

CHAPTER 1: SERVICE ORGANISATIONS IN CORK

“The institutional system is integrally and purposefully unequally structured in that it does not allow for social and economic integration to take place”.

INTRODUCTION

A total of 20 organizations were interviewed between October and December 2001. All the interviews were conducted with people who deal with either the homeless or ethnic minorities, but may well also deal with other social welfare dependent residents of County Cork. Each interview was organized by appointment and all respondents were informed as to the purpose of the interview and agreed to set-aside one-hour for it's administration. On average most interviews lasted for approximately 45 minutes. A total of 24 organizations were approached and in only one case was there an outright refusal to co-operate. In the case of the other three organizations, permission to interview became intertwined within that great state and statutory bureaucratic web which proved to be beyond the challenge of this research process. The organizations approached fall under the following generic categories

Generic Typology of Respondent Organizations

1	Charitable (economic disadvantage) (3)
2	Community development
3	Health (2)
4	Homeless
5	Hostel Men's
6	Hostel Women's
7	Housing (3)
8	Immigrant Support
9	International Student
10	Rural development
11	Social Health
12	Training Men'
13	Training Women
14	Welfare (2)

Prior to proceeding with the report, a number of issues need to be raised. Firstly, and all due respects to the authors, but the interview schedules were inappropriate for many of the interviews. There were numerous issues that the researchers and respondents wished to explore, but the rigidity and repetitive nature of the questionnaire made it impossible. It is accepted and without any reservation whatsoever, that attempting to create an interview schedule that is to be used across a number of countries and aimed at a disparate group of organizations is not easy. However, in such situations it is also common practice to allow for regional anomalies to be dealt with through the use of an open-ended interview schedule that is thematic in nature. Such a schedule would have allowed the researchers in Cork the flexibility to explore issue of relevance to this region of Europe, but to report them in a manner that is consistent with other regions, thus allowing the synthesis to better explore regional disparities.

Secondly, and this is not a criticism, but rather an observation, but although certain questions guided the informants towards *other* groups in society, understandably, it

was often the priority of the informant to speak about their particular client base, which in turn had consequences for detailing answers to *all* questions. This is an unavoidable problem that could occur in any such study, regardless of the type of interview schedule applied.

It is hoped that these criticisms are taken in a constructive manner, which may perhaps assist in any subsequent survey of this type. They are neither meant to be offensive nor made out of any sense of frustration.

DISCRIMINATION PLOTTING

1	In your service's scope, do you think there are groups of categories of people who are discriminated against?	Yes	19	No	1
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All but one of the respondents agreed that they are constantly confronted with discrimination in Cork. Answers ranged from the general "Discrimination is endemic in Cork, mostly that of the unspoken variety but absolutely widespread. In Northern Ireland it is open and apparent, in the south it is insidious and carefully masked." To the specific, "the homeless in particular are by far the worst discriminated against in Cork". Some of the respondents listed long lists, "the disabled, Travellers, older people, long-term unemployed, early school leavers, single parents, immigrants, homeless, gay and lesbians, refugees, asylum seekers" and others limited their entire discrimination categories to one generic grouping and to the exclusion of all others, "women continue to be discriminated against, both within their homes and at the workplace, but worse of all are single mothers are the worst discriminated group in Cork".

There were unique categories that were mentioned once and then never followed through again, "those with psychological problems are discriminated against as we do not have the services for them". And there were those that were vague without committing themselves to any particular group, "discrimination cuts across all sectors of society and it stems from the fact that people are unwilling to take a stand and deal with these differences." One respondent categorized discrimination as occurring across three distinct levels: at the general societal, within the socio-economic and institutional levels. Discrimination occurring between and within immigrants also occurs, particularly between Eastern Europeans, who sometimes classify "Africans as savages" and within Africans, who often easily perpetuate "class and tribal traditions here in Ireland". This imported racism, further exacerbates any homegrown problems.

There were however, three specific groups that stood out from the rest "Travellers and the homeless and the 'down and outs' and people of colour – namely those visibly different are the most discriminated against". Foreign ethnic minorities, including asylum seekers, refugees and immigrants were also noted by most of the respondents. In addition, many of the respondents noted that generally all groups in Cork that were welfare dependent were vulnerable to being discriminated against. This group included long term unemployed, the homeless and anybody else that relies on some form of welfare grant in order to survive.

Travellers

“Travellers whom the settler community despised are the most discriminated against. Not only by society at large, but also by the law that creates categories (for the Travellers) and which society can use as labels.” Essentially, respondents were saying that it is the action of attaching a label that provokes discriminatory reactions. This is picked up by the mainstream, which may not have previously perceived any differences between themselves and Travellers and start to compare and contrast their ethical and normative base with that of the Travellers. This is a somewhat simplistic approach, and many respondents also argued that the problem is deep set and goes back many generations. What they argue is incomprehensible, is the strides made during the past 30 years to eradicate or limit discrimination around the world; little has been done on the home front. Perhaps given the personal background of one of the researchers, it was noted that Ireland was at the forefront of the ideological struggle against apartheid, but whilst this was happening, very little was being done to redress the problem of “apartheid against the Travellers”.

It was argued that because Travellers have big families, their access to welfare resources are limited, “we have to limit the amount of families we can take”. In addition it was generally agreed that, should they seek it, Travellers couldn't get accommodation through Cork Corporation (housing) because of both the lack of housing and also due to blatant discrimination. Many of the respondents also noted that current conditions at halting sites (where Travellers reside) are appalling, generally being over –crowded. dirty and sometime lacking even basic sanitation: “not fit for pigs”.

There was a minority opinion that argued that the current impasse cannot be entirely blamed on the State and the social welfare system, for in some cases when interventions are made, they are rejected out of hand by the Travellers, “it is difficult when social workers take it up (issues) as they (the Travellers) say that it is cultural” and by implication the social workers should involve themselves.

A number of respondents mentioned that Travellers themselves were not homogenous and within the Traveller community there were groups that were discriminated against for different reasons and in different ways.

Newborn Travellers do not get the degree of health service and after-care that they need.

- a) this is due to the nature of Traveller Nomadism and homelessness.
- b) Public Health Nurses find it difficult to locate families that may have moved. We sometimes can help with this. This becomes discrimination when local authorities enforce transient accommodation on Travellers.

The living conditions of newborn Traveller children was described as “awful”. The incidence of hearing difficulties and children with visual impairment is far greater in the Traveller community than in another community in Cork.

Traveller children attending primary schools are

- a) not accepted above a certain quota.
- b) discrimination occurs as the school may put obstacles in the way of parents. Above the quota assistance is sometimes not given to parents in the filling out of forms where some may be illiterate. Transport is also a problem as the Traveller

child's day at school is sometimes shortened as the transport provided for them is often late and thus the child may be marked absent.
Travellers are practically invisible in third level education.

Young Travellers in shops

a) are 'watched' and there are cases where the shop will lock the door until the person has been served. This is very demeaning.
a) there is a clear absence of opportunity and support for young Travellers.
There are only 27 Traveller children involved in youth groups in Cork. The recruitment working of youth organizations towards Traveller children is bad. This is a form of discrimination.

Confirmation

It is very difficult for Traveller families to book restaurant, hotel or other venues such as halls etc. to celebrate the occasion. Most venues for entertainment are practically impossible to book by Travellers.

Teenage boys

It is very difficult for boys to get a trade, as employers won't take them on. As a result the only way to learn a trade is for boys to work with their fathers, for example, with horses. It is difficult to rent land for this due to the prejudice of farmers but also and even more so now due to the prejudice of the neighbours of these farmers. Many urban professional people have moved into rural areas and built houses. Landowners who are renting to Travellers are also intimidated by the local authority or by people claiming to be a representative of the local authority.

The media

The media is quick to publish incidents involving Travellers in a negative light. This it is argued has a detrimental impact for it adversely influences the public in a manner that it raises anti-Traveller sentiments. In addition, it was claimed that Traveller incidents are much more widely reported than those of the settled community. Finally a number of the respondents stated that the media exaggerated often events that dealt with anti-social Traveller behaviour, further exacerbating the problem.

→ Immigrants, Asylum-Seekers and Refugees

Some of the respondents were forthright in their condemnation of Irish society's inability to deal the recent wave of immigration into the country. "Ireland's isolationism until recently has incapacitated her in terms of being able to deal with foreigners." Respondents felt that foreigners were often discriminated against because there is a general lack of awareness of minority issues, however often this was seen as also an excuse and the mere fact that people are different is the reason for them being discriminated against.

The case of a black immigrants doctor was highlighted as an example of the difficulties faced by people coming into Ireland. "There is an immigration system but it is extremely difficult to get through it. The system itself is very racist. One person who was in the medical field could not get a job. There is a big wait to take exams in Ireland and there is no preparation given. The Medical Council was similar to the Department of Justice as it was very difficult to try to get through to them for advice. He or someone on his behalf tried everyday or a few times a day for a year. If an

employer were to take him on he would have to apply to Department of Justice. This and his colour stopped him working. He could not claim social welfare. He and his girlfriend were told that they had no option but to get married.”

Not all respondent subscribed to this point of view, and they felt that immigrants in general were not really discriminated against, but rather asylum seekers and refugees, bore the brunt of any discrimination that occurred. This was particularly harsh on asylum seekers from Africa and Eastern Europe. Although not condoning racism of any type, most of the respondents felt that they could understand why some people resorted to racist views, particularly people from low-income communities who perceive Ireland, as not being wealthy country and the sharing of resources is difficult.

, “the working and under classes in Ireland allow racial feelings to come into play when they are confronted by the fact that they perceive Africans to have greater benefits than them in society.”

→Welfare dependant

The third group of people noted as being discriminated against was those that are welfare dependant. For many being reliant on welfare is just part of the problem and although receiving welfare grants was part of the solution, the form by which they are received creates a new set of problems for the poor. “People in receipt of state benefit are the group most discriminated against, particularly by landlords who generally want professional people and the majority will not accept rent allowance.”

It was claimed that the long-term unemployed and lone-parents are particularly discriminated against. There are perceptions that the long-term unemployed have a reputation of “not wanting to work, and being people that cannot get a job nor want to get a job”. Lone-parent, unable to source adequate childcare facilities are often marginalized from the labour market and are forced to become welfare dependent. Once “pulled into such a lifestyle” it is difficult for the to break the mould, and later when it is possible for them to enter the sector, they have stagnated in terms of skilling and employers are unwilling to invest in further training. Furthermore, lone-parents, along with separated and divorced people who are unable to afford rented accommodation, find that the State system and Corporation housing does not cater for their needs, rather they are directed towards family unities.

1	What are the major causes of discrimination?
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Information

Repeatedly stressed by most of the respondents was the issue of un-available information. The lack of information was perceived as the greatest problem faced by Ireland today. It was argued that most of the government policies on record were good, but implementation is difficult because information was not flowing between caregivers and the intended recipients.

Poverty, not only in Ireland but also everywhere in the world, is characterised by the inability of individuals and households to command sufficient resources to satisfy a socially acceptable minimum standard of living. Likewise, poverty is also not a static condition; as individuals and households may be vulnerable to poverty as a result of shocks and crises (uncontrollable events which harm livelihoods and food security)

and long-term trends (such as racial and gender discrimination, environmental degradation, macroeconomic trends and technological innovations). As such, the poor and discriminated in Cork are not a constant and homogenous entity, and when conditions are generally buoyant their numbers drop, increasing when conditions worsen. Most respondent argued that with the decline in the economy, the situation is predicted to worsen. This would leave many poor individuals and households in Cork, depending on their ability to cope with or adjust to changes, migrate downwards into poverty.

Respondents articulated that vulnerability to poverty is characterised by an inability to devise appropriate coping strategies in such times of crisis. Therefore, understanding the forces that impact on poverty is essential for poor households, if they are to buffer the impact of the shocks and to use their assets to undertake a wide range of survival-generating activities.

Ultimately, poor households need to reduce uncertainty, for only by reducing uncertainty they are better able to predict the consequences of both their actions and exogenous impacts. This they do by increasing the accuracy of their forecasts and as such should increase their overall benefits and well being. Information if contextually relevant, easily accessible and affordable is the main means of reducing this uncertainty and increases the powers of prediction to the potential beneficiary. Furthermore, increased access to information would assist many of the newly found poor to access the necessary resources for survival. Individually and collectively the poor need information to increase their predictive accuracy and access to increased benefits. In Cork, this simply does not happen, for information is not forthcoming to the poor. In addition, many of the respondents mentioned that there is a large degree of gate keeping by people who work at social welfare and health agencies. Some of this happens deliberately, but in most cases simply because the persons working there have not been properly taught as to how they should best articulate such information.

Other causes of discrimination noted are listed below:

- Simple Prejudice
- Traditional
- Gender Biases
- Cultural exclusion
- Professional elitism, “non-professional’ are not held up as having much value in society”
- Language barriers “There is a language barrier and people dismiss non-nationals because of this. What is done to non-nationals now was done to Travellers a few years ago. Now there is discrimination but 2 or 3 years ago there was not as many non-nationals around”.
- Generalizations made by people regarding an ethnic minority
- ‘Scape-goating’, needing to find some people or members of society to blame.
- Welfare recipients located in the private rented sector
- Homelessness
- Landlords who take advantage of the Social Welfare system
- Inflexible approach to Traveller Nomadism

- Deep-rooted assumptions that Travellers will steal, namely that being a Traveller is synonymous to being a thief.
- Improper education facilities for Travellers

- Media radicalism (Note, unfortunately the researchers did not properly probe this point, but given the number of times that it was mentioned, it might perhaps be prudent that future work place some focus on this, one respondent said: Talk shows are used by those wishing to vent their fury at ethnic minorities as a medium to further spread their message.)

1	How does this discrimination take place?
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“The perception of an easy going and open Irish person, is a myth, they don’t exist, but are brilliant at masking their feelings.”

A number of respondents made the point that discrimination in Cork is not overt, but that it manifests itself in a snide and off-hand manner, through comments rather overt action. The continue by saying that there is a lack of tolerance when somebody is different and it takes an effort to get to understand that difference regardless whether the difference means that an additional effort might be necessary. “In Ireland attitudes are easily born out of heresy and then there is an inability to adapt to reality”.

The answers to this question however, were varied and but could be synthesized into three broad groupings: accommodation rental related, racial and anti-Traveller. In some instances the respondents went beyond the symptoms and tried engaged their discussions on what they felt were the main causes. A common theme to emerge was that there is no continuum of services. People are shifted in and out of institutions with few linkages in-between. No overall cohesive strategy or program exists to deal with those who have been marginalized and then trying to get back into the system. For example, it is claimed that homeless go into hostels, there is no other support. It is almost a prison for the homeless. People are trapped and excluded and find it impossible to break back into the main stream.

The theme of labeling was also strong, and it was often argued that institutional discrimination was at the root cause of all discrimination and that in reality discrimination is not local or community based. Rather, the system is set up to deal with different categories of people so they labeled and then they themselves and society at large start to think that they are different. This when placed in the perspective that there is little follow-up, means that, “consultation with people is piecemeal. Accommodation is privatized so it is a problem, for there is little co-ordination. Many of the problems attributed to Travellers are the fault of authorities. The status quo is perpetuated, as measures put into place to solve problems become the problem.”

Religion and the ethical and normative impact that it has had to Irish society was often mentioned, and numerous instances of bigotry and religious intolerance were mentioned, perhaps the following quote summed up this theme, ““There is intolerance towards those who have sinned, like single mothers, and even the disabled are looked upon as if they have been cursed.” Another respondent (albeit a

Northern Irish Protestant) claimed, “amongst the working class it is most overt, but also firmly embedded within other strata in society. It is embedded in middle class culture, which takes its cue from Roman Catholic teaching society.”

Another theme to emerge was that related to societies indifference to what was occurring around it that is in terms of marginalized groups. One respondent's said. “Inertia is at the root of most problems. The lack of willingness to reach out and tackle an issue that might be alien to most is problematic. This initially manifests itself in the education sector and is perpetuated throughout after that.” Linked to this, was also the lack of scope to maneuver through the system, “There is no flexibility to the system, it is rigid and geared towards the mainstream.” Many of the respondents noted that that, “there is fear amongst government employees that if they do anything against the norm that they would loose favour. However, the lack of information that is communicated to the bottom levels manifests itself in ignorance.” Again the concept of information and rigidity emerges.

The lack of appropriate venue where people can mix was cited by a number of respondents who said that perhaps the problems would diminish if such opportunities existed. However, others argued that this would not really be of any use, saying that, “the mainstream tries to distance itself from the activities of the minority groups, firstly because they do not identify and secondly because they a sense of “us” versus “them” has emerged. There is a great of jealousy amongst the Irish regarding the foreigners and the NIMBY syndrome is rife in Ireland, namely that there us a right to exist, but not in my back yard.” A couple of respondents echoed the sentiment that often-resulted in foreigners being marginalized and breaking the law “immigrants are not given a chance to create an environment and a life for themselves. Far too many obstacles are put in their way and inevitably because they have to survive they resort to breaking the law.” Other respondents argued, that, “if foreigners simply blend in and say little, then the chances are that they will be ignored, if not they will evoke anti-feelings.”

“Society creates invisible barriers to entry by framing people and thus restricting their movements (asylum seekers). Attacks and racial taunts arte seen as being commonplace and restricted to a lunatic minority but generally to the populace”. These invisible barriers were also noted in a practical sense and it was claimed that, “through manipulating the employment recruiting, by limiting education opportunities and via a glass ceiling, especially in the civil service. Physical access by the disabled into most places is severely restricted”.

One respondent noted the rise of racial taunts directed towards African immigrants and this was disconcerting for it means that a generation of young people is about to enter society brining with them a set of racist opinions that will perpetuate discrimination well into the future. A number of respondents noted that education at secondary school level was vital, if discrimination is to be minimized.

Other reasons given included:

- Landlords may not accept rent-allowance
- Non-Nationals may be treated in a dismissive way due to a language barrier
- The majority of Asylum-seekers are not given the right to work
- Asylum-seekers get low-paid jobs

- The presence of a restrictive and category-bound immigration system
- Landlords can choose their tenants
- Landlords put up rents
- Provision of bad accommodation for homeless people
- Status is also an issue as single people or childless couples are put to the end of the housing lists.
- Refusals by owners of entertainment premises to rent to Travellers
- Local Authorities enforce transient accommodation on Travellers
- Presence of a Traveller quota in schools
- Access to pubs and restaurants is common as Travellers are denied entry.
- Media over-reporting of Travellers incidents
- Unregulated school transport for Traveller children
- Refusal of many employers to take on Travellers as apprentices
- Unavailability of Corporation housing to Travellers
- Lack of services for people with psychological difficulties
- Lack of housing for people with health difficulties
- The placing of obstacles in the way of illiterate parents
- A lack of funding for groups who are less *obviously* disadvantaged than others
- Refusal to employ somebody, as they do not already have a job

3	Are there other contexts in nowadays society where discrimination takes place?	Yes	20
	Can you give some examples of how such discrimination takes place?		

Officials in institutions are the labeled as the worst culprits as they are unable neither to perceive differences nor to communicate with people who require help. They are also guilty of blocking the progress of those who need help the most in society. In addition, the wealthy and those with power make the rules that govern society and thus must be held accountable for the current impasse as far as discrimination is concerned.

The following lists the main contexts identified in the research:

- Those on Local Authority housing waiting lists** – *list is too long* – Government/Local Authority
- Those who fail to meet status priorities for Local Authority housing waiting lists (i.e. single or childless couples)** – *Put to the end of the list* – Local Authority
- Travellers** – *in education* – Schools – *hotels (one particular hotel will not allow Travellers in. This is the only hotel in the area that has disability access. This automatically discriminates against disabled Travellers).*
- Gays and Lesbians** – *lack of recognition and funding* – Government
- Women** - *under represented in business* – Employers
- Asylum-seekers** – *distrust due to uninformed pre-conceptions* – Irish people
- Those receiving rent allowance** – *landlords may not accept them as tenants* – Landlords
- Asian and African-American students** – *lack of representations of ethnic minorities in Irish Universities on erasmus from the United States* – The U.S (has to be explored from the US perspective)
- Pregnant Asylum-Seekers** – *assumptions that their pregnancy is deliberate as a way of gaining residency in Ireland* – Irish people

- **Young people who dress in an avant-garde way** – *their choices are not respected* – by others
- **Young drivers** – *forced to pay high car insurance* – Insurance companies
- **Old people** – *find it difficult to get health insurance* – Insurance companies
- **Single people** – *difficult to get housing* – Local Authority
- **People with psychological problems** – *difficult to get housing*- Local Authority
- Through the lack of childcare is a problem for many Irish.
- **Housing estates** won't take Travellers and disabled for it means either problems with other tenants or additional costs to adapt building to standards where the disabled can traverse easily.
- **Settled Travellers** are the worse off, for they are dislocated from their own and stuck within a society that does not want them.
- **The commercial sector**, When a member of an ethnic minority starts up a business attacks are both overt – an attempts to physically damage goods or infrastructure or even the person themselves or covert, through the non utilisation of the services or boycotting of goods.
- **The Mentally Challenged** have recently fallen foul of education authorities via a ruling from the Department of Education that does not create a statutory provision for them to receive primary education, if they are over 18 years of age.

5	Who discriminates more often or in a more serious way in nowadays society?
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These are listed through quotes below:

“**The populace**, full-stop”

“**Leaders and opinions makers**, as well as those who through their position in society can positively influence the population at large.”

“**Statutory institutions** exaggerate racism and create further exacerbate the problem.”

“Government policies, and especially those of the **Justice Department** are discriminatory.”

“The **state** and the **corporation** and it are getting worse. People are loosing jobs and those in a position to make a difference are being effected by having relatives and friends in such circumstances, so when foreigners or Travellers try to access scarce resources, they get blocked.

“**Institutions** are way ahead on this one. There are no collective policies and although there is an equality authority, applying the law is easier said than done. Staff who are meant to apply the government position have neither been trained what they are supposed to do, and if they have been trained, they have not been synthesized in how to apply the law. There is also in-bred racism and discrimination, like that against Travellers.”

“People from deprived backgrounds – **the working class** and **the unemployed** - are those most likely to discriminate, because it is a struggle for the same scarce

resources. They are unable to comprehend the fact that there are sufficient resources for all to share. Also, it is from this same group from which emigration was the most common and they have been the ethnic minority wherever they have been and have conveniently forgotten that.”

“The **working class** feels threatened by those who seem stronger than them and those who enjoy the protection of their state, a state that does little to protect them.”

Potential landlords

Employers

The wealthy

The media

4	Do you think that nowadays there are specific protections against discrimination?	Yes	12	No	7	Don't Know	1
	If yes, who implements them?						

The responses to this question were ambiguous, an almost yes: no type of answer would have been the best. The following quotation sums up the general feeling of most respondents. “Legislation exists but it is not understandable, accessible and translatable to the disadvantaged. People at risk are not informed of their rights and even if they are, do not have the mechanisms to implement them. Much of the legislation is the conscience of society and meant to appease it, it has no teeth.”

A second quote along similar lines echoes: “There are statutory laws but they are inadequate and biased against those they try to protect. There is little in terms of financial legal aid that is made available for those discriminated against to be able to utilise to fight their case.”

A more sympathetic respondent, retorted by saying that, there are laws and a system is being put into place “but at this stage it is very embryonic” and only with the passage of time will positive results emerge from the current policy. There have been a number of high profile cases that the Equality Authority has challenged in court and been successful. This is highly symbolic and has given minority groups the confidence to believe the structures that have been placed for the to combat anti-discrimination.

Yet another respondent said, the bureaucracy is so old and antiquated that it cannot possibly adapt to these changes, yet it is such circumstances that initially led to the creation of the bureaucracy which has now forgotten to deal with it.”

A number of respondents mentioned the ethos of charity in Ireland and how society still at times feels that this should remain within the realm of the church, ‘the state still has an ethos that caring should be left in the hands of the church.’ And “there is still a strong sense of “charity” when people think of welfare in Ireland, and charity is seen as something that the church and its support base deals with, namely it is not a problem for the mainstream.”

Yes

- NASC is actively trying to protect against discrimination.
- Legislation can deal with blatantly obvious discrimination. Some discrimination is less obvious and requires proof, which is difficult to get solidly much of the time.
- I am more concerned with the “cultural support” for laws protecting against discrimination. There is a lack of clarity within the legislation.
- The Equality Authority is there.
- There is legislation but it needs to be implemented.
- Within the university this office investigates any complaints made by overseas students. The University Ombudsman ultimately deals with all complaints.
- The Equal Status Act. This is only strong if Travellers know of its existence and many do not.
- Equality Authority and Ryan Air, the latter for creating opportunities for youth.
- Traveller Visibility Groups are doing things but how that filters down into for example, a halting site in a particular area of Cork I don't know.
- National Consultative Organization of Intercultural Awareness
- Justice Department.

No

- Asylum-Seekers rely on communications and associations they have with any Irish person they know.
- There is a lot of discrimination within the Police but they are trying to deal with it from within.
- There is no protection within the Social Welfare if you are an immigrant.
- The Equal Status Act is very limiting. If an employer has to pay to employ someone, then that is discrimination.
- What does exist is biased towards urban areas; forcing people in need to gravitate towards the cities, further dislocating them from their societies
- If public awareness changes, people may be better protected.
- With regard to the Police, there is a lot of discrimination within the organization but they are trying to deal with it.
- There is no protection within social welfare if you are an immigrant.
- There is no support from the Southern Health Board or the Corporation. The Corporation has just "dumped" the issue (of health and housing).

Don't know

- I don't know of any other protections.
- Traveller Visibility Group is doing things, but how that filters down, I don't know. I don't know of any other protections.
- There might be legal protection, but there is no concerted policy to teach people the necessary skills to be able to access it.

This question is best summed up with the following quotation: “In a legal sense Ireland has an excellent policy, but these are not implemented.”

6	Which forms of discrimination do you perceive as the worst ones in contemporary society?
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- Racial (most often mentioned)
- Travellers (second most often mention and thought of as most serious)

- Those who are most vulnerable in society (also most serious)
- Those with special needs who cannot find housing
- That directed against immigrants
- Non-Nationals (also most serious)
- People on rent-allowance (also most serious)
- Asylum-seekers (also most serious)
- All forms of discrimination is serious

- Patriarchy and abuse against children.

7	Do you think your organization can do something to fight discrimination against you?	Yes	17	No	1	Don't Know	2
	If yes, please tell me if there is there anything currently going on in your?						

Politicking

- Advocacy and raising awareness and understanding of the issues (often mentioned).
- Look at Government policy creatively.
- Work towards increasing awareness of racism by sharing own experiences with others. In the workplace ensure that racisms and any other form of discrimination is not tolerated.
- Lobby more on people’s realities.
- Through leadership in society.

Networking

- Linking to other like-minded people through local networks.
- Involvement with local area networks.
- Link with other European countries.
- Currently liaising with a local area network to ensure that we maximize our efforts in Cork and that participation is increased.

Cultural

- One World week is very important and we are having lectures here during that week.
- We all do different things to fight discrimination in our own areas of work. For example, we have transport services for the unemployed. We all work against racism. We find out the reason why people are discriminated against and then work on it.
- We have also had drama. It was a piece where we were made to feel like an asylum-seeker with 24 hours to get out of your own house.
- We are using community art to fight discrimination. We have poster competitions around social inclusion. Short story competitions. We also have theatre. A theatre

group had an interactive piece about racism. It allowed people to get at their inner feelings.

→We had a day on cultural awareness. In training people take hold of their own lives and empower themselves and relate to others. This involves people who are discriminated against and the discriminators. We live in a mono-cultural society.

→Getting out there and making a difference. By helping people recognise that there is a problem. By assisting people who need support. Involved with the setting up of a multicultural fair to celebrate multi culturalism. Using the Arts and theatre to convey a message that being different is acceptable and it's great.

→We are encouraging Youth work organizations to make contacts between Traveller and settled children.

→I run a sports club on Saturdays with asylum-seekers and refugees but also with anyone who wants to come. We have people from New Zealand, Australia, everywhere. The local children join in, which is great. It promotes communication through sport. That is very important.

→We brought two Nigerian asylum-seekers to the schools, both primary and secondary. The pupils were apprehensive at first but then they relaxed and began to ask questions. The phrase "they are taking our jobs and our houses" did not come from the children; it was from an older person. We made them see that asylum-seekers weren't a threat.

Training

→Through vocational training and volunteer with asylum seekers.

→Through promoting equality and inclusion at all times. Take a stand within my own community.

→Give talks at local schools.

→We have Travellers who are available to give talks in schools and institutions.

→ We have tutors work with Travellers. For example, we got a group of Traveller women to assess their own health needs. I see discrimination, as being more than economic, e.g. there are cultural factors as well. We employ tutors who are not from academic backgrounds so that does not exclude anyone. Intercultural awareness is difficult to recruit for. Within personal development training we would explore people's own feelings etc. that obviously would deal with prejudice, which is at the forefront.

Advocacy and Counseling

→ We are running 2 projects at the moment,

1. Peer advocacy for older people:

The human resources used, are older people and/or those who are retired. The human need is that it is very difficult for these people to find their voice, e.g., when they go to the doctor. This is an active approach to overcome a certain kind of discrimination. Society is very ageist; therefore, it is difficult to sustain self-esteem.

2. A low-cost counseling service.

→To advise people of their rights and to treat everybody equally. Point people in the right direction.

→We all do different things to fight discrimination in our own areas of work. For example, we have transport services for the unemployed. We all work against racism.

→We find out the reason why people are discriminated against and then work on it.

7	Are you aware of other people other people, groups, institutions (etc) that can do something to fight discrimination?	Yes	15	No	2	Don't Know	2
	If yes, what?						

- NASC, The Irish Immigrant Support Centre (all the respondents, but this may be biased by our introduction as being from NASC)
- Amnesty International (second highest mention)
- ‘Anti-Racism Workplace Week’ is something that the Government is doing.
- ACCESS group in UCC and CIT
- Agencies within the Health Board
- All CDP’s in Cork and Kerry
- Anti Racism Committee
- Business in the Community
- CCDI
- CDP, has switched from anti-Poverty to anti-Discrimination.
- Combat Poverty Agency
- Comhairle
- Cork City Partnership
- Cork Corporation
- Cork Traveller Women’s Network
- Corporation swimming pool
- CWEI for women.
- Department of Education and Science
- Dept. of Agriculture (land-rental)
- Dept. of Justice, Equality and Law Reform
- Dept. of Social Welfare
- Edel House.
- Education Board of Ireland.
- Equality Authority.
- FAS (Women’s Development)
- FAS and Community Employment.
- Government Agencies
- Guardaí (have approached T.V.G to talk to young Guards)
- Higher Education Authority.
- ICOS (Irish Council for over-seas students). They are based in Dublin only.
- Integrating Ireland
- Irish Refugee Council
- Landlords
- Mahon CDP
- National Crime Diversion Group
- Northside Community Enterprise
- Part of Ireland Now
- Partnership Institutions.
- Pavee Point (Travellers)
- Simon Community
- Southern Health Board
- Southern Health Board

- St. Vincent de Paul
 - Traveller Health Unit (S.H.B)
 - Travellers Training Centre (horse training project)
 - Vocational Education Committee
 - Youth Links (funded by FAS)
 - Youth Work organizations
- There are also packs in the work place for anti-racism week.
- A 'Homelessness Forum' has been set up whose participants are statutory bodies, local authority and the Health Board. They have put an 'action plan' in place for an 'integrated strategy'. This is a positive move but is at the early stages as yet.
- A priest in the area is actively doing something to fight discrimination. The GAA is not encouraging outsiders and by having club subscriptions they are discriminating against people who could not pay it. The fee is very much a class thing and the priest organizes to have them paid sometimes.

4	Can you tell me about other organizations (public/private/run by volunteers) that you are in contact with?
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- ACCESS group in University College Cork and Cork Institute of Technology
- All CDP's in Cork and Kerry
- Amnesty International
- Bantry Bay Charter
- Business in the Community
- CCDI
- Comhlamh
- Cork City Partnership
- Cork Corporation
- Cork County Council
- Cork Traveller Women's Network
- Corporation swimming pool
- Department of Agriculture
- Department of Education and Science
- Department of Social Welfare
- Dept. of Justice, Equality and Law Reform
- Dept. of Social, Community and Family Affairs
- Edel House
 - Family Centres
- FAS
- FAS (Women's Development)
- Government Agencies
- Gardaí
- Health Board
- ICOS (Irish Council for over-seas students)
- Irish Wheelchair Association
- Landlords
- Local Authority
- Mahon CDP (Community Development Programme)
- NASC
- National Crime Diversion Group

- Northside Community Enterprise
- Pavee Point
- Private Industry (funding)
- Simon Community
- Specialised groups (e.g. parents of HADD Children)
- St.Vincent de Paul
- The Education Board of Ireland
- The Higher Education Authority
- The Homelessness Forum
- Traveller Health Unit (Southern Health Board)
- Travellers Training Centre
- University partnership institutions
- Vocational Education Committee (2)
- Youth Links (funded by FAS)
- Youth Work organizations

SERVICES

SERVICES	With which of these services do you deal with?		Were your expectations fulfilled or disappointed?	
	yes	no	Fulfilled	Disappointed
Registry	6	14	6	0
Gardai	3	17	2	1
Healthcare services	11	9	5	5
Care services	10	10	8	2
Disabled	8	12	4	3
Housing	14	6	4	9
Schooling	6	14	3	2
Vocational training	15	5	11	3
Work	7	13	2	4
Culture and leisure	10	10	7	2
Worship-religion	9	11	7	1

5	What do you expect from these organizations? Have there been times that your expectations haven't been met?
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“Hope for a caring individual who would be sympathetic to the cause of helping those that need it”.

- A caring service.
- Collaboration
- Co-operation and a way forward for the benefit of those that need it.
- Co-operation and the ability to work together.
- Expect people to attend meetings and training
- Expectations dependent on type of organisation
- To be vigilant
- Action following contact
- To create a partnership and a working relationship offering their expertise to the problem or issue on hand.
- To provide people with the correct information.
- To assist by providing the best possible service.

- To carry out their proper mandate and not that perceived by the functionary.
- To enter into relationships with broad horizons.
- Service is OK, but people are generally constrained by the set agenda of their organizations. Many people are frustrated and let this frustration spill over into discriminatory acts. This wrong but can be → Communication and the formulation of realistic aims
- I expect communication and realistic aims.
- We all have different expectations of them depending on what area we look after.
- I would expect that something would happen when we contact them. We bring the expertise.

- “We support them” so there is no point in asking the question, “are your expectations met?” We expect collaboration from these organizations and we usually get it.

- I have no expectations really.

SERVICES	8		
	Which services were difficult to deal with?		
	yes	no	N/A
Registry	0	6	14
Gardai	1	2	17
Healthcare services	4	7	9
Care services	1	9	10
Disabled	3	5	12
Housing	5	9	6
Schooling	1	5	14
Vocational training	1	14	5
Work	4	3	13
Culture and leisure	2	8	10

11	What kinds of difficulties were experienced? – Link to specific service
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- General lack of interest.
- **General** – Non-attendance at meetings – *Encouragement to attend meetings will hopefully come in the future in the form of organized links between organizations and good projects.*
- **Shifting goalposts** – even at a weekly level.
- **Bureaucratic difficulties** that frustrate what should be a smooth operation.
- **Institutional intransigence** – impossible to “get through”
- Short term difficulties, but in the long term these were sorted out.
- is available in many instances but it **rarely gets used for the correct purposes.** Structures within the corporation badly need changes.
- The **system is problematic** and not conducive to creating a better working and service-orientated environment.

- **Dept. of Social, Community and Family Affairs** – The Department of Social, Community and Family Affairs’ policy on funding can be ambiguous (according to one informant). They decide only after you have invoiced them whether you are to get funding. In addition, they seem to move from one group to another with regard to giving funds – **Not settled**.
- **The Homelessness Forum** – The ‘Homelessness Forum’ has set out definite dates within an ‘action plan’ and they are too ambitious – **Not settled but there are direct lines of responsibility, therefore, accountability. There are also forum meetings where conflicts can hopefully be resolved**.
- One organisation received funding through the National Development Plan to employ a youth worker. This has caused friction with a certain voluntary organisation that see the fruition of this post as taking away from their work – **Not settled**.
- Cork County Council has failed to house Travellers adequately – **Not settled**.
- **Southern Health Board** – When in contact with the board you are often passed from one person to another.
- **Gardaí** – Have marked certain families. The whole family is tainted by what any member of the family does. Some families have been run out of town – **Not Settled**.
- Some organizations have not acted on the information we have brought to them – **Sometimes settled. “If they explain to us why they have not acted on the information we have given them, then we can possibly give extra information or a different type of information if that is what they require. It is a two-way process and if that happens we make progress”**.
- **Neither NASC nor the Homeless Unit** – could find accommodation for a young Asylum-seeker girl – **a bed was found somewhere. More accommodation for under 18’s needs to be found**.
- **The Planning Authority’s** new ‘Housing Strategy’ has “failed before they [it has] have even begun”. Those on the current waiting lists for housing will still not be accommodated at the end of their five-year plan.
- **Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform** – very difficult to get a reply from them on immigrant issues. There is no accountability – **Not settled. There needs to be an attitude change**.
- **Department of Justice**, there is no trust between them and volunteer organisations that deal with immigration in Ireland – “NIL”. There is a liturgy of broken promises and non-collaboration, but it is understood that it is part of the culture of that organisation.
- There is **no access to information**, thus nothing changes. For the disabled there is no Braille. There is no concept of a one-stop shop for people and people go from pillar to post. There is also a dislocation of service provision between organizations.

SERVICES	9		
	Were there any conflicts?		
	yes	no	N/A
Registry	0	6	14
Gardai	1	2	17
Healthcare services	5	6	9
Care services	2	8	10
Disabled	0	8	12
Housing	4	12	4
Schooling	1	5	14
Vocational training	1	14	5
Work	1	6	13
Culture and leisure	2	8	10
Worship-religion	0	9	11

9	What kinds of conflicts were experienced? And How were they settled
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→A person with a medical condition that was akin to looking drunk was thrown out of a **welfare office** because he was perceived to have been drunk.

→**Department of Justice** shut down an immigration hostel with 12 hours notice, informing people that they were simply being moved. This turned to the belief that that the asylum seekers ere to be deported and a near riot broke out. This was not true, but given the short period given between notice given and forcible eviction, it was difficult to properly inform the asylum seekers, that they were not being repatriated. A local immigration support agency solicited the support of the Guards who assisted in sourcing accommodation for 110 asylum seekers within 12 hours. It was suggested that the people sent by the Justice department to forcibly evict the asylum seekers were not properly trained and could have, through their inability to properly understand the situation caused an enormous amount of harm.

→There have been conflicts with the **Southern Health Board** that displays a total lack of transparency and accountability. Staff hides behind screens and are very apt at making sure that they remain hidden. No information is ever given to whoever seeks it making it impossible for anybody to traverse the system with any degree of confidence that they will get their problem solved.

→Reluctance for **Cork Council** employees to participate. Institutional and personal.

→Generally, over program priorities – regional understandings are often undermined – **Cork Corporation**.

→Often the **state**, statutory organizations and voluntary bodies meet to strategise and decisions are agreed to, but then the state proceeds in a manner that was pre-determined before the actual meetings. Programs that lack vision are then imposed

and the “partners” are supposed to accept these, being bought off by funding. Through lobbying reversed decisions, and with **Cork Corporation** showed individual councilors that they have the power to do so.

In most cases respondents walked away from the conflict, but in some they engaged and in a few were successful in overcoming it.

SERVICES	10		
	Do you regard different kinds of services as discriminatory?		
	yes	no	N/A
Registry	0	6	14
Gardai	1	2	17
Healthcare services	6	5	9
Care services	2	8	10
Disabled	2	6	12
Housing	19	4	6
Schooling	1	5	14
Vocational training	3	12	5
Work	5	2	13
Culture and leisure	2	8	10
Worship-religion	0	9	11

10	Why? – In what way are obstacles to accessibility or discriminatory practices displayed? Please (describe)
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No information

“People who have real need are rarely told of their entitlements. It’s so much easier to get rid of them than serve them. I suppose it’s the same everywhere. Where is there the motivation for a state employee to do good work?”

→ People are not informed of their rights. Information gatekeepers abound in the state.

→ People are not read their rights and thus social exclusion is perpetuated buy the same people that should try to eradicate it. When attempting to access service the poor do not get them. Little effort is made to ensure that they do receive the proper and correct service.

→ People don’t understand their rights. The public service is only now beginning to change and this transformation will take years to manifest itself into a transparent and accountable one.

In-bred apathy

→ Some of the policies and actions are partially in-bred and the others partially deliberate s they conform to institutional patterns of racism. The prohibition of minorities to services would seem to be the ideal for many of those that should be providing the service.

→ No direct evidence that they are, but they are prejudiced.

→ People working in the public sector are taught to follow the pro-forma and there is no initiative to be found, and where it exists it is discouraged. Existing charters are

followed to the rule, and the bureaucracy ensures that they are met, except these are there as guidelines rather than being the beginning and end of whatever service is being sought. People delivering these services have initiative to perform well and they simply see time out.

- The youth are not given the same priorities as the middle aged.
- Disabled have no chance.

Affordability

- The poor that cannot afford private health and welfare must wait in long waiting lists that are the whim of whomever organises them.
- Private sector can deliver a lot more, but that is wealth dependant.
- There is a policy that creates exclusion in society, and until that is reversed, the services will remain inaccessible by all.

11	Do you think that it would be possible to improve these services? (Improvement is intended in regard to discrimination)	Yes	18	No	1
Explain your response to the improvement of services					

YES

"We could improve our own service by doing more development work rather than more service delivery" and "improvement can only come if the government is serious about wanting to change things and presses with punitive actions should people not receive the required service."

- Equality Authority needs to be more active in information provision.
- Adult education courses need to come out of the universities and into the community.
- Church needs to be more passionate about discrimination issues.
- Curricula at schools must become more secular.
- Department of Justice - attitude change within.
- Education system needs to be overhauled to reflect the diversity of today's society.
- Every community should have a "Directory of Essential Services".
- Health Boards and Gardaí training.
- Immigration policies need to be amended.
- Improve access to information, make it a pre-determined right and then new sights can be set.
- Link with other European countries.
- Lobby more on people's realities.
- Look at Government policy creatively.
- Men's health focus.
- More accommodation for those on housing lists needs to be provided.
- More outreach necessary
- Must allow flexibility for local solutions to local problems rather than be dictated from by Dublin on what must be done.
- Must create a culture of awareness, professionalism and pleasantry.
- Must introduce compulsory refresher courses for all staff in statutory care giving institutions.
- Must make improvements for the disabled.

- Necessary to allow for longer after care.
- Need a system that follows up those that are marginalized or fall off the list – an ombudsman of sorts.
- Need more doctors and nurses.
- Need to further expose people to what racism really is.
- Need to move away from the current rigidity to a more flexible approach to problem solving.
- Need to teach people the meaning of inclusion and assistance, not to mention good manners.
- People with psychological difficulties need a voluntary or statutory
- Qualifications recognition for immigrants has to be looked at.
- School curriculum should include information about the Traveller way of life.
- Service providers need to understand that everybody is entitled to an equal service or an equal opportunity to that service.
- Should teach life skills both to those who use and provide the services.
- Special schooling for Traveller children needs to be provided.
- Target the “non-converted”.
- Transport facilities for people with disabilities.
- Voluntary groups need more help in the form of funding.

MAYBE

- Yes, but only if there is to be a coordinated approach, through local networks and understandings. In addition there needs to be a greater symbiosis between statutory and voluntary bodies.
- Yes, but that is a question that I would have to get my thinking cap on for.

NO

No, it would be too costly, yet this is not an issue of more resources, but the better harnessing of what is currently available. There is a dire need for lobbying and advocacy amongst those that wish to make a difference to society. When there is a set-up to deal with these problems there is no evidence of either the state or statutory bodies being present. There is a need for a radical agenda to shake the apathy and lethargy from the system. Ireland must move away from being an accepting society.

THE FOLLOWING SETS OF QUESTIONS WERE EXTREMELY DIFFICULT TO ADMINISTER, FOR THE TYPES OF RESPONSES SOLICITED WERE VERY SIMILAR. THERE ARE OBVIOUSLY GOOD REASONS WHY THEY HAVE BEEN ASKED IN THE MANNER THAT THEY HAVE, AND A 100% EFFORT WAS MADE TO ADMINISTER THEM IN THE EXACT MANNER. HOWEVER MANY OF THE RESPONSES OVERLAP, AND OFTEN RESPONDENTS BECAME IRRITATED FOR THEY FELT THAT THEY HAD PREVIOUSLY ANSWERED THE QUESTIONS. A VARIETY OF RESPONSES WERE NOTED AND THOSE THAT ARE RELEVANT TO THE QUESTIONS LISTED BENEATH EACH QUESTION.

19	Do you think that being different from others automatically means being discriminated?	Yes	9	No	2	Depends	4	Don't Know	5
	If yes, how?								

Discriminated Against

→ Different skin colour causes fear. It is not discrimination to begin with. It is easier to discriminate against something visual.

Some people have the attitude that if you are not Irish then you are not meant to be here.

→ There are cultures in Ireland now that we know nothing about. The Government has made no attempt to enlighten us as to why they are here in the first place. There are no provincial programmes in place. The 'direct provision' policy allows no attempt for integration; therefore, it is easier for asylum-seekers to become victims.

→ It is different for those who are integrating and those who are not.

→ 1.2 Million people in Ireland are affected by disability in some way and in this small town, people do not know how to react when they see a disabled person.

→ There may be men who portray themselves as effeminate guys and some people cannot cope with this.

→ If you are homeless, you cannot open a bank or credit union account because you may not have picture identification. Therefore, you may not be able to find someone to cash your Social Welfare cheque.

→ Difference is a reflection of the real world and it is a world that Ireland must join. Interchange and learning of different experiences will strengthen Ireland.

→ Depends on social and economic status.

→ Being male and white and Irish but non-catholic will have you discriminated, the others have no chance at all.

→ With regard to difference being a pre-requisite for discrimination I should reiterate that there are cultures in Ireland now that we know nothing about and the Government has made no attempt to enlighten us as to why they are here in the first place. The Government addresses situations after they happen. There are no provincial programmes in place. The 'direct provision' policy allows no attempt for integration therefore it is easier for asylum-seekers to become victims. The complexities of sub-cultures have not been explored.

→ Difference can sometimes be negative for the people who are deemed different as their culture and family set-up is totally different than the host community. The homes we provide are not what they need.

→ We have a lot to learn as a society in general and people are open to learning. The Health Board has appointed experienced Community Welfare Offices to deal with issues within 'direct provision'. They have provided financial aid but there still is not enough housing, therefore, they are not addressing the problem

→ Yes. Different skin colour causes fear. It is not discrimination to begin with. It is easier to discriminate against something visual.

→ Some people have the attitude that if you are not Irish then you are not meant to be here.

→ Difference is positive. It has to be accepted. A multi-cultural society is the way forward.

- Status is perhaps what deterring factor as to whether being different makes any sense at all.
- If someone applies for a post, the Nigerian technology specialist is much more likely to get a job, as it is needed, than a Roma person who applies for a job in a shop.
- The issues are cultural difference and looks. It is different for those who are integrating and those who are not.
- We cannot celebrate difference unless there is dialogue with and about the difference first.
- Difference is positive providing we make structures to meet Irish society.
- It is not positive if we ghettoize it or if incoming groups ghettoize themselves. Ghettos imply very bad planning. Especially, with the present situation, we need to foster communication with Muslims. Integration is a word that needs to be defined. We need to look at integration versus assimilation.
- We have to be open to difference and diversity.
- We have samba music in the schools, which sees difference as very positive.
- We also have a 'circus skills school', which is very popular especially with immigrant children.
- People with disabilities for example, 1.2. Million people are effected by disability in Ireland and yet in a small town people do not know how to react with people with a disability.
- Some Travellers look like Travellers and they are discriminated against. It is the same with coloured people.
- It does depend on the type of difference. It depends on how people cope with it.
- If you are homeless you cannot get your social welfare cheque. Nobody will cash it. You cannot open a bank or credit union account, because you do not have a passport or some kind of picture ID.

Not Discriminated Against

- Being different doesn't automatically mean that you are discriminated against.

Confused Response

- It is unfortunate that some ethnic minorities give them all a bad name, for example, the Romanians.
- Depends why difference is being classified as a difference and for what purpose.

THERE WAS CONFUSION HERE, WITH MOST RESPONDENTS SAYING THAT THE DIFFERENCES ARE POSITIVE, BUT GIVING EXPLANATIONS THAT WERE LARGELY NEGATIVE OR COMPLETELY OFF THE SUBJECT.

19	Do you think that differences among people are positive, negative or it varies depending on the kind of difference?	Positive	14	Negative	3	Depends Don't Know	3
	Why?						

POSTIVE

- The mix of cultures, languages and religions will strengthen society.
 - Difference is positive. It has to be accepted. A multi-cultural society is the way forward.
 - Difference is positive providing we make structures to meet Irish society. We cannot celebrate difference unless there is dialogue with and about the difference first.
 - We have samba music in the schools, which sees difference as very positive.
 - Difference is positive. It should be encouraged. Languages, traditions and cooking should be encouraged.
 - Difference is the spice of life and should be welcomed.
- If the Irish feel confident and feel that they have something to offer then they will be able to share. It takes time. So yes, it will be positive.
- Very positive and necessary to stimulate debate
 - Difference should be encouraged. Languages, traditions and cooking should be celebrated. For example, we could do something with different types of food.
 - Diversity is essential if society is to progress. Society has never been homogeneous anyway, that's a red herring, and there are as many differences now as there were years ago.
 - Because it is natural.

NEGATIVE

- Difference is negative in this respect but in an ideal world it would be positive.
- The negative view of difference is far deeper than some think. Some immigrants do not think that Irish people are racist.
- Difference can sometimes be deemed negative for the people who are deemed different as their culture and family set-up is totally different than that of the host community.
- It is not positive if we ghettoize it or if incoming groups ghettoize themselves.
- Asylum-seekers children are lost in the equation. They will be Irish citizens and may be looked down upon because of the fact that their parents had them here on purpose. This needs to be addressed.
- The interpretation of asylum-seeker law is negatively applied.
- I am disappointed in the political leadership. Most of the official statements from the church are good.
- Asylum-seekers are like animals in the hotels.

DEPENDS

- It depends on how people cope with the difference.
- How people react to difference makes it positive or negative.
- An education pattern, which would lead to a change of mindset, would take away the fear of the unknown.
- A greater understanding of the issues involved has to be on both sides.

→ “Actions speak louder than words”.

REALIST

→ There is no fast answer to this.

19	Are there differences that are acceptable and differences that aren't?	Acceptable	11	Unacceptable	2	Depends	4	Don't Know	3
If yes, which ones are acceptable and which ones are unacceptable?									

In general respondents said that: racial, ethnic and cultural differences are acceptable, but that Violent people, criminal differences and gender related differences between men and women are unacceptable.

19	How should society deal with differences?
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→ For society to deal with difference in general we have to first address it. We have to look at what the difference is. Conflict resolution involves exploring common problem areas and this has to be done if a resolution is to be found. We are “only at the beginning” and we should learn from other country’s mistakes. There is ignorance and lack of awareness that is not the fault of the general public, they have to be educated and the Government is not doing anything.

→ Education (should begin in primary as by secondary level the damage has already been done) in schools and in the homes. Schoolbooks could play a part in this. Break down barriers through education and greater tolerance.

(THIS WAS A COMMON RESPONSE)

- Accepting them as a strength.
- A social housing mix on new housing developments is a good progression.
- Co-operation and perseverance.
- Create a space for them.
- Create better awareness.
- Every obstacle to integration should be dealt with.
- Every obstacle to integration should be dealt with.
- If the Irish feel confident and feel that they have something to offer then they will be able to share. It takes time.
- Inform others of these differences so that they do not fall into the same trap.
- Information is the key; it needs to be given to everyone. The “All Different, All Equal” campaign worked.
- Personal development needs to take place at a personal level.
- Resources need to be put in place for asylum-seekers.
- Respect and understanding.
- The more opportunity for Traveller children to integrate, the better.
- Transition year in school would be a perfect place for education.
- We need to begin the dialogue and communication process e.g. organizing a public lecture on Islam.
- We need to actively reach out and communicate and engage with them in their diversity.
- The onus is to understand what the people think and then attempt to change that so it no longer is discriminatory.