
A Framework towards an Integration and Intercultural Strategy for Dublin City Council 2021-2025

1.) Introduction

Dublin City's population has become much more diverse. Today, more than one in every five people living in the city was born outside of Ireland or the UK. More than 65 different languages are spoken daily at home, all the world's major religions are practised and at least one in twenty Dublin residents is visibly different, as a person of Asian or African descent. Dublin has more than twice as many foreign born residents as the rest of Ireland.

Dublin's diversity is not just a story of temporary labour migration. Many migrants are here to stay; for example, a third of people of Asian or African descent living in Dublin City are Irish citizens. Many EU citizens have made Dublin their home too. Looking toward the future, one in seven children and young people in Dublin City has at least one parent from a minority ethnicity and one in every 15 young Dubliners is from a visible minority (Asian or African descent).

Dublin's great diversity is something to be celebrated as a sign of the city's dynamism and attractiveness to people from all over the world. At the same time, diversity should also be something ordinary that does not attract unwanted attention. Sadly, too many people are experiencing racism, discrimination and abuse, especially those who are visibly different.

2.) Framing the new strategy

A new strategy is now required that will build on the national *Migrant Integration Strategy* (2017-20) and the inaugural *Dublin City Council Integration Strategy* (2016-2020). An important context is the *Dublin City Council Corporate Plan* (2020-2024) that acknowledges the Public Sector Duty as a positive development that provides a framework to ensure policies, services and facilities are equitable and accessible to all.

The Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty is a legal obligation that requires public bodies to "have regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, to promote equality of opportunity and treatment of its staff and the persons to whom it provides services, and to protect the human rights of its members, staff and the persons to whom it provides services (Section 42 of the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act, 2014).

DCC's Corporate Plan has a priority objective to promote social inclusion and diversity, including a reinforcing action to review the city's integration strategy. It also reinforces the goals of the Dublin City Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) 2016-2021, including to:

"Ensure that all residents and visitors, regardless of social or cultural background, feel a sense of ownership and engagement with the City, feel safe in their communities and are welcome to fully participate in the community, social, cultural, business and political life of the City."

Our Shared Future, the 2020 programme for government commits to task all local authority Local Community Development Committees (LCDC) with developing new integration strategies to promote, through a participative process, the inclusion of minorities. National policy and guidance is currently under development and likely to issue by end of 2021 under objectives for new Local Economic Community Plans (LECP) for adaption in 2022.

3.) Work underway in 2021

In preparation, work is underway from January 2021 by Dublin's LCDC on a new Integration and Intercultural Strategy for Dublin City Council. This includes ongoing engagement with a broad range of community and voluntary organisations as well as statutory bodies and agencies. From the outset of the need to develop a new strategy, there has been contact between lead staff in Dublin City Council and a wide range of internal and external stakeholders, including representative groups for migrant and minority communities.

DCC's LCDC has benefited in this work from the high profile and priority given in 2021 by the Office of the Lord Mayor of Dublin and looks forward to continuity in our future endeavours. Lord Mayor Hazel Chu has played a lead role in driving the development of this framework for the new strategy and worked with the LCDC to convene an external stakeholder engagement in February 2021. Due to COVID-19, engagements have been held through online video conference. In addition, two internal stakeholder forums, combined with one-to-one contact with colleagues from the different sections and units within the city council, have provided insights into what worked well under the previous strategy and what lessons have been learned.

Notably all stakeholders refer to the city's leadership role in promoting a culture of zero tolerance for racism or discrimination, while also fostering a welcoming, inclusive culture across the city. The new Integration and Intercultural strategy will build on the city's engagement with these issues and will set out concrete actions for every section within the City Council.

4.) Recognising Dublin's Diversity

- Nearly one in five Dublin City residents was born outside Ireland or the UK, and one in five do not have Irish nationality.
- One in four Dublin residents is not White Irish, and 1 in 20 Dubliners is a person of Asian or African descent.
- Nearly two in five residents aged 25-34 (37.4%) are not Irish nationals.
- One in 18 Dubliners aged 65 or older (5.7%) is not Irish, as is one in every nine children (11.2%).
- One in every 44 Irish citizens (2.3%) is from a visible minority (Asian or African descent).
- Alongside the Roman Catholic majority, there are more than 57,000 people of minority religious faiths in Dublin City and over 94,000 people with no religion.
- There are nearly 97,000 people living in Dublin who speak one of 65 other languages than English or Irish at home. Twenty of these other languages have a thousand or more native speakers.

5.) Identifying the Policy Context

The following policies, strategies and legal requirements provide context for the development of the new Integration and Intercultural Strategy for Dublin City Council.

- The International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ratified by Ireland).
- Ireland is a member of the United Nation's International Organization for Migration (IOM).
- European Union anti-racism action plan 2020-2025.
- EU Action Plan for Integration and Inclusion 2021-2027.
- Common Basic Principles for Immigrant Integration Policy in the EU.
- EU Roma strategy framework for equality, inclusion and participation for 2020-2030.
- The Equal Status Acts 2000-2018.
- The Local Government Reform Act 2014.
- The Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act 2014.

- The National Traveller and Roma Inclusion Strategy 2017-2021.
- The Roadmap for Social Inclusion 2020-2025.
- The Programme for Government: Our Shared Future commits to a range of measures, including a new national Action Plan against Racism, a Migrant Integration Strategy and local authority County Integration Strategies.
- The Dublin City Council Corporate Plan 2020-2024.
- Dublin City's Public Sector Duty Implementation Strategy and Action Plan.
- Dublin City's Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) 2016-2021.
- Dublin City is a member of the Intercultural Cities Programme (ICC) of the Council of Europe.
- Dublin City has signed the Eurocities Charter on Integrating Cities.

6.) Developing a Vision, Values and Strategic Objectives

In developing an overall vision Dublin City Council has a lot of good work to build on, including lessons from its earlier integration strategy and from implementing the Public Sector Duty, as well as national and international guidelines around best practice. The new vision for the Integration and Intercultural Strategy is being developed as follows:

- Dublin City celebrates, supports and protects the cultural, ethnic, linguistic and religious diversity among all who live in, work in and visit the city.
- Dublin City will ensure that all residents are empowered and enabled to fully and equally participate in the city's cultural, social, economic and political life, and that all can access and benefit from the services they need on an equal and culturally appropriate basis.
- Dublin City will ensure that all can pursue their aspirations free from all forms of discrimination and racism, in a manner that reflects and is informed by our Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty.

The framework for Dublin City Council's integration and intercultural strategy addresses the full spectrum of minority ethnic and religious groups in the city, people of non-Irish nationality and people who speak languages other than English or Irish. The strategy has a particular focus on the inclusion of migrants and people of migrant background and on how minority ethnicity interacts with the other grounds exposed to discrimination and inequality.

The strategy will be concerned with advancing and achieving full equality in practice, recognising and adapting for cultural and linguistic diversity, eliminating discrimination and ensuring compliance with equality legislation, and respecting, promoting, and fulfilling the human rights standards that Ireland has committed to through various international instruments and through the Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty.

This framework for Dublin City's Integration and Intercultural Strategy has five core values that will drive thematic strategic objectives designed to address issues and concerns experienced by residents, workers and visitors to the city. They are:

- Dignity and respect:** People being treated in a manner that recognises their intrinsic human worth.
- Diversity and accessibility:** Difference is welcomed and valued and diversity is accommodated in access to our services and in employment.
- Inclusion and social justice:** The diversity of people have the resources and opportunities to participate fully in all aspects of life in the city.
- Participation and engagement:** The diversity of people have opportunities to have a say on matters and in decisions that affect them.
- Choice and autonomy:** The preferences and choices of the diversity of people are acknowledged with appropriate options available in service delivery and employment where possible.

This framework for a new integration and intercultural strategy for Dublin City Council is designed to be ambitious for what the council can achieve based on its own remit, while also providing public leadership on these important issues. The implementation of the strategy will take place across each of Dublin City Council's departments and units. Dublin City Council has an Integration Officer who has been engaged from later 2020 with a wide number of colleagues and external groups on a one-to-one basis and who has received written submissions towards the revision of the city's integration strategy. A process has already begun to identify:

- Actions that will continue from the previous integration strategy (2016-20),
- Actions that external stakeholders will propose; and,
- Action that Dublin City Council's sections and units will suggest based on their remits.

7.) Next Steps

Dublin City Council's Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) has a lead role in the development of the integration strategy. As noted, it is expected the integration strategy will also inform the next six-year Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) from 2022 that will be developed by the LCDC. The LECP identifies actions "to strengthen and develop the economic and community dimensions of the local authority area" with the aim of improving the wellbeing and quality of life of residents and communities across the city. Dublin City Council also aims to build on the experience of best practice from across local government, while also developing an ambitious template that other local authorities may wish to copy.

In particular, Dublin's LCDC is happy to confirm a new project from June 2021 working with the UN International Organization for Migration (IOM) Ireland office on proposals for a pilot Migrant Forum for Dublin. Details for this pilot are being agreed with UN IOM and will include wider engagement with the LCDCs of neighbouring local authorities in order to realise joined-up work between Dublin's local authorities. Secondly, Dublin's Public Participation Network (PPN) is resourced to continue to include new membership specific to engagement with the pilot IOM Dublin Migrant Forum and more broadly on the new integration strategy. Details on the pilot are expected to be agreed and finalised by autumn 2021.

As the framework for the next strategy builds, Dublin's LCDC remains cognisant of the forthcoming national policy and guidelines on integration that will issue in the next period. The LCDC will ensure strong alignment and coherence with national policy is established for the next integration strategy.

It is also the LCDC's expectation that a public consultation process on the final draft strategy will be required in order to maximise input from across Dublin City's population and to better identify the actions that will make a real difference to people's lives. On that basis, we urge everyone to participate in the conversation about framing our next integration strategy, so that we can remove all of the barriers that prevent people from realising their full potential when living in, working in or visiting Dublin city.

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