



PAVEE POINT
TRAVELLER AND ROMA CENTRE

Public Sector Duty:

A positive duty in mainstreaming equality and human rights on a statutory basis in Ireland

Date: Tuesday 10th February 2015

Time: 10am- 2pm

Location: Unite, The Union Hall, 55-56 Middle Abbey Street, Dublin 1

Background

For many years Pavee Point Traveller and Roma Centre, alongside a range of other NGOs and bodies, has been lobbying for the introduction of a Positive Duty on the Public Sector, similar to that in other jurisdictions including the Section 75 Duty in Northern Ireland. This Positive Duty is about mainstreaming equality and human rights on a statutory basis. It puts an onus on public bodies to take steps to ensure they do not discriminate against or violate the human rights of a range of vulnerable groups and to ensure they advance equality for these groups and fulfil their human rights.

Section 42 of the *Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act 2014* sets out the Positive Duty required of Public Bodies. It states that Public Bodies in performing their functions need to have regard to:

1. Eliminate discrimination
2. Promote equality of opportunity and treatment of its staff and the persons to whom it provides services
3. Protect the human rights of its members, staff and the persons to whom it provides services.

Public bodies are required, in their strategic plans, to assess the equality and human rights issues relevant to their functions and to set out the policies and plans, in place or to be put in place, to address these, and to report on developments and their achievements in this regard in their annual reports.

Seminar Objectives:

- To provide information and facilitate debate on the Public Sector Duty
- To share information and provide insights into how it can be used to promote equality, combat discrimination and advance human rights
- To discuss challenges and opportunities the Public Sector Duty presents, in particular to NGOs including Traveller and Roma organisations

The seminar will provide an opportunity to reflect on the Public Sector Duty and how to use it in an Irish context. It will facilitate different sectors to come together and share insights, discuss the challenges posed and identify ways of collaborating in using the Public Sector Duty to advance human rights and achieve equality.

Target Audience:

NGOs, Traveller/Roma organisations, community groups, policy makers and service providers.



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Programme

Chairperson: Anastasia Crickley

Director of Department of Applied Social Studies, Maynooth University

10.00 Registration

Tea/Coffee

10.10 Welcome and Background to Seminar

Ms Ronnie Fay, Joint Director, Pavee Point Traveller and Roma Centre

10.20 A Legal Perspective on the Public Sector Duty

Judy Walsh, Director UCD Equality Studies Centre

Followed by Table Discussion

11.00 What should Public Authorities do to realise the potential of the Positive Duty?

Niall Crowley, Independent Equality Expert and Former CEO, Equality Authority

Followed by Table Discussion

11.40 Implementing public sector equality duties- sharing experience from the public prosecution service in England and Wales

Seamus Taylor, Lecturer, Department of Applied Social Studies, Maynooth University, Formerly Director of Equality and Diversity, Crown Prosecution Service, England and Wales and Director of Strategy, Commission for Racial Equality, Britain

Followed by Table Discussion

12.20 Community Organisations Engaging with Positive Duty

Martin Collins, Joint Director, Pavee Point Traveller and Roma Centre

Followed by Table Discussion

13.00 Plenary Discussion

13.30 Closing Comments

Ms Emily Logan, Chief Commissioner, Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission

Booking is essential as places are limited- to book a place, contact nurul.amin@pavee.ie

For more information contact ronnie.fay@pavee.ie