Evidence of discrimination and its impact on Travellers and Roma

Ethnic Data: A Tool to Combat Discrimination
“In many European countries the Roma population is still denied basic human rights and made victims of flagrant racism. The Roma remain far behind others in society in terms of educational attainment, employment, housing and health standards, and they have virtually no political representation”

Former CoE Commissioner on Human Rights Thomas Hammarberg 2012
Racism & Discrimination

- Individual or Institutional
- Intentional or Unintentional
- Direct or Indirect
- Spectrum of Violence based on ethnicity
  - Harassment
  - Hate speech
  - Assaults & Death
Institutional racism

• Processes that consciously or unconsciously result in the systematic exclusion of minority ethnic groups. It is most visible in the inequitable outcomes for minority ethnic groups from the policies and practices of organisations and institutions throughout society.
Evidence of link between discrimination and health

Experience of racist verbal abuse or physical violence is related to a greater risk of premature death; high blood pressure; respiratory illness; lower self-esteem and life satisfaction; psychological distress, depression and anxiety; suicidal tendencies; stress and anger; psychosis; and more work-limiting long-term illness and disability. (Krieger, 2000; Karlsen and Nazroo, 2002; Williams et al., 2003)
Our Geels: All Ireland Traveller Health Study

Experience of Discrimination (assessed in the Study using a comparative question from the US, (Krieger et. At.2005)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Traveller ROI</th>
<th>Black US</th>
<th>Latino US</th>
<th>White US</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>At School</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Getting Work</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In shop/pub/restaurant</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In public settings</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With guards/courts</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Experience of discrimination
AITHS using a comparative question from the US, (Krieger et. At.2005)
Causes of Death

• Leading Causes of Deaths among Travellers similar to General Population:
  – CVD
  – Cancer
  – Respiratory Disease

Suicide is 6 times the rate of general population and accounts for approx. 11% of all Traveller deaths

• Travellers dying in greater numbers & at younger age- Why?
AITHS Traveller Deaths 2008

54 expected deaths
134 excess deaths
188 observed deaths
Traveller Infant Mortality rate

Deaths - Infants

♀️ = 4 per 1,000  �اويئة ♂️ = 14 per 1,000

Infant death rate is 3.5 times national average
Mortality rate of Traveller women

Deaths - Women

309

100

General Population

Female death rate is 3 times national average
Mortality Rate of Traveller Men

Deaths - Men

372

= 100

General Population

Male death rate is 4 times national average

100
Accommodation

- Between 2006 and 2011, the percentage of Irish Traveller households residing in caravans or mobile/temporary structures halved from 24.7% to 12.23%
- Almost 1 in 3 Traveller households in temporary accommodation had no sewerage in 2011, affecting 886 people
- 1 in 5 of those households had no piped water source, impacting 556 people
Accommodation

- Traveller Culture Not Provided For
- Few Transient Sites Built
- Traveller Specific Accommodation Stopped
- Forced into Standard Housing
- Private Rented Accommodation
- Landlords & Insecurity of Tenure
- Inadequate & Overcrowded
Education

• 55% of Travellers had completed their education by the age of 15
• In Ireland, 90% of students complete second level education
• In budget 2011, 86.6% of Traveller specific education supports were cut
2012 *State of the Nation’s Children* report found that Traveller children, immigrant children and children with a disability are more likely to report being bullied at school.

The ‘past – pupil’ criteria in enrolment policies presents a clear example of institutional discrimination.

Illustrated in the case of *Stokes v CBS High School Clonmel*.
Travellers in Third Level Education

Less than 1% of Travellers go on to third level education

• 2009/2010 - 29 Travellers
• 2010/2011 – 31 Travellers
• 2011/2012 – 29 Travellers

Higher Education Key facts and Figures 2011/2012

62 % of Travellers felt that they were discriminated against in school (AITHS)
Economic Development

- Unemployment rate of 84%
- Traveller Economy not Supported
- Traveller Public Service Internship Programme
Attitudes of Settled People to Travellers

• 60.1% would not welcome a Traveller as a member of the family
• 72.3% support Travellers ‘to live their own way of life decently’ – down 20.7% since 1989
• 63.7% reject Travellers on the basis of their ‘way of life’
• 18.2% would deny Irish Citizenship to Travellers

Source: ‘Emancipation of the Travelling People’ 2010 Micheál Mac Gréil, S.J., NUI Maynooth
Racism against Travellers

Arson Attack on House Allocated to Traveller Family
Ballyshannon, Donegal February 2013:

“The situation is Niall; I think there should be an isolated community of them some place. Give them houses and keep them all together.”

“The amount of support coming out of mass yesterday morning was absolutely unbelievable. They were chasing all over me to shake my hand...I wish to God there was an election tomorrow morning.”

Sean McEniff – Fianna Fáil Councillor, Donegal.

"they can be sent to Spike Island for all I care".

Eugene Dolan – Fine Gael Councillor, Donegal.
A waste of valuable resources

Proposed Traveller accommodation at Mount Anville Depot, Bird Avenue, Stillorgan Grove and UCD.

At the County Council meeting held on January 13, a proposal to build Traveller accommodation on sites on Mount Anville Road, Stillorgan Grove, Bird Avenue and UCD was passed by a majority of sitting councillors by 16 votes to 10.

This is very concerning for the residents living in the surrounding areas, but it is not yet set in stone that these sites will be used this way. There will be opportunities for a newly-elected council chamber to reverse the decision.

I am calling on sitting councillors to pass a motion stipulating that no action is taken on the proposed sites until a full cost-benefit analysis is undertaken. I will, if elected, seek cross-party support for such a measure if the current council fails to do so.

If this is not done then the county manager could be in a position to implement this draft plan without any further votes in the council chamber.

The use of a site such as the one at Mount Anville—which has an estimated value of between €2m and €5m—is a dreadful waste of taxpayers’ money, especially when there is so much accommodation potentially available in the constituency currently held within NAMA’s vaults.

I was surprised to see one sitting Labour councillor quoted in the media as saying “not everything is about the money”. In an age of budgetary cuts and severe pressure on services, I believe all our residents need to be accommodated, but not at an inflated cost to you.
Roma Discrimination in Europe

- Roma and the Holocaust
- Coercive Sterilisations
- Violence against Roma
- Anti-Roma speeches
- Segregated Education

Copyright James Fraher

A boy reacts as he stands next to riot policemen while an excavator demolishes a relative's shack in the shanty town settlement of "El Gallinero", in the outskirts of Madrid June 18, 2013. ( REUTERS/Susana Vera)
Roma Discrimination in Ireland

- Access to social protection
- Access to health
- Accommodation
A blonde haired blue-eyed seven year-old girl has been taken from a Roma family in Dublin and into care by the HSE in a case remarkably similar to the Greek stolen child scandal.

The Sunday World can exclusively reveal that the child, who is living with a Roma gypsy family in Tallaght in south Dublin, was taken away by gardai following a major investigation on Monday afternoon.

Gardai received a tip-off from a member of the public that a six or seven year-old girl was living with a large Roma family but looked nothing like any of her supposed siblings.

'Blond angel' in Roma child-trafficking case may be 6

Greek authorities say no breakthrough yet in identifying blond, blue-eyed girl found in Roma camp
iReport

• iReport is a fully confidential and independent, civil society based Racist Incident Report system

• 2nd Quarterly Report details 18 incidents against Travellers and Roma in Ireland- almost 20% of all incidents reported

• Almost a quarter of complaints (23%) featured social media or internet abuse, as did unfair treatment in public or seeking services (Heffernan, David O Laoighre)
• Pulse: Racial Profiling
• Details of Traveller Children being Recorded
• Comments by Judges, Politicians & Media
“Nobody has indicated it to me, but I suspect he comes from a certain ethnic background that would give him even more form given the type of behaviour in which some of them engage. ...As I’ve described it before, they are like Neanderthal men living in the long grass, abiding by the laws of the jungle.”

Judge Seamus Hughes in Athlone District Court
Sept. 5th 2012
At a sitting of Tuam District Court, Judge Geoffrey Browne is reported describing burglars as ‘Knackers’ and encouraging homeowners to use maximum force against them.

January 2013
"I assume from his appearance that he's from the Roma community who came here to do what all of them tend to do, to use the streets to beg,“

Justice Patrick McCartan, March 2013
(Dublin Circuit Criminal Court)
“For us to try to change that culture here would be like trying to change people in Dublin from drinking Guinness; it’s their culture and they do not see anything wrong with it.”

Insp Patrick McMenamin of Pearse Street Garda station
BIGGER. FATTER. GYPSIER.
Traveller ‘culture’ that spells premature death

Comments on RTÉ show were offensive to Travellers

Ahern fair game, but not Travellers according to BCC

Sixteen-day-old children being put on Garda Pulse system 'because they are members of travelling community'
Travelling with Austerity

Report highlighted devastating and disproportionate impact of funding cuts on Travellers

- Interagency activities -100%
- Traveller education -86.6%
- Traveller accommodation -85%
- Equality -76.3%
- National Traveller Orgs -63.3%
- FAS Special Initiative for Travellers -50%
- National Traveller Partnership -32.1%
- Traveller SPY youth projects -29.8%
- Health -5.4%

Government spending in total is down 4.3% for this period
“This is a striking picture. One can think of no other section of the community which has suffered such a high level of disinvestment, compounded by the failure of the state to spend even the limited resources that are available.”

Brian Harvey: Travelling with Austerity
Thank You!
‘Well what kind of jobs are they good at? ....I suppose they’re good with their hands aren’t they?’

In the classroom they were filling in a questionnaire about what children would like to be when they grew up. The children were aged between 4 -6. When it came to the little Traveller girl the teacher said ‘sure you are going to get married and have a family when you grow up.’
“To ensure a fair selection, you all get the same test. You must all climb that tree.”