

RACISM & DISCRIMINATION



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Racism is prejudice, discrimination, or antagonism directed against someone of a different ethnic group based on the belief that one's own ethnic group is superior. Discrimination occurs when human rights are denied to categories of people based on prejudice. Discrimination often occurs on grounds of colour, ethnic origin, religion, nationality or citizenship.

In Irish society there has been a great reluctance to acknowledge racism as an internal problem to be addressed: increasing immigration is resulting in a more culturally diverse society and a growing realisation that this issue can no longer be ignored. Racism is an explicit part of the economic, social, political and cultural exclusion experienced by Travellers.



According to the All Ireland Traveller Health Study of 2010, the following findings towards racism and discrimination are::

- ❖ 40% of Travellers have experienced discrimination in accessing health services.
- ❖ 62% of Travellers have experienced discrimination at school.
- ❖ 55% of Travellers have experienced discrimination at work.
- ❖ 61% of Travellers have experienced discrimination in a shop/restaurant/pub.
- ❖ 50% of Travellers have experienced discrimination.

Faced with discrimination and an often hostile reception, Travellers retreat into their own social networks, further compounding their segregation in society.

The widespread negative stereotypes of Travellers, combined with notions of innate inferiority, are used to legitimate discrimination. Examples would include residents associations which organise against the provision of Traveller accommodation; the denial of one's own Traveller identity to get a job and the fear if it's known you're a Traveller you will lose the job; the design and delivery of a range of public services that ignore the specific needs of minority ethnic groups, including Travellers - because it is assumed there is only one culture.

Ultimately, Travellers and Roma are portrayed in national media as a disturbance or threat to the settled order and safety. Such a portrayal reinforces negative stereotypes.