights of staff and those that use its services (IHREC,2019).

6 Situation, Experience and Identity

The assessment of equality and human rights issues required under the public sector equality and human rights duty involves the identification of equality and human rights issues for the identified groups for the duty, specifically those that are relevant to the functions of the body. These are Equality and Human rights issues the public body could already be taking action on, are planning to take action on, or have taken action on in the past. It is not an assessment of the public body or its performance, it is only the foundation stone for the planned and systematic approach to Equality and Human Rights required by the Duty. The 'assessment of Equality and Human Rights issues', involves an examination of the situation, experience and identity of marginalized or disadvantaged groups for the Duty, to identify the key equality and Human Rights issues they face, and which have relevance to our function (Solas ,2022).

The **situation** of the group refers to disadvantage in the level and quality of resources the group can access, such as education and training services, as well as employment opportunities.

The **experience** of the group refers to the quality of the group's engagement with wider society, including their engagement with public services, both as employees and service participants.

The **identity** of the group refers to the manner in which the group gives expression to its identity and the specific needs that arise from diverse identities, such as needs arising from one's ethnicity, level of ability, gender identity expression (LCETB, 2020).



7. Gender – Women

The National Strategy for Women and Girls 2017-2020 creates a vision of 'an Ireland where all women enjoy Equality with men and can achieve their full potential, while enjoying a safe and fulfilling life' The National Strategy which sprung from a commitment made Internationally by governments at the United Nations Fourth World Conference on women (1995) which adopted a Declaration and Platform for Action on the following critical areas of concern,

- The persistent and increasing burden of poverty on women.
- Inequalities and inadequacies in and unequal access to education and training and in health and related services
- Violence against women
- The effect of armed or other kinds of conflict on women including those living under foreign occupation
- Inequality in economic structures and policies, in all sorts of productive activities and in access to resources
- Inequality between men and women in the sharing of power and decision making at all levels
- Insufficient mechanisms at all levels to promote the advancement of women
- Lack of respect for and inadequate promotion and protection of the Human Rights of women
- Stereotyping of women
- Inequality in women's access and participation in all communication systems, especially the media
- Gender inequalities in the management of natural resources and in the safeguarding of the environment
- Persistent discrimination against and violation of the girl child.

(BDPfA, 2015 cited in Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth, 2021)

Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, sets out a plan for the world and its people with 17 sustainable Development Goals and 169 targets, SDG 5 is concerned with the achievement of gender equality and empowerment of all women and girls, targets that inform Irelands National Plan are set out under this goal with a view to:

'ending discrimination, eliminating violence against women and harmful practices, recognising unpaid care and domestic work, ensuring women's full and effective participation in leadership and decision making, universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights, equal access to economic resources and enhancing the use of enabling technology'

(Department of Justice and Equality,2017 p10.)



Figure 6: UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) - 17 Goals to transform our World

The National Strategy displays that progress has been made on several issues such as Education, Employment opportunities, Gender quotas for National political parties, Women in the Civil Service and most significantly under hunger educational attainment. However there are still some persistent issues to be addressed.

7.1 Gender Pay Gap

The Gender pay gap is currently being investigated in Ireland with some valuable research taking place to identify if the gender pay gap is still prevalent in Irish employment with The Gender Pay Gap Information Act 2021 and Employment Equality Act 1998 (section 20a) (gender pay gap information) regulations 2022, 'which requires organisations to report on their hourly gender pay gap across a range of metrics'(Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth, 2022).

The ESRI report states 'The need to address the clear connection between caring responsibility and gender inequality in the labour market. Without greater equality in terms of unpaid work, greater gender equality in the labour market is unlikely to be achieved' (ESRI,2019).

Minister O Gorman 2022 in his introduction to the new legislation - The Gender Pay Gap Information Act 2021 which was signed into law on 13th July 2021 stated 'When it comes to participation in the labour market, women face far greater obstacles than men. Persisting gender stereotypes, the glass ceiling preventing women from senior positions, and the fact that women take on a much larger share of family caring responsibilities and unpaid work in the home, are all contributing factors to a significant pay disparity between women and men in Ireland' (O'Gorman, 2022).

7.2 Women in Consistent Poverty

Consistent poverty levels are higher in Ireland for women than men. In 2015, the consistent poverty rate for women was 9.1% compared to 8.3% for men. The risk of poverty for women over 65 is 2.6%, slightly less when compared to 2.9% for men over 65 (Department of Justice and Equality,2017).

The European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) each year publishes a Gender Equality Index to deduce the progress of gender equality in all EU member states. It states 'a women's mean monthly earnings are €2,808 in Ireland, compared to €3,423 for men, while the full-time equivalent employment rate for women is 43.9% compared to 60% for men. It also shows that on average a woman's working life in Ireland spans 33.1 years, in comparison with 40.1 for men'(EIGE,2021). This can have negative implications for financial security into the future for women as they may have less PRSI contribution and state entitlement in older age.

Women continue to be more likely to work on a part-time basis and almost 70% of all part-time workers are women. They are also more likely to work in work that is precarious, which is work that is uncertain, unpredictable, and risky from the point of view of the worker (National Women's Council ,2020).

7.3 Violence Against Women

According to the National Strategy on Women and Girls, (2017) Domestic and gender-based violence continues to be experienced by women across social classes and situations. According to the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) study published in 2014, 8% of women surveyed in Ireland experienced sexual violence by a partner or a non-partner since the age of 15, 24% of women surveyed in Ireland experienced physical violence by a partner or by a non-partner since the age of 15.

Women's Aid Ireland (cited in Trinity News), states 43,500 calls to respond to domestic abuse incidents in 2020, as well as 24,686 incidents of domestic abuse reported to An Garda Síochána in 2022 and from their website:

'One in four women in Ireland who have been in a relationship have been abused by a current or former partner'

(Women's Aid, 2022)

The 2020 Femicide Factsheet from Womens Aid shows that: 43 women aged between 18 and 25 years old have been murdered in Ireland since 1996 and of the resolved cases, 52% of women were murdered by a boyfriend or former partner. Other issues that are persistent for women are higher risk factors for intimate partner and sexual violence (Womens Aid, 2022).



8. Gender – Men

There is a dearth on research on Gender Issues of inequality for men in Ireland and issues that affect men which is problematic. Many issues of discrimination which are experienced by men are experienced in other Equality legislation grounds due to intersectional nature of identity.

Some of the main gendered issues highlighted by advocacy groups and research for men include access and information regarding Mental Health Supports and men experiencing Domestic Violence. Issues of gender equality which have been highlighted under family and womens rights are important for men also as legal and fiscal supports such as paternity leave and pay equality can bolster families and indeed support the mans role within the home as a co parent.

8.1 Violence Against Men

Domestic violence affects men and women and children of all genders. Men (including trans men) experience all elements of abuse and an added stigma of feeling reluctant to report. It can range from Coercive control, Intimate partner violence, Physical, Emotional and Sexual abuse. There are inequalities within the system for example, if a man needs to take his children to a shelter for domestic abuse there are none available in Ireland. They are also more often affected by parental alienation from their children.

8.2 Men and Mental Health

Although statistics display that Women are feeling low mental health more often than men (Department of Health, 2015), there is a much higher level of suicide among men than women and suicide is more prevalent among certain cohorts of men than others. Men appear less likely to seek support for Mental stress or difficulties and are more likely to turn to substance misuse or suicide than women.

Men in Ireland have experienced one of the fastest rising suicide rates in the world from 1980-2002. This rise has been most striking in young people (aged 25 years or under), who now have the second highest rate of suicide among the 30 OECD Member States, (National Men's Health Policy 2008 - 2013). In the review of this report it stated 'Over the past 10 years, the rate of deaths from suicide has been about 4-5 times higher in young males than in females (Department of Health and Children, 2008).

9 Gender - Transgender (Women & Men)

The Annual Report for 2017 prepared in accordance with section 6 of the Gender Recognition Act 2015 cited in the Journal article outlined that '99 people had been issued with gender recognition certificates in 2017, and 109 in 2016. Of these, two applications by 16/17-year-olds were granted in 2017, and six were granted in 2016. A total of 297 gender certificates were issued since the introduction of the legislation' (Journal, 2019).

A survey commissioned by the Transgender Equality Network of Ireland (TENI) revealed that 78 per cent of respondents had considered suicide – with 63 per cent of respondents saying they had thought about ending their own lives in the last year (Journal, 2019).

According to the Summary report Irish Research Council issued by TENI and University of Limerick, the post primary school experiences of Transgender and Gender Diverse (TGD) Youth in Ireland 'Without exception, TGD youth felt gender diversity was marginalised within their post-primary school'. The research stated that 'Marginalisation was linked to: (a) the lack of discussion around gender identity, (b) the absence of representation of TGD people, and (c) a lack of LGBTI+ supportive spaces.

The marginalisation of gender diversity was found to deny TGD students the information they required to process their gender identity as well as terminology with which to discuss their gender identity with others. This led many TGD youth to feel shameful about their gender identity and anxious about discussing their gender identity with others. As a result, some TGD youth concealed their gender identity for an extended period, which could detrimentally affect their self-confidence, well-being, social connectedness, and academic attainment (UL & TENI,2020).

The transgender and gender diverse youth study Co-authored by UL's Irish Research Council Fellow and Marie Curie Fellow, Dr Ruari-Santiago McBride, The Post-Primary School Experiences of Transgender and Gender Diverse Youth in Ireland, made the following recommendations.

1. The school curriculum needs to be more inclusive of gender identity and gender expression.
2. Schools need to review their uniform policy and provision of gender-neutral facilities.
3. The importance of school staff affirming transgender and gender diverse youth's identity by using their preferred name and pronoun. (TENI & UL, 2020)

The report findings state 'There is also the need for proactivity at the level of national policy to ensure schools become more inclusive of gender diversity. There is also the need to establish a National Gender Identity and Gender Expression in Education Working Group, which would involve participation of all relevant education stakeholders' (TENI & UL,2020).

9.1 The Risk factors for both intimate partner and sexual violence

Although Intimate Partner violence can affect men women and youth and sexual violence can be perpetrated against children of both sexes, there are higher risk factors for some individuals within society.

- lower levels of education (perpetration of sexual violence and experience of sexual violence).
- a history of exposure to child maltreatment (perpetration of sexual violence and experience of sexual violence).
- witnessing family violence (perpetration of sexual violence and experience of sexual violence).
- antisocial personality disorder (perpetration of sexual violence)
- harmful use of alcohol (perpetration of sexual violence and experience of sexual violence).
- harmful masculine behaviours, including having multiple partners or attitudes that condone violence (perpetration of sexual violence).
- community norms that privilege or ascribe higher status to men and lower status to women
- low levels of women's access to paid employment; and low level of gender equality (discriminatory laws, etc.) (WHO, 2019)



10. Family Status

Discrimination on the 'family status ground' occurs where there is less favourable treatment of one person compared to another person because one person has family status and the other does not or, has a different family status (IHREC, 2020).

10.1 Family Carers

'The census showed a total of 195,263 persons (4.1% of population) were providing unpaid assistance to others, an increase of 8,151 (4.4%) on the 2011 figure of 187,112. Women made up just over 6 in 10 carers (60.5%, 118,151 carers) with 77,112 (39.5%) men. There were 3,800 children under 15 years engaged in providing care to others, accounting for 1.9 per cent of all carers' (CSO,2016).

The National Strategy for Women and girls' states that the programme for government committed to support families where one parent stays at home to care for children through an increase in Home Carers Credit by €100 annually providing additional support to jointly assessed couples where one person stays at home to care for their children or incapacitated persons. This measure falls short in the support of economic security and does not support lone parents and caregivers. Findings from ESRI data outline that there is a significant and persistent imbalance in Ireland between men and women in relation to unpaid work and caring responsibilities and that this impacts negatively on equality for enhanced employment and economic opportunities. The latest figures from CSO (2016) state that 76% of Carers in receipt of social welfare support, Carers Benefit or Carers Allowance are female, 53,978 compared to 16,481 male carers (CSO,2016).

- The majority (55%) of those providing unpaid care on a daily basis in Ireland are in employment.
- Ireland has the third highest weekly hours of unpaid work for both men and women which reflects the relatively low State involvement in support for caring.
- On average women spend double the time of men on caring and more than twice as much time on housework. A substantial gender gap persists even among men and women doing the same amount of paid work (ESRI,2019).

The report states that there is 'A need for changes in social and employment policies that support carers, facilitate the combination of care and employment and encourage greater male participation in care' (ESRI,2019).

10.2 Lone Parents

There were 218,817 families headed by one parent, the vast majority of whom (86.4%) were one parent mothers. Almost 90,000 (89,686) were single; a further 50,496 were widowed while the remaining 68,378 were separated or divorced (CSO, 2016). Therefore, one in four families according to the CSO 2019 figures are one parent households. The SILC report, 2020 stated 'Those living in households with one adult and one or more children aged under 18 had the highest enforced deprivation rate in 2019 at 45.4%.'

Lone parents are less likely to have upper secondary, Further or Higher educational qualifications than the general population (Czhen and Bradshaw, 2012). This has important implications for the FET sector, since education and training provides an opportunity to reduce barriers to employment (Mooney & O'Rourke, 2017). According to SVP research (2014) the ability of lone parents to engage in employment is highly dependent on policy changes and available support.



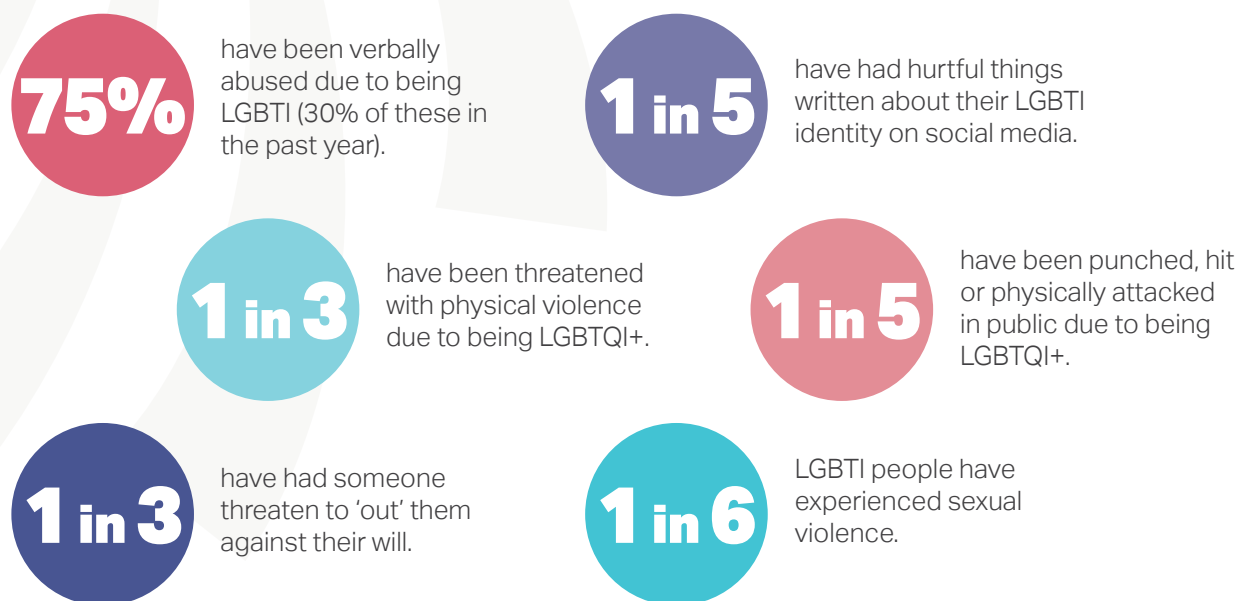
11. Sexual Orientation

In Ireland, ground-breaking legislation has been enacted which increase Equality and Human Rights for people that are LGBTQ + such as;

- Ireland introduced civil partnership for same sex couples in 2010
- The Marriage Act 2015 Marriage Equality for same sex couples which provides legal certainty for children of same sex couples
- The Children and Family Relationships Act 2015 which addresses the rights of children to legal security, to the care of their parents and important adults in their lives, and to equality before the law.
- The Paternity Leave and Benefit Act 2016 which introduced paid statutory leave for new fathers for the first time in Ireland. Recognising the importance of enabling fathers to take on a greater sharing of caring responsibilities for their children.
- The Gender Recognition Act 2015 provides for a person to apply for a Gender Recognition Certificate to have their preferred gender recognised by the State.

11.1 LGBTQIA + Experience

The LGBTIreland Report (2016), a groundbreaking study of the mental health of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) people in Ireland states that LGBTI people continue to experience victimisation and harassment in their day-to-day lives and that there has not been a significant reduction in these experiences since the Supporting LGBT Lives study in 2009.



(GLEN, BeLonGTo and The National Office for Suicide Prevention and Trinity College Dublin, 2016).

11.2 LGBTQIA+ in School

Younger LGBTI people were more likely to have been threatened with being outed and more likely to say they felt unsafe or very unsafe going to or leaving an LGBTI venue.

Those currently in school or who had been in school in the previous 5 years rated how LGBTI-friendly their school was, with most giving a rating of 5 out of 10. This compares to college/ university and workplace ratings of 10 out of 10 for LGBTI-friendliness (10 = completely LGBTI-friendly). This discrepancy is most likely accounted for by the findings on LGBTI students' negative experiences in Irish schools,

- Only 20% of LGBTI students felt they belonged completely in their school.
- Only 44% of LGBTI students said they received positive affirmation of their identity.
- 67% witnessed bullying of other LGBTI students in their school.
- 50% of LGBTI students personally experienced anti-LGBTI bullying.
- 1 in 4 missed or skipped school to avoid negative treatment due to being LGBTIQI.
- 1 in 4 considered leaving school early and approximately 1 in 20 quit school.
- Students who experienced anti-LGBTI bullying in school had higher levels of depression, anxiety, stress and alcohol use. Students who experienced anti-LGBTI bullying in school were more likely to self-harm, to seriously consider ending their life and to attempt suicide (Mayock et al, 2009).

Belong To's School Climate Survey (2019) indicates that a staggering 73% of LGBTQ+ students feel unsafe at school, with 1 in 3 reporting that other students are unaccepting of LGBTQ+ identities. Positively, the research also found that LGBTQ+ students who witnessed staff intervene when homophobic remarks were made were 15% more likely to feel that they belong in their school, and 8% less likely to miss school days due to feeling unsafe.



12. Disability

People that have a disability are not a homogeneous but very diverse group that have very different issues or barriers preventing their full participation in education training and employment. There have been barriers to inclusion along many different dimensions; institutional, environmental, and as a result of these barriers and historical lack of inclusion, internalised barriers.

There have also been models of support that have stifled progress such as the Medical model and the Charitable model. In Irish society the social model of disability and Human Rights Approach is now enshrined in legislation. UNICEF have stated that the greatest barriers to inclusion are 'stigma, prejudice, ignorance and lack of training and capacity building'(UNICEF,2013). They outline the following barriers to inclusion,

- **Physical barriers** – for example, buildings, transportation, toilets and playgrounds that cannot be accessed by wheelchair users.
- **Communication and information barriers** – such as textbooks unavailable in Braille, or public health announcements delivered without sign language interpretation.
- **Attitudinal barriers** – like stereotyping, low expectations, pity, condescension, harassment and bullying.

According to DESSA (2021) 'Disabled children are among the most marginalised and excluded groups of children, experiencing widespread violations of their rights. Their experience – lack of opportunity, social isolation, discrimination and bullying are caused, not by their conditions, but are a lack of understanding and knowledge, of ignorance and outdated views of disability' (UNICEF cited in DESSA, 2021).

12.1 Disability – Health and Service provision

Disability health and support services has been under funded and under resourced for decades. This has been most commonly evidenced in lack of Early intervention, Health Care Appointments and surgeries, specialist support and lack of therapeutical interventions. Lack of equipment and assistive technologies to support children born with impairments.

- 44,592 children are on waiting lists for speech and language services across Ireland.
- More than 16,000 children are awaiting initial assessments, with around 3,600 on waiting lists for over 12 months.
- A further 9,574 were waiting for initial therapy, with almost half waiting more than a year.
- Some 18,552 more were awaiting further therapy with more than 6,000 on waiting lists for more than a year.
- 4,137 children on the CAYMHS waitlist for Mental Health support in March 2022 (Irish Examiner, Sep 2022))
- The wait time for Autism Assessment after initial referral as a public patient to HSE can take up to 3 years

(Irish Society for Autism, 2021)

12.2 Disability and Education

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of persons with Disabilities - Education:

The right of persons with disabilities to education without discrimination and on the basis of equal opportunity and the right to an inclusive education system at all levels, in the communities in which they live, and lifelong learning opportunities.

In education there has been historic difficulties with a lack of Inclusion in mainstream schools. Lack of training for teachers in specialist education. Lack of funding for the Education for Person with Special Educational Needs Act EPSEN Act 2004 that is still not fully resourced in 2022, which means that the statutory sanctions for non-compliance have been shelved since budget 2010. Delayed ratification of the United Nations Convention on the rights for persons with disabilities (UNCRPD), which was signed by Ireland in 2007 and ratified in 2018, the optional protocol still not signed due to a lack of National legislation and services to meet UNCRPD obligation. This has led to the following outcomes for people with disabilities and their families;

- Lack of school placements and Units for Autism.
- Lack of funding for schools for Special Needs Assistants, resource teaching and educational support. Lack of availability of NEPS psychologists for assessments.
- Lack of psychological services, speech and language, physiotherapists, occupational therapists and CAHMS for school age children.
- Lack of Autism Unit spaces in secondary schools

In the Further and Higher Education sector there has historically been a lack of progression and pathways in to mainstream further and higher education and targeted programmes for people that have an intellectual disability. Lack of services and supports in Further and Higher Education for neurodiversity.

Lack of facilities, resources and ambition for inclusion and lack of voice and agency for the disabled. This has resulted in a lack of academic opportunity, choice and vocational training for employment and routes to higher education for people that have disabilities.

After education there are a lack of employment opportunities which can lead to poverty and social isolation. A lack of Supportive Recruitment policies, Reasonable Accommodations and a lack of visibility in the workplace.

These barriers to full enjoyment of their human rights can be considered as ableism which can be defined as a society that is set up for the maximum benefit of people that are not disabled.

Universal design is necessary to support people that have a disability have access to our built environment and in education Universal design for learning can support the many diverse learning styles within the classroom.

The National Disability Inclusion Strategy 2017- 2021 outlined the following areas as themes for improvement for people that have an impairment and are disabled by society.

1. *Equality and Choice*
2. *Joined up policies and public services*
3. *Education*
4. *Employment*
5. *Health and Wellbeing*
6. *Person centred disability services*
7. *Living in the Community*
8. *Transport and access to places*

(Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth, 2020).



12.3 Disability and Employment

In the '**Comprehensive Employment Strategy for People with Disabilities**' it recommends; Implementation of the Comprehensive Employment Strategy for Persons with Disabilities, including an increase of the public service employment target from 3% to 6%, the arrangement of special public service competitions and the opening up of alternative recruitment channels.

The National Household Surveys 2010-2015 concerning employment transitions of people with disabilities shows that in the 20-59 age group, 31% of people with a disability are in paid employment, compared to 71% of those without a disability

The Irish government signed up to the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2007) and have recently ratified it (2018) without the optional protocol. Article 27 key points;

- People with disabilities have the right to work on an equal basis, with others.
- People with disabilities have effective access to vocational guidance, placement, and training.
- Employing people with disabilities should be promoted through affirmative action and other measures.
- People with disabilities are provided reasonable accommodation at work.
- Work experience as a measure to employ people with disabilities should be promoted in the open labour market programme of reform in disability and mental health.

The Comprehensive Employment Strategy for People with Disabilities 2015-2024 states 'Development of proposals to address access to, or affordability of, necessary aids, appliances and assistive technologies required for everyday living, for those people with disabilities whose entry, retention or return to work could be jeopardised due to being unable to afford these items' (Government of Ireland, 2014).



13. Race

Ireland signed up to the CERD convention in 2000 which is the International Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Racial Discrimination and last appeared before the committee in 2011. In parallel to the Irish government's official CERD submission, the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission has a mandate to provide a separate independent report on how Ireland is meeting its international legal obligations to combat racial discrimination under CERD. In its Interim Report to the Minister for Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth, The Anti-Racism Committee outlined its definition of Racism as " the power dynamics present in those structural and institutional arrangements, practices, policies and cultural norms, which have the effect of excluding or discriminating against individuals or groups, based on their identity, as outlined in Article 1 of the International Convention for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (ICERD), which defines the term "racial discrimination" -as any distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference based on race, colour, descent, or national or ethnic origin which has the purpose or effect of nullifying or impairing the recognition, enjoyment or exercise, on an equal footing, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural or any other field of public life" (HEA, 2022).

The EU Action Plan Against Racism 2020-2025 acknowledges the prevalence and impact of racism across the EU, and states: Racism comes in different forms. Overt expressions of individual racism and racial discrimination are the most obvious. All too often, racial or ethnic origin is used as a ground to discriminate – the COVID-19 pandemic and the aftermath of terrorist attacks are just the most recent cases where blame has been unjustly directed at people with a minority racial or ethnic background. People of Asian and African descent, Muslims, Jewish and Roma people have all suffered from intolerance. But other, less explicit forms of racism and racial discrimination, such as those based on unconscious bias, can be equally damaging.

The HEA have published a Race Equality report and a Race Equality Implementation Plan which plan to tackle racial inequalities within the Higher Education sector. This plan has implications for the Further Education sector and recommendations for good practice.

Recommendations from the Higher Education Sector that could be adapted to Further Education

Providing mandatory race equality training

- For all members of recruitment panels
- Mandatory antiracism training for staff at all levels with an emphasis on intersectionality.
- Training to include elements such as bystander intervention, unconscious bias, cultural intelligence, equitable practice and racial justice.
- These should also counter myths about positive discrimination
- Clear signposting to existing policies relating to race equality
- Clear signposting of disciplinary and reporting procedures in relation to race equality on campus

Sustained anti-racist campaigns on campus and on online platforms

- Targeting advertising towards ethnic minority groups
- Providing immigration advice for non EEA staff to reduce employment difficulties.
- A National Anti-Racism Campaign across the Irish HE sector.

Guidance on recruitment/promotion/progression practices across the Irish HE sector

- Targeted advertising towards ethnic minority groups – which will be developed by the Athena SWAN Intersectionality Working Group.
- Voluntary Disclosure Campaign focussed on highlighting the importance of equality monitoring data.

A National Anti-Racism Campaign across the Irish HE sector,

- Development of a campaign across campuses and on online platforms.
- Guidance on recruitment/promotion/progression practices across the Irish HE sector – particularly relating to targeted advertising towards ethnic minority groups
- Voluntary Disclosure Campaign focussed on highlighting the importance of equality monitoring data (HEA, 2022).

14 Membership of the Traveller Community

"All over the world, people see employment and education leading to better employment as the route to breaking free from poverty in an honest and dignified way. Yet for the majority of the Traveller community, this opportunity is not there. Doors to employment are closed to them because of their Traveller identity, many members of our community feeling they have no other choice but to hide their identity to get a job, or out of fear of losing their job, being subjected to anti-Traveller racism in the workplace, anti-Traveller racism continues to go unchecked in the workplace as it continues to go unchecked in the education system, and in society as a whole. The result is a community in crisis due to poverty and want, a proud and once self-sufficient people now overly dependent on the state, while their skills and talents go unused and wasted."

Minceirs Whiden, December 10, 2019.

Submission to the Oireachtas Committee on Key Issues Affecting the Traveller Community



14.1 Traveller Experience of Education

A 2018 report by the National Economic and Social Council (NESC) examined the experiences and services interaction of those in households where no one is working or where there is only marginal attachment to the labour force. The report noted that the groups most likely to be facing multiple reasons for unemployment were Travellers and African migrants, citing literacy/language proficiency issues, lack of work experience, discrimination, and length of time out of work.

The NESC report identified specific barriers that hinder Traveller women's participation in employment and related labour market supports, including childcare responsibilities or caring responsibilities for a family member with a disability; or having their access to state employment services hindered when they are not in receipt of a social welfare payment in their own right.

The ESRI found that while almost two-thirds of the employment gap between Travellers and non-Travellers is accounted for by educational disadvantage, when the data are adjusted to account for education, age, gender, marital status, and the presence of children, the employment gap still remains significant. This, they note, is accounted for by the presence of direct and indirect discrimination and prejudice, which play a significant role in Traveller unemployment.

- 13.3% of Traveller females were educated to upper secondary level or above, compared with 69% of the general population,
- 57.2% of Traveller males were educated to primary level at most, compared with 13.6% of the general population.
- 167 Travellers had a third-level qualification, an increase of just seventy-eight from the 2011 Census.
- Data on further education and training outcomes for Travellers indicate that women strongly outnumber men at all levels of further education and training provision.
- Qualitative research indicates that Travellers have mixed experiences in accessing and participating in education. Negative experiences, in particular issues of racism, and low expectations of their potential from teachers, have been identified as key barriers to good educational outcomes, for Traveller children and young people.
- Funding decisions to cut Traveller-specific education supports, such as the Visiting Teacher Service and Resource Teachers for Travellers, have also been identified as having an adverse impact on Traveller children's education.
- Between 2008 and 2012 state funding to Traveller-specific educational supports was reduced by 87%. This compares to an overall reduction in government spending, during the same period, of just 4%.²² These supports were not subsequently reinstated, yet, in 2017, the ESRI noted that "The depth of educational disadvantage experienced by Travellers means that specific, targeted additional supports will be required in order for them to participate in mainstream education on equal terms

According to the 'report and recommendations for a traveller Education Strategy' (2005)

The ambition for Traveller Education is that it should be mainstream and inclusive and strive to achieve equality of access, equality of participation and equality of outcome for Travellers from education in the context of lifelong learning.

It should promote Intercultural and anti-bias education that recognises that cultural diversity is a strength to be validated, celebrated, and nurtured. Education should address the danger of racism and discrimination. It should be inclusive, provide equity, support diversity and not be predicated on the assumption that all travellers have learning difficulties.

The report defines inclusion to encompass some of the following;

- The integration of Travellers in mainstream provision at all levels of the education system, in a fully inclusive model of educational provision, thereby creating a positive environment for all the traveller community.
- The provision of resources in accordance with identified educational need.
- The promotion and acceptance of parity of esteem, whereby difference is acknowledged, respected and welcomed
- All components of pre service, induction and continuing professional development courses for teachers/tutors to be informed by the principles of equality, diversity and inclusion; all those involved in the education system should have an understanding of anti-discrimination, anti-racism, anti-bias and interculturalism, so that all educational professionals will have the skills, knowledge and attitudes for dealing with issues and challenges and for making the inclusive school system a reality. Within this inclusive context, Traveller identity and culture would be addressed.
- Affirmation and support in education for Travellers with disabilities and also for their parents.
- The provision of education in a way that accepts and validates the identity of all traveller learners including travellers with disabilities (Department of Education and Skills, 2006).



15 Roma Community in Ireland





According to the Assessment of Need report (2018), Roma families were identified in every county in Ireland. The largest communities of Roma are estimated to be in Dublin, Louth, Kildare, Wexford, Cork, Kerry, Clare and Donegal. The mapping identified Roma from Romania, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary and Poland; with the majority from Romania (approx. 80%)

The length of time that respondents have lived in Ireland spans from less than a year to 19 years. 70% of respondents had been living in Ireland for five years or more; 14% for 15 years or more. 20% of respondents had been living in Ireland for eight years, coinciding with Romanian and Bulgarian accession to the EU in 2007. A consistent reason that people gave for migration to Ireland was for a better life for their children.

Discrimination and Poverty were the most pressing issues for Roma in Ireland most especially in Roma that wore traditional clothes and those who had less fluency in English. Poverty was experienced in many different domains as per the second table (Pavee Point Traveller and Roma Centre & Department of Justice and Equality, 2018).

Felt discriminated against	% of respondents
Getting a job	78.9% (n=76)
Getting accommodation	93.3% (n=90)
Getting social welfare	84.3% (n=83)
At health services	70.5% (n=78)
Getting served in a shop, restaurant, pub or other social venue	74.7% (n=87)
In the street or another public setting	81.1% (n=90)
From the guards or in the courts	53.8% (n=78)
By a landlord or local authority	76.2% (n=77)

*Pavee Point Traveller and Roma Centre & Department of Justice and Equality (2018)
Roma in Ireland – A National Needs Assessment, p.51*

Percentage of respondents	Facing some or all of the issues below
 <p>0 - 20% respondents (Approx)</p>	<p>No kitchen (12.4%) No cooker (9.6%) No fridge (13.5%) Sometimes without food, gas, water and/or electricity Household with 10+ people (7.3%) Overcrowded and poor quality accommodation No PPS number – limited access to services (19.8%) Begging as a source of income (17.6%) No income (14%)</p>
 <p>0 - 60% respondents (Approx)</p>	<p>Children gone to school hungry (25%) Not always enough food (49.5%) Not always enough fuel (46.2%) Cannot keep the house warm all the time (66.3%) Not enough money for books and uniforms (57.5%)</p>

Pavee Point Traveller and Roma Centre & Department of Justice and Equality (2018) Roma in Ireland – A National Needs Assessment p.61

15.1 Roma and Education

The Needs Assessment report stated in relation to the education of Roma children that, 'respondents viewed education as a positive opportunity for Roma children in Ireland and parents stressed the value they placed on their children receiving an education'. It stated that 'over 70% of households children attended primary and post-primary school'. It also stated there were, 'significant challenges to the participation, attendance and attainment of Roma children in the Irish education system' and 'poverty and poor living conditions act as formidable barriers to accessing and participating in education as 25% of households respondents reported that children have gone to school hungry'. The respondents also cited 'Inadequate English language and literacy supports for children and parents as issues, as were parents' own experiences in education including discrimination, segregation and low educational attainment' (Pavee Point Traveller and Roma Centre & Department of Justice and Equality, 2018).

15.2 Literacy Difficulties

In the Needs Assessment 71.2% of respondents reported that they have difficulty reading English forms and 66% said they had difficulty filling in English forms. In 84% of households respondents received help reading and writing in English. It highlighted that 'services which require a lot of written material to engage with, need to take this into account' (Pavee Point Traveller and Roma Centre & Department of Justice and Equality, 2018).

16. Economic Disadvantage

Ireland demonstrates a remarkably high proportion of individuals with tertiary level education (OECD, 2020; Smyth and McCoy, 2021). This high rate of educational attainment in comparison to other OECD states is attributed to the introduction of free second-level education in the 1960s and the introduction of free third-level education in the 1990s. The Growing Up in Ireland (GUI) longitudinal study has reported that 87% of 20 year olds surveyed have undertaken at least one training course since leaving school (O'Mahony et al., 2021).

According to the report 'Intergenerational Poverty in Ireland (2022), Curristan, S., Maître, B., Russell, H.,

'educational attainment is of particular interest as it has been identified by scholars as the single most critical factor for enabling social mobility and the transmission of (dis)advantage (Erikson and Goldthorpe, 2002; Jerrim and MacMillan, 2015).

According to Black and Devereux (2011) several reasons may underpin this effect. First, people with higher education tend to have larger incomes, and the availability of income may positively influence their children's educational attainment.

Second, parental education may be linked to parents' investment in their children; past studies have demonstrated a link between education levels and time spent with one's children (Guryan et al., 2008; Smyth, 2016). Research by Jerrim and Macmillan (2015) proposes that it is high income families' capacity to invest in their children's development that is critical to the transmission of advantage (Curristan, 2022).



16.1 Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE's)

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE's) are stressful or traumatic experiences that can have a huge impact on children and young people throughout their lives and have a huge impact on their futures regarding quality of life; socially, academically, and economically. There are ten recognised ACE's as follows;

Abuse

- Physical, Sexual and/or Verbal

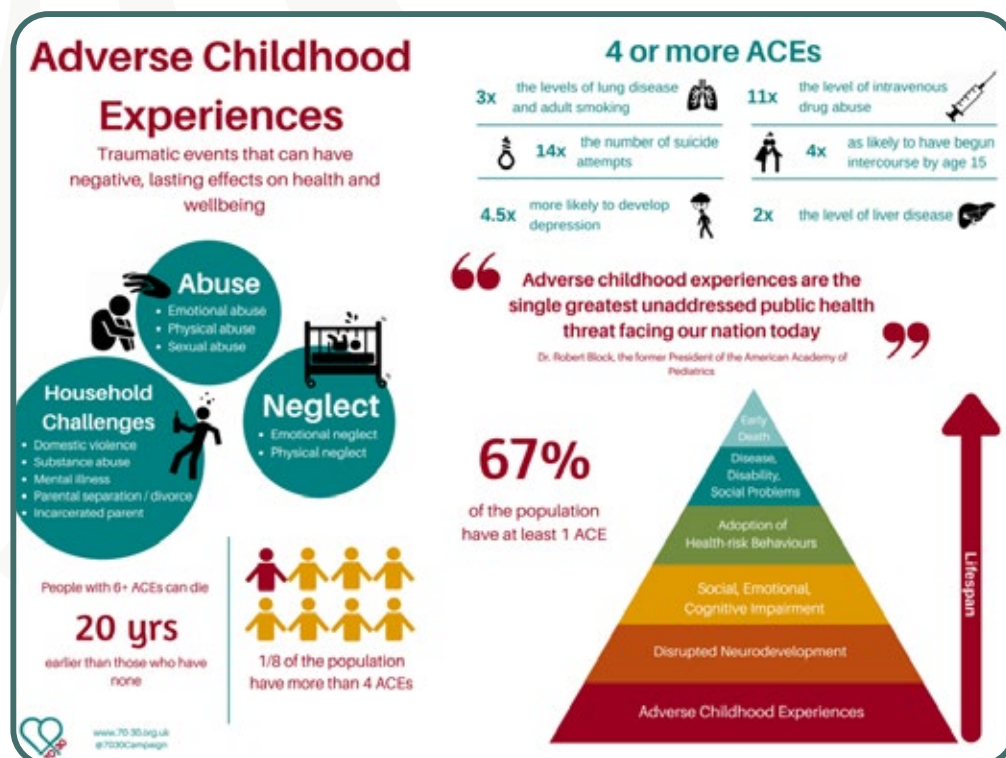
Neglect

- Emotional and Physical

Growing up in a household where;

- There are adults with alcohol and drugs problems
- There are adults with Mental Health Issues
- There is domestic violence
- There are adults that have spent time in prison
- Parents have separated

According to the NEPS research study (2017) 'A profile of learners in Youthreach, there are a range of other types of Childhood adversity that have similar negative long-term effects; bereavement, bullying, poverty, community adversities such as living in a deprived area and neighbourhood violence.



16.2 Adverse Community Environments

Although adversities do not affect every individual in the same way possibly due to resilience factors and individual dispositions, studies have shown that experiencing 5 or more of these ACE's without mitigation can have severe negative impact on an individual's neurological growth and brain development and can affect their future outcomes.

A research study conducted by NEPS (2017) outlined that the greater number of ACEs the greater the risk of negative outcomes for individuals learners for example with more than two ACE's were found to be three times more likely than those with none to experience academic failure, six times more likely to have behavioural problems, five times more likely to have attendance problems; while having four ACE's was associated with a seven fold increase in alcoholism and an ACE score above six was associated with a 30 fold increase in suicide (NEPS, 2017). Community factors also impact individuals' experiences of Adverse Childhood Experiences.

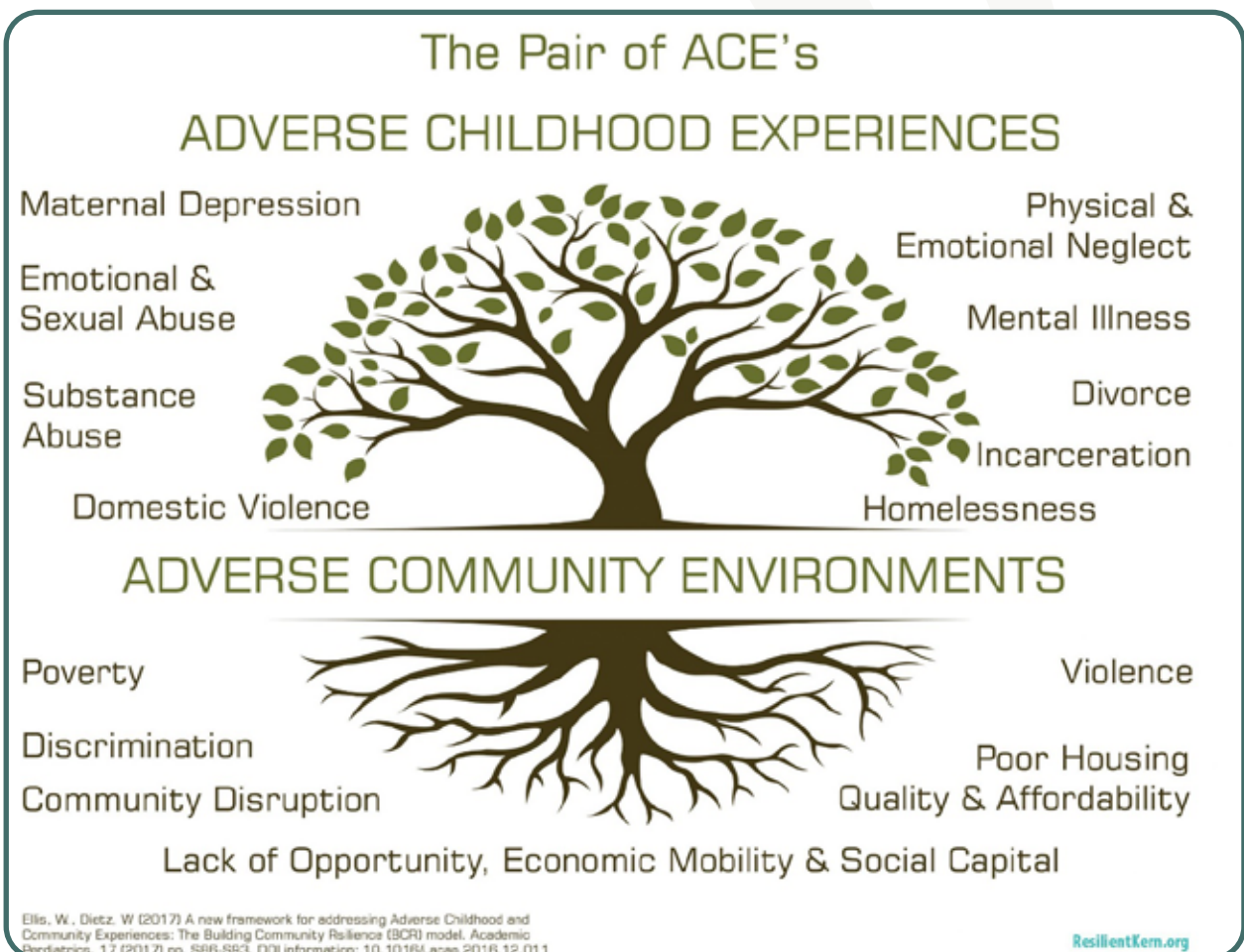


Figure 8: Ellis, W., Dietz, W (2017) A new framework for addressing Adverse Childhood and Community Experiences

The following non –exhaustive list indicates the kinds of difficulties that have been found to be associated with ACEs (NEPS,2017)

Alcoholism and alcohol abuse	Ischemic Heart Disease	Multiple Sexual Partners	Early Initiation of Smoking
Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary disease	Liver Disease	Sexually transmitted diseases	Early Initiation of Sexual Activity
Depression	Poor Work Performance	Smoking	Adolescent Pregnancy
Foetal Death	Financial Stress	Suicide Attempts	Risk for sexual violence
Illicit drug use	Risk from Intimate Partner Violence	Unintended pregnancies	Poor Academic Achievement

ACE’s have related to Early School Leaving and poor academic achievement as the developing brain is responding in ‘fear, flight or freeze’ mode a stress response that is not conducive to learning and can result in behavioural issues or in attendance in education. Research from the NEPS study has indicated that although optimal age for supports is the early years from birth to adolescence however as the brain undergoes radical changes in adolescence and regions in the front of the brain that control higher thinking don’t finish the maturation process until into the twenties.

The earlier that supportive, ameliorative and protective experience interventions are put in place for children and families the greater the opportunity there is for to not experience and/or recover from ACEs. There is still time for mitigating against disadvantage throughout the lifetime through Trauma Informed Provision and Restorative Practice.

16.3 Adverse Childhood Experience Informed Approach

Early intervention is key to successful mitigation against ACEs. Supporting families and communities can increase protective factors and prevent the intergenerational cycle of trauma. Supporting children and young people that experience ACE's can be achieved through trauma informed care and education.

Wellbeing in Primary and Secondary Schools Guidelines, (Department of Education and Skills, 2015) highlights how schools can promote protective factors in relation to mental health, including positive relationships, a sense of security, effective classroom management, social and emotional skills education, and high expectations of achievement.

ACE-informed Approach


“ An ounce of PREVENTION is worth a pound of cure ”
Benjamin Franklin

Negative impacts of ACEs are significantly mitigated by having an **Always Available (trusted) Adult (AAA)**


People with 4+ ACEs and **NO** CONSTANT SUPPORT are

3x


more likely to do any two of the following:



heavy drinking




poor diet









daily smoking


Than people with 4+ ACEs and **CONSTANT AAA SUPPORT**



The presence of **PROTECTIVE FACTORS** can often mitigate the consequences of ACEs

Safe, stable, nurturing relationships 	Concrete support for families in times of need 
 Parental resilience	 Caregiver knowledge & application of positive parenting skills
Child's social and emotional skills 	ACE-aware, supportive communities and social systems 

TRAUMA-INFORMED CARE



Holistic, multi-agency, non-stigmatising, information sharing among all professionals

All children need to develop :

RESILIENCE

tools to respond to the challenges of life

EMPATHY

ability to understand & share the feelings of others


www.70-30.org.uk
@7030Campaign 

Figure 9: Woerden, 2018, ACE Informed Approach

17 Validation Meeting with Stakeholders

The final section of the Literature Review was a consultation process with Stakeholders in order to ensure that the research was reflective of local issues and is representative of the groups to which it draws focus.

Validation meetings were held with staff, learners, secondary providers and external organisations to validate the report.



18 Key Recommendations and Proposed Actions



Key Recommendation	Actions	Outcomes
<p>All staff should be informed of their Public Sector Duty under section 42 of the Irish Human Rights and Equality Act, 2014</p>	<p>Staff training in the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission (IHREC) Act, 2014</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The IHREC have created free online certified staff training so public sector employees can understand their duty • IHREC online training should be included in staff induction • Awareness raising campaigns/ training on the IHREC, Public Sector Duty for all staff. • IHREC publications available for all staff in Sharepoint 	<p>The IHREC free online training is advertised on the Access & Inclusion Sharepoint. The information handbook is on the Access & Inclusion Sharepoint. This training is available at the IHREC website. www.ihrec.ie/elearning</p>

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Key Recommendation	Actions	Outcomes
<p>Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Training be made available for all staff.</p>	<p>Training and resources be made available to staff in the following;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traveller Culture Awareness Training • Race Inclusion Training • Disability Awareness Training • Intercultural Awareness Training • Anti bias /Unconscious Bias Training • LGBTQIA+ Training • Universal Design for Learning • Active Consent/ First Point of Contact Training 	<p>Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Masterclasses provided through Professional Learning & Development (PLD) and follow on modules from South East Technological University for staff through Professional Learning & Development for Further Education & Training. Other training available through FET- PLD;</p> <p>Disability Awareness Training</p> <p>Universal Design for Learning</p> <p>Autism Inclusion Training</p> <p>Dyslexia Inclusion Training.</p> <p>Active Consent/ Consent Hub.</p> <p>First Point of Contact Training FET- ETBI</p> <p>The Access & Inclusion Sharepoint in Further Education and Training signposts to free online, self directed and certified training from advocacy agencies;</p> <p>Digital Accessibility, Introduction to Universal Design for Learning, Accessible Resources and Know how (AHEAD ARK digital badges).</p> <p>Intercultural Anti Bias Training.</p> <p>LGBTQIA – Awareness Training from BeLonGto</p> <p>Mental Health & Wellbeing Support Training</p>

	Key Recommendation	Actions	Outcomes
3	Awareness raising campaigns and celebrations to promote Equality, Diversity and Inclusion across all streams and embedded in our culture.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thematic Working groups for embedding inclusive practice for our staff and the people we serve. • Diversity Promotion & Initiatives across all streams. • Ensure all Centre, Offices, Schools are reflective of diversity and have an Inclusive culture. 	Schools, Youthreach and Post Leaving Certificate Centres have been proactive in promoting and celebrating Equality, Diversity and Inclusion. The WWETB Learner Council has been commenced to promote the Learners Voice in WWETB.
4	All buildings should be accessible for people that have a disability and fit for purpose for staff and learners. A buildings review conducted of all buildings to ensure compliance under section M of the disability Act, 2005	Accessibility Assessment should be carried out on all offices, centres, schools and WWETB buildings and surrounding parking areas.	Accessibility assessments of our buildings has been sanctioned and has commenced.

	Key Recommendation	Actions	Outcomes
5	<p>Our resources, materials, advertisements need to be accessible to people that have a disability and people that English is not their first language.</p> <p>Plain English guidelines should be used in all publications.</p>	<p>Implementing Plain English guidelines. Developing or sourcing resources accessible to all learners/potential learners.</p> <p>Our signage, advertisements etc. should be accessible and in Plain English.</p> <p>Easy Read and translation to other languages should be available to communicate important information to people that have an Intellectual Disability and people that English is not their first language.</p> <p>Staff should be aware of the Adult Literacy for Life (ALL) strategy - Being literacy aware, providing a literacy friendly service and integrating literacy into provision, services and every point of contact/interaction.</p>	<p>Training from NALA in Plain English has been rolled out through Professional Learning and Development for staff. NALA-Plain English Evaluation Tools and Tips are available to Further Education & Training (FET) staff on SharePoint.</p> <p>NALA have created a guide for the public service. Literacy and Activation (ops.gov.ie)</p> <p>WWETB Adult Literacy provides Literacy classes and programs to people that have literacy needs one to one classes, small groups to thematic learning programs non accredited and accredited levels 1-3 (QQI) including family learning programs.</p> <p>Literacy support is also available to learners in Further Education and Training programs from levels 3-5 through Adult Literacy WWETB.</p> <p>A WWETB Regional Literacy Coordinator has been appointed and The Adult Literacy for Life (ALL) Strategy and Collaborative Fund launched to enhance literacy across Waterford and Wexford.</p>

Key Recommendation	Actions	Outcomes
<p>Our Teaching and Learning resources and materials should be Universal Design for Learning and in accessible formats. Staff should use inclusive methods for teaching.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teaching and Learning inclusive practice, Universal Design for Learning (UDL) supports inclusion. • Staff working in certified training, should consider all learner profiles in their teaching and learning resources, materials and practice. 	<p>In Further Education and Training, Professional Learning and Development have rolled out this training on at least 2 occasions. It was made mandatory in Literacy. The new Teaching Learning and Assessment group has adopted the promotion and progress of Universal Design for Learning as a key topic to advance.</p> <p>Training is available through AHEAD and free online short course - digital badges are available through Access & Inclusion Sharepoint. UDL Guidelines for FET Practitioners published and available on Sharepoint.</p>
<p>Easy Read documents should be available for learners that have an intellectual disability to explain information contained in forms and documents, policies etc.</p>	<p>Software to be purchased to create Easy Read documents for our forms and information for people who have an intellectual disability.</p>	<p>Software purchased for forms and documents for people that have an intellectual disability to create Easy Read documents.</p>

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Key Recommendation	Actions	Outcomes
<p>All our reports and documents created internally should be in accessible format using the MS tools available or suitable alternative. We must pass on this duty to create accessible reports to procured publications.</p>	<p>AHEAD have published free online short certified training for educators Accessibility Resources and Know how (ARK).</p>	<p>The communications team have a document on the Hub that informs best practice in report and content writing, to support the production of accessible content.</p> <p>Staff are encouraged to take up the free online certified short training courses advertised on the Access and inclusion SharePoint.</p> <p>AHEAD ARK</p> <p>Our free Accessibility Courses - Just Self enroll.</p> <p>5 Free Online Courses on ARK - Accessibility Resources and Know-How! - AHEAD</p> <p>Free Course: An Introduction to Digital Accessibility for Educators.</p> <p>Free Course: Digital accessibility - a Whole Institution Approach.</p> <p>Free Course: Developing a Web Accessibility Statement.</p> <p>Free Course: Designing Course Layouts for Learner Success.</p>

Key Recommendation	Actions	Outcomes
<p>WWETB have an obligation under the Web Accessibility Directive that was enshrined in Irish Legislation in 2020 to have accessible websites and mobile applications with accessible content and images and a statement available to the public on their accessibility compliance. They must pass on this duty also through procurement.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communications to create a digital accessibility statement for websites. This must be published to the website under the web accessibility directive, 2020. • The virtual learning environment, learning management system and digital learning tools need to be accessible. The Moodle accessibility plugin can be purchased to support tutors using Moodle to check the accessibility of their content. • All our websites and social media need to be checked to ensure compliance with the web accessibility directive 2020. • A Learning Management System (LMS) should be available to learners on accredited training courses. Learning Management systems / Virtual Learning Environments support the ability to customize course notes and have access to resources for learners that have a disability and learners that may have prolonged absence due to illness. 	<p>The New WWETB website has been launched with enhanced accessibility.</p> <p>The site has been checked for inaccessible content.</p> <p>A web accessibility statement has been issued and uploaded.</p> <p>Communications Team support accessible content for website.</p>

	Key Recommendation	Actions	Outcomes
10	<p>In addition to creating Access and Targeted courses, WWETB should be proactive in developing inclusive pathways for marginalised learners in Further Education and Training.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learners on targeted programs should have pathways in to mainstream provision. In the Access, Transfer and Progression policy, staff are required to give learners clear information on pathways to, from and within programmes, and about awards and qualifications that may be achieved. 	<p>Waterford & Wexford Adult Educational Guidance Services (WWAEGS) are available to individuals and groups and should be used to sign post learners to educational opportunities and progression routes.</p>
11	<p>In line with WWETB's commitment to being an equal opportunities employer, support measures need to be put in place to increase the diversity of our staff and also to ensure we meet our targets that are due to increase for employment of people with a disability in the public sector from 3% to 6%.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work placement opportunities for minority or disadvantaged persons to increase the diversity of our staff such as the WAM - Willing Able Mentoring Program from AHEAD or the new inclusive Mentoring Program from Department of Social Protection WPEP- Work Placement Employment Program Accessible interviews and a selection of Reasonable Accommodations for the interview process should be advertised. Positive employment measures for people with disabilities to reach Public Sector quotas. Diversity, Equality and Inclusion Training for Interview panels. 	

Key Recommendation	Actions	Outcomes
<p>Investigate and Standardise access in Further Education and Trainings (FET) to supports for Learners; Academic Support, Disability supports and Wellbeing Supports across full time and part time provision. Create a Hardship fund for learners experiencing financial burdens preventing their uptake or completion of education.</p> <p>Proactive Well being supports and signposting to community Mental Health supports available for staff and learners.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop Internal Application for funding for Learner Supports to provide Equity for non Post Leaving Cert learners that do not receive Solas (Fund for Students with Disabilities) funding for reasonable accommodation. • Disability supports database to be created for resources and equipment loan scheme. • Assessment of need document available and circulated to staff as per statutory obligation. A Learning Education Needs Support plan LENS plan available as per best practice in Individualized Learning plans for learners with disabilities. • Set up laptop loan scheme. • Investigate the provision of a hardship fund for those that are economically disadvantaged to include, transport, resources and childcare supports similar to the Student Assistance Fund in Higher Education. • Develop learner support working group. • Rollout and promote positive Mental Health supports for learners with signposting to external community supports. • Embed wellbeing in our Education and Training provision. 	<p>The Disability supports and funding process for Part time and non Post Leaving Cert (PLC) Learners has been developed.</p> <p>Assessment of Need documents and Learning Educational Needs Supports document created for Further Education and Training.</p> <p>Sign posting available to Mental Health Supports on Access & Inclusion Sharepoint on the staff Hub.</p> <p>ETBI Mental Health Framework Published.</p> <p>The laptop loan scheme is available in most services.</p>

	Key Recommendation	Actions	Outcomes
13	<p>A review school supports; Special Educational Needs, Resource hours, English as an Additional Language and grinds and ensure that priority cohorts are being supported.</p>		<p>A mapping exercise is being completed to ensure equity of provision in schools.</p>
14	<p>Proactive Measures for inclusion in our education provision and workplace for those that experience discrimination and disadvantage in society both staff and learners.</p> <p>Identified groups under equality legislation and National Strategies;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LGBTQIA+ • Migrants • People with Disabilities • Traveller Community • Carers • Lone Parents • Race 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create solutions to economic barriers to participation in education and training similar to Student Assistance Fund in Higher Education. • Create more flexible training options and supports for Carers, Lone parents and people that are economically disadvantaged including Hybrid, Blended Learning opportunities with supports for digital literacy and assistive technology loan scheme. • Address inequalities between International Protection Applicants and Emergency Response learners in Post leaving Certificate fee exemptions. • Increase provision in Targeted programs and supports for transfer and progression opportunities. • The Race Equality strategy and Anti – Racism Principles published by the Higher Education Authority illuminate the structural inequalities in Irish society and highlights Unconscious Bias. The Race Inclusion strategy supports inclusive hiring in the Higher Education sector. A similar strategy should be promoted in WWETB. • Inclusive policies ; Family friendly policy, Carers policy and Reasonable Accommodations for staff that have a disability should be available to staff and advertised on the staff Hub. 	



19. Conclusion

All public sector bodies must adhere to the public sector duty and Assess, Address and Report on Equality and Human rights relevant to their function for their staff and the people they serve. They must Eliminate Discrimination, Promote Equality and Protect the Human Rights of staff and service users. They must identify potential gaps in provision and further opportunities for pro activity across all areas of their provision.

As a public body WWETB must identify measures they are already taking that are Human Rights based measures that are being achieved under different plans and strategies and name them also as Human Rights and Equality measures. This will be completed in the next stages, the annual progress reports on the IHREC, Public Sector Duty.

In this report we have Assessed for priority Equality and Human Rights issues and outlined under Key Actions the planed activity to address priority actions within this report. Progress on these actions will be issued and new priorities highlighted annually. There is a requirement to integrate the Duty into strategic plans and annual reports as it is an ongoing obligation that must be monitored, reviewed, and developed in each strategic planning cycle (IHREC, 2020).

WWETB has identified 'key moments' within our planning and evaluation cycles when actions and measure taken under IHREC Public Sector Duty will be reported on. Excerpt from the IHREC code of practice outlining our obligation to publish is in Appendix 1.

Appendix 1: Code of Practice on the Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty

Performance Measures

In order to ensure compliance, and to demonstrate compliance, with the Duty in practice, a public body should develop appropriate performance measures.

The following suggestions may assist a public body in developing its performance measures for the purpose of reducing discrimination and promoting human rights and equality in its workplace and in the provision of its services to the public:

- an internal review of the effectiveness of the process by which a public body ensures compliance with the Duty;
- an internal review of a public body's record-keeping in respect of its compliance with the Duty;
- an internal review by a public body of the extent to which the policies, plans and actions in place, or proposed to be put in place, to address issues in its equality and human rights assessment have been put in place and have been effective in addressing the issues identified in the assessment.
- An internal review of a public body's minutes (or any similar documents) in which its decisions are recorded regarding the performance of the public body's functions, to ascertain whether regard was had in the making of decisions to the matters set out in Section 42(1).
- the collection of information, evidence and other material necessary to inform a public body's assessment of human rights and equality issues. This could include the collection of relevant statistical and qualitative data available to a public body.

This is not an exhaustive list and it is a matter for the public body as to the performance measures that it develops for the purpose of reducing discrimination and promoting human rights and equality in its workplace and in the provision of its services to the public.

Operational Standards

In order to ensure compliance, and to demonstrate compliance, with the Duty in practice, a public body should develop appropriate operational standards.

The following suggestions may assist a public body in developing its operational standards for the purpose of reducing discrimination and promoting human rights and equality in its workplace and in the provision of its services to the public:

- Designing and implementing a process by which a public body ensures compliance with the Duty, including consultation with staff and service users as appropriate;
- Identifying the information, evidence or other material necessary for a public body's assessment of the human rights and equality issues, both generally and in the context of adopting policies and making decisions with a significant impact on equality and human rights;
- Maintaining records in respect of the assessment of the human rights and equality issues that a public body believes to be relevant to its functions and purpose, including records of any information, evidence or other material considered by the body in the context of its assessment, the date on which the assessment was carried, and the process undertaken for the purposes of carrying out the assessment;
- Maintaining records in respect of the policies, plans and actions in place, or proposed to be put in place, to address the issues identified by a public body in its assessment;
- Maintaining records in respect of the manner in which the Duty has been integrated in the performance of a public body's functions;
- Undertaking an equality and human rights impact assessment before adopting a policy and making a decision which may have significant implications on equality and human rights;
- Maintaining records of a public body's decision-making demonstrating that the public body had regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, promote equality of opportunity and protect the human rights of its members, staff and the persons to whom it provides services. Such records might include but are not limited to its human rights and equality assessment, the **policies, plans and actions** to address the issues identified in its assessment, and any equality and human rights impact assessments carried out by it;
- Where a policy is adopted and/or a decision is taken which may have implications on equality and human rights, this should be appropriately recorded in a public body's records, whether by way of minutes, report or otherwise.

This is not an exhaustive list and it is a matter for the public body as to the operational standards that it develops for the purpose of reducing discrimination and promoting human rights and equality in its workplace and in the provision of its services to the public.

In recording its human rights and equality assessment, and the policies, plans and actions to address the issues identified in its assessment, in its strategic plan, (howsoever described), a public body may include wording to the following or similar effect:

The public body has conducted an assessment of the human rights and equality issues it believes to be relevant to its functions and purpose. This assessment is publicly available [as an appendix to the strategic plan] on the public body's website at [INSERT LINK] [and for inspection at its office(s)]

Arising from this assessment, the public body has put in place the following policies, plans and actions to address the human rights and equality issues it believes to be relevant to its functions and purpose: [INSERT LIST OF POLICIES, PLANS AND ACTIONS].

In reporting on developments and achievements – in respect of the policies, plans and actions in place or proposed to be put in place to address issues identified in its assessment - in its annual report (howsoever described), a public body may include wording to the following effect:

The following are the developments and achievements in regard to the policies, plans and actions which have been put in place (or are proposed to be put in place by the public body) to address the human rights and equality issues which have been assessed by the public body to be relevant to its functions and purpose: [INSERT].

Further information on these developments and achievements are available on the public body's website on [INSERT][and for inspection at its office(s)].

In recording its consideration of the Duty in the context of its decision-making, a public body may include wording to the following or similar effect:

In arriving at this decision, the Board had regard to the considerations identified in section 42(1)(a)-(c) of the 2014 Act and, in particular, considered [List the relevant information, material and/or evidence]

Written Preventative Strategies

In order to ensure compliance, and to demonstrate compliance, with the Duty in practice, a public body should develop appropriate preventative strategies and record these strategies in writing.

The following suggestions may assist a public body in developing its written preventative strategies for the purpose of reducing discrimination and promoting human rights and equality in its workplace and in the provision of its services to the public:

- ensuring that there is an appropriate process in place to provide training for management and staff on the Duty;
- maintaining records of training, including records of to whom and when training has been provided;
- incorporating the Duty into applicable corporate governance standards and processes including any decision-making processes and records of decisions;
- ensuring that appropriate reference is made to the Duty in a public body's strategic plan and annual report (howsoever described);
- ensuring appropriate consultation of staff and service users in the carrying out of a public body's human rights and equality assessment, in the adoption of policies, plans and actions to address the issues identified in its assessment, and in the adoption of any policy or the making of any decision which may have significant implications on equality and human rights;

- gathering information, evidence and other material necessary for a public body's assessment of the human rights and equality issues. This could include the gathering of relevant statistical and qualitative data available to a public body.

This is not an exhaustive list and it is a matter for the public body as to the preventative strategies that it develops for the purpose of reducing discrimination and promoting human rights and equality in its workplace and in the provision of its services to the public.

Public Sector Duty Review

In accordance with section 42(5) of the Act, where IHREC considers that there is evidence of a failure by a public body to perform its functions in a manner consistent with section 42(1) and that it is appropriate in all the circumstances to do so, the Commission may invite the public body to:

- carry out a review in relation to the performance by that body of its functions having regard to section 42(1), or
- prepare and implement an action plan in relation to the performance by that body of its functions having regard to section 42(1).

In accordance with section 42(6) of the Act, a review or action plan may relate to:

- equality of opportunity or human rights generally, or,
- a particular aspect of human rights or discrimination, in the public body concerned.

In the exercise of its power of review, IHREC may request that a public body furnish to it some or all of the following information:

- its annual report(s) and its strategic plan(s) (howsoever described);
- records of the human rights and equality assessment(s) carried out;
- records of the policies, plans and actions in place or proposed to be put in place to address the issues identified in any such assessment(s);
- records of operational standards, preventative strategies and performance measures in place for the purposes of complying with the Duty;
- records of the process undertaken by a public body for the purposes of complying with the Duty and/or of the information, evidence or other material considered in carrying out the body's human rights and equality assessment and/or of training provided to management and staff. Any other records relevant to the discharge by a public body of its Duty, including records of the following matters: how the Duty has been integrated in the performance of a public body's functions and/or applicable corporate governance standards; equality and human rights impact assessments carried out; and/or a public body's decision-making in respect of human rights and equality issues more generally.

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