

Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty

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Assessment of Equality and Human Rights Issues



Bord Oideachais & Oiliúna
LUIMNIGH & AN CHLÁIR
LIMERICK & CLARE
Education & Training Board

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01

Introduction

This assessment of equality and human rights issues has been prepared by Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board (the ETB) in fulfilment of its obligations under S42 of the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act 2014: the public sector equality and human rights duty (the Duty) and in reflection of its ambitions to advance the achievement of equality and the fulfilment of human rights across all of its function areas.

The Duty requires public bodies to have regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, promote equality of opportunity, and protect human rights for employees and service users, and across all function areas. Step one of the Duty requires a public body to prepare and publish an assessment of the equality and human rights issues, relevant to its functions, for identified groups under the Duty.

In conducting this assessment, the ETB has ensured compliance with guidance issued by the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission, namely, that the assessment is evidence-based and involves consultation with key stakeholders.¹

This is NOT an assessment of the performance of the ETB in regard to its work to address equality and human rights concerns. It is an assessment of the equality and human rights issues facing the identified groups under the Duty, in particular, those equality and human rights issues that have relevance for the functions of an ETB.

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¹Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission (2019).
[Implementing the Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty.](#)

02

The Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty

Section 42 of the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act 2014 requires:

- (1) 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 the persons to whom it provides services; and
 - ➔ Protect the human rights of its members, staff and the persons to whom it provides services.

S42(a)(b) establish three key steps that public bodies should follow, in regard to implementing the Duty: **Assess**; **Address**; and **Report** (see section 4.3 for more detail).

- (2) (a) set out in a manner that is accessible to the public in its strategic plan (howsoever described) an **assessment** of the human rights and equality issues it believes to be relevant to the functions and purpose of the body and the policies, plans and actions in place or proposed to be put in place to **address** those issues, and
- (b) **report** in a manner that is accessible to the public on developments and achievements in that regard in its annual report (howsoever described).

The Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission (IHREC) guidance identifies the following groups as the main focus regarding implementing the Duty: "Keep the focus on people across the nine grounds included in equality legislation and on the potential impact of those at risk of poverty or social exclusion". The nine grounds in the equality legislation are: gender (including gender identity); civil status; family status (including lone parents and carers); age; disability; sexual orientation; race; religion; and membership of the Traveller community.

03

Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board Equality and Human Rights Values Statement

Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board has developed this equality and human rights values statement to support our work to promote equality, prevent discrimination and protect human rights.

Our equality and human rights values statement is a tool to allow our ETB to apply a values lens to embedding a coherent and consistent approach to promoting equality, preventing discrimination and protecting human rights, across all of our function areas and encompassing our roles as a service provider and employer.

Applying our Equality and Human Rights Values Statement

In applying our values statement, we are focused on the identity, situation and experience of people experiencing inequality and disadvantage across grounds of gender, civil status, family status, age, disability, sexual orientation, race, religion, membership of the Traveller community, and socio-economic status.

- ➔ Situation refers to the social and economic status of the group and its members, including education status.
- ➔ Experience refers to nature and quality of the interactions of the group and its members with public institutions and the wider society.
- ➔ Identity refers to the manner in which the group and its members give expression to their identity and the specific needs that arise from this.

Our policies, procedures, practice and processes will reflect our approach to building this organisational culture.

In implementing this statement, we respect the boundaries set by broader legislative requirements, national policy, and funding availability.

04

Assessment Template

The assessment of equality and human rights issues involves an examination of the **situation, experience, and identity** of those group identified for the Duty, to establish the key equality and human rights issues experienced by these groups, that are relevant to the functions of Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board (the ETB).

The identified groups are:

- ➔ those groups protected under the nine grounds under equality legislation²: gender (including gender identity), civil status, family status (including lone parents, and those with caring responsibilities in the family), age, sexual orientation, disability, race (encompassing nationality, skin colour, and ethnicity), religion, and membership of the Traveller community; and
 - ➔ those at risk of poverty and social exclusion.
- The **Situation** of the group refers to: access to resources and any particular disadvantage experienced by the group in accessing key resources. Resources relevant to the functions of an ETB include: primary and second-level education; further education and training, adult education, and employment.
 - The **Experience** of the group refers to: the quality of the groups interaction with service providers and the wider society, and their experiences of negative treatment (discrimination, identity-based harassment, stereotyping and biases, social isolation and exclusion), in particular, in accessing services and supports.
 - The **Identity** of the group: refers to diversity on the basis of such as, gender and gender identity expression, age, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, religion, family status, and the specific needs that arise from this diversity.

The equality and human rights issues identified in our assessment, are drawn from up-to-date research and reports on the key equality and human rights issues facing the groups identified for the Duty.

²The Employment Equality Acts (1998–2015) and the Equal Status Acts (2000–2018)

The ETB takes a values-led approach to its work to implement the Duty. This involves employing a specific set of values (values that underpin the goals of advancing equality and fulfilling human rights) as a lens, through which we: engage our staff and service participants with the Duty; conduct the assessment of equality and human rights; and ensure adequate attention to addressing issues identified in the assessment, across the three pillars of the organisation (Schools; Further Education and Training; and Organisation Support and Development).

The ETB has identified the values of Respect, Inclusion, Social Justice, and Empowerment, as motivating our concern for equality and human rights. We have developed an equality and human rights values statement setting out, for each value: a shared understanding of the value, in alignment with our mission; a statement of priority, for the change we seek to pursue to give expression to each value in our work to address equality and human rights concerns; and a statement of process, for the way in which we work to deliver on our strategic objectives to give expression to each value in our work to address equality and human rights concerns. These statements of priority and process will serve as high level benchmarks to guide our ambition in implementing the Duty across all our function areas.

05

Assessment of Equality and Human Rights Issues

This section sets out the core equality and human rights issues that have most relevance to the functions of Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board (the ETB). These issues are drawn from the wider evidence base of issues, set out in section 4.

In this section we use the framework of our equality and human rights values statement, to set out the core equality and human rights issues that have particular relevance for each of the values of: Respect, Inclusion, Social Justice, and Empowerment, and the particular priority and process focus for each of these values.

When using the assessment as a tool to implement the Duty (when developing or reviewing plans, strategies, policies, procedures, services and programmes), the equality and human rights issues of relevance to the plan, strategy, policy, procedure, service or programme under development or review, should be identified from this section. The evidence base, section 4. and referenced reports/research, should also be used, to obtain more detail in regard to the specific issues identified from section 3.

The equality and human rights issues identified below relate to all of the identified groups unless otherwise indicated. In regard to a number of the equality and human rights issues, the particular situation or experience for one or more of the identified groups is noted where the data indicate: a unique experience for that group in regard to the issue(s); or that the group experience significant/persistent inequality/discrimination/human rights violations in regard to the issue(s).

Respect



Respect is about mutual empathy, integrity, fairness, and kindness. It involves listening to, and consideration of the perspectives of the diversity of our learners, staff and the wider community.

Our Priority

The ETB strives to contribute to realising a culture of respect and dignity in communities and across society.

Our Approach

The ETB will ensure an organisational culture of respect, dignity and wellbeing and a respectful and safe working and learning environment through: openness, responsiveness, active listening to diverse perspectives, and ensuring that all forms of discrimination are prevented and addressed.

The equality and human rights issues to be addressed in implementing the Duty, related to the value of **Respect** and relevant to the functions of the ETB, are:

- ➔ Employment-related discrimination³ (recruitment and progression in employment) for all of the identified groups. In particular, the data point to:
 - high levels of discrimination, when seeking employment, for: Travellers; Roma and Black (non-Irish national) migrants; disabled people; transgender people; and people with a criminal conviction.
 - high levels of in-work discrimination, for women, disabled people, and transgender people.
- ➔ Discrimination in accessing and/or participating in key services⁴, including education and training. In particular, the data point to:
 - high levels of discrimination in accessing and participating in education, experienced by Travellers, and people with disabilities.

³ As defined under the Employment Equality Acts (1999 to 2015)

⁴ As defined under the Equal Status Acts (2000 to 2018)

➔ Identity-based harassment, sexual harassment⁵, and other forms of abuse and violence which prevent access to, participation in and good outcomes from employment and key services, including education. In particular, the data point to:

- high levels of racist abuse/harassment experienced by Travellers and other minority ethnic groups,
- high levels of homophobic and/or transphobic abuse/harassment experienced by LGBTIQ+ people,
- high levels of sexual harassment experienced by women in the workplace,
- gender-based violence, including domestic violence which negatively impacts on women's participation in employment,
- problematic attitudes in regard to consent, among the general population.

➔ Limited understanding of equality, anti-discrimination, human rights issues for different groups, including among employers and service providers.

Inclusion



Inclusion is about recognising, valuing and harnessing the richness of difference. It involves a recognition that diversity brings opportunities for innovation that enrich the learning environment and workplace.

Our Priority:

The ETB strives to be inclusive in employment and service provision and to be a reflection of the diverse communities we serve, including the most marginalised and those who experience inequality and discrimination. We seek to harness the potential of a diverse workplace and learning environment.

Our Approach:

The ETB will build and embed an inclusive culture and environment. We will operate in an accessible and flexible manner and will strive to remove barriers to participation in the workplace and in our services.

⁵ As defined under the equality legislation (the Employment Equality Acts and the Equal Status Acts). Identity-based harassment on the basis of a protected characteristic under one or more of the protected grounds under equality legislation.

The equality and human rights issues to be addressed in implementing the Duty, related to the value of **Inclusion** and relevant to the functions of the ETB, are:

- ➔ Invisibility of diversity, with particular regard to:
 - lack of equality data (employment and service provision) to measure diversity and monitor progress in regard to equality outcomes for specific groups (in particular a lack of data on ethnicity, and disability),
 - lack of visibility in education curricula for diverse cultures and ethnicities.

- ➔ Failure to make adaptations for diversity in order to meet the specific needs arising from this diversity. In particular the data point to:
 - failure to provide reasonable accommodations (employers and service providers, including in education) for people with different types of disabilities, and lack of focus on universal design for accessibility,
 - inflexibility in the design and delivery of education and related supports, which presents barriers for people who: have a disability; are living in poverty; have caring responsibilities; are in the older age cohort; are from different cultural backgrounds and may not have fluent English; are digitally excluded,
 - limited capacity and knowledge on the part of employers and service providers to understand and respond to the practical implications of diversity.

- ➔ Inadequate responses, including by employers and service providers, to meet the needs of those with caring responsibilities. In particular, the data point to:
 - the unequal sharing of caring responsibilities between women and men,
 - the lack of affordable and accessible childcare,
 - the absence of adequate work life balance workplace arrangements.

- ➔ Unwelcoming/non-inclusive working and learning environments, with particular regard to:
 - 'soft' barriers to inclusion where certain groups (Travellers, LGBTIQ+ people) feel they have to hide their identity to avoid negative treatment,
 - educational provision that applies a 'one-size-fits-all' approach,
 - stereotypes and assumptions of certain groups resulting in barriers of access and participation (employment and service provision).

- ➔ Isolation and social exclusion that prevent people's participation, including in work and education. In particular, the data point to:
 - rural isolation and lack of access to public transport (in particular for older people, and those living in poverty),
 - isolation experienced by people with disabilities where there are barriers to their full participation in workplace and education settings,
 - isolation experienced by Travellers and LGBTIQ+ people where they feel compelled to hide their identity, including in work and in education settings; and,
 - isolation of some migrants from local community services and supports, particularly those whose first language is not English and those in direct provision accommodation.

Social Justice



Social justice is about ensuring equality of outcome by providing access to opportunities and resources to enable full participation by all in economic, social, political and cultural life. It involves prioritising a focus on individuals and groups experiencing inequality and those who are marginalised.

Our Priority:

The ETB strives to break cycles of disadvantage and to remove the barriers experienced by individuals and groups who are marginalised, to enable more equal outcomes.

Our Approach:

The ETB will identify and seek to remove barriers to access and participation in our services and workplace, by applying innovative and adaptive approaches to: curriculum development and delivery; organisational development and change management processes.

The equality and human rights issues to be addressed in implementing the Duty, related to the value of **Social Justice** and relevant to the functions of the ETB, are:

- ➔ Low educational status due to poor educational outcomes. In particular, the data point to:
 - young people from socio-economically disadvantaged areas more likely to have poorer educational outcomes and lower likelihood of engaging with FET,
 - non-attendance and/or early school leaving, due to identity-based harassment, for Travellers and LGBTIQ+ students,
 - poor educational outcomes for Travellers and people with disabilities, and teachers having low expectations of the capacity of Traveller students and students with a disability,
 - lower levels of functional literacy among the Traveller and Roma communities,
 - children with disabilities from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds disproportionately placed in special education,
 - Traveller children disproportionately being subject to reduced timetabling in school,
 - poorer Leaving Cert outcomes and consequent lack of transition to third-level education, for young people who are taking on care responsibilities in the family.

- ➔ Barriers to participation in lifelong learning, in particular for: older people, lone parents, people who have left formal education at an early stage, migrants whose first language is not English, and people in prison,

- ➔ Specific barriers for some minority ethnic migrants in accessing education and training due to: lack of information and knowledge; language barriers; eligibility requirements; lack of recognition of qualification from other jurisdictions, and legal status requirements.

- ➔ Low skills status due to lack of access to and outcomes from training provision across the identified groups. In particular, the data point to:
 - barriers to accessing FET for those with caring responsibilities, in particular lone parents,
 - lack of progression into employment for Travellers and people with disabilities, and Travellers lacking the sort of networks and family connections available to the settled community, for required course placements/apprenticeships,
 - Travellers missing out on educational supports due to having to hide their ethnic identity,
 - for some groups, particularly those who have left school early or who have been educated outside of the formal education system, lack of recognition of prior learning presents a barrier to people's education and career pathways,
 - gender imbalance in STEM and apprenticeships.

- ➔ Digital exclusion and/or digital constraints, preventing access to and participation in education. In particular, the data point to:

- a high proportion of older people have no, or basic, digital skills and a significant number have never used the internet,
- older people find it difficult to navigate online services/application processes and have low levels of trust in engaging with services online, including in regard to sharing personal data,
- people on low incomes are more likely to have limited/no access to devices and/or are unable to afford broadband; and,
- barriers to digital inclusion for people with low levels of literacy, people with learning disabilities, and people whose first language is not English.

- ➔ Unemployment and under-employment. In particular, the data point to:

- high levels of unemployment in the Limerick region, in particular youth unemployment,
- low levels of labour market participation for: young people; people with disabilities; Travellers and other minority ethnic groups; and lone parents,
- Travellers lack the sort of networks and connections available to their settled peers, to support them to get into employment,
- a lower overall employment rate for women, in comparison to men, and a higher concentration of women in part-time and precarious work,
- lack of diversity in public sector employment.

- ➔ Lack of access to in-work employment opportunities and promotion. In particular, the data point to:

- women underrepresented at management level,
- impact of caring responsibilities, which limits promotion and other career opportunities, for women.

- ➔ Poverty and/or low income. In particular, the data point to:

- the intersections of socio-economic disadvantage with identity-based discrimination and inequality (in particular for: lone parents, Travellers, minority ethnic groups, disabled people, older people, and transgender people),
- the concentration of women in low-paid, part-time work,
- the gender pay gap and gender pension gap,
- the additional financial costs of having a disability.

- ➔ Homelessness/insecure accommodation status, and overcrowding, which adversely impact on people's learning and educational outcomes. In particular, the data point to:
 - high levels of children and young people homeless,
 - poor living conditions, overcrowding, and high risk of homelessness for Travellers and Roma and other minority ethnic groups,
 - unsuitability of direct provision accommodation for families, and lack of accommodation options for those exiting direct provision; and,
 - poor quality of accommodation and increased risk of homelessness for disabled people, and lone parents.

- ➔ Unequal health status. In particular, the data point to:
 - mental health issues for young people, Travellers and LGBTIQ+ people, and limited availability of, and access to mental health supports and services,
 - high suicide levels in the Traveller community, including among Traveller young people,
 - the impact of identity-based abuse and harassment on the mental and physical health of victims,
 - the impact of COVID-19 on people's health and wellbeing.

The equality and human rights issues to be addressed in implementing the Duty, related to the value of **Empowerment** and relevant to the functions of the ETB, are:

- ➔ Groups experiencing inequality and social exclusion often do not have a voice, autonomy or influence. In particular the data point to:
 - stereotypes and assumptions about children, young people, disabled people, and older people that present barriers to them having agency and influence,
 - the prevalence of a 'medical model' of disability (over a 'social model'), which negatively impacts on disabled people's autonomy.
- ➔ Significant under-reporting of discrimination, identity-based harassment and abuse, and sexual harassment, by victims, including in work and in learning environments, and a lack of knowledge of rights and protections under legislation and capacity to exercise these rights.
- ➔ Lack of spaces and opportunities for the voice of identified groups to be effectively articulated. In particular the data point to:
 - the need for service providers and employers to ensure the lived experience of people experiencing inequality, discrimination, and social exclusion is informing priorities and approaches in employment and service provision.
- ➔ Limited articulation of individual perspectives and experiences by members of the identified groups. In particular the data point to:
 - reluctance to report negative treatment (in work and/or while attending education) due to: low levels of confidence that issues will be addressed by employers/service providers; fear of further victimisation; fear of repercussions (in particular for employees); and fear of not being believed or taken seriously,
 - disempowerment due to literacy and/or learning difficulties,
 - lack of autonomy, agency and advocacy afforded to people with learning difficulties and intellectual disabilities,
 - being unable to articulate issues due to having to hide one's identity as a Traveller, LGBTIQ+ person,
 - impact of internalised oppression (internalised ageism, racism etc.) on people's self-belief and confidence.

Empowerment



Empowerment is about enabling individuals, groups and communities to have the personal and social power to influence decisions affecting their lives and the life of their communities.

Our Priority:

The ETB strives to enhance the self-esteem and confidence of our learners to realise their potential. We strive to support and enable the professional development of all staff. We seek to build a workplace and learning environment that is enabling and accountable.

Our Approach:

The ETB will engage learners and staff in decision-making and learners in processes of co-production regarding their learning. We will ensure meaningful, two-way consultation and collaboration with staff and learners, and accountability in decision-making.

06

Assessment
Evidence Base

Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board (the ETB) has used the following data sources to inform this assessment:

- ➔ Research conducted by a range of bodies, including the Central Statistics Office, and the Economic and Social Research Institute; and research and reports from national and local organisations advocating on behalf of the identified groups for the Duty.
- ➔ National policy strategies for specific identified groups.
- ➔ SOLAS data in regard to FET provision for a number of the identified groups.
- ➔ Submissions by the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission to the international UN human rights monitoring framework, and
- ➔ Data and information collected by the ETB.

The evidence base, with the assessment, serves as a resource for the implementation of the Duty in the ETB, by providing more detailed information and data to inform the development and review of our strategies, plans, policies and procedures, services, programmes, and initiatives.

This evidence base will be periodically updated by the ETB to ensure that the most up-to-date data and information is informing our ongoing work to address equality and human rights concerns across our functional areas.

The evidence base is set out according to the identified groups for the Duty, and using the framework of situation, experience, identity.

Gender (men, women, transgender and gender identity)



Situation

- ➔ Census 2022 data⁶ indicate the following in regard to men and women in employment:
 - the labour force participation rate⁷ was 61% (67% for males and 56% for females). The labour force participation rate for Co. Limerick and Co. Clare, for both sexes, was 58% and 59% respectively.

⁶ CSO [Census 2022 data](#) on employment.

⁷ The labour force is made up of people who are at work, unemployed or looking for their first job. All other categories of economic status (i.e. students, people looking after home/family, retired people and those unable to work due to sickness or disability) are not considered part of the labour force for census purposes.

- 61% of males and 51% of females, aged 15 years+, were in employment.
 - the proportion of female workers who were part-time was over three times higher than the proportion of males, 23% and 7% respectively.
 - 12% of females recorded their principal economic status as 'looking after the home/family'. Of all people who recorded their economic status as 'looking after the home/family', 90% were female.
- ➔ In 2019, women held just 26% of senior roles in large Irish enterprises. They occupied just 11.5% of CEO positions, 28.3% of Senior Executive roles, 19.6% of Board of Director positions, and 7.4% of Chairperson roles.⁸
 - ➔ 2021 figures indicate that 38% of leaders of Higher Education Institutions were women.⁹
 - ➔ Women make up almost two-thirds of the civil service workforce, while the vast majority of better-paid senior positions at the top four civil service grades are filled by men, suggesting the continued existence of a glass ceiling in the public sector.¹⁰
 - ➔ In 2022 the gender pay gap in Ireland was 9.6%.¹¹
 - ➔ Women report having lower job control¹² than their male peers.¹³
 - ➔ Data from the period during COVID, when a significant number of people worked from home, found that working from home resulted in an intensification in people's effort levels, and an increase in employees' stress, inability to disconnect from work and diminishment in wellbeing and health. Female employees were more likely than male employees to report that their mental health had suffered.¹⁴
 - ➔ Women are concentrated in part-time employment: Census 2022 indicates that almost a quarter of women in employment were in part-time employment, compared to 7% of men.¹⁵
 - ➔ Gendered allocation of unpaid work is a key component to gender inequality in employment, pay, poverty and lifetime income.¹⁶
 - ➔ Young women are more likely than young men (13.9% of women (15 - 29) vs. 11.9% of men in 2017) to be neither in employment nor in education and training (NEET).¹⁷

⁸ CSO [Women and Men in Ireland 2019](#).

⁹ It should be noted, however, that the 2021 data indicate an improvement, since 2016. [Gender Equality in Irish Higher Education Institutions 2015-2021](#). HEA

¹⁰ IHREC (2015) Ireland and the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights

¹¹ CSO [October 2023](#).

¹² How much control workers feel they have over the tasks, timing, and pace of their job

¹³ Mc Ginnity, F. et al (2021) [Monitoring Decent Work in Ireland](#). IHREC and the ESRI.

¹⁴ IHREC (July 2022). Comments on Ireland's 19th National Report on the implementation of the European Social Charter. Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission.

¹⁵ CSO Census 2022.

¹⁶ Russell et al. (2019). [Caring and Unpaid Work in Ireland](#). The ESRI and the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission.

¹⁷ The 'National Strategy for Women and Girls: Creating a Better Society for All, 2017-2020'

- ➔ Subject and course choices (available to, and pushed towards females and males) can reinforce gender stereotypes.¹⁸
- ➔ Despite attaining better outcomes from education than their male peers, women experience lower employment participation rates and continue to be employed in less senior positions than men.¹⁹
- ➔ There is gender imbalance on STEM courses, and apprenticeship (with low levels of women participating).²⁰ However, the situation in regard to apprenticeships is showing some improvement: the number of women in apprenticeships has grown from 26 in 2015 to 1,500 in 2022.²¹
- ➔ The cost and availability of childcare provision, and the lack of flexibility in regard to the timing of course sessions for women with children, in particular lone parents, serve as a significant barrier to women's uptake of FET provision. While there are FET childcare supports in place, these are described as being: inadequate to meet the high cost of childcare; inflexible in terms of eligibility criteria; and insufficiently universal, in that they do not apply to all FET programmes.²²
- ➔ Irish research found that transgender and gender diverse young people's education is impacted by inadequate responses from schools. Issues identified were: male to female trans youth faced particular challenges due to "heightened levels of prejudice against students who transition from male-to-female; some young people left school before getting their formal qualifications, or had to move to another school; students who had transitioned faced barriers in accessing physical education and sports teams."²³

Experience

- ➔ Irish research²⁴ found that sexual harassment²⁵ in the workplace was significant and very under-reported:
 - women were overwhelmingly the victims and for 81%, the perpetrator of the *most recent* incident was a male colleague (54%) or their (male) manager (31%),
 - 54% of respondents were subjected to unwelcome jokes of a sexual nature; 41% received unwelcome verbal sexual advances; 37% experienced unwanted touching;

¹⁸ Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission (January 2017). Ireland and the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women: Submission to the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women on Ireland's Combined Sixth and Seventh Periodic Reports, Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission, Dublin.

¹⁹ IHREC (2015) Ireland and the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights

²⁰ The 'National Strategy for Women and Girls: Creating a Better Society for All, 2017-2020'

²¹ <https://apprenticeship.ie/success-stories/women-in-apprenticeship>

²² SOLAS 2017. [Barriers to FET with particular reference to long-term unemployed and other vulnerable individuals.](#)

²³ Mc Bride, R. et al. (2020). [The Post-Primary Experience of Transgender and Gender Diverse Youth in Ireland.](#) Transgender Equality Network of Ireland and University of Limerick.

²⁴ Irish Congress of Trade Unions (November 2019) Survey with 1,300 union members on their experience of sexual harassment and sexual assault in the workplace.

²⁵ As defined under equality legislation.

- 37% experienced unwelcome questions or comments about their sex life; 17% were exposed to displays of pornographic photographs or drawings; 23% received unwanted messages with material of a sexual nature by e-mail, text social media; 15% were subjected to unwelcome questions or comments of a sexual nature about their sexual orientation; 2% were seriously sexually assaulted or raped at work,
- 41% of victims avoided certain work situations as a result of the harassment; 30% felt less confident at work; 18% felt it had a negative impact on their work performance; 26% reported that the harassment had a negative impact on their mental health; 10% reported that there was a negative impact on their physical health; 16% wanted to leave their job as a result but were unable due to financial or other factors; and 6% said the harassment had caused them to change their role within the company or leave their job with that employer,
- 55% of the incidents had taken place on work premises and 20% at a work-related social event,
- only 1 in 5 people who experience such harassment in the workplace reported it to their employer. The main reasons for not reporting were: fear that reporting would impact negatively on working relationships/career; fear of not being believed/taken seriously; feeling that nothing would be done (no action would be taken); embarrassment; and fearing that they would be blamed for what happened.
- ➔ CSO data indicate that while similar numbers of males and females experienced discrimination while *looking for work*, women are twice as likely as men to report that they had experienced *in-work* discrimination in the previous two years (7.3% vs 4.6%). For women who experienced in-work discrimination, the types of discrimination/relevant issues were (in order of prominence) harassment or bullying (34.3%), work conditions (19.4%) and promotion (17.2%). For men who experienced in-work discrimination, the types of discrimination experienced were (in order of prominence) harassment or bullying (30.4%); promotion (21.6%).²⁶
- ➔ Women are more likely than men to experience discrimination in the workplace, but in other domains (access to goods and services) there is no gender difference.²⁷
- ➔ A UK trade union employee survey on domestic violence²⁸, found the following:
 - Victims of domestic violence may be prevented from getting to work, due to: injury and/or the abuser preventing them going to work,
 - 20% of victims of domestic abuse had to take a month or more off work in the previous year due to the abuse, and domestic violence affects workers' attendance and performance,
 - Domestic violence can spill over into the workplace with abusers continuing to harass the victim at work,
 - Women can be forced out of employment due to the impact of the abuse and/or the tactics of the abuser,
 - Victims rarely disclosed the abuse to anyone at work.

²⁶ Central Statistics Office: [Equality and Discrimination](#). CSO release July 2019

²⁷ IHREC and ESRI (2017) [Who Experiences Discrimination in Ireland](#)

²⁸ TUC (2014). [Domestic Violence and the Workplace](#): a TUC Survey Report.

- ➔ 1 in 5 Irish people believe that having sex without consent is justifiable in certain circumstances, and 11% believe it is acceptable if the woman is under the influence of alcohol or drugs. 23% of Irish people believe women often make up or exaggerate claims of abuse or rape.²⁹
- ➔ Gender norms, gender stereotypes, sexism, and discrimination present barriers to women and girls.³⁰ Stereotyping and prejudices about the role of women in society persist and can be more pronounced in regard to marginalised groups of women.³¹
- ➔ An EU-wide survey on issues facing transgender and non-binary people found that 50% of Irish transgender and non-binary respondents had experienced discrimination when seeking employment and 20% had experienced discrimination in work, in the previous twelve months.³²
- ➔ Transgender people face many barriers in coming out in the workplace.³³
- ➔ A national study on the mental health and wellbeing of LGBTIQ+ people, found the following in regard to transgender respondents³⁴:
 - 9.4% of transgender participants reported leaving employment due to negative treatment about their gender identity from colleagues,
 - negative experiences and bullying related to their gender identity was higher for transgender and intersex people (than for lesbian, gay and bisexual respondents): 24% and 36% respectively,
 - transgender participants reported the highest incidence of self-harm among LGBTIQ+ respondents (49%),
 - nearly half of transgender respondents said they would feel unsafe or very unsafe to express their gender identity in public.
- ➔ 36% of LGBTIQ+ students reported hearing transphobic comments from teachers or other school staff; and 53% heard other students making transphobic comments.³⁵
- ➔ Transgender and gender diverse young people in post-primary level education identify the following issues while attending school: negative treatment when they disclosed their gender identity to a member of staff, such as being invalidated or obstructed from transitioning; not being allowed to wear the school uniform that aligned with their gender identity; misnaming and mis-gendering; not being able to access bathroom facilities that they felt safe using; being asked inappropriate questions by school staff; being bullied by peers and schools not taking action to prevent and address such incidents; feeling socially isolated and excluded due to a marginalisation of and/or invisibility of transgender and gender identity issues in the school setting.³⁶

²⁹ Eurobarometer on Gender-based Violence 2016.

³⁰ The 'National Strategy for Women and Girls: Creating a Better Society for All, 2017-2020'

³¹ The IHREC (2017) Submission to the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women on Ireland's combined sixth and seventh periodic reports

³² FRA (2014). Being Trans in the European Union Comparative analysis of EU LGBT survey data. European Agency for Fundamental Rights.

³³ The 'LGBTI National Youth Strategy 2018-2020'

³⁴ GLEN, BeLonGTo. (2016). The LGBT Ireland Report: national study of the mental health and wellbeing of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex people in Ireland, GLEN, BeLonGTo, TCD and the HSE, 2016.

³⁵ BeLonGTo (2022) The 2022 Irish School Climate Study. (involving 1,208 LGBTIQ+ students)

³⁶ Mc Bride, R. et al. (2020). The Post-Primary Experience of Transgender and Gender Diverse Youth in Ireland. Transgender Equality Network of Ireland and University of Limerick.

- ➔ 24% and 23% of the Irish public (in 2023) said they would feel uncomfortable with their child being in the same class as a transgender child or a non-binary child (respectively) (transgender and non-binary came out the lowest and second lowest of 46 groups).³⁷

Identity

- ➔ Issue of intersectionality, which can give rise to experiences of multiple and compounding discrimination and inequalities, are evident for women in terms of their experiences of discrimination/inequality/harassment/abuse on the basis of their gender and other identities they may hold as: older women, minority ethnic women, migrant women, disabled women, lesbian women, trans women, and women from minority faiths.
- ➔ Since 2015, people over 18 have a legal right to self-declare their own gender identity.
- ➔ Transgender and gender diverse (TGD) youth experience: a lack of understanding about and invisibility of gender identity and transgender issues in school settings.³⁸

Age



Situation

Young people:

- ➔ Census 2022 data indicate: an unemployment rate of 8% (down from 13% in Census 2016); and a higher unemployment rate (16%) for young people (15-24 years) than for those above this age, and higher for males in this age group, than for females: 17% vs 15%.³⁹ Census 2022 indicate: an unemployment rate of 8.54% for males and 7.6% for females in County Clare (down from 14.2% and 11.95% respectively, in Census 2016); and an unemployment rate of 9% for males and 8.14% for females in County Limerick (down from 16.54% and 14.71% respectively, in Census 2016).⁴⁰
- ➔ In 2019, 8.1% of children in Ireland were living in consistent poverty.⁴¹
- ➔ Young people from regeneration areas in Limerick report having to use a different address to have any chance of getting a job interview.⁴²
- ➔ High unemployment and deprivation in Limerick has led to "a sense of despair amongst the youth population and many have low expectations for their future prospects".⁴³

³⁷ Government of Ireland (2023) Survey of People in Ireland's Attitudes Towards Diversity.

³⁸ Mc Bride, R. et al. (2020). The Post-Primary Experience of Transgender and Gender Diverse Youth in Ireland. Transgender Equality Network of Ireland and University of Limerick.

³⁹ CSO Census 2022. Profile 7 Employment, Occupations, and Commuting.

⁴⁰ Pobal HP Deprivation Index- Census 2022.

⁴¹ CSO 2019

⁴² Data from Area Profiles and needs assessments conducted by Limerick and Clare ETB Youth Team, to inform the UBU Youth Scheme: Your Place Your Space.

⁴³ Data from Area Profiles and needs assessments conducted by Limerick and Clare ETB Youth Team, to inform the UBU Youth Scheme: Your Place Your Space. Page 157.

- ➔ Young workers have less security in employment than those aged 25+. In 2019, 33% of young workers (18–24) had a temporary contract, compared to 6% of those aged 25–64.⁴⁴
- ➔ Approximately 25% of children have additional educational needs.⁴⁵
- ➔ Digital exclusion: Young people who are classified as NEET are far less likely to own digital devices. Young people living in poverty can experience educational exclusion where they cannot afford digital devices/broadband access.⁴⁶
- ➔ A survey on lifelong learning participation,⁴⁷ found that 17–24 year olds are the age group most likely to participate in lifelong learning, with a participation rate of 88%. As age increases, the participation rate decreases.
- ➔ Non-Irish national young people who are living in Ireland and attending primary/second-level education and who are on Stamp 3 residence permits (as dependents of adults on Stamp 3 residence permits) are not eligible to apply for FET programmes.⁴⁸
- ➔ In Limerick, waiting lists for health services, in particular mental health services, can negatively impact on young people's wellbeing and their ability to participate in and derive good outcomes from education.⁴⁹

Older people:

- ➔ 2022 CSO data indicates that 19% of people aged 65 and over in Ireland are at risk of poverty (up significantly from 11.9% in 2021).⁵⁰
- ➔ Survey on Income and Living Conditions data for 2022 show that 5.9% of older people (60+) could not afford to meet someone for tea or coffee in the last two weeks, and 4.5% could not afford to have friends or family come over for a meal in the last month.⁵¹
- ➔ Women over the age of 65 are more likely to depend on the non-contributory State Pension as their source of income.⁵²
- ➔ Older women in Ireland tend to be in worse situations than older men. They have less money, poorer housing, greater unmet transport needs, a higher vulnerability to abuse, and are more likely to live alone and to have a disability.⁵³

⁴⁴ Mc Ginnity, F. et al (2021) [Monitoring Decent Work in Ireland](#). IHREC and the ESRI.

⁴⁵ The 'Better Outcomes Brighter Futures: The National Policy Framework for Children and Young People 2014–2020'

⁴⁶ PAUL Partnership 2021 [Exploring the meaning and experience of digital exclusion among at-risk groups in Limerick](#)

⁴⁷ Aontas (2023) [Lifelong Learning Participation in Ireland: a focus on marginalised and vulnerable groups](#).

⁴⁸ Education and Training Boards Ireland (undated). [Access to Further Education and Training Programmes](#).

⁴⁹ Data from Area Profiles and needs assessments conducted by Limerick and Clare ETB Youth Team, to inform the UBU Youth Scheme: Your Place Your Space.

⁵⁰ Central Statistics Office: [Survey on Income and Living Conditions \(SILC\)](#). 2022.

⁵¹ Age Action (2023). [Spotlight on Income and Older People](#).

⁵² Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission (May 2017) Submission to the Citizens' Assembly: 'How we respond to the challenges and opportunities of an ageing population'

⁵³ Age Action (2023). [Spotlight on Income and Older People](#).

- ➔ Employment among those aged 65+ has increased by 50% in five years (to 2022).⁵⁴ However, older women (60–64) have a much lower employment participation rate than older men: 47.5% vs 63%. For persons aged 65+, the female participation rate was just 6.7% compared to a male rate of 16.4%.⁵⁵ In addition, ageism can push people to leave the labour market prematurely.⁵⁶
- ➔ There are a lack of employment options available, to allow older people opt for gradual retirement.⁵⁷
- ➔ Older people are more likely to provide financial assistance to their children (48%) than receive financial help from them (3%).⁵⁸
- ➔ Census 2022 indicates that 15% of those providing unpaid care (to a family member) are aged 65+. Half of adults aged 54 to 74 provide regular childcare for their grandchildren (average of 36 hours per month).⁵⁹
- ➔ A survey on lifelong learning participation,⁶¹ found the following:
 - as age increases, participation rates in lifelong learning decrease to: 73% of 25–34-year-olds, 63% of adults aged 35–44, 54% of 45–54-year-olds and 48% of respondents aged 55 years+,
 - participants who reported no participation in learning in the last three years were asked about the main barriers preventing them from doing so: 25% cited that they "feel too old",
 - reduced access to digital devices, and lower digital skills and digital literacy, places older adults at a significant disadvantage when it comes to course access, retention, and completion. This is particularly relevant in the context of remote and hybrid learning, where much tutor-led and self-directed learning relies on the use of digital devices and skills,
 - ageism in educational settings and prior experiences of negative treatment in formal education are being shown to act as a barrier to older people's lifelong learning participation.
- ➔ The share of adult learners (aged 40+) in Ireland is one of the lowest in the EU.⁶²
- ➔ 2016 data indicate that 61% of people aged 55–65 had low literacy and 63% had low numeracy.⁶³

⁵⁴ Age Action Ireland (2022): [Reframing Ageing: the State of Ageing in Ireland 2022](#).

⁵⁵ CSO [Women and Men in Ireland 2019](#).

⁵⁶ Age Action (2023). [Spotlight on Income and Older People](#).

⁵⁷ The '[National Positive Ageing Strategy](#)'

⁵⁸ Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission (May 2017) Submission to the Citizens' Assembly: 'How we respond to the challenges and opportunities of an ageing population'

⁵⁹ CSO Census 2022: [Disability, Health and Carers](#).

⁶⁰ Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission (May 2017) Submission to the Citizens' Assembly: 'How we respond to the challenges and opportunities of an ageing population'

⁶¹ Aontas (2023) [Lifelong Learning Participation in Ireland: a focus on marginalised and vulnerable groups](#).

⁶² The '[National Positive Ageing Strategy](#)'

⁶³ Age Action Ireland (2022): [Reframing Ageing: the State of Ageing in Ireland 2022](#).

- ➔ Access to information (in particular online) is a key barrier to older people's access to services.⁶⁴
- ➔ Older people identified that navigating bureaucratic systems and processes is especially difficult because of: user unfriendly websites; a lack of information in regard to the implications of choosing certain options; complex application processes; and inaccessibility of decision makers. Many found engaging with bureaucracy so psychologically taxing that they sometimes gave up.⁶⁵
- ➔ Older people are more likely to be digitally excluded, than other age cohorts. The data indicate the following:
 - In 2019, 33% of Irish people aged 65–74 had never used the internet (compared to 11% in Britain),⁶⁶
 - 41% of 'older households' do not have internet access,⁶⁷
 - Of those aged 60–74 who are online, 43% have digital skills below a basic level and only 6% have "above basic",⁶⁸
 - The main barriers to older people's digital inclusion are: accessibility for older people with literacy and/or learning difficulties; education and training barriers in learning and maintaining digital skills; income barriers and affordability of devices and broadband; and some older people do not wish to use the internet.⁶⁹

Experience

Older people:

- ➔ Older working-age people, 45–64 years, report significantly higher levels of discrimination while looking for work (12%), compared to younger job-seekers (5.2% of 18–24-year-olds and 5.9% of 25–44-year-olds).⁷⁰
- ➔ The number of older people taking no action in regard to incidents of discrimination increased from 52% in 2004, to 79% in 2019.⁷¹
- ➔ Ageism is a pernicious barrier to older people's full participation in society and in regard to how older people are viewed by other age groups. Ageist representations of older people in the media, as frail, dependent, and lacking agency, perpetuate ageist attitudes.⁷²
- ➔ Ageism in educational settings and prior experiences of negative treatment in formal education are being shown to act as a barrier to older people's lifelong learning participation.⁷³

⁶⁴ IHREC (2017). [Submission to the Citizens Assembly on: How we respond to the challenges and opportunities of an ageing population.](#)

⁶⁵ Age Action (2023). [Spotlight on Income and Older People.](#)

⁶⁶ [Digital Inclusion in Ireland: Connectivity, Devices, and Skills.](#) NESC, Council Report 154, 2022.

⁶⁷ Age Action Ireland (2021) [Digital Inclusion and an Ageing Population.](#)

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ McGinnity, F., Grotti, R., Kenny, O., and Russell, H. (2017) [Who Experiences Discrimination in Ireland: Evidence from the QNHS Equality Modules.](#) ESRI and IHREC.

⁷¹ Age Action Ireland (2022): [Reframing Ageing: the State of Ageing in Ireland 2022.](#)

⁷² Age Action Ireland (2022): [Reframing Ageing: the State of Ageing in Ireland 2022.](#)

⁷³ Aontas (2023). Op cit.

- ➔ More older women than men live alone, which can lead to social exclusion and isolation, particularly for women living in rural areas.⁷⁴
- ➔ Older people report that they can go for months without any social contact. A lack of money was a big barrier to socialising with friends and family. Some older people reported that they had given up hobbies, travel, day-trips, eating out due to financial struggles.⁷⁵
- ➔ Some older people will be at increased risk of social exclusion/marginalisation and isolation due to: rural isolation; ill-health and/or physical and mental capacity; poverty; and lived experience of discrimination due to their gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, or ability.⁷⁶

Young people:

- ➔ CSO data for 2019 indicate the following:⁷⁷
 - 4% of young people (18–24) reported that they had experienced age-related discrimination in the workplace, in the previous two years, and 4.9% had experienced such discrimination while looking for work,
 - Comparing different age groups, those aged 18 to 24 experienced the highest levels of discrimination in accessing accommodation (5.6%), when compared with those aged 45 to 64 (1.7%) and those aged 65+ (.5%).
- ➔ Young people are often not afforded voice or agency in regard to having a say in decisions affecting them. Despite the Constitutional Convention recommending, in 2013, that the voting age should be lowered to 16, this has not been acted on by governments.

Identity

- ➔ Children and young people experience a number of key transitions in their journey from childhood to adulthood – from home to early years setting, from pre-school to primary school, from primary school to post-primary school, leaving school, and from living within the family home to living on their own or with others.⁷⁸
- ➔ Children and young people with diverse identities: with disabilities, from minority ethnic groups, migrants whose first language is not English, LGBTIQ+ children and young people, and those living in or at risk of poverty need additional and/or diverse supports in school.⁷⁹
- ➔ Census 2022 data indicate that 15% of the Irish population is aged 65 years and over.⁷⁹

⁷⁴ Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission (May 2017) Submission to the Citizens' Assembly: 'How we respond to the challenges and opportunities of an ageing population'

⁷⁵ Age Action (2023). [Spotlight on Income and Older People.](#)

⁷⁶ The 'National Positive Ageing Strategy'

⁷⁷ Central Statistics Office: [Equality and Discrimination.](#) CSO release July 2019

⁷⁸ ['Better Outcomes Brighter Futures: The National Policy Framework for Children and Young People 2014–2020'](#)

⁷⁹ [Better Outcomes Brighter Futures: The National Policy Framework for Children and Young People 2014–2020](#)

Race (nationality, skin colour, ethnic identity) and Religion⁸⁰



Situation

- ➔ Migrants, refugees, and those seeking international protection face particular barriers to accessing education or training, including: uncertainty or short-term nature of their visa or residential status; lack of recognition of their existing qualifications; and the limited availability of English language classes.⁸¹
- ➔ Census 2022 data indicate the following: The highest unemployment rate was recorded for Ukrainian citizens (36%), followed by, citizens of African countries at (15%) and citizens of Other Asian countries (excluding India and China) (13%); and among those who could speak English very well, 8% were unemployed (which was the same as the overall census unemployment rate), however, the unemployment rate for those who could not speak English at all was the highest at 22%.⁸²
- ➔ Many minority ethnic/national groups and particularly those of Black ethnicity, experience more negative outcomes in employment and occupational attainment.⁸³
- ➔ Difficulties in obtaining recognition of foreign educational qualifications pose a barrier to labour market integration and may lead non-Irish nationals to situations of under-employment and over-qualification.⁸⁴
- ➔ Research on the employment situation of the Roma community in Ireland⁸⁵ found the following:
 - because of the significant barriers Roma experience in accessing employment (discrimination and racism, language barriers, regulatory barriers), many working age Roma are unemployed (just 16% are in employment). Those who do find work are more likely to: be underemployed (e.g. working very few hours or precarious hours); vulnerable to exploitation, such as not getting paid properly or working in unsafe conditions; feel compelled to hide their ethnicity due to fear of racism and discrimination,
 - The Habitual Residency Condition and how it is applied in Ireland was noted as a big challenge to seeking employment. Roma support workers identified a lack of transparency in the process and they cited examples where it was used as a tool to exclude Roma from accessing basic supports.
- ➔ Research on Roma in Ireland found the following:
 - 37% of Roma adults have no formal education, and women are twice as likely as men to have had no formal schooling). As a consequence, many Roma adults have low levels of literacy and numeracy in their mother language,

- 71% of Roma had difficulty reading English,
- For this community, therefore, literacy and language are compounding barriers in regard to participation in education and training, employment, accessing services, and fully participating in community life⁸⁶.
- ➔ A survey on lifelong learning participation⁸⁷, with over 1,000 people, found the following in regard to migrants: their participation in learning was found to be hampered by: personal trauma from experiences in country of origin and/or from living in direct provision (DP); lack of access to childcare; lack of transport/inadequate transport links available locally; lack of recognition of prior learning; disproportionately higher fees for international students who are living in DP; language and communication barriers preventing people from knowing what is available locally.
- ➔ Minority ethnic migrants face specific barriers in accessing FET:
 - Lack of information and knowledge of FET and how to access it,
 - Language barriers,
 - Barriers related to meeting the requirements of the Habitual Residence Condition,
 - Courses may have eligibility requirements which include a minimum length of time on the live register before they are eligible to apply for a course,
 - Lack of recognition of their qualification from other jurisdictions can prevent their access to certain courses⁸⁸; and
 - International Protection Applicants who are less than 6 months awaiting a decision on their application are not eligible to access FET provision, with the exception of ESOL and literacy supports.⁸⁹
- ➔ Applicants for International Protection cannot access employment or vocational training until they successfully apply for 'Labour Market Access Permission'. This permission cannot be applied for until the applicant has waited "at least 5 months" for a first instance decision. The permit, if granted, is valid for one year unless a negative decision is received in the meantime.⁹⁰ Currently there is a 120 day delay in issuing these permits.
- ➔ In a study of people's experiences of living in direct provision accommodation: 28% said they had difficulty accessing educational materials/resources for their children. When asked what additional supports they most need for themselves/family, financial support was the most cited (71%) followed by educational supports (41%).⁹¹
- ➔ Ethnic minorities/non-EU nationals are one of the groups found to be at higher risk of experiencing disadvantage across multiple housing dimensions (discrimination in accessing accommodation, quality of accommodation (including for example over-crowding), and risk of becoming homeless).⁹²

⁸⁰ We include Religion in conjunction with data on the Race ground as research indicates that religious discrimination is mainly targeted at minority ethnic groups who are members of minority religions.

⁸¹ Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission (October 2019). Ireland and the Convention on Racial Discrimination, Submission to the United Nations Committee on Racial Discrimination on Ireland's Combined Fifth to Ninth Periodic Report. Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission, Dublin.

⁸² CSO Census 2022. Profile 7: employment, occupations, and commuting.

⁸³ IHREC and ESRI (2018) *Ethnicity and Nationality in the Irish Labour Market*.

⁸⁴ IHREC and ESRI (2018) *Ethnicity and Nationality in the Irish Labour Market*.

⁸⁵ Pavee Point (2023) *Roma in Ireland: Access to Fair and Decent Work*. Pavee Point and Maynooth University.

⁸⁶ Pavee Point Traveller and Roma Center (2018). *Roma in Ireland- a national needs assessment*. Pavee Point and the Department of Justice and Equality.

⁸⁷ Aontas (2023) *Lifelong Learning Participation in Ireland: a focus on marginalised and vulnerable groups*.

⁸⁸ SOLAS 2017. *Barriers to FET with particular reference to long-term unemployed* and other vulnerable individuals

⁸⁹ Education and Training Boards Ireland (undated). *Access to Further Education and Training Programmes*.

⁹⁰ Department of Justice (April 2021). *Information Booklet: labour market access for international protection applicants*.

⁹¹ Cid, Sara (2023). *Living in International Protection Accommodation: Exploring the experiences of families and children in direct provision*. The Irish Refugee Council.

⁹² Discrimination and Inequality in Housing in Ireland June 2018 Raffaele Grotti, Helen Russell, Éamonn Fahey, Bertrand Maître.

- ➔ Migrant communities in Limerick live mostly in the city in private rented accommodation, therefore, they can be cut off from the support of community development and youth organisations and projects, located mostly in the suburbs in Regeneration areas.⁹³

Experience

- ➔ The highest rates of in-work discrimination (across the protected equality grounds) are reported by Black people (14%), followed by those with a minority religion (11%) and people with Asian ethnicity (10%). The highest rates of reported discrimination while looking for employment, are reported by Black people (16.5%). 7.5% of Asian people reported discrimination when seeking work and 10% of people with a minority religion reported discrimination when seeking work.⁹⁴
- ➔ Discrimination is high in multiple domains (employment, service provision) for minority ethnic groups (Black, Asian and especially Irish Travellers), and people with minority religions.⁹⁵
- ➔ The Roma community in Ireland experience very high levels of discrimination: 79% have experienced discrimination in seeking employment, and 93% have experienced discrimination in accessing accommodation.⁹⁶
- ➔ 20% of the Irish public (in 2023) said they would feel uncomfortable with their child being in the same class as a Roma child (Roma came out 4th lowest of 46 groups).⁹⁷
- ➔ A consultation on the needs of people of African descent, in Ireland,⁹⁸ identified the following:
 - racism and discrimination, at the individual and institutional levels, including in education and employment, is a key barrier that needs to be tackled by government. The education system was identified as a key site for promotion of integration and inclusion,
 - discrimination in seeking employment, is a key barrier for this community,
 - the education curriculum was deemed Eurocentric, excluding a focus on African history and experience,
 - young Black people would benefit from having visible positive role models, and learning more about their heritage.
- ➔ Muslim women are three times more likely to suffer from verbal and physical violence in public spaces than Muslim men.⁹⁹

⁹³ Data from Area Profiles and needs assessments conducted by Limerick and Clare ETB Youth Team, to inform the UBU Youth Scheme: Your Place Your Space.

⁹⁴ McGinnity, F., Grotti, R., Kenny, O., and Russell, H. (2017) *Who Experiences Discrimination in Ireland: Evidence from the QNHS Equality Modules*. ESRI and IHREC.

⁹⁵ IHREC and ESRI (2017) *Who Experiences Discrimination in Ireland*.

⁹⁶ Pavee Point Traveller and Roma Centre (2018). *The National Roma Needs Assessment*. Pavee Point and Department of Justice and Equality.

⁹⁷ Government of Ireland (2023) *Survey of People in Ireland's Attitudes Towards Diversity*.

⁹⁸ Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration, and Youth (2023). *International Decade for People of Irish Descent: consultation report*.

⁹⁹ Carr (2016). *Islamophobia in Dublin: Experiences and how to respond*. The Immigrant Council of Ireland.

- ➔ An EU-wide 2022 survey¹⁰⁰ found the following in regard to the experience of minority ethnic migrants living in Ireland:
 - 50% said they had experienced discrimination on the basis of their skin colour; 6% had experienced discrimination on the basis of their religion; 38% had experienced discrimination on the basis of their ethnic or immigrant background; 8% had experienced discrimination on the basis of their gender; and 10% had experienced discrimination on the basis of their age,
 - 35% had experienced racist harassment in the previous 12 months and 6% had experienced racist violence in the previous 5 years,
 - 29% avoided certain places, including public transport, for fear of experiencing racist abuse/violence.
- ➔ Research on attitudes to ethnic diversity in Ireland, found the following¹⁰¹:
 - attitudes to some migrants are much more negative than others: 58% of Irish-born people report they would allow many or some immigrants from members of the same ethnic group as most Irish people to come to Ireland, the equivalent figures for Muslim Roma migrants are 41% and 25% respectively,
 - just under half of adults born in Ireland believe that some cultures are superior to others, and 45% believe that some races/ethnic groups were born harder working. 17% believe that some races/ethnic groups were born less intelligent. This negative attitude is more common in Ireland than across a ten-country sample of the EU.
- ➔ 2023 research on public attitudes towards immigration found that, while overall a high proportion of the Irish population are positively disposed to immigration, they are less welcoming of refugees and those seeking asylum. The potential cost to support refugees and asylum seekers being the main factor in this regard. Respondents who identified that they find it difficult to 'make ends meet', were the most likely to be less welcoming of refugees and asylum-seekers.¹⁰²
- ➔ The Direct Provision accommodation system is not in the best interests of children and impedes the lives of families.¹⁰³
- ➔ The recent rise of far-right groups and growing support for anti-immigrant policies highlight that civil rights for minority groups and freedom to live and work without racist abuse and violence cannot be taken for granted.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰⁰ EU Agency for Fundamental Rights (2023) *Being black in the EU: the experiences of people of African descent - survey of immigrants and descendants of immigrants*. FRA.

¹⁰¹ McGinnity, F., Grotti, R., Russell, H., and Fahey, E. (March 2018). *Attitudes to Diversity in Ireland*

¹⁰² Laurence, J., McGinnity, F., and Murphy, K. (May 2024). *Attitudes Towards Immigration and Refugees in Ireland: understanding recent trends and drivers*. ESRI and Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration, and Youth.

¹⁰³ IHREC (2014) *Submission of the Irish Human Rights Commission to the UN Human Rights Committee on the Examination of Ireland's Fourth Periodic Report under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights*

¹⁰⁴ O'Connell, Hugh. February 3, 2024. "Poll: Over a third of Irish people would consider voting for anti-immigrant party". *Irish Independent*, online edition, last accessed Feb 23, 2024.

Identity

- ➔ People with a minority ethnic identity have specific customs, traditions, and language. There are specific needs arising from this diversity that need to be considered to ensure they can fully access and participate in supports, services, and wider society.
- ➔ The diversity of people with a minority ethnic identity needs to be considered in terms of the specific needs that arise from this diversity, including for minority ethnic: women, LGBTIQ+ people, disabled people, younger and older people, migrants, and those living in poverty and direct provision.
- ➔ In 2020, there were over 197 different nationalities enrolled in the FET sector: approximately 22% were non-Irish nationals (among the non-EU learner enrolments, 36.9% were nationals of Asia, 34.2% were nationals of Africa, 16.5% were nationals of the Americas, 11.6% were nationals of Europe and 0.7% were nationals of Oceania). There was a slightly higher proportion of females among non-Irish national learners, than among Irish national learners.¹⁰⁵
- ➔ A 2021 ETB Learner Survey (1,496 respondents) indicates a diverse learner cohort, in terms of religion: 67% identified as catholic, 15.5% had no religion, 3.1% were Muslim, 5.1% were 'other religion' including Christian, Protestant, Orthodox, Buddhist, Jehovah Witness, Hindu, Lutheran, and Baptist.¹⁰⁶
- ➔ Lack of availability of key information in languages other than English and of interpreting to enable migrants to access public services, including education.¹⁰⁷
- ➔ Issues concerning the adequacy of training in intercultural awareness for frontline staff delivering public services.¹⁰⁸
- ➔ There are issues in relation to the rights of children and parents to freedom of thought, conscience and religion in the state-funded education system in the absence of a diversity of provision of school type within educational catchment to reflect the diversity of religious and non-religious convictions now represented in the State. The rights of minority faith or non-faith children need to be recognised in the curriculum.¹⁰⁹
- ➔ The potential and impact of RPL for enabling inclusion is of particular relevance to migrant learners who may have acquired skills through non-formal learning in their country of origin and now wish to have these recognised and certified in Ireland.

¹⁰⁵ SOLAS (2021) FET In Focus 2021: Non-Irish Nationals in FET.

¹⁰⁶ Roe, S. (November 2021). *A Study of the role, contribution and impact of Education and Training Board (ETB) Further Education and Training (FET) Services on Active Inclusion in Ireland*. Education and Training Boards Ireland.

¹⁰⁷ *The Migrant Integration Strategy: A Blueprint for the Future*. Department of Justice and Equality. 2017

¹⁰⁸ *The Migrant Integration Strategy: A Blueprint for the Future*. Department of Justice and Equality. 2017

¹⁰⁹ IHREC 2014 *Submission of the Irish Human Rights Commission to the UN Human Rights Committee on the Examination of Ireland's Fourth Periodic Report under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights*



Travellers

Situation

- ➔ Census 2022 data indicate that: the unemployment rate for Travellers is 66%: seven times that of the unemployment rate for the general population (8%); and 18.5% of Travellers over 15 years were unable to work due to a permanent sickness or disability, compared to 4.6% of the general population aged 15+.¹¹⁰
- ➔ The ESRI has noted that taking educational attainment into account, Travellers are still much more likely (9 times more likely) than the general population to experience unemployment. They conclude that discrimination and prejudice is the reason for this significant difference.¹¹¹
- ➔ Focus groups with young Travellers in Cork, identified that they felt defeated about their prospects of securing employment, even before they started looking for work, due to high levels of discrimination experienced in seeking employment, by peers and family members.¹¹²
- ➔ Travellers have limited access to potential employment connections and networks than their settled peers, to support them to gain employment, particularly their first job.¹¹³
- ➔ A 2019 EU survey¹¹⁴ found that 31% of Travellers and 28% of Traveller children (0-17) were living in households experiencing severe material deprivation (based on an inability to afford four of nine specified items). The figures for Irish Travellers were higher than for Travellers in the 5 other countries surveyed.
- ➔ Figures for the academic year 2020-2021 show that, compared to non-Travellers, a greater number of Travellers are continuing to leave formal education at age 16. There has, however, been an improvement in retention rates to Transition Year and to Leaving Certificate, between the academic years 2016/17 and 2020/21- The highest number of Traveller students, 412, participating in the Leaving Certificate programme was recorded for the 2020-21 academic year.¹¹⁵ Very few travellers are progressing to third-level education: 1% of Travellers have a degree or higher compared with 30% of non-Travellers.¹¹⁶
- ➔ There is evidence that some schools are reducing Traveller children's time in school (reduced timetabling) as a means of addressing behavioural issues, resulting in Travellers not getting the same level of education as their settled peers.¹¹⁷

¹¹⁰ Irish National Organisation for the Unemployed (e-bulletin December 2023). *Census 2022 Key Stats*.

¹¹¹ Watson, D., Kenny, O., and F McGinnity (2017). *A Social Portrait of Travellers in Ireland*. ESRI Research Series No 56.

¹¹² Cork Traveller Visibility Group (2023). *Measuring the Impact of Discrimination on Traveller Youth Mental Health*.

¹¹³ Mullen, R. Kelly, B, and Crowley, N. (2021) *Travellers in the Mainstream Labour Market: Situation, Experience, and Identity*. St. Stephen's Green Trust.

¹¹⁴ EU Agency for Fundamental Rights (2020) *Roma and Travellers in Six Countries*

¹¹⁵ Department of Education (May 2023). *Pupils from the Traveller Community 2016-2020*.

¹¹⁶ Watson, D., Kenny, O., and F McGinnity (2017). *A Social Portrait of Travellers in Ireland*. ESRI Research Series No 56.

¹¹⁷ Joint Committee on *key Issues Affecting the Traveller Community (Nov. 2021) Key Issues Affecting the Traveller community*: Final Report of the Joint Committee on key Issues Affecting the Traveller Community. Houses of the Oireachtas.

- ➔ Educational disadvantage delays and thwarts Travellers' career aspirations. Many interviewees had left school early, most had experienced racist bullying in school, particularly from their peers at second level, and many had experienced low expectations from teachers at primary and second level.¹¹⁸
- ➔ Traveller students in, and applicants to, third level who did not feel empowered to openly identify as Travellers were consequently missing out by not being able to avail of the supports offered through the Access Programme.¹¹⁹
- ➔ In 2019, Travellers represented .85% of total learners who enrolled in FET (1,527 of 179,058 total learners: 57% female and 43% male).¹²⁰
- ➔ Identified barriers to Travellers progressing in further and higher education include¹²¹:
 - post-primary school educators having low aspirations for Traveller students, even where students have attained good Junior Cert results (e.g. directing them into Leaving Cert Applied and PLC courses (however PLC courses can be an important gateway into higher education for Travellers)),
 - being drawn away from education towards employment, to bring an income into a financially struggling household,
 - the emotional and psychological impact of negative experiences while attending secondary education,
 - lack of family role models,
 - lack of knowledge about/difficulty negotiating SUSI.
- ➔ Traveller students find it very difficult to secure work placements, which are a requirement of access to some third-level courses.¹²²
- ➔ Travellers are one of the groups found to be at higher risk of experiencing disadvantage across multiple housing dimensions (discrimination in accessing accommodation, quality of accommodation (including for example over-crowding), and at risk of becoming homeless).¹²³
- ➔ Approximately 40% of Travellers live in overcrowded accommodation compared with less than 6% of the total population.¹²⁴ At 39%, the Mid-West had the joint-highest rate of Travellers living in overcrowded conditions.¹²⁵

¹¹⁸ Mullen, R. Kelly, B. and Crowley, N. (2021) Travellers in the Mainstream Labour Market: Situation, Experience, and Identity. St. Stephen's Green Trust.

¹¹⁹ Mullen, R. Kelly, B. and Crowley, N. (2021) Travellers in the Mainstream Labour Market: Situation, Experience, and Identity. St. Stephen's Green Trust.

¹²⁰ Roe, S. (November 2021). A Study of the role, contribution and impact of Education and Training Board (ETB) Further Education and Training (FET) Services on Active Inclusion in Ireland. Education and Training Boards Ireland.

¹²¹ SOAR (2021) The Traveller Graduate Network: a formative evaluation of a new initiative to support Travellers in education. SOAR. HEA.

¹²² Mullen, R. Kelly, B. and Crowley, N. (2021) Travellers in the Mainstream Labour Market: Situation, Experience, and Identity. St. Stephen's Green Trust.

¹²³ Discrimination and Inequality in Housing in Ireland June 2018 Raffaele Grotti, Helen Russell, Éamonn Fahey, Bertrand Maître.

¹²⁴ Discrimination and Inequality in Housing in Ireland June 2018 Raffaele Grotti, Helen Russell, Éamonn Fahey, Bertrand Maître.

¹²⁵ Watson, D., Kenny, O., and F McGinnity (2017). A Social Portrait of Travellers in Ireland. ESRI Research Series No 56.

- ➔ 24% of Traveller accommodation had internet access (compared to 82% of non-Traveller households) the rate is lower for those living in a caravan. At 20%, the Mid-West region had the highest adjusted rate of Travellers living in caravans in the State.¹²⁶
- ➔ The suicide rate is almost seven times higher among Traveller males than in the general population.¹²⁷

Experience

- ➔ A 2019 EU survey¹²⁸ found the following in regard to Travellers in Ireland:
 - 68% of Traveller men and 62% of Traveller women said they had experienced discrimination in the previous 12 months (looking for or in work; in education; accessing a public service; accessing goods and services),
 - 52% had experienced hate-motivated harassment, and 7% had experienced hate-motivated violence in the previous 12 months,
 - 27% said their child/children had experienced racist bullying in school, in the previous 12 months,
 - 27% said they had felt discriminated against by education providers in the previous 5 years, and 13% in the previous 12 months.
- ➔ Travellers are ten times more likely to experience discrimination in seeking work than 'white Irish' (e.g. unemployment: 80% compared to 12.9% in the general population).¹²⁹
- ➔ Travellers have very low levels of trust in regard to engaging with mainstream services: their experiences of high levels of racism and discrimination, when interacting with wider society, are key factors.¹³⁰
- ➔ A 2021 report on the experiences of Traveller and Roma in education, found the following¹³¹:
 - generational feelings of isolation and being overlooked,
 - Traveller and Roma children feeling unsafe in school and experiencing racist bullying,
 - post-primary school transition is particularly difficult for Traveller children and post-primary spaces were found to be unwelcoming,
 - the Youthreach financial incentive acting as a disincentive for young Travellers to complete second-level education,

¹²⁶ Watson, D., Kenny, O., and F McGinnity (2017). A Social Portrait of Travellers in Ireland. ESRI Research Series No 56.

¹²⁷ The 'National Traveller and Roma Inclusion Strategy 2017-2021'

¹²⁸ EU Agency for Fundamental Rights (2020) Roma and Travellers in Six Countries

¹²⁹ Submission to the Universal Periodic Review of the UN Human Rights Council: Second Cycle Mid-Term Review, Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission, April 2019

¹³⁰ Kelleher et al (2010) All Ireland Traveller Health Study

¹³¹ Quinlan, M., (2021) Out of the Shadows: Traveller and Roma Education, Voices from the Community. Department of Education.

- children unable to cope with increased workload in post-primary and subsequently falling behind,
 - Traveller parents felt 'looked down on' by teachers and reported that teachers often had a low expectation of Traveller children's capacity,
 - lack of representation of Traveller culture, values and experiences e.g. in CSPE,
 - members of the school community identify: absenteeism, lack of parental support and value of education; curriculum not meeting needs and school unable to innovate, as the major barrier to Traveller participation in education.
- ➔ Focus groups with young Travellers in Cork identified the following experiences in education settings: teachers making derogatory comments based on stereotypes of the community; teachers having low expectations of Traveller students and their capabilities, including dissuading them from particular education pathways; teachers siding with settled children where an argument/fight occurred between a Traveller and a non-Traveller; denying Travellers a bathroom break on the assumption that they were using this as an excuse to avoid class, but not having similar assumptions in regard to settled students; and a lack of Traveller role models in education.¹³²
 - ➔ 21% of the Irish public (in 2023) said they would feel uncomfortable with their child being in the same class as a Traveller child (Travellers came out 3rd lowest of 46 groups).¹³³

Identity

- ➔ Family holds particular importance and centrality in Traveller culture.
- ➔ Travellers distinct ethnic identity has been officially recognised by the state, however, Travellers identify that this recognition has not translated to a realisation of their rights in key areas including: accommodation, education, health and employment.
- ➔ Many Travellers feel compelled to hide their ethnic identity in the workplace and in schools and colleges, due to fears of racism, discrimination and social exclusion.

Disability



Situation

- ➔ People with disabilities are more likely to live in poverty and to be outside the workforce, than non-disabled people.¹³⁴

¹³² Cork Traveller Visibility Group (2023). Measuring the Impact of Discrimination on Traveller Youth Mental Health.

¹³³ Government of Ireland (2023) *Survey of People in Ireland's Attitudes Towards Diversity*.

¹³⁴ Banks, J., Raffaele G., Fahey, E., and Watson, D. (2018). Disability and Discrimination in Ireland: Evidence from the QNHS Equality Modules 2004, 2010, 2014. ESRI.

- ➔ The cost of living is approximately one-third higher for people with disabilities.¹³⁵ The additional costs associated with being disabled can range from an additional €8,500 to €16,000 per annum.¹³⁶
- ➔ Census 2022 data indicate the following in regard to disabled people's employment status:
 - half of those experiencing "a long-lasting condition or difficulty to some extent" and 22% of those experiencing "a long-lasting condition or difficulty to a great extent" were participating in the labour force,
 - for each type of "long-lasting condition or difficulty to any extent", males were more likely than females to be economically active (in work, looking for work, or unemployed),
 - the highest rates of labour force participation for those experiencing "a long-lasting condition or difficulty to any extent" were among those with a vision impairment/blindness, and those with a psychological, emotional, or mental health issue. The lowest rates of labour force participation were amongst those 'experiencing difficulty with basic physical activities' and people with an intellectual disability.
- ➔ Research¹³⁷ on the employment status of disabled people in Ireland, found the following:
 - only 29% of working age disabled people who had early-onset disability were in employment. Younger disabled adults were more likely to be in employment, than older: 43% of those aged 18-34 vs 21% aged 45+. Of those not in work, 47% would be interested in a job if the circumstances were right,
 - 85% had left employment because of disability,
 - people with a hearing disability and those with a learning disability were most likely to be employed and employment was lowest for people with mobility, dexterity, pain disability and emotional, psychological, and mental health disabilities,
 - barriers to participation in employment for disabled people included: lack of reasonable accommodation to address specific needs (e.g. aids/technology; flexible work arrangements etc.); fear of losing needed social protection benefits; for some disabled people, the main barrier was getting a first job; some had to leave employment because of the impact of disability. Unmet needs in this regard were found to be a particular barrier for people with a mobility and dexterity disability and those with a pain disability.
- ➔ Disabled working age people reported that they require the following accommodations in order to fully participate in employment: flexible work arrangements such as reduced hours (46%); modified job tasks (29%); accessibility modifications (32%); and a wage subsidy (24%)¹³⁸.

¹³⁵ IHREC (2015). Ireland and the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights

¹³⁶ Indecon (2021). *The Cost of Disability in Ireland*. Commissioned by the Department of Social Protection.

¹³⁷ Watson, D., Banks, J., and Lyons, S. (2015) *Educational and Employment Experiences of People with a Disability in Ireland: an analysis of the National Disability Survey*. ESRI.

¹³⁸ Watson, D., Banks, J., and Lyons, S. (2015) *Educational and Employment Experiences of People with a Disability in Ireland: an analysis of the National Disability Survey*. ESRI.

- ➔ Ireland was ranked among the bottom five countries (of the EU 27) in terms of the At Risk of Poverty or Social Exclusion measurement, for people with disabilities (24th position).¹³⁹
- ➔ Economic independence, social inclusion and personal fulfilment are at issue where person with disability does not have a job.¹⁴⁰
- ➔ The labour market participation rate for people with an intellectual disability is 21%, compared to 73% of the general population. The unemployment rate for this group is 43%.¹⁴¹
- ➔ In 2020, 11,376 of those enrolled in FET disclosed that they had at least one type of disability (this figure represents 7.5% of all FET enrolments that year).¹⁴²; A 2021 ETB Learner Survey (1,496 respondents) found that 12.2% of respondents indicated they had a disability.¹⁴³
- ➔ A survey of ETB staff asked respondents to rank which groups of learners they considered to be most challenging to engage in learning: people with literacy, numeracy and digital skills challenges were ranked second (by 25.3% of respondents). people with mental health issues were ranked as most challenging to engage in FET, by (15.7% of respondents).¹⁴⁴
- ➔ Census 2022 data indicate the following in regard to disabled people's education status:
 - while just over a quarter of the population aged 15 years+ who completed their full-time education had an honours degree or higher, only 18% of those experiencing "a long-lasting condition or difficulty to any extent" had the same qualification,
 - the proportion of people who had completed formal education varied by type of disability: people with an intellectual disability fared worse in regard to having any formal education, completing primary school education only, or attaining an honours degree or higher qualification; those with a psychological or emotional condition or mental health, or blindness/vision impairment fared best in terms of attaining an honours degree or higher qualification.
- ➔ Research.¹⁴⁵ on the education status of disabled people in Ireland, found the following:
 - adults with a disability were significantly less likely to have completed education (at all levels) than non-disabled people,

¹³⁹ Sprong, S., and Maitre, B. (November 2023). *Thematic report on poverty and social inclusion indicators: Poverty and social inclusion indicators in the Roadmap for Social Inclusion 2020–2025 in comparative perspective covering 2018–2021*. ESRI and Department of Social Protection.

¹⁴⁰ The 'Comprehensive Employment Strategy for People with Disabilities 2015-2024'

¹⁴¹ SOLAS (2021) *Implementation of Guidelines on the Inclusion of Learners with Intellectual Disabilities in Adult Literacy Services*.

¹⁴² SOLAS (2020) *FET in Numbers: Learners with Disabilities*

¹⁴³ Roe, S. (November 2021). *A Study of the role, contribution and impact of Education and Training Board (ETB) Further Education and Training (FET) Services on Active Inclusion in Ireland*. Education and Training Boards Ireland.

¹⁴⁴ Roe, S. (November 2021). *A Study of the role, contribution and impact of Education and Training Board (ETB) Further Education and Training (FET) Services on Active Inclusion in Ireland*. Education and Training Boards Ireland.

¹⁴⁵ Watson, D., Banks, J., and Lyons, S. (2015) *Educational and Employment Experiences of People with a Disability in Ireland: an analysis of the National Disability Survey*. ESRI.

- 30% of working age people with a disability developed their disability during their school years and of those, 50% had school absences (most lasting over 12 months),
- 15% of working age people with a disability left school sooner than desired because of the disability,
- People with an intellectual disability, learning disability or speech impairment were more likely to experience education barriers, than those with other impairments.
- ➔ Poor health has been highlighted as a factor impeding participation in learning for adults. 25% of people who left education after primary school (and 16% of people who left school after the Junior or Inter Certificate) cited health and age as a reason they could not participate in lifelong learning. Whereas only 4% of those with third-level qualifications cited health and age as a barrier to participation in lifelong learning.¹⁴⁶
- ➔ There is a significant digital literacy gap between adults with an intellectual disability and those without an intellectual disability: in one study three-quarters of adults with an intellectual disability reported they had difficulty using technology; three-quarters of adults with an intellectual disability did not write, text, email, or use social media to contact their family or friends; one third of adults with an intellectual disability owned a mobile phone, with some of these reporting that they never used it; just over one third reported had access to a computer, tablet or smartphone, but a significant proportion (38%) reported that they used their device infrequently or never.¹⁴⁷
- ➔ Digital literacy (in the absence of accessible design, information, and technology) can be particularly challenging for people with literacy issues, and for people with learning disabilities.¹⁴⁸
- ➔ People with disabilities may need certain aids or devices to participate fully in employment. Unmet needs in this regard were found to be a particular barrier for people with a mobility and dexterity disability and those with pain disability.¹⁴⁹ Accommodations and flexible approaches to education are required for students with disabilities and those with specific educational needs, such as: a flexible, blended approach (rather than a full-time course); support services (in particular for those with emotional and mental health issues); adaptations or assistive technologies; wheelchair accessible environments; information in accessible formats (including on websites of providers).
- ➔ Students with disabilities are more likely (than non-disabled students) to face barriers in education and report disliking school, and are at risk of poorer academic outcomes.¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁶ Aontas (May 2020) *Mitigating Educational Disadvantage (including Community Education issues) Working Group Educational Equity and Learner Cohorts :A Discussion Paper*.

¹⁴⁷ SOLAS (2021) *Implementation of Guidelines on the Inclusion of Learners with Intellectual Disabilities in Adult Literacy Services*.

¹⁴⁸ SOLAS (May 2021) *Adult Literacy for Life: detailed consultation report to develop the adult literacy, numeracy and digital strategy*.

¹⁴⁹ Watson, D., Banks, J., and Lyons, S. (May 2015). *Educational and Employment Experiences of People with a Disability in Ireland: an analysis of the National Disability Survey*.

¹⁵⁰ Banks, J., Raffaele G., Fahey, E., and Watson, D. (2018). *Disability and Discrimination in Ireland: Evidence from the QNHS Equality Modules 2004, 2010, 2014*. ESRI.

- ➔ The majority of children with disabilities attend mainstream education, classes or schools, although the percentage attending special education settings increases as they move to secondary education. Children with disabilities from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds are more likely to be placed in special education.¹⁵¹
- ➔ The move to online communications, as a result of COVID-19, has enabled increased participation (in events, services, supports) of people with mobility issues.
- ➔ People with a disability are one of the groups found to be at higher risk of experiencing disadvantage across multiple housing dimensions (discrimination in accessing accommodation, quality of accommodation (including for example over-crowding), and risk of becoming homeless).¹⁵²

Experience

- ➔ People with disabilities are three times more likely to experience discrimination than non-disabled people in accessing public services (such as education, health, and transport).¹⁵³
- ➔ People with disabilities are twice as likely, as non-disabled people, to experience discrimination when seeking work or in the workplace.¹⁵⁴
- ➔ Research on discrimination against people with disabilities (in employment, and accessing public and private services and goods) found that two forms of disability result in higher levels of reported discrimination (in any domain): blindness/serious vision impairment, followed emotional or psychological conditions.¹⁵⁵
- ➔ Parents and teachers of children with disabilities can have lower educational expectations (of disabled students) compared to non-disabled students.¹⁵⁶
- ➔ Irish research on ableist attitudes¹⁵⁷, provided evidence for ableist beliefs being expressed as justifications for potential discrimination, including in access to education and employment. The research also found that the disabilities that tend to be judged more harshly, were autism and mental health issues. The findings include the following:
 - research participants were significantly less accepting of a school using reduced timetables for children with a speech impairment and children with no disability, than they were of children with autism being placed on reduced timetables,

- research participants judged it to be more acceptable not to offer a person with an anxiety disorder a job than a person with a physical disability or a non-disabled person.
- ➔ Research on attitudes towards people with disabilities shows a hierarchy of acceptance in regard to different types of impairment: 75% of respondents would support children with physical disabilities attending the same school as non-disabled children; 61% would support children with vision or hearing disabilities attending the same school as non-disabled children; 56% would support children with intellectual disabilities attending the same school as non-disabled children; 54% would support children with autism attending the same school as non-disabled children; and 49% would support children with mental health difficulties attending the same school as non-disabled children.¹⁵⁸
- ➔ 18% of the Irish public (in 2023) said they would feel uncomfortable with their child being in the same class as a child with a mental health issue (coming out 6th lowest of 46 groups).¹⁵⁹
- ➔ The lived experience and knowledge gained by people with a disability is not always recognised. People are not always valued in their own right as 'Experts by Experience'.¹⁶⁰

Identity

- ➔ Census 2022 data indicate that 22% of the population has "at least one long lasting condition or difficulty to any extent" and 8% has "at least one long lasting condition or difficulty to a great extent or a lot".¹⁶¹
- ➔ Most disabilities develop during the period of life when people are working.¹⁶²
- ➔ Many disabled people want their needs addressed through the social model of disability, rather than the medical model. The social model (developed by disabled people) recognises society's disabling of people as the problem and focuses on removing the barriers that prevent disabled people's full participation. The medical model focuses on the person's impairment as the 'problem'.¹⁶³

¹⁵¹ IHREC (2015) Ireland and the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights

¹⁵² Discrimination and Inequality in Housing in Ireland June 2018 Raffaele Grotti, Helen Russell, Éamonn Fahey, Bertrand Maître.

¹⁵³ Banks, J., Raffaele G., Fahey, E., and Watson, D. (2018). Disability and Discrimination in Ireland: Evidence from the QNHS Equality Modules 2004, 2010, 2014. ESRI.

¹⁵⁴ Banks, J., Raffaele G., Fahey, E., and Watson, D. (2018). Disability and Discrimination in Ireland: Evidence from the QNHS Equality Modules 2004, 2010, 2014. ESRI.

¹⁵⁵ Banks, J., Raffaele G., Fahey, E., and Watson, D. (2018). Disability and Discrimination in Ireland: Evidence from the QNHS Equality Modules 2004, 2010, 2014. ESRI.

¹⁵⁶ Banks, J., Raffaele G., Fahey, E., and Watson, D. (2018). Disability and Discrimination in Ireland: Evidence from the QNHS Equality Modules 2004, 2010, 2014. ESRI.

¹⁵⁷ Timmons, S. McGinnity, F. and Carrol, F. (May 2023). Ableism differs by disability, gender and social context: Evidence from vignette experiments. ESRI Working Paper 752.

¹⁵⁸ NDA (2017) National Survey of Public Attitudes to Disability in Ireland.

¹⁵⁹ Government of Ireland (2023) Survey of People in Ireland's Attitudes Towards Diversity.

¹⁶⁰ HSE (2018) Transforming Lives : Effective Participation in Decision-Making: Planning for Ordinary Lives in Ordinary Places.

¹⁶¹ Census 2022: Disability, Health, and Carers. CSO

¹⁶² Banks, J., Raffaele G., Fahey, E., and Watson, D. (2018). Disability and Discrimination in Ireland: Evidence from the QNHS Equality Modules 2004, 2010, 2014. ESRI.

¹⁶³ See for example- HSE (2018) Transforming Lives : Effective Participation in Decision-Making: Planning for Ordinary Lives in Ordinary Places.

- ➔ Ensuring access and participation for disabled people (to information and services, including education/learning) requires attention to:
 - a universal design approach (including, but not limited to: improving access to devices and technology – laptops, tablets, smartphones and Wi-Fi; standardising the use of plain language and multiple communication mediums (e.g. audio and video and text); accessible websites, particularly when required to access rights, entitlements and services; scheduling of ALND services and training to ensure they are accessible to people with work and family commitments)¹⁶⁴; and,
 - ensuring specific accommodations for the diversity of impairments (including, but not limited to: provision for Irish Sign Language; assistive technology; provision of information in braille) plain English and different formats.¹⁶⁵

Family Status (including lone parents and others with caring responsibilities, pregnancy)



Situation

- ➔ Census 2022 data indicate that unpaid care work¹⁶⁶ continues to be undertaken by women: 61% of carers were female and 39% were male; and among those who provided more than 43 hours of unpaid care work per week, proportionately more were women (in almost all age groups of carers).¹⁶⁷
- ➔ The gendered allocation of unpaid care work has been identified as a significant source of gender inequalities in employment, pay, poverty and lifetime income.¹⁶⁸
- ➔ Social protection payments for lone parents often disincentivise their entry into the labour market.¹⁶⁹
- ➔ The lack of childcare places and affordable childcare provision is a key employment barrier for all groups.¹⁷⁰
- ➔ Once a woman is classified as a 'qualified adult' under the One Parent Family Payment, she is excluded from a range of social supports, such as funding for higher education, which particularly affects Traveller, Roma and migrant women.¹⁷¹

¹⁶⁴ SOLAS (May 2021) *Adult Literacy for Life: detailed consultation report to develop the adult literacy, numeracy and digital strategy*.

¹⁶⁵ Watson, D., Banks, J., and Lyons, S. (2015) *Educational and Employment Experiences of People with a Disability in Ireland: an analysis of the National Disability Survey*. ESRI.

¹⁶⁶ Those providing regular unpaid personal help or support to a family member, neighbour or friend with a long-term illness, health issue or an issue related to old age or disability.

¹⁶⁷ CSO Census 2022: *Disability, Health and Carers*.

¹⁶⁸ Economic and Social Research Institute (2019). *Caring and Unpaid Work in Ireland*. The ESRI and the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission.

¹⁶⁹ OECD Face of Joblessness in Ireland – A People-centred perspective on employment barriers and policies

¹⁷⁰ OECD Face of Joblessness in Ireland – A People-centred perspective on employment barriers and policies (2018)

¹⁷¹ IHREC (2017) Submission to the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women on Ireland's combined sixth and seventh periodic reports.

- ➔ Lone parents are likely to experience several barriers to lifelong learning participation, including: judgemental attitudes, exclusion, financial pressure, an absence of adequate childcare facilities, unsuitable course scheduling, digital poverty and confidence issues. Other barriers to education include the scheduling of courses in the evenings which often clash with primary childcare activities and responsibilities.¹⁷²
- ➔ Hybrid-learning provides flexibility to lone parents, however, there is a need to consider the financial resources required to engage in online learning, including access to digital tools and learning materials.¹⁷³
- ➔ The AONTAS Annual Synthesis Report 2021-2022 highlights that a majority of lone parents (51%) were unaware of the availability of childcare support within their respective Education and Training Boards.¹⁷⁴
- ➔ Pregnant students can be prevented from continuing their education during pregnancy.¹⁷⁵
- ➔ Lone parents are one of the groups found to be at higher risk of experiencing disadvantage across multiple housing dimensions (discrimination in accessing accommodation, quality of accommodation (including for example over-crowding), and risk of becoming homeless).¹⁷⁶
- ➔ Research on young adults who take on caring responsibilities in the family¹⁷⁷, found the following:
 - there was no gender difference in terms of young people who were taking on care responsibilities, and there were similar rates of caregiving among young adults from lone-parent and two-parent households. However, greater resources in the family, did reduce the prevalence of caregiving,
 - providing any care at age 17 was found to be "significantly related" to lower Leaving Certificate grades for those who had higher levels of prior achievement, especially if they are involved in caring for multiple types of care recipient. As a result, these young people were less likely than others to go on to higher education, and when they go on to further/higher education, they potentially constrain their choices, placing more emphasis, in their education decisions, on being able to live at home,

¹⁷² Meyler, A., et al. (2023). *Lifelong Learning Participation in Ireland: A focus on marginalised and vulnerable groups*. AONTAS and SOLAS.

¹⁷³ Meyler, A., et al. (2023). *Lifelong Learning Participation in Ireland: A focus on marginalised and vulnerable groups*. AONTAS and SOLAS.

¹⁷⁴ Meyler, A., et al. (2023). *Lifelong Learning Participation in Ireland: A focus on marginalised and vulnerable groups*. AONTAS and SOLAS.

¹⁷⁵ IHREC (2017) Submission to the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women on Ireland's combined sixth and seventh periodic reports

¹⁷⁶ *Discrimination and Inequality in Housing in Ireland* June 2018 Raffaele Grotti, Helen Russell, Éamonn Fahey, Bertrand Maitre.

¹⁷⁷ Russell, H. and Smyth, E. (January 2024). *Caregiving among Young Adults in Ireland. Evidence for Policy*. Economic and Social Research Institute.

- migrant families are less likely to have local family members to draw on for care support and there may be language or cultural barriers to accessing services. This is reflected in “migrant-origin” young people being more likely to care for their parents and/or younger siblings at age 20 and to spend more of their time on care responsibilities.

Experience

- ➔ Gender stereotypes in regard to women’s caring role, have contributed to gender inequality in regard to caring responsibilities for children and other family members.¹⁷⁸
- ➔ Women caring for a child with a disability, often face discrimination by association, in employment. Workers caring for a relative with disabilities may struggle to find employment, face difficult working conditions, or be laid off by their employers.¹⁷⁹
- ➔ Women experience pregnancy-related workplace discrimination with job offers rescinded, reduced hours, negative impact on performance rating, and lack of promotion.¹⁸⁰

Identity

- ➔ Those with caring responsibilities can more effectively participate in education and training when courses are delivered in blended format.¹⁸¹
- ➔ 86.4% of lone parents in Ireland are headed by a woman.¹⁸² Census 2022 indicates an increase in lone parent households headed by a male, however, female-headed lone parent households outnumbered male-headed lone parent households, by 5.6 : 1.¹⁸³

Sexual Orientation



Situation

- ➔ A 2022 survey¹⁸⁴ of LGBTIQ+ students at second level, found the following:
 - 1 in 3 LGBTIQ+ students had skipped school to avoid negative treatment due to being LGBTIQ+ and 1 in 10 were unsure if they would complete their Leaving Certificate,

¹⁷⁸ IHREC (2017) Submission to the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women on Ireland’s combined sixth and seventh periodic reports.

¹⁷⁹ European Human Rights Report Issue 7, 2023 (edf-feph.org)

¹⁸⁰ IHREC (2017) Submission to the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women on Ireland’s combined sixth and seventh periodic reports

¹⁸¹ Limerick and Clare ETB Learner Inclusion Survey (2021)

¹⁸² Meyler, A. Lovejoy, Dr. L., Swan, L (2023, March). Lifelong learning in Ireland: A focus on marginalised and vulnerable groups. AONTAS.

¹⁸³ CSO, Census 2022. Profile 3. Households, Families, and Childcare.

¹⁸⁴ BeLonGTo (2022) *The 2022 Irish School Climate Study*. (involving 1,208 LGBTIQ+ students)

- LGBTIQ+ students who had experienced significant levels of harassment and assault were twice as likely to skip school, due to feeling unsafe, as those who had experienced lower rates of such harassment.
- ➔ 60% of LGBTIQ+ people in one study, said they had seriously thought of ending their own life, with approximately 45% having thought of doing so within the past year. 60% reported that their suicidal thoughts were at least somewhat related to their LGBTIQ+ identity and their struggle to be accepted.¹⁸⁵

Experience

- ➔ Young LGBTIQ+ people in Limerick report feeling stigmatised and experiencing discrimination. This is especially the case for young people in rural areas with little access to transport.¹⁸⁶
- ➔ A 2022 survey¹⁸⁷ of LGBTIQ+ students at second level, found the following:
 - 76% felt unsafe in school,
 - 69% hear homophobic remarks from other students, and 58% hear homophobic remarks from staff,
 - 49% said that school staff did not intervene on hearing homophobic comments from students,
 - 60% of LGBTIQ+ students said they did not report incidents of identity-based harassment/abuse to school staff, and 70% felt that the intervention of school staff was ineffective,
 - 1 in 3 said that other students were not accepting of LGBTIQ+ identities,
 - LGBTIQ+ students said they avoided certain activities (sports, PE) and school spaces (lunch room, locker room, bathrooms) to protect themselves from negative treatment,
 - 71% said they were experiencing anxiety, stress, depression, or other mental health challenges,
 - LGBTIQ+ students reported high levels of loneliness and isolation in school.

¹⁸⁵ GLEN and BeLonGTo (2016). LGBTI Ireland report- national study of the mental health and wellbeing of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex people in Ireland.

¹⁸⁶ Data from Area Profiles and needs assessments conducted by Limerick and Clare ETB Youth Team, to inform the UBU Youth Scheme: Your Place Your Space.

¹⁸⁷ BeLonGTo (2022) *The 2022 Irish School Climate Study*. (involving 1,208 LGBTIQ+ students)

Identity

- ➔ There is a gap of years between 'knowing and telling' one's LGBTIQ+ identity. For many, this period spans their time at second level education and intersects with critical milestones such as state examinations and preparation for working life or continued studies. This has implications for schools to ensure the learning environment is safe, supportive and affirming for LGBTIQ+ young people.¹⁸⁸
- ➔ The most common age to know one's LGBTIQ+ identity is 12 years. The most common age to 'come out' is 16 years.¹⁸⁹
- ➔ 12% of LGBTIQ+ students reported they were taught negative things, in school, about LGBTIQ+ identities¹⁹⁰

Poverty and Social Exclusion



Situation

- ➔ Groups protected under the nine grounds in equality legislation, because of their vulnerability to discrimination, identity-based harassment and abuse, and inequality, are more likely to live in or be at risk of poverty (see above for specific details in regard to different grounds). This is particularly the case for: women (particularly older women, and lone parents), disabled people, Travellers and other minority ethnic groups, and transgender people. The negative treatment they experience on the basis of their identity often results in, or is compounded by, their experiences of poverty, socio-economic disadvantage, and social exclusion.
- ➔ 2022 data indicate the following: 13% of the population are at risk of poverty (an increase of 2% from 2021) and 5.3% of people were living in consistent poverty (up from 4% in 2021); 1 in 3 unemployed persons are at risk of poverty; and 18% of the population were defined as living in enforced deprivation, i.e. experienced two or more of the eleven types of deprivation (compared with 14% in 2021).¹⁹¹
- ➔ Research indicates that a number of groups face significant barriers in meeting their right to decent employment¹⁹², thus making them more vulnerable to poverty or the risk of poverty: women, lone parents, older people, young people, Travellers, ethnic minorities (particularly migrants from minority ethnic groups), and disabled people.¹⁹³

¹⁸⁸ Gay and Lesbian Equality Network (2016) 'Being LGBT in School: A Resource for Post-Primary Schools to Prevent Homophobic and Transphobic Bullying, and Support LGBT Students'.

¹⁸⁹ Gay and Lesbian Equality Network (2016) 'Being LGBT in School: A Resource for Post-Primary Schools to Prevent Homophobic and Transphobic Bullying, and Support LGBT Students'.

¹⁹⁰ BeLONGTo (2022) *The 2022 Irish School Climate Study*. (involving 1,208 LGBTQ+ students).

¹⁹¹ Central Statistics Office: *Survey on Income and Living Conditions* (SILC). 2022.

¹⁹² Decent work is measured across 6 dimensions: access to employment, adequate earnings, employee voice, security and stability of employment, equality of opportunity regarding treatment in employment, and health and safety in work.

¹⁹³ Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission (2021). *Ireland and the International Convention on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights*. Submission to the UN Committee for the list of issues on Ireland's 4th Report under the ICESCR.

- ➔ 8 of the top 10 unemployment blackspots in Ireland, are in Limerick.¹⁹⁴ Poverty in Limerick is becoming hidden but visible to workers doing outreach.¹⁹⁵
- ➔ The Habitual Residence Condition can act as a barrier to migrants being able to access state-funded services (including Further Education and Training) and social welfare assistance. This presents particular challenges for migrants living in poverty.¹⁹⁶
- ➔ In 2020, the unemployment rate among non-Irish national learners in FET was much higher than for Irish national learners: upon enrolment to a FET course 37.8% of non-Irish nationals reporting they were unemployed vs 27.4% of Irish nationals.¹⁹⁷
- ➔ Growing up in socio-economic disadvantaged areas is associated with poorer educational outcomes and lower likelihood of engaging in FET.¹⁹⁸
- ➔ A survey on lifelong learning participation¹⁹⁹, with over 1,000 people, found the following:
 - employed respondents were more likely to have taken part in learning than unemployed respondents (68% vs 45%, respectively),
 - 25% of respondents who reported no participation in learning in the last three years cited financial/cost issues as a barrier.
- ➔ The unemployed, those with lower levels of education, lone-parent households, and the lower income quintiles are less likely to own ICT devices, use computer software, download apps, use internet banking, or interact with government online. In addition, older people, the unemployed, people with literacy issues, and those whose first language is not English, are less likely to use online public services.²⁰⁰
- ➔ There are particular digital literacy challenges faced by unemployed/inactive, economically-disadvantaged individuals, as this group simultaneously lacks access to digital literacy learning opportunities at home (due to the high cost of technology) and the workplace (due to extended absence from the labour market).²⁰¹
- ➔ People with low income/unemployed have a higher digital exclusion risk because of a number of factors linked to income status. These include: not being able to afford digital devices or broadband access; not having enough time to attend a digital training course because they may have more than one low-paid job. Digital exclusion constrains their life opportunities and can increase the likelihood of remaining unemployed. The price of broadband services, which can vary significantly between areas, combined with the quality and availability of broadband services (particularly in rural areas), were key factors constraining access to digital life in Limerick.²⁰²

¹⁹⁴ Census 2016 data.

¹⁹⁵ Data from Area Profiles and needs assessments conducted by Limerick and Clare ETB Youth Team, to inform the UBU Youth Scheme: Your Place Your Space.

¹⁹⁶ IHREC (2015). Ireland and the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights

¹⁹⁷ SOLAS (2021) FET In Focus 2021: Non-Irish Nationals in FET.

¹⁹⁸ SOLAS 2017. *Barriers to FET with particular reference to long-term unemployed and other vulnerable individuals*

¹⁹⁹ Aontas (2023) *Lifelong Learning Participation in Ireland: a focus on marginalised and vulnerable groups*.

²⁰⁰ *Digital Inclusion in Ireland: Connectivity, Devices, and Skills*. NESC, Council Report 154, 2022.

²⁰¹ SOLAS (May 2021) Adult Literacy for Life: detailed consultation report to develop the adult literacy, numeracy and digital strategy.

²⁰² PAUL Partnership 2021 *Exploring the meaning and experience of digital exclusion among at-risk groups in Limerick*

- ➔ The number of young people experiencing homelessness is significant and increasing. In January 2023, 1,423 young people aged 18–24 were officially homeless (i.e. living in emergency accommodation). This compares to a figure of 640 in January 2016, a 122% increase in just seven years.²⁰³ Homelessness and the risk of becoming homeless has negative impacts for young people's access, retention and progression in education.

Experience

- ➔ CSO data ²⁰⁴ indicate the following:
 - 1 in 5 (20%) of unemployed persons experienced discrimination while looking for work in the previous two years,
 - the highest rates of discrimination related to the education setting were reported by people aged 18–24 and those who are unemployed (3.4%).
- ➔ People who live in disadvantaged areas in Limerick report being stereotyped due to associations between those areas with violence, gang crime, and drug use.²⁰⁵
- ➔ People who are educationally disadvantaged, and unemployed individuals, are more likely to experience discrimination in accessing housing. There is also a strong association between socioeconomic background, and housing deprivation and overcrowding.²⁰⁶
- ➔ Many people in the prison system have a history of social exclusion, including high levels of family, educational and health disadvantage, and poor prospects in the labour market. Discrimination against individuals with a criminal conviction is a key barrier to their ability to access employment: 81% of respondents in one study said their conviction had negatively impacted on their ability to access employment; 53% were concerned about the impact of their conviction on volunteering; and 29% were concerned about the impact of their conviction on accessing education.²⁰⁷
- ➔ The absence of a socio-economic ground, as a basis for discrimination, in equality legislation impacts on people's ability to challenge socio-economic discrimination in accessing key services, such as employment and education.²⁰⁸

Identity

- ➔ Issues of intersectionality which can give rise to experiences of multiple and compounding discrimination and inequality, are evident for people living in/at risk of poverty with diverse identities involving more than one protected characteristic, including: Travellers and other minority ethnic groups; young people; refugees and those seeking asylum; disabled people; women; transgender people; lone parents; and older people.

²⁰³ Irish Coalition to end Youth Homelessness: [from their website](#). Accessed March 2024.

²⁰⁴ Central Statistics Office: [Equality and Discrimination](#). CSO release July 2019

²⁰⁵ Data from Area Profiles and needs assessments conducted by Limerick and Clare ETB Youth Team, to inform

²⁰⁶ Data from Area Profiles and needs assessments conducted by Limerick and Clare ETB Youth Team, to inform the UBU Youth Scheme: Your Place Your Space.

²⁰⁷ IPRT [Submission to the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth on the Review of the Equality Acts](#), December 8, 2021.

²⁰⁸ Ireland and the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women, Submission to the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women on Ireland's Combined Sixth and Seventh Periodic Reports, Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission, January 2017.

07

Validation Meeting with Civil Society

The Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Guidance, on implementing the Duty, recommends that public bodies consult with organisations and groups, representing those identified groups for the Duty, as part of the process to finalise the assessment of equality and human rights issues.

Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board invited relevant local organisations and groups to attend two meetings (in June 2021).²⁰⁹ The purpose of the initial meeting was to explain: the Public Sector Duty; the purpose of the assessment; and their required input, to determine:

- ➔ whether the equality and human rights issues identified in the draft assessment adequately reflect the situation, experience, and identity of the identified groups; and
- ➔ if there were any gaps in the assessment data and information (particularly regarding the local context).

Participants were then given the draft assessment to consider and their feedback was taken at a follow-up meeting.

²⁰⁹ The PPN structures in Clare and Limerick assisted us in regard to identifying and communicating with relevant organisations and groups in their networks.



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