

Mincéir Gruber Malaid Streed

What Next for
Traveller Employment?

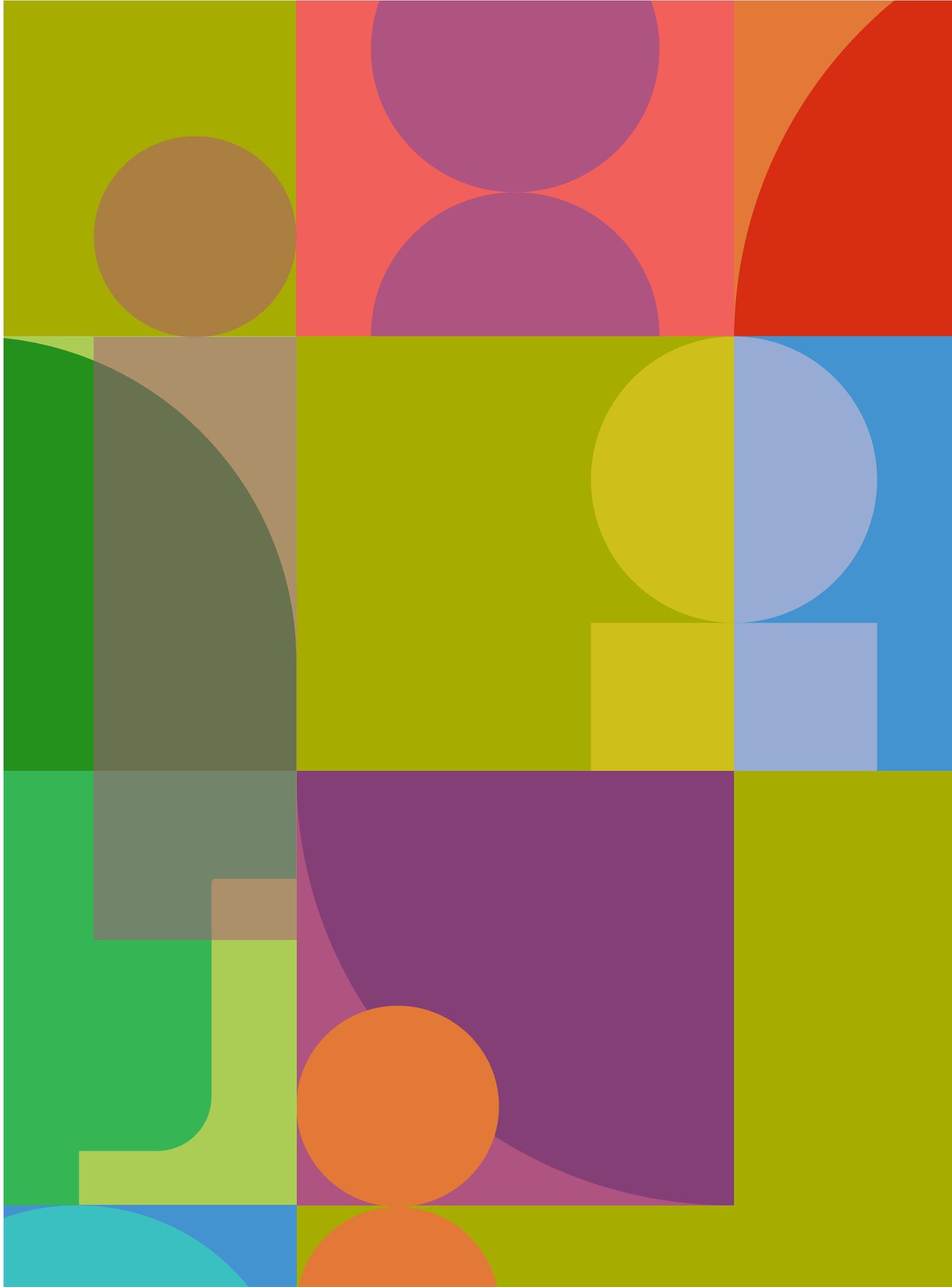


May 2019

ssgt | **st.stephen's
green trust**

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foreword

St Stephen's Green Trust (SSGT) is a charitable foundation which respects human dignity and is committed to helping create a society where the dignity of all can be realised through social justice and inclusive, nurturing communities.

Trustees committed to focusing on a range of strategic goals to give effect to that mission in the Strategic Plan 2018–2022. One of the goals is to contribute to improving the situation for Travellers by concentrating on areas that progress their life chances and participation in Irish society including increasing participation in employment and enterprise. SSGT also supports programmes and initiatives that improve the provision of culturally appropriate quality Traveller accommodation and improve outcomes for Travellers in the Irish prison system.

Our aim is to work in partnership and solidarity with Travellers and their representative organisations underpinned by our core values of respect & solidarity; accountability & transparency; integrity and partnership.

As part of our commitment to a sound analysis of the causes of inequalities and injustice and their effects on both individuals and communities we focus on the structural, systemic and institutional drivers of social injustice.

This short report aims to contribute to knowledge on how and why high numbers of Travellers are unemployed, to reflect the current policy context and to make recommendations on some areas that will contribute to change. We will use the information to determine how we might make an effective contribution to improving employment and enterprise outcomes for Travellers over the next few years.

Thank you to the report author, Audry Deane, who was assisted in the process by SSGT trustees, Dr Mary Murphy and Anna Lee. Thanks also to Maria Joyce, National Traveller Women's Forum, Bernard Joyce, Irish Traveller Movement and Martin Collins, Pavee Point for their assistance. Oein de Bhardúin provided the Cant title, 'Mincéir gruber malaid streed' which means 'Traveller hands work hard'.

We are grateful to our donors who make this work possible – the Discalced Carmelites, the Daughters of the Cross of Liege and private foundations advised by Porticus UK.

Orla O'Neill
Executive Director
May 2019

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

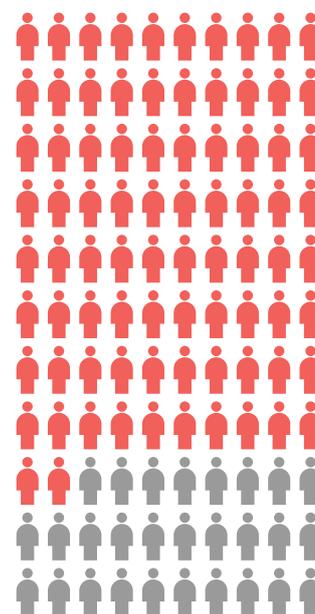
St Stephen's Green Trust commissioned this report as part of its strategic goal of contributing to improving the situation for Travellers by focusing on areas that progress their life chances and participation in Irish society – a subgoal of which is increasing participation in employment and enterprise. It explores why low numbers of Travellers progress through education, training and labour market programmes to secure work in the open labour market or in enterprise settings.

The National Traveller and Roma Inclusion Strategy (NTRIS) was launched in June 2017. It has 149 recommendations covering ten strategic themes¹. While an implementation plan for the strategy is expected from the Department of Justice and Equality, it currently has no time bound targets or indicators. This report and recommendations aim to support the work of the NTRIS Traveller Employment Sub Group to secure better employment outcomes for Travellers and to assist Traveller and other organisations to hold duty bearers to account.

Educational attainment levels amongst Travellers remain low. The very low rate of young Travellers completing second level continues. There is no structured scheme focused on supporting young Travellers to access and stay in apprenticeships. This indicates endemic and severe problems which must be resolved in order to make staying in school and progressing to further training/ upskilling and educational options relevant for this cohort. Current national policy has not succeeded in significantly improving Traveller access, progression and retention in second, further and higher education, which would have a positive effect on their employment status.

Eighty-two percent of Travellers of working age are unemployed. The transactional nature of Public Employment Services, a focus on deficits and some of the engagement mechanisms used discourage Travellers from proactively engaging. Although there is now a suite of national strategies underpinning growth, recovery, employment and enterprise, none name Travellers as a target group. This underpins the perception that national policy makers consistently fail to consider the needs of Travellers.

Despite the evident fit between SICAP and Travellers as a disadvantaged group, access, retention and progression of Travellers through SICAP is very low. Progress is needed in developing a flexible approach to create specific opportunities that engage Travellers.



82%
of Travellers
of working age
are **unemployed**

¹ The ten strategic themes in the NTRIS are: Cultural Identity, Education, Employment and the Traveller economy, Children and Youth, Health, Gender Equality, Anti-Discrimination and Equality, Accommodation, Traveller and Roma Communities and Public Services.

Barriers to access and progression in education and employment include discrimination; the value placed by young Travellers on education as a route to income generation; inadequate consideration of Traveller culture in programme design, and national initiatives that are too large and rigid to respond to individual needs.

Enablers include leadership and commitment at all levels; effective administrative systems that include targets and deliverables relating to equality and anti-discrimination; person centred strengths-based programmes, and creative progression mechanisms.

The following recommendations from SSGT focus on specific actions and initiatives in priority policy areas to improve outcomes for Traveller enterprise and employment. The recommendations are underpinned by the following core principles which SSGT believes should permeate all initiatives:



TRAVELLER PARTICIPATION -

The process of participation is fundamental to community development. It is rooted in the self-identification of needs and interests, the formulation of responses by the community or group concerned and is central to their ability to continue to influence outcomes². SSGT recognises that policies and programmes targeted at Travellers will not be effective without the meaningful participation of Travellers at the design, implementation and monitoring stages.



RELATIONSHIP BUILDING –

SSGT recognises that effecting change in Travellers’ experience of employment and training programmes requires partnership and cooperation between a range of individuals and groups, including Travellers, State bodies, other community and voluntary groups and Traveller representative organisations. There is a need to develop trust across all sectors and relationship-building work should be a core objective of all initiatives. Unless relationships are effectively fostered and developed, change is not likely to be successfully achieved or sustained.



GENDER DIMENSION –

SSGT believes that integrating gender analysis into the design, implementation, evaluation and dissemination of programmes and activities is essential in order to maximise outcomes for men and women.

² All Ireland Endorsement Body for Community Work Education and Training (2016), *All Ireland Standards for Community Work*

recommendations

1. Where there are higher numbers of unemployed Travellers (both urban and rural) Intreo offices should set up a mechanism to analyse current Traveller engagement and progression in their service and explore how this could be enhanced with collaboration and appropriate referral. Actions areas could include:
 - Mapping the numbers and pathways of unemployed Travellers.
 - Reviewing the service's current approach to engaging with this group.
 - Interrogating how and if their business processes are conducive to engaging with this group.
 - Setting specific local targets to improve the quality of Traveller engagement and progression.
 - Setting appropriate indicators at local level to measure successful outcomes (referrals, progression and completion).

2. Local Employment Services offices which have successfully engaged with Travellers on an individual basis should share their specific learning on what works to encourage Travellers into their service and create a 'how to' manual / guidelines which would encourage other LES to replicate their methods.

3. Local Enterprise Offices should develop specific initiatives which support the development of the Traveller economy and enable social enterprise.

4. All relevant agencies should collaborate to create specific Traveller apprenticeship projects for example in transport/haulage, tourism/hospitality and construction. The initiatives should encourage the participation of Traveller women and be mindful of the local employment context and individual interests and skills.

5. Course provision offered to Travellers must be expanded to raise expectations, to capture the interest of Traveller students and to meet the needs of employers.

6. Education and Training Boards should liaise more intensively with local employers to meet their needs by developing targeted initiatives for Travellers which could be designed and delivered collaboratively.

7. The design of actions and initiatives in training and employment should be gender-proofed to take account of barriers to participation of Traveller women, such as access to culturally competent affordable childcare.

8. A national action plan to mainstream Traveller employment across all facets of the public service should be established, with targets set for all relevant agencies.

9. SICAP organisations should ensure Travellers are aware of self-employment and social enterprise opportunities and there should be a high degree of flexibility for providers to facilitate local context and conditions. These actions should be underpinned by more ambitious targets for both Traveller participation in and outcomes from these supports.

10. Cognisance should be taken of the particular needs of Travellers in all employment policy including the National Action Plan for Jobs, Pathways to Work and implementation of the public sector duty. There is also a need to gender-proof policy in relation to Traveller women.

11. Specific targets should be set across all policy areas and incorporate mechanisms to measure outcomes for Travellers.

12. The Department of Justice and Equality should establish and lead a NTRIS Implementation Working Group. It should consist of senior officials from the various Departments³, agencies and bodies involved in the delivery of the strategy, along with a sub group of the NTRIS Steering Group. This Working Group should have responsibility for the timely delivery and ongoing monitoring of the strategy. The Working Group should report quarterly to the Minister of Justice and Equality and the NTRIS Steering Group on progress and challenges which emerge.

13. The NTRIS Implementation Working Group should set up a clear monitoring matrix, as soon as the Departmental targets are agreed. This monitoring matrix will facilitate transparent, effective monitoring of progress in all areas. It should be broken down into policy goals, objectives, measures, actions, outputs, outcomes and timelines. This matrix must clearly show lines of accountability.

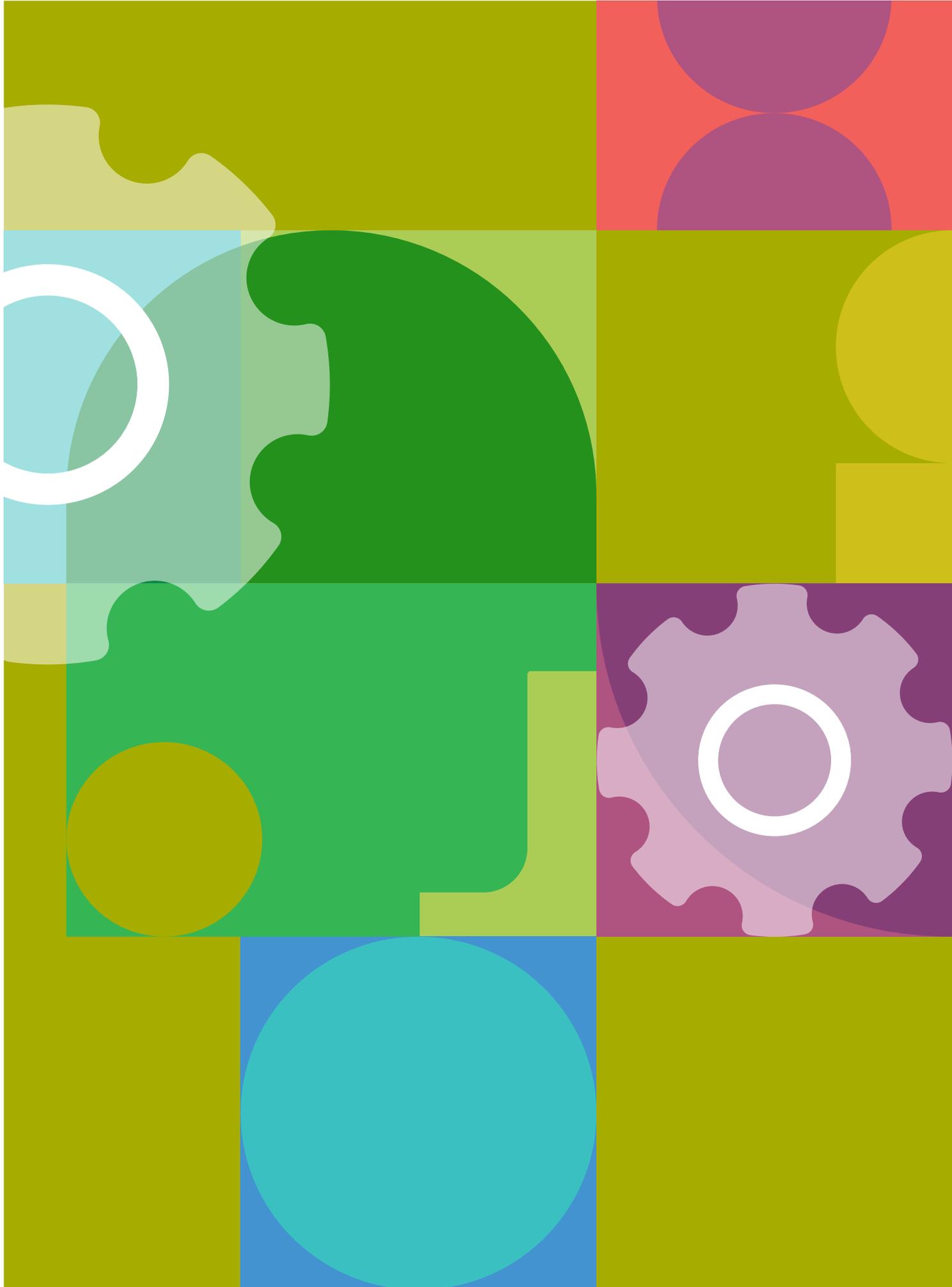
14. The Department of Justice and Equality should make sure that a distance travelled approach⁴ is used to measure progress and performance and that flexible responses emerge as the actions and outcomes unfold.

15. The Department of Justice and Equality should publish detailed progress on the monitoring framework on a quarterly basis on its website.

16. The NTRIS Implementation Working Group should report within its own structures and to the most appropriate Oireachtas Committees.

³ Relevant Departments and bodies on this group should include: The Department of Education and Skills, the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection, the Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation, the Department of Rural and Community Development, the Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government, SOLAS, ETBI, Pobal.

⁴ Distance travelled in this context refers to the progress made in achieving soft outcomes that lead towards sustained employment or associated hard outcomes as a result of participating in an initiative or service and against an initial baseline set on joining it.



introduction

This report explores why low numbers of Travellers access and progress through education, training and labour market programmes to secure work in the open labour market or in enterprise settings.

This report was commissioned by the St Stephen's Green Trust as part of its strategic goal to contribute to improving the situation for Travellers by focusing on areas that progress their life chances and participation in Irish society – a subgoal of which is increasing participation in employment and enterprise.

Currently 82 per cent of Travellers of working age in the Republic of Ireland are unemployed at a time when Ireland is approaching full employment. This high level of unemployment has remained unchanged since before the economic crisis. This report explores why low numbers of Travellers access and progress through education, training and labour market programmes to secure work in the open labour market or in enterprise settings.

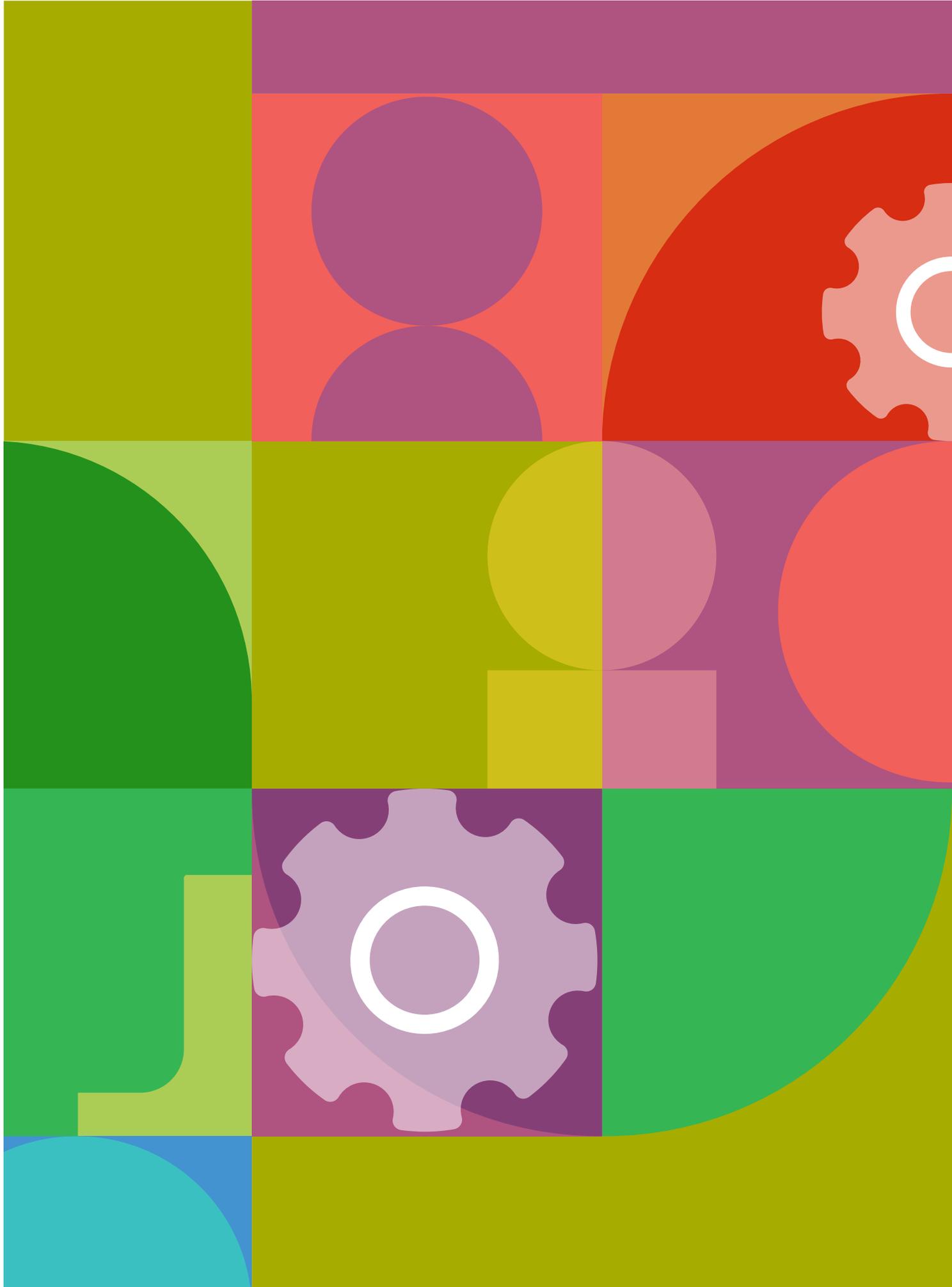
The report is structured as follows:

- Section 1 outlines the institutional context.
- Section 2 provides statistics on Traveller education and employment.
- Section 3 examines the visibility of Travellers in national education, employment and inclusion policies.
- Section 4 looks at the barriers and enablers in Traveller employment initiatives.
- Section 5 sets out recommendations for action to secure improved Traveller employment outcomes.

The methodology included a review of recent policy literature and statistics. A number of stakeholders were consulted, including policy experts, relevant NGO staff, national Traveller representatives⁵ and relevant Departments. Some examples of collaborative initiatives and actions taken by either Traveller representative organisations on their own, or in collaboration with agencies and Departments were examined and offer a flavour of the range and potential for creative engagement and for positive outcomes.

While there are multiple factors contributing to the poor employment and education outcomes for Travellers, an examination of these is beyond the scope of this report. This report outlines how national employment and education policy and practice fails to take account of these factors or to address them through targeted initiatives. Recommendations are offered to complement those set out in the National Traveller and Roma Inclusion Strategy 2017–2021 (NTRIS).

⁵ The paper was informed by discussions and input from representatives from the Irish Traveller Movement, the National Traveller Women's Forum and Pavee Point.



SECTION 1

context

This section examines the institutional context in which education, training and employment initiatives operate.

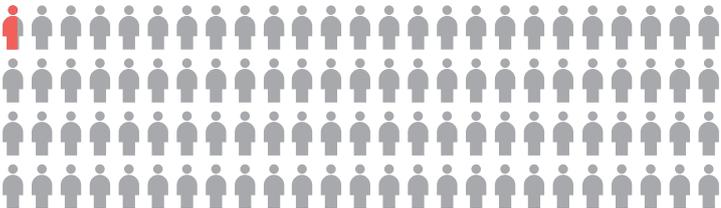
Traveller Population

Travellers make up 0.7 per cent of the population. Sixty per cent are aged less than 25 years.

30,987 Travellers currently live in the Republic of Ireland and 1,700 live in Northern Ireland.

Travellers are located around Ireland but are increasingly urbanised. Based on the 2016 Census, 78.6% of Travellers live in urban settings compared to 62.4% of the general population.

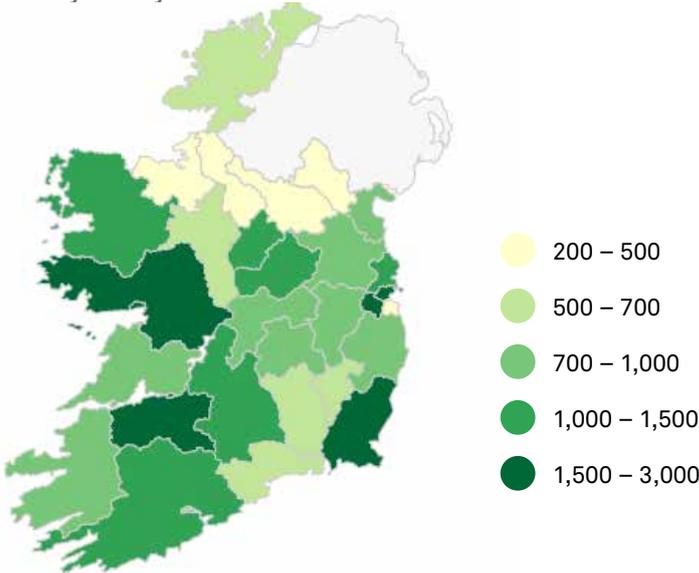
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Irish Travellers by County



Source: Census 2016⁶

6 Census 2016 Profile 8 Irish Travellers <https://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/ep/p-cp8iter/p8iter/p8itd/>

Labour Market Activation

In 2012 the Government introduced its strategy for labour market activation, *Pathways to Work*. It introduced a more pro-active approach to activation which included greater conditionality. This meant that Jobseekers payments could be reduced or withdrawn if the unemployed person did not engage with Intreo's employment support services.

Intreo was set up as a one-stop-shop providing both welfare supports and job-seeking supports to the unemployed.

In 2015, a new national service called JobPath was set up to support jobseekers. Under JobPath two external organisations, Turas Nua and Seetec, were contracted to provide job-seeking supports to the long term unemployed referred to them by Intreo.

At local level, job seeking support services include Local Employment Services (LES). The LES was set up in 1994 to provide job-seeking supports using a holistic guidance approach. It was incorporated into Intreo in 2012.

These services combined form the Public Employment Service. Other supports available for jobseekers include Jobs Clubs and the Social Inclusion Community Activation Programme (SICAP).

Jobs Clubs provide individualised support, a drop-in service and formal workshops. Referral to workshops is made by either Intreo or the LES.

SICAP is operated by Local Development Companies funded through the Local Authorities. It supports individuals who are most distant from the labour market through one-to-one support and locally provided training and education opportunities.

The EmployAbility Service provides employment supports to people with a disability, health condition, injury or illness.

For individuals interested in starting their own business or becoming self-employed supports are provided through SICAP and the Local Enterprise Offices (LEOs) as well as the Back to Work Enterprise Allowance and Enterprise Support Grant. A number of LEOs have undertaken targeted initiatives to engage with prospective entrepreneurs amongst the Traveller and Roma communities and other ethnic and minority groups.

There are a number of schemes to support workers on low incomes and workers previously unemployed. These include the retention of the medical card for up to three years after gaining employment for previously unemployed individuals, housing supports and the Working Family Payment.

Programmes that help long-term unemployed to gain work experience include Community Employment (CE), Tús, Gateway and the Rural Social Scheme.

A number of LEOs have undertaken targeted initiatives to engage with prospective entrepreneurs amongst the Traveller and Roma communities and other ethnic and minority groups.

Education and Training

Solas is an agency of the Department of Education and Skills. It was established to develop and give strategic direction to the Further Education and Training (FET) sector in Ireland. It is responsible for funding, planning and co-ordinating a wide range of training and further education programmes. It has a mandate to ensure the provision of 21st century high-quality programmes to jobseekers and other learners.

Solas is responsible for the Education and Training Boards (ETBs) which provide further education at local level. Provision includes QQI⁷ accredited courses, Post Leaving Certificate courses, specific skills training, apprenticeships, traineeships, Local Training Initiatives, literacy and English language courses, Youthreach and Community Training Centres.

The National Training Fund (NTF) was set up in 2000. It is a dedicated fund to support training for people in work and those seeking work. It is funded by a levy on recoverable earnings of employees⁸. The NTF currently stands at over €550 million. The shift in unemployment in recent years from 16% in 2016 to 5% in 2019 has resulted in a rebalancing of the fund towards training for those in work. Reform of the NTF is underway and will result in increased skills focussed education and training such as apprenticeships, traineeships, Springboard+ and Skillnets and less funding for programmes such as the Back to Education Allowance⁹.

Springboard+ provides free courses in higher education that lead to qualifications in areas where there are employment opportunities in the economy. Courses are generally open to homemakers returning to work, the unemployed or previously unemployed and the employed.

Skillnets Ireland works with businesses to address existing and future skills needs. It aims to increase participation by companies in training and upskilling employees. There are over 65 Skillnet Learning Networks around Ireland.

Social Inclusion

Travellers are a named target group for SICAP, which operates at local level around the country. It includes measures to support local groups as well as one to one interventions for individuals.

The Community Development Programme (CDP) was established in 1990 and it provided core funding for staff in recognition of the role that community development plays in addressing poverty and social exclusion. Although most CDPs have been subsumed into local partnership companies, there are 16 local Traveller Community Development Projects for which continued support is referenced as an action in the NTRIS.

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⁷ Quality & Qualifications Ireland was set up to amalgamate a number of different awards into one common awards framework.

⁸ Those in Class A and H employment.

⁹ Department of Education and Skills, (2018), National Training Fund Expenditure Report 2018. <https://www.education.ie/en/Publications/EducationReports/national-training-fund-expenditure-report-2018.pdf>

SECTION 2

education and employment of travellers

This section examines data about Traveller participation in education and the labour market.

2.1 Traveller Education

Traveller education and employment outcomes have been and continue to compare poorly with those of the settled population and other minority groups living in Ireland. According to Census 2016¹⁰:

- Six out of ten male Travellers (57.2 per cent) had only primary level education. This is over four times higher than the general population (13.6 per cent).
- Just 13 per cent of Traveller girls completed second level education compared to 69 per cent of the settled community.
- Half of Traveller children do not live in DEIS school catchment areas¹¹.
- Of those who left second level education early, 55 per cent left by the age of 15.
- 1% of Travellers progressed to third level education. They made up 0.1% of the total student body. 167 Travellers gained a third level qualification.

Participation in further and higher education is consequently low. The apprenticeship database does not capture ethnicity. As over 70 per cent of apprentices have a Leaving Certificate and Traveller completion rates for second level education are low, it is safe to extrapolate that Travellers make up a very small number of the present intake (15,373).

Figure 2.1 shows Traveller education attainment rates.

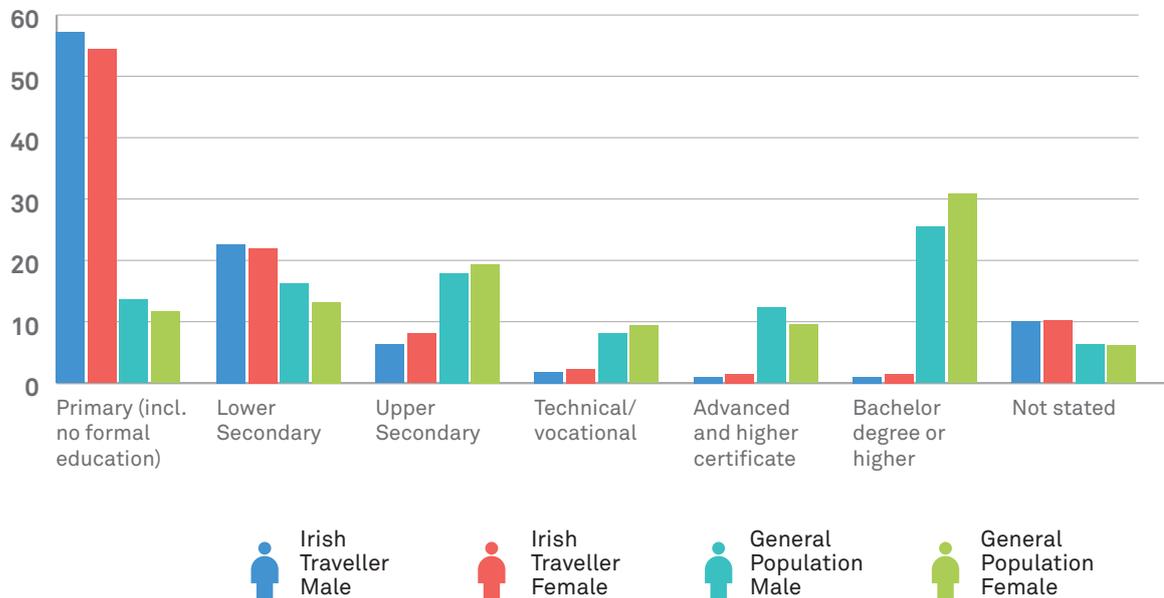
 **6 out of 10** male Travellers (57.2%) had only primary level education. This is over four times higher than the general population (13.6 per cent).

 **13%** of Traveller girls completed second level education compared to 69% of the settled community.

¹⁰ Census 2016 Profile 8 Irish Travellers <https://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/ep/p-cp8iter/p8iter/p8itseh/>

¹¹ Launched in 2005 by the Department of Education and Skills, DEIS (Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools) is the most recent national programme aimed at addressing the educational needs of children and young people from disadvantaged communities. <https://www.education.ie/en/Schools-Colleges/Services/DEIS-Delivering-Equality-of-Opportunity-in-Schools-/Lessons-from-Research-on-the-Impact-of-DEIS.pdf>

Figure 2.1 Persons who completed their full time education by highest level of education completed, 2016

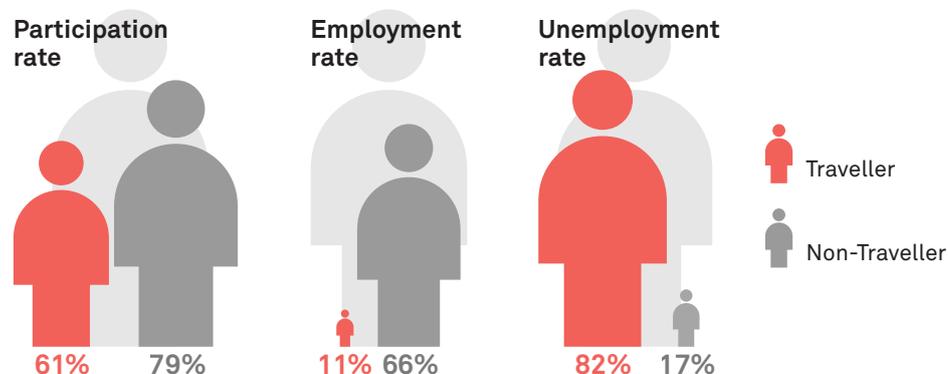


Source Census (2016¹²)

2.2 Traveller Employment

A study by the Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI)¹³ found that after controlling for age and education only 11 per cent of Travellers of working age were in employment in 2011. For the rest of the population, 66 per cent were employed.

Participation, Employment and Unemployment Rates Census 2011



Source: ESRI¹⁴

12 Census 2016 Profile 8 Irish Travellers <https://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/ep/p-cp8iter/p8iter/p8itseah/>

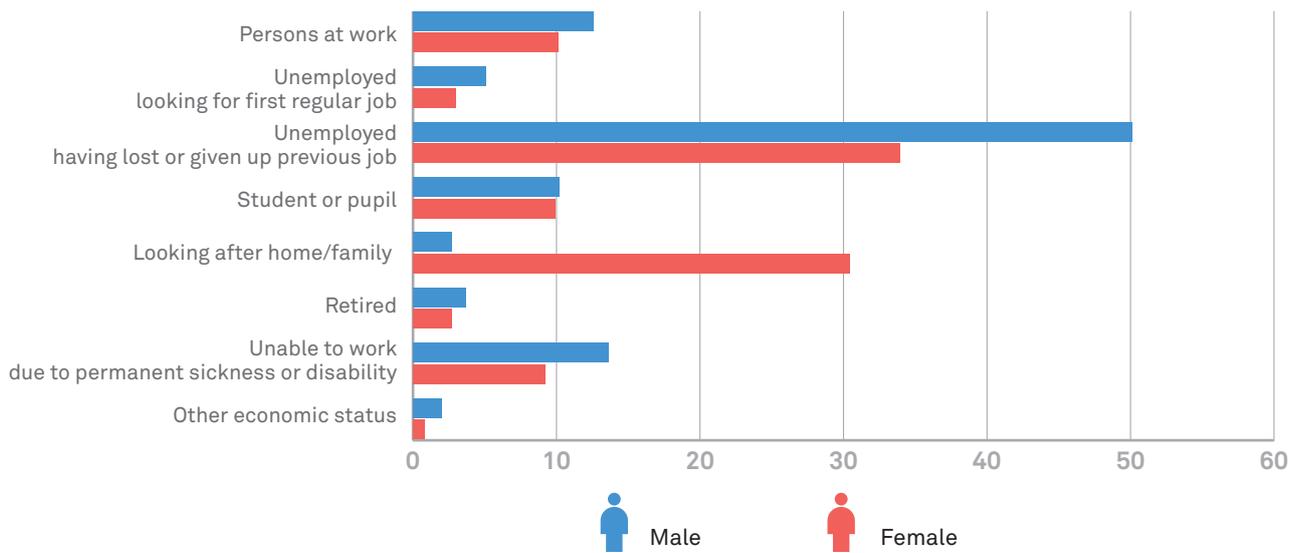
13 Watson D, Kenny O and Mc Ginnity F, (2017), *A Social Portrait of Travellers*, ESRI Research Series No 56

14 Ibid

In 2016, 10,653 Travellers were in the labour force. However, 80.2 per cent (8,541) were unemployed¹⁵.

One in eight Travellers (11 per cent) stated that they were unable to work due to a disability. This is almost three times the rate in the general population (4.3 per cent)¹⁶.

Figure 2.2 Principal Economic Status of Irish Travellers, 2016



Source Census 2016

The high level of Traveller unemployment stands in marked contrast to the national Irish unemployment rate which has been on a downward trajectory since 2012. By July 2018 it stood at 5.1 per cent, which is the lowest rate recorded since October 2007. The unemployment rate is projected to fall to 4.5 per cent in 2019.

Ireland Unemployment Rate



Source: Tradingeconomics.com | Central Statistics Office Ireland

15 Census 2016
16 Census 2016

66%

of Travellers had participated in at least one training scheme...

only 17%

of the general public said they would employ a Traveller.

The Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission (IHREC)¹⁷ noted that:

“Irish Travellers report very high rates of discrimination in seeking work, where they are ten times more likely than White Irish to experience discrimination, and extremely high rates of discrimination in private services, where they were over 22 times more likely to report discrimination, particularly in shops, pubs and restaurants. The number of Travellers among survey respondents was too low to examine workplace discrimination.”¹⁸

The IHREC also noted the severe educational disadvantage which Travellers experience.

A national survey of Travellers¹⁹ carried out by Behaviour & Attitudes in 2017 on behalf of Traveller organisations found that 66% of Travellers had participated in at least one training scheme with the average number being 2.4 training schemes. However only 30% of Travellers had progressed to employment as a result. The survey also asked the general public if they would employ a Traveller to which only 17% responded positively, which underpins the finding of the IHREC report and gives further insight into poor rates of progression to employment for Travellers.

2.3 Social Enterprise

Social enterprises engage in traded activity for a social or societal purpose with any surpluses primarily reinvested in their social objectives²⁰. It is a growing sector in Ireland. Social enterprise is a named action within SICAP 2018–2022 and the Rural Development Programme 2014–2020. It can provide a pathway to employment or enterprise for Travellers. Three case examples are provided below to demonstrate social enterprises that have provided employment for Travellers.

17 Mc Ginnity, F. Grotti R. and Russell H (2017) *Who Experiences discrimination in Ireland?*, IHREC. Available at <https://www.ihrec.ie/app/uploads/2017/11/Who-experiences-discrimination-in-Ireland-Report.pdf>

18 Ibid.

19 https://www.exchangehouse.ie/publications_nationaltravellerssurvey2017.php

20 Forfás, (2013), *Social enterprise in Ireland: sectoral opportunities and policy issues*

Galway Traveller Movement's²¹ social enterprise development strategy²²

In 2006, GTM initiated an enterprise development strategy, which sought to champion and support social enterprise; provide training and supports to Traveller men and women interested in enterprise, provide sustainable employment for Travellers, enable Travellers to generate an income; and create wealth for community benefit. Social enterprise was a key pillar of this strategy, and to date it has resulted in the establishment of two social enterprises.

FORMATION OF FIRST CLASS INSULATION (FCI)

An opportunity to provide home insulation services under the Better Energy Warmer Homes scheme²³, operated by the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI) led to the establishment of First Class Insulation (FCI) in 2010. The enterprise currently employs seven operatives and one project manager, all members of the Traveller community. It is funded by the Community Services Programme (CSP). Since forming, FCI has continually developed its operations and scale – it now provides services throughout Galway city, county and the islands. In 2013, it successfully participated in the SEAI formal procurement process, which replaced grant funding. FCI retrofit on average 150 homes a year. All staff are fully trained to deliver works and have received accreditation in this field. FCI are registered with the National Standards Authority of Ireland (NSAI).

BOUNCE BACK RECYLING (BBR)

BBR, which recycles end of life mattresses was formed in 2017, employs three operatives, and is funded by the CSP, and up to six community employment places are based in the enterprise. It has handled 7,500 mattresses during its first year of operation on behalf of Galway, Mayo, Roscommon, Donegal and Leitrim local authorities, as well as three waste management companies.



Resources required and pre-development work

The formation of these enterprises involved significant pre-development work involving strategy development, training, ideas generation for social enterprises, feasibility and business planning, and funding and contract negotiations. In the absence of government policy for support of social enterprise development, this work was funded by a range of organisations including Galway Rural Development, Department of Employment and Affairs and Social Protection, RAPID and the Department of Education and Skills (under the 'Special Initiative for Travellers' fund). This funded technical expertise, which included the recruitment of enterprise development staff and external consultants.

21 GTM works to achieve full equality for Travellers and the participation of Travellers in social, economic, political and cultural life as well as the broader enhancement of social justice and human rights. It was established in 1994 and works with Travellers in Galway City and South East Galway. GTM is committed to the principles of community work.

22 This case study is drawn from Costello, A., O' Riada, M., and Ward, M (2012): 'Social enterprise in action – A Traveller organisation's experience', in Doyle, G. and Lator, T. (2012) *Social Enterprise in Ireland – A People's Economy?* Cork and Dublin: Oak Tree Press

23 The work includes attic insulation, cavity wall insulation, draught proofing, CFLs bulbs, ventilation and energy advice.

...the two business models developed by First Class Insulation and Bounce Back Recycling can be replicated by other Traveller social enterprises who want to challenge the myth that Travellers don't want to work.

Barriers for social enterprises can include lack of expertise and supports, and lack of influence amongst state agencies arising from poverty and inequality (Pearce, 2003). Discrimination also plays a part, and GTM experienced difficulties in securing a business premises in the pre-trading phase. As a result, forming alliances became an important part of its strategy, and GTM worked with a range of partners, including academic institutions, local development bodies, and the mainstream enterprise sector from the outset.

When asked if discrimination had been a challenge for FCI since it started trading, Martin Ward, FCI manager and co-director of GTM noted that “there were a few complaints initially to the SEAI when some homeowners discovered that the team insulating their home were Travellers, but SEAI backed us all the way because we maintained a high quality assurance rating and delivered a good service”.

GTM believes that the approach could be the blueprint for other Travellers' organisations to address the economic marginalisation that affects Travellers throughout Ireland. Martin Ward is convinced that the two business models developed by First Class Insulation and Bounce Back Recycling can be replicated by other Traveller social enterprises who want to challenge the myth that Travellers don't want to work.



SHUTTLE KNIT CLG

Shuttle Knit is a not-for-profit social enterprise employing Traveller women in the Wicklow area. It arose out of an initiative started in the 1990s by Sr. Caitriona Geraghty OP. She provided a meeting space for Traveller women who were interested in crafting. Over time they acquired knitting machines and looms. In 1999, money was raised by the Wicklow Travellers Group to build the Centre of Education and Resourcing Travellers (CEART) premises. Shuttle Knit CLG was established in 2001 and moved into CEART. The premises house a Community Development Programme, a Drugs and Alcohol Prevention Programme and County Wicklow Primary Health Care Programme.

Shuttleknit receives funding from Pobal's Community Services Programme. It employs 11 staff, eight of whom are Traveller women and three are women from the settled community. Its motto is 'Knitting Communities Together' reflecting the partnership between women from the Traveller and settled communities.

Shuttle Knit began as a knitting and weaving enterprise. Production is now focussed on knitting and embroidery. Knitted scarves, hats, jackets and other items of clothing are produced for a range of shops, many in tourist areas around the country and for export. New collections are designed and produced each season.

The embroidery side of the business makes crests and logos for schools, businesses and clubs.





SECTION 3

traveller visibility in national policies

This section provides an overview of Traveller visibility in national education, employment and inclusion policies.

3.1 Recent Traveller Policy Milestones

Two significant milestones for Travellers occurred in 2017. The first was the recognition of Traveller ethnicity by the Irish Government in March 2017.

“The recognition of Traveller ethnicity over a year ago, was part of an acknowledgment that we have in the past simplistically labelled Travellers as failed settled people, and that this historic approach delivered a denial of their rights and equality of treatment in particular in education, health and housing which the State is still dealing with today.”²⁴

The second was the launch of the National Traveller and Roma Inclusion Strategy (NTRIS) in June 2017²⁵.

The NTRIS emerged from a three phase consultation process in which national and local Traveller and Roma representative organisations were asked what themes and policy areas the strategy should include. A prioritisation process then followed. This focused on the high level objectives to be achieved within the strategy. A final public consultation was held on the proposed actions to deliver these objectives.

The NTRIS Steering Group²⁶ formed during the consultation period is now tasked with the monitoring and implementation of the strategy.

Three NTRIS subgroups were set up in 2017 to report to the Steering Group on specific issues. One is tasked with focusing on the issue of data collection on ethnic grounds, another seeks to deal with the issue of retention of Traveller and Roma children in education and the third is focused on mediation to bring feuding to an end.

A fourth NTRIS subgroup on Traveller Employment was formed in August 2018 and held two meetings in 2018. Its members include representatives from: Department of Justice and Equality; Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection; Traveller organisations; ETBs and other State and voluntary organisations.

²⁴ Statement from the Chief Commissioner of the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission, 17th October 2018, <https://www.ihrec.ie/statement-on-the-recognition-of-traveller-ethnicity/>

²⁵ Department of Justice and Equality, (2017), National Traveller and Roma Inclusion Strategy 2017–2021,

²⁶ Membership includes representatives from local and national Traveller organisations, government departments, local authorities, an Garda Síochána and the City and County Managers Association.

3.2 Education

3.2.1 Primary and Second Level

Prior to 2011 there were a number of Traveller specific educational supports. These included the Visiting Teacher Service, National Education Officer, resource teachers for Travellers in primary schools, allocation of teaching hours in second level schools, enhanced capitation for primary and second level schools and special schools for Travellers.

In 2011 and subsequently most of these supports were discontinued. This was part of a national policy to phase out segregation of Traveller provision and part of a wider policy trend towards mainstreaming and integration, which continues today.

The education statistics presented in the previous chapter show that these changes have not resulted in improved educational outcomes for Traveller children. The 2018 UNICEF report, *An Unfair Start: Inequality in Children's Education in Rich Countries*, highlights the stark differences in educational outcomes for Traveller, homeless and immigrant children compared to others²⁷ and the risk of falling behind due to a lack of education support.

3.2.2 Apprenticeships, Further Education and ETBs

The Solas review of pathways to apprenticeships (2018)²⁸ acknowledges the proven links between ethnic and socio-economic status and access to and progression in education. The report references Travellers and relevant NTRIS recommendations. It also specifically commits to taking additional practical steps to “*promote and open up apprenticeship opportunities for members of the Traveller community*”, without specifying what these steps would be.

The 2018 Solas report²⁹ on integrated literacy and numeracy in FET analysed the benefits and challenges of integrated approaches. There is no mention of Travellers in the report.

The 2016 Solas report³⁰ on participation in FET by vulnerable groups such as the under 25s, the long-term unemployed, people with disabilities, and members of migrant communities identified barriers across four main themes. These themes were: motivational/ dispositional, economic/social welfare, organisational and informational/guidance. The report emphasised how FET contributes to active inclusion. It stressed its role as an alternative to higher education in offering learners a viable pathway to the labour market. There is no mention of Travellers in this report.

Travellers are cited once in each of the FET Service Plans for 2016, 2017 and 2018 either as a named group or by reference to the NTRIS.

27 UNICEF Office of Research (2018). *An Unfair Start: Inequality in Children's Education in Rich Countries*. Innocenti Report Card 15, UNICEF Office of Research – Innocenti, Florence.

28 SOLAS (2018) *Review of pathways to participation in apprenticeship*. Available at <http://www.solas.ie/SolasPdfLibrary/PathwaysApprenticeshipReviewNov18.pdf>

29 SOLAS (2018) *Integrating Literacy & Numeracy*. Available at <http://www.solas.ie/SolasPdfLibrary/Integrated%20Literacy%20and%20Numeracy%20Final%20Report.pdf>

30 SOLAS (2017) *Barriers to Further Education and Training with Particular Reference to Long Term Unemployed Persons and Other Vulnerable Individuals*. Available at <http://www.solas.ie/SolasPdfLibrary/Barriers%20to%20FET%20Final%20June%202017.pdf>

“...Travellers believed there was a huge stigma attached to their cultural identity. More than half the Travellers we spoke to who had participated in the workforce or further education had hidden their Traveller identity from co-workers or fellow students.”

3.2.3 Higher Education

The previous chapter shows that Traveller progression to third level education is low. Travellers are cited in the *National Action Plan for Equity of Access to Higher Education 2015–2019*³¹. After consulting with Traveller organisations, this Plan opted for a numeric target for Traveller progression to third level.

The *National Action Plan for Education 2016–2020*³² restated the numeric target for Traveller progression to third level. The target is 80 by 2019³³.

The 2018 *Progress Review of the National Access Plan and Priorities to 2021*³⁴ gave the number of Travellers currently in third level education as 41. However, it notes that Travellers must self-identify to be counted and anecdotal evidence from higher education institutions suggests there are more Travellers in higher education than is formally recorded.

A 2010 report³⁵ by Maria Campbell and Niamh Hourigan sought to explore the reasons for the low level of progression of Travellers into mainstream, further and higher education and the workforce. It found that education policy focus on progression fails to acknowledge the depth of prejudice that Travellers encounter on a daily basis or to recognise that mainstream educational and workplace contexts are dominated by the values, behaviours and authority structures of the settled community.

In an interview³⁶ about the report, Dr Hourigan said, “*the main obstacle we identified from their (Travellers) perspective was prejudice from the settled community. Travellers believed there was a huge stigma attached to their cultural identity. More than half the Travellers we spoke to who had participated in the workforce or further education had hidden their Traveller identity from co-workers or fellow students.*”

The second goal of the *National Action Plan for Education 2018* aims to improve the learning experience and learning outcomes for learners impacted by disadvantage. Action 25.7 states that in Quarter 4 there will be collaboration with Túsla and Traveller representative groups on measures to improve Traveller engagement with education in the context of the NTRIS. As yet there are no published time-lines, targets, indicators or measures set for individual departments and bodies, which renders these objectives and actions impossible to track, evaluate or monitor.

31 HEA (2015) *National Plan for Equity of Access to Higher Education 2015–2019*. Available at <http://hea.ie/assets/uploads/2017/06/National-Plan-for-Equity-of-Access-to-Higher-Education-2015-2019.pdf>

32 Department of Education and Skills, 2016, *Action Plan for Education 2016–2019*. Available at <http://www.education.ie/en/Publications/Corporate-Reports/Strategy-Statement/Department-of-Education-and-Skills-Strategy-2016-2019.pdf>

33 This target is for the number of Travellers in higher education (full and part-time undergraduate new entrants)

34 HEA (2018) *Progress Review of the National Access Plan and Priorities to 2021*. Available at <http://hea.ie/assets/uploads/2018/12/HEA-Progress-Review-NAP-2021.pdf>

35 Hourigan, N & Campbell, M (2010) *The TEACH Report Traveller Education & Adults: Crisis Challenge and Change*. Dublin: National Association of Travellers' Centres available at https://cora.ucc.ie/bitstream/handle/10468/254/NMH_TEACHPV2010.pdf

36 <https://www.irishexaminer.com/ireland/education/travellers-hide-their-identity-in-workplace-and-school-123209.html>

3.3 Employment

Given the high dependency of Travellers on social welfare transfers there is frequent engagement with the Public Employment Service. Travellers can experience serious difficulties engaging effectively with activation services. The dominance of the deficit model within the Public Employment Service does not encourage positive engagement with Travellers whose attainment in education lags substantially behind that of other vulnerable groups.

The main Government strategy encouraging access to employment is *Pathways to Work 2016–2020*³⁷. The strategy is focused on ‘*activation in a time of recovery and growth*’. It aims to design and deliver services and supports which are an ‘*important enabler of social and active inclusion*’. It states:

“In this sense the provision of job-search assistance, training options, and employment incentives is not designed solely to address labour market issues per se but is also informed by recognition of the role which occupational activity and financial independence plays in improving the quality of life of people with disadvantage(s) or with a restricted ability to take up employment without State assistance.”³⁸

Despite an unemployment rate of over 80 per cent, Travellers are not mentioned in *Pathways to Work 2016–2020*, the *2017 Action Plan for Jobless Households*³⁹ or the *2018 Action Plan for Jobs*⁴⁰.

It could be argued that the actual numbers of young Travellers exiting second level with the Leaving Certificate award means that they are a very small group which does not register at a macro level. Indeed a 2018 report from the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform on the Public Employment Service acknowledged that certain groups, including Travellers, ‘*made up a small minority of clients to these services*’.⁴¹ However, the Public Employment Service has begun to shift its focus towards the inclusion of ‘*non activation clients*’. These are defined as lone parents, early school leavers, low income smallholders, refugees, persons with disability, members of the Travelling community, ex-offenders and non-live register employment returners.

37 Government of Ireland (2016) *Pathways to Work 2016 –2019*. Available at <https://www.welfare.ie/en/downloads/PathwaysToWork2016-2020.pdf>

38 Ibid.

39 Government of Ireland (2017), *Action Plan for Jobless Households*. Available at www.welfare.ie/en/downloads/Action_Plan_for_Jobless_Households.pdf

40 Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation (2018), *Action Plan for Jobs*. Available at <https://dbei.gov.ie/Publications-file/Action-Plan-for-Jobs-2018.pdf>

41 Government of Ireland. (2018) *Public Employment Services – Mapping Activation*. Available at <https://www.per.gov.ie/wp-content/uploads/12.-Public-Employment-Services.pdf>

3.4 Moving from Welfare to Work

In its 2018 Irish Country Report the European Commission⁴² noted that Ireland's employment rate in 2016 for low skilled workers was 10 per cent lower than before the recession. The Commission noted that:

"Ireland's persistent high at-risk-of-poverty-or-social-exclusion rate is linked to the high proportion of people living in households with low work intensity⁴³ (almost twice the EU average and highest in the EU at 18.2 per cent versus 10.5 % in 2016)".

"...[My eldest son] has put out loads of CVs but he didn't get a job, I think it's over being a Traveller ... he had an interview up there in [large retailer], and they didn't give it to him, the girl that was sitting beside him had the same experience and she got it."

It highlighted '*the continuing insufficient levels of educational attainment among the Traveller community*' and the skills gap between the general population and disadvantaged groups such as immigrant and Traveller students.

The 2018 NESC report on low work intensity households⁴⁴ found that these households had higher levels of poverty that had a lasting impact on children. Thirty-four households, including Travellers⁴⁵, were interviewed for the report. Feedback from these households about the social welfare and the employment supports systems (Intreo, JobPath and the LES) were generally seen to be supportive but negative views were also expressed.

Negative sentiments included a lack of trust between participants and Intreo, a sense of not having a choice, insufficient places on popular courses and a lack of information on options. Of the 34 interviewees, seven (all of whom were Travellers or African migrants) felt that discrimination against them had a negative impact on their ability to gain employment. A Traveller woman commented:

"It is very, very hard for a Traveller to get a job. Once they know ... that you're a Traveller at all. ... [My eldest son] has put out loads of CVs but he didn't get a job, I think it's over being a Traveller ... he had an interview up there in [large retailer], and they didn't give it to him, the girl that was sitting beside him had the same experience and she got it."⁴⁶

The NESC noted that customised educational supports had achieved good results for Travellers. It found that to improve their educational outcomes, Travellers, African migrants, lone parents and people with literacy problems had a specific need for tailored intensive supports and a person centred approach.

Tailored intensive supports should include literacy supports, actions to address discrimination, activation into part-time work, access to childcare, expansion of

42 The European Commission produces a comprehensive analysis of economic and social policies in its Member State as part of the EU Semester Process. The Irish Country Report 2018 is available here https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/2018-european-semester-country-report-ireland-en_1.pdf

43 Low work intensity is defined as not working or having a marginal attachment to the labour market.

44 NESC (2018) *Moving from Welfare to Work: Low Work Intensity Households and the Quality of Supportive Services No.146*. Available at http://files.nesc.ie/nesc_reports/en/146_Low_Work_Intensity_Households.pdf

45 Only 5 out of the total of 34 people interviewed had no experience of work, 3 of them were Travellers.

46 This is a direct quote from a Traveller woman interviewed for the NESC No 146 report, page 19.

the apprenticeship programme and financial supports to cover the full cost of participation in education and training such as travel, childcare, accommodation and equipment. Flexibility to tailor services to people's needs and accountability at local level was considered necessary.

The person centred approach it recommended focussed on provision of quality career guidance, matching the most experienced career guidance staff with the most disadvantaged and ensuring a better fit between a person's interests and relevant courses.

The NESI also recommended better co-ordination and strengthening of links between service providers and employers.

3.5 Inclusion

There are various initiatives and programmes at national and regional level which aim to reduce social exclusion. The largest of these is the Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP).

3.5.1 Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme

SICAP aims to reduce poverty and promote social inclusion and equality at a local level. It engages and develops partnerships between disadvantaged individuals, community organisations and public sector agencies. Forty-eight organisations are contracted and the work programme is agreed with their Local Community Development Committees (LCDC)⁴⁷.

SICAP goals are:

- To support communities and target groups to engage with relevant stakeholders in identifying and addressing social exclusion and equality issues developing the capacity of local community groups and creating more sustainable communities; and
- To support disadvantaged individuals to improve the quality of their lives through the provision of lifelong learning and labour market supports.⁴⁸

Travellers are a named target group. Despite this, access, retention and progression of Travellers through SICAP are very low. Travellers accounted for just 2% of the total programme caseload for the period 2015-2017.

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2% of the total
programme caseload
for the period
2015–2017.

⁴⁷ LCDCs were established on a statutory basis in 2014 to in all 31 local authorities and aim to bring a more co-ordinated and joined-up approach to local/community development. Membership includes local authority elected members and officials; State and non-State local development agencies; community and voluntary organisations; and other representatives of civil society, including business interests, farming interests, etc.

⁴⁸ <https://www.gov.ie/en/policy-information/6609f4-social-inclusion-and-community-activation-programme-sicap/#sicap-goals>

Table 3.1: 2015–2017 SICAP Participation of Travellers in the Caseload

Output	2015			2016			2017		
	Total No.	% of Traveller caseload	% of total caseload	Total No.	% of Traveller caseload	% of total caseload	Total No.	% of Traveller caseload	% of total caseload
Travellers completed labour market training course	56	8%	0.15%	101	11%	0.21%	118	14%	0.24%
Travellers progressed into employment	7	1%	0.02%	10	1%	0.02%	20	2%	0.04%
Travellers progressed into self-employment	21	3%	0.06%	24	3%	0.05%	24	3%	0.05%

Source: SICAP 2015–2017 Pobal IRIS Database 04/09/2018

The review of the first SICAP resulted in some improvements and these should result in local need being addressed in a more streamlined, simplified and flexible way. Progress is needed in developing a flexible approach to create specific opportunities that engage Travellers.

The example below illustrates work that has been done by Pavee Point on guidelines about ethnic data collection for SICAP.



Missie Collins, Pavee Point
Healthcare Worker
Photo Derek Speirs

ETHNIC DATA COLLECTION FOR SICAP – PAVEE POINT

In 2017 Pavee Point consulted with a number of Traveller and migrant organisations and SICAP Programme Implementers in putting together ethnic identifier guidelines and a leaflet. This resulted in a very practical and useful tool aimed at SICAP staff about working with minority ethnic groups including Travellers and Roma. The Guidelines reminds government agencies about “positive duty” obligations under Section 42 of the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act 2014 (IHREC). Public sector bodies must commit to proactively advancing equality and human rights within the public service. The Guidelines were disseminated at regional workshops. Copies of the Guidelines and a service user leaflet were issued to all Programme Implementers (<http://www.pobal.ie>).

3.5.2 National Traveller and Roma Inclusion Strategy – NTRIS

The NTRIS was developed in recognition that Travellers and Roma are amongst the most marginalised and disadvantaged groups in Ireland. It acknowledged the disproportionate impact of the financial crisis and budgetary cuts on marginalised groups. It moves away from the concept of integration to one of inclusion. It proposes a partnership approach to addressing the challenges that the Traveller and Roma community face.

It has ten high level strategic themes. These range from cultural identity to education, employment, children and young people, health, equality, anti-discrimination, accommodation, communities and public services.

There are five education objectives with fourteen specific actions. It has five employment and training objectives underpinned with thirteen employment actions. Appendix 1 lists these actions.

SECTION 4

barriers and enablers to traveller access and progression

This section provides a summary of stakeholder views on the barriers and enablers which either prevent or facilitate Travellers accessing and progressing through education and employment initiatives. It also offers a short overview of two recent reports on Traveller employment.

4.1 Barriers

Stakeholders identified barriers which in their view reduce the successful access, retention and progression of Travellers within education, training, public employment services and employment initiatives. Their views mirror very closely the findings from the NESC No. 146 report. They listed the following:

INADEQUATE PUBLIC SERVICES

- Childcare and family commitments were raised as a particular issue for Traveller women seeking employment. Traveller children have traditionally been cared for within the extended family but, like non Traveller families, this is changing. The lack of culturally-competent quality childcare provision means Traveller women are reluctant to have their children cared for outside the immediate family.
- The Community Childcare Subvention Programme (CCS)⁴⁹ is the main subvention to families to support parents on a low income to avail of reduced childcare costs so they can return to work, training or education. However the rates do not cover the full cost of childcare in most instances and the programme is only available in participating community not-for-profit childcare services which are not available in all areas.
- A consultation carried out by the National Traveller Women's Forum in 2013 found a fear of losing secondary benefits to be a key barrier for women returning to work. This fear mirrors that for all women for whom the loss of a medical card also means the loss of other child related supports such as school transport and exam fee exemptions⁵⁰.

49 The CCS Programme is a childcare programme targeted to support parents on a low income to avail of reduced childcare costs at participating community childcare services. The Department of Children and Youth Affairs pays for a portion of the childcare costs for eligible children, a payment described as a subvention payment, with the parent paying the remainder. The CCS is only available through participating community not-for-profit childcare services.

50 Dr. Mary Murphy (2012) *Careless to Careful Activation: Making Activation Work for Women*, NWCI

DISCRIMINATION

- Endemic discrimination is considered to have a corrosive effect on Travellers.
- Getting a job is not enough to secure an exit from poverty for Travellers as they face complex and structured disadvantage. This type of disadvantage also creates ongoing challenges for Travellers in retaining their children in second level education.
- High levels of systemic discrimination and prejudice in work places discourages young Travellers from aiming for mainstream employment.

EDUCATION NOT VIEWED AS THE BEST ROUTE TO INCOME GENERATION

- There were two perspectives on this issue. Some respondents felt that low educational attainment and qualifications makes it difficult for young Travellers to view mainstream work as a realistic goal for themselves. Others said even when Travellers have the necessary education and qualifications, it still does not lead to employment due to discrimination. For some, education is not viewed as a viable and useful route to find work.
- Some respondents felt a lack of knowledge regarding welfare to work supports and fears about losing benefits such as the medical card act as barriers to progression. It was also said that losing supports and benefits is a real issue and a bigger barrier is an employment culture and structures more suited to the settled community.

PROGRAMMATIC ISSUES

- Programmes are not designed to take into account Traveller specific culture.
- Travellers in general do not perceive programmes to be sufficiently welcoming or encouraging for them.
- Lack of cultural awareness training for both participants and programme providers creates barriers and discourages Travellers.
- Lack of fit between the very small number of Travellers accessing initiatives and the scale and scope of national programmes and administrative systems which do not facilitate emergent and flexible programme design and delivery.
- National initiatives are too rigid and large and cannot respond to the individual nature of Traveller engagement which requires individualised responses.

4.2 Enablers

Stakeholders identified some key enablers for successful design and delivery of programmes for Travellers:

LEADERSHIP AND ACCOUNTABILITY

- ✓ Political will and leadership is critical.
- ✓ Actual, demonstrable commitment to initiatives is vital at senior manager / policy owner level.
- ✓ A champion must be appointed, perhaps self-appointed, to be available throughout the programme for all parties to liaise and problem solve with.

EFFECTIVE ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURES

- ✓ Individual performance reviews for public servants (Performance Development Management System) should explicitly include specific targets and deliverables in relation to equality and that these are used in promotion processes.⁵¹
- ✓ Equality training, prior to intercultural training, is required for both participants and providers before an initiative goes live.
- ✓ Staff job descriptions should be specific about essential skills and should include anti-discrimination and equality, and relevant training should be made available.
- ✓ Having flexibility in target setting at local level to take account of the local context and conditions and to ensure that if targets are set which are found to be irrelevant that this can be addressed.
- ✓ Identifying where rigidity is preventing flexible responses and addressing this.

PERSON CENTRED APPROACH

- ✓ Movement away from the deficit model of engagement towards a strengths-based approach that begins where Travellers are in terms of education and skills would enable Travellers to engage with more confidence.
- ✓ Individual placements should be avoided and there should be more than one Traveller participant in any initiative to avoid isolation and to promote peer support.
- ✓ Perseverance and patience is needed from all parties involved to learn through mistakes, tolerate failure and try again.
- ✓ Providers must listen to what Travellers tell them with regard how to promote the programme/initiative successfully to Travellers.

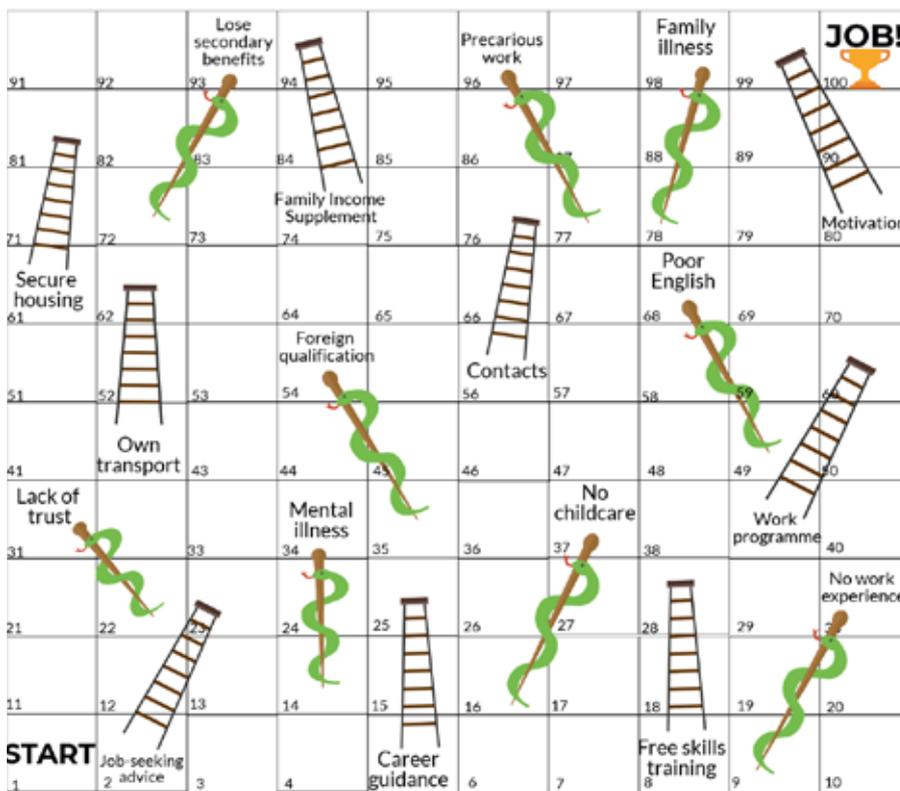
⁵¹ Pavee Point Submission to Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government 'Ireland 2040' - National Planning Framework. Available at <https://www.paveepoint.ie/submissions/>

CREATIVE PROGRESSION MECHANISMS

- ✓ Resources should be allocated to ensure that successful completion is applauded and celebrated in the Traveller’s own community.
- ✓ Resources should be dedicated to post completion progression with relevant agencies and organisations, such as mentoring, coaching or in-house supports.

The barriers and enablers outlined above tally with those identified by the NESC in its report on welfare to work:

Figure 4.1: NESC Summary of Barriers and Enablers to Education and Employment



Source: Training and progression pathways graphic page 58 NESC Report number 146

4.3 Lessons from Traveller Training and Employment Initiatives

A recent academic paper highlighted a range of positive benefits for Travellers who worked with the Galway Traveller Movement on specific job initiatives and how this positively benefited family members.⁵²

While EU and Irish policy believes that securing work addresses poverty and social exclusion, the research found this is insufficient for Travellers who face multiple disadvantage and experience discrimination in both education and work settings. Specific schemes alone do not suffice and strong policy measures are needed to afford Travellers equal access and opportunities.

This theme had previously been explored by the Equality Authority in 2003⁵³. Barriers to access and participation of Travellers in training and labour market programmes were identified. These included:

- Lack of reasonable accommodation of Traveller needs and culture.
- Lack of acknowledgement of Traveller culture in the planning and delivery of programmes and in the access and recruitment processes.
- Ineffective mainstream messaging and communication to attract Traveller participants.
- Lack of clarity as to who is responsible to ensure that programmes are Traveller specific and '*embrace the value of the Traveller community within programme provision*'.

Specific recommendations to improve outcomes were made. These included:

- ✓ Setting up a central body responsible for '*championing the participation and progression of Travellers within labour market policy and programme provision*'.
- ✓ Taking specific measures to target and encourage the participation of Travellers in programmes.
- ✓ Training of providers in cultural awareness and valuing diversity.
- ✓ Building Traveller confidence by accommodating their needs.
- ✓ Increasing self-esteem by having Traveller content in programmes.
- ✓ Ensuring that participants achieve tangible goals.
- ✓ Evaluating programmes to make sure they are making a difference.
- ✓ Including Travellers in designing programme content.
- ✓ Creativity and patience to secure minority group participation in programmes.

⁵² Ryan, M. (2016), *One Size Does Not Fit All! The Relevance to Travellers of Labour Market Approaches in Addressing Social Exclusion*. University of Limerick. Available at https://www.ul.ie/ppa/content/files/miriam_ryan.pdf

⁵³ Pearn Kandola (2003, *Travellers' Experiences of Labour Market Programmes Barriers to Access and Participation*. Equality Authority. Available at https://www.esf.ie/en/ImageLibrary/Repository/Info-and-Pub/Travellers_x0020_Experiences.pdf

A review⁵⁴ of a Traveller internship pilot programme in the Civil Service in 2006/2007 provided good insights and recommendations, many echoing those outlined by the Equality Authority. They included:

- ✓ Adequate resourcing of the programme including an experienced, full-time coordinator.
- ✓ Design and implementation of a 'bridging course' for interns to ensure a good skill match.
- ✓ Access to appropriate formal training programmes for all interns.
- ✓ Effective communication and promotion of the programme to the target audience.
- ✓ Mentoring of interns.
- ✓ Involvement of Traveller organisations in programme recruitment and measures at the close of a programme.
- ✓ Careful management of exit from the programme on completion to ensure linkage with appropriate activation services.

An example of a collaborative approach between Traveller organisations and the statutory sector in the design and implementation of a health employment programme is given below.

PRIMARY HEALTHCARE PROJECT GALWAY TRAVELLER MOVEMENT

This is a peer led primary health care project operated as an outreach programme with the HSE. The initial model was developed by Pavee Point and the HSE. Sixteen young Traveller women, aged over 23, engaged in a programme to become part time Community Health Workers. Fourteen completed the course successfully. Galway Traveller Movement employed 11 under the primary healthcare programme. Only two of the women had sat a State exam prior to going on the course.

54 Conroy, P. O'Leary, H. (2007). *Review of a Civil Service Traveller Internship Pilot Programme 2006–2007 'Not like Usual'*. Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform. Available at <http://www.justice.ie/en/JELR/Review%20of%20a%20Civil%20Service%20Traveller%20Internship%20Pilot%20Programme.pdf/Files/Review%20of%20a%20Civil%20Service%20Traveller%20Internship%20Pilot%20Programme.pdf>



SECTION 5

recommendations of this report

These recommendations aim to support the work of the NTRIS Traveller Employment Sub Group to secure better employment and enterprise outcomes for Travellers and to assist Traveller and other organisations to hold duty bearers to account.⁵⁵

Evidence from various sources shows that authentic stakeholder engagement leads to more sustainable outcomes in policy design and implementation. The stakeholders in the NTRIS Employment Sub Group have the specific knowledge to propose creative bespoke initiatives to meet current need.

The following recommendations from SSGT focus on specific actions and initiatives in priority policy areas of most importance to Traveller enterprise and employment. The recommendations are underpinned by the following core principles which SSGT believes should permeate all initiatives:

⁵⁵ NTRIS Employment Sub Groups Terms of Reference include progressing implementation of certain training, apprenticeships and employment related actions of the NTRIS, developing a series of targeted innovative and practical actions/programmes that will create real employment opportunities for Travellers and Roma.



Traveller participation – ‘The process of participation is fundamental to community development. It is rooted in the self-identification of needs and interests, the formulation of responses by the community or group concerned and is central to their ability to continue to influence outcomes⁵⁶. SSGT recognises that policies and programmes targeted at Travellers will not be effective without the meaningful participation of Travellers at the design, implementation and monitoring stages.



Relationship building – SSGT recognises that effecting changes in Travellers’ experience of employment and training programmes requires partnership and cooperation between a range of individuals and groups, including Travellers, State bodies, other community and voluntary groups and Traveller representative organisations. There is a need to develop trust across all sectors and relationship-building work should be a core objective of all initiatives. Unless relationships are effectively fostered and developed, change is not likely to be successfully achieved or sustained.



Gender dimension – SSGT believes that integrating gender analysis into the design, implementation, evaluation and dissemination of programmes and activities is essential in order to maximise outcomes for men and women.

The recommendations are written in view of some key policy and contextual factors and challenges including:

- The NESC urging a deeper focus on supporting vulnerable households most distant from the labour market, including Travellers.
- Ongoing poor outcomes in educational attainment for Traveller students.
- A high urban concentration of Travellers.
- Reluctance of some Traveller families to support young Travellers to stay in school and progress to training, further and/or higher education.
- Fears expressed by Travellers of losing secondary social welfare benefits on securing a job, notably the medical card.
- The current lack of employers on the NTRIS Employment Sub Group.
- The need for quick wins to secure Traveller confidence in the ability of NTRIS to effect change.
- Preference expressed for a one-stop-shop model offering a Traveller specific service which navigates the various programmes and initiatives and that can offer tailored support and advice.

Implementation of the recommendations should be prioritised in areas of higher Traveller density to ensure maximum take up and outcomes. The table below gives an indication of where Travellers live in Ireland.

⁵⁶ All Ireland Endorsement Body for Community Work Education and Training (2016), *All Ireland Standards for Community Work*

Table 5.1: Top 15 towns/cities (1,500+ persons) by usually resident Traveller population 2016⁵⁷

City/Town	Number of Irish Travellers
Dublin city and suburbs	5,089
Galway city and suburbs	1,598
Cork city and suburbs	1,222
Tuam	737
Longford	730
Navan	668
Mullingar	571
Dundalk	536
Ballinasloe	514
Limerick city and suburbs	501
Ennis	487
Tralee	422
Tullamore	409
Ballina	402
Waterford city and suburbs	367

⁵⁷ Census 2016 <https://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/ep/p-cp8iter/p8iter/p8itd/>

5.1 Recommendations for Action in Employment and the Traveller Economy

- 1 Where there are higher numbers of unemployed Travellers (both urban and rural) Intreo offices should set up a mechanism to analyse current Traveller engagement and progression in their service and explore how this could be enhanced with collaboration and appropriate referral. Actions areas could include:
 - Mapping the numbers and pathways of unemployed Travellers.
 - Reviewing the service's current approach to engaging with this group.
 - Interrogating how and if their business processes are conducive to engaging with this group.
 - Setting specific local targets to improve the quality of Traveller engagement and progression.
 - Setting appropriate indicators at local level to measure successful outcomes (referrals, progression and completion).

- 2 LES offices which have successfully engaged with Travellers on an individual basis should share their specific learning on what works to encourage Travellers into their service and create a 'how to' manual / guidelines which would encourage other LES to replicate their methods.

- 3 LEOs should develop specific initiatives which support the development of the Traveller economy and enable social enterprise.

Rationale

The Public Employment Service (primarily via Intreo and JobPath) is dominated by a transactional approach to client progression with an emphasis on deficits in education and skills. Combined with group based formats for some of its engagements, this discourages Travellers from engaging proactively with the service and opening up about their fears, barriers and experiences which have resulted in low educational attainment and progression. In contrast, the LES guidance and counselling model is grounded in person-centred adult guidance⁵⁸. This approach begins the work where the individual is and builds on strengths and interests. The less constrained and open-ended nature of the engagement offered by experienced staff, attuned to local conditions and education providers, can provide a more holistic offering to Travellers.

⁵⁸ A skills and qualification audit (conducted by the LES in 2016) found that 93 out of 131 LES Job Mediators had attained the NUIM Adult Guidance qualification at either Certificate or Diploma level.

5.2 Recommendations for Action in Training

- 4 All relevant agencies should collaborate to create specific Traveller apprenticeship projects for example in transport/haulage, tourism/hospitality and construction. The initiatives should encourage the participation of Traveller women and be mindful of the local employment context and individual interests and skills.

- 5 Course provision offered to Travellers must be expanded to raise expectations, to capture the interest of Traveller students and to meet the needs of employers.

- 6 ETBs should liaise more intensively with local employers to meet their needs by developing targeted initiatives for Travellers which could be designed and delivered collaboratively.

- 7 The design of actions and initiatives in training and employment should be gender-proofed to take account of barriers to participation of Traveller women, such as access to culturally competent affordable childcare.

Rationale

Despite some examples of good practice with young Traveller men and construction initiatives⁵⁹, there is no structured scheme focused on supporting young Travellers to access and stay in apprenticeships. Inadequate income is a very real barrier which must be addressed in order to attract and support Travellers into training opportunities.

Although active inclusion is one of the five goals of FET, Travellers make up a very small minority of the 337,966 beneficiaries which engaged with this sector in 2018. ETBs are very well placed to provide customised wrap around individualised support for Travellers. The shift to an integrated literacy and numeracy approach, while a welcome enhancement, will not replace individualised one to one tuition and support which is a very effective method for vulnerable jobseekers such as Travellers.

⁵⁹ The Chair of the NTRIS Employment Working Group shared an example of a construction company which hired four young Traveller youths to work alongside more experienced labourers on a housing development project. The young men gained valuable experience, but without any signposting and support to encourage them to pursue training/study in this area, they reverted to unemployment when the job was over. A more structured approach to on the job learning would have maximised their experienced learning and the potential to secure future work.

5.3 Recommendation for Action in the Public Service

- 8 A national action plan to mainstream Traveller employment across all facets of the public service should be established, with targets set for all relevant agencies.

Rationale

Useful learning exists from previous pilots of employing Travellers in both Local Authorities and the Public Service. Section 42 of the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act 2014 clearly articulates the responsibility of duty bearers with regard to promoting equality and eliminating discrimination⁶⁰.

5.4 Recommendation for Action in the Social Inclusion Programmes

- 9 Ensure Travellers are aware of self-employment and social enterprise opportunities and there should be a high degree of flexibility for providers to facilitate local context and conditions. These actions should be underpinned by more ambitious targets for both Traveller participation in and outcomes from these supports.

Rationale

While challenges have been identified regarding the lack of fit between the administration and architecture and the small numbers of Travellers accessing SICAP, the low numbers of Travellers within SICAP must be addressed.

⁶⁰ Section 42 of the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act 2014 places a positive duty on public sector bodies to have regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, promote equality, and protect human rights, in their daily work. <https://www.ihrec.ie/our-work/public-sector-duty/> accessed 18th January 2019.

5.5 Recommendations for Action in National Policy

- 10 Cognisance should be taken of the particular needs of Travellers in all employment policy including the National Action Plan for Jobs, Pathways to Work and implementation of the public sector duty. There is also a need to gender-proof policy in relation to Traveller women.
- 11 Specific targets should be set across all policy proposal areas and incorporate mechanisms to measure outcomes for Travellers.

Rationale

As this report highlights, there has been a failure to take account of the particular factors contributing to poor employment and education outcomes for Travellers in national employment and education policy and practice.

5.6 Recommendations on Monitoring Implementation of the NTRIS

The NTRIS has 149 recommendations covering ten strategic themes⁶¹ none of which has a timeline, deliverables, indicators or individual accountability assigned. An implementation plan for the NTRIS, where relevant Departments submit their specific deliverables, actions and targets, has yet to be published. The Department of Justice and Equality has stated that it is committed to conducting a mid-term review on the implementation of the NTRIS. It will also compile periodic relevant reports as appropriate to fulfil EU and international obligations.

The following recommendations are offered to facilitate effective and transparent monitoring of the NTRIS implementation plan:

- 12 The Department of Justice and Equality should establish and lead a NTRIS Implementation Working Group. It should consist of senior officials from the various Departments⁶², agencies and bodies involved in the delivery of the strategy, along with a sub group of the NTRIS Steering Group. This Working Group should have responsibility for the timely delivery and ongoing monitoring of the strategy. The Working Group should report quarterly to the Minister of Justice and Equality and the NTRIS Steering Group on progress and challenges which emerge.

61 The ten strategic themes in the NTRIS are: Cultural Identity, Education, Employment and the Traveller economy, Children and Youth, Health, Gender Equality, Anti-Discrimination and Equality, Accommodation, Traveller and Roma Communities and Public Services.

62 Relevant Departments and bodies on this group should include: The Department of Education and Skills, the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection, the Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation, the Department of Rural and Community Development, the Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government, SOLAS, ETBI, Pobal.

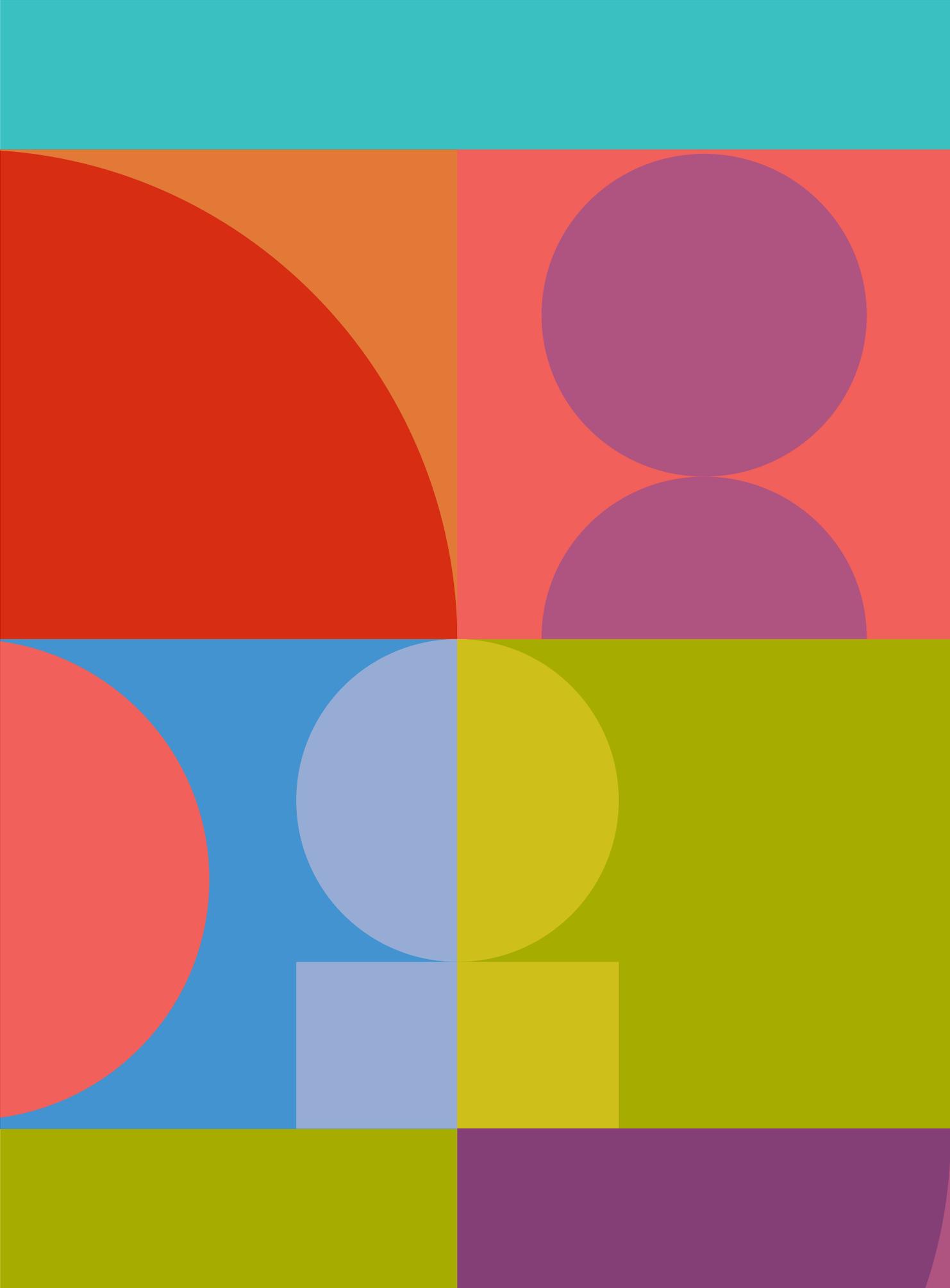
- 13** The NTRIS Implementation Working Group should set up a clear monitoring matrix, as soon as the Departmental targets are agreed. This monitoring matrix will facilitate transparent, effective monitoring of progress in all areas. It should be broken down into policy goals, objectives, measures, actions, outputs, outcomes and timelines. This matrix must clearly show lines of accountability.

- 14** The Department of Justice and Equality should make sure that a distance travelled approach⁶³ is used to measure progress and performance and that flexible responses emerge as the actions and outcomes unfold.

- 15** The Department of Justice and Equality should publish detailed progress on the monitoring framework on a quarterly basis on its website.

- 16** The NTRIS Implementation Working Group should report within its own structures and to the most appropriate Oireachtas Committees.

⁶³ Distance travelled in this context refers to the progress made in achieving soft outcomes that lead towards sustained employment or associated hard outcomes as a result of participating in an initiative or service and against an initial baseline set on joining it.



conclusion

The literature shows that providing tailored supports is the most effective way to improve outcomes for vulnerable groups. Outcomes will be achieved if local actors co-operate and there is sufficient autonomy and flexibility encouraged. Good integration and communication is needed from Departments, regional bodies and local implementers.

Due to the severe and enduring degree of structural disadvantage and discrimination experienced by generations of Travellers, and the relatively small numbers of people in question, this report proposes that a focus on the individual and their household will yield the best results.

Protective factors we consider necessary before any outcomes can be achieved are as follows:

- Strong political leadership.
- Continuous systematic focus.
- Co-ownership and co-design.
- Close collaboration with local and national Traveller organisations.
- Broad range of committed actors.
- Inter sectoral working and collaboration.
- Avoid welfare traps and enable transition to employment by tapering withdrawal of benefits and facilitating access to secondary supports.
- Strong monitoring mechanisms focusing on equity of outcome.
- Providing a small scale, individualised support model that offers a wrap-around strengths-based approach to Traveller employment.

Appendix 1

National Traveller and Roma Inclusion Strategy Education and Employment Actions

Education Actions

Access, participation and outcomes for Travellers and Roma in education should be improved to achieve outcomes that are equal to those for the majority population.

10. The Department of Education and Skills, the Department of Children and Youth Affairs and TUSLA will develop proactive, early intervention education welfare supports to promote and support Traveller and Roma attendance, participation and engagement with the education system and retention to the Leaving Certificate or equivalent.
11. The Report and Recommendations for a Traveller Education Strategy will be reviewed by the Department of Education and Skills and the review will be published by early 2017.
12. All relevant Departments and agencies will promote the Early Childcare and Education (ECCE) pre-school scheme, as well as the Access and Inclusion Model (AIM) for Children with a Disability, within the Traveller and Roma communities in order to facilitate access for every child to free pre-school from the age of three until they start school.
13. The Department of Education and Skills, the Department of Children and Youth Affairs and TUSLA will implement good practice initiatives to support parental engagement in education and increase children's school readiness.
14. In line with the National Plan for Equity of Access to Higher Education (2015-2019), the Department of Education and Skills will support the development by the higher education sector of a network of peer support and mentoring for Travellers and Roma in third level education.

Access, participation and outcomes for Travellers and Roma in education should be improved to achieve outcomes that are equal to those for the majority population.

15. The Department of Education and Skills will support the development by the higher education sector of positive action measures to encourage and support Travellers and Roma to become teachers. The Department of Education and Skills will work with the Department of Children and Youth Affairs to support those wishing to enter the workforce as early years educators.
16. The Department of Education and Skills will review policy on admissions to school in line with the Programme for Government commitment to publish new School Admissions legislation taking account of current draft proposals and addressing issues including publication of school enrolment policies, an end to waiting lists, introduction of annual enrolment structures, and transparency and fairness in admissions for pupils and their parents.
17. The Department of Justice and Equality will fund Traveller community groups to implement community-based supports to assist retention of Traveller and Roma children in the education system. The intervention and the supports to be provided will be designed in consultation with the Department of Education and Skills, the Department of Children and Youth Affairs/TUSLA, and Traveller interests.
18. In consultation with representative groups, the Department of Education and Skills will commission research on the effectiveness of their antibullying procedures and guidelines on Traveller and Roma experiences in the school system.

There should be a positive culture of respect and protection for the cultural identity of Travellers and Roma across the education system.

19. The Department of Education and Skills has introduced programmes for initial Teacher Education and for Continuing Professional Development (CPD) based on the concept of inclusive education. The Department of Education and Skills will ensure that such programmes enable teachers to deal with teaching and learning needs of all students from all cultural backgrounds and provide support for pedagogical practices that promote inclusion.
20. The Department of Education and Skills will request that the Teaching Council examine how the areas of intercultural, anti-racism and diversity are dealt with in Initial Teacher Education Programmes during the review of the “Criteria and Guidelines for Programme Providers of Initial Teacher Education”.
21. The Department of Education and Skills will continue to address the areas of anti-racism, identity-based bullying and cultural awareness through a suite of supports including the recently revised Stay Safe Programme and the Continuing Professional Development (CPD) provided by Department funded support services to teachers at Primary and Post-Primary level.

There should be improved opportunities for Traveller and Roma men to engage in culturally appropriate apprenticeships, training and lifelong learning.

22. SOLAS and the Education and Training Boards will continue to provide training and education that supports Traveller men and women to develop literacy, numeracy and “soft” skills, in line with the Further Education and Training (FET) strategy.
23. The Department of Justice and Equality, in collaboration with Traveller and Roma organisations and employer bodies, will promote greater Traveller and Roma participation in apprenticeship and traineeships.

Employment and the Traveller Economy

There should be increased employment, training and apprenticeships opportunities for Travellers and Roma.

24. The Department of Social Protection will promote the availability of existing employment and training services (e.g. those provided by the Education and Training Boards) to the Roma and Traveller communities and continue to ensure promotional and information materials are available and accessible on any of its schemes and services including via the Department’s website. The Department of Social Protection will provide tailored supports for the longterm unemployed and for young people to build their confidence and prepare them for the workplace.
25. The Department of Social Protection will develop targeted initiatives to increase Traveller and Roma engagement with employment and training services.
26. Anti-racism and cultural awareness training for staff will be developed under the new shared Civil Service learning and development curriculum and will be made available for Departments in 2017.
27. The Department of Social Protection and the Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government will put in place liaison arrangements between INTREO and the Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP) to enable Travellers and Roma to access relevant supports, training and opportunities.

Targeted positive public service recruitment to train and employ Traveller and Roma staff in public services should be introduced.

28. We will develop proposals for internships for Traveller and Roma in Government Departments, Local Authorities and other public bodies and will support provision of Transition Year, Leaving Certificate Applied

and Youthreach work experience placements for Travellers and Roma in public services and statutory agencies as a route to meaningful employment.

Entrepreneurship and self-employment opportunities for Traveller and Roma should be supported.

29. The Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government, in conjunction with Local Authorities, will arrange for the inclusion in Local Economic and Community Plans of provisions for Traveller and Roma economy supports including general policies and programmes as well as group-specific (targeted) initiatives to support Travellers and Roma in enterprise, mainstream labour market and the Traveller economy.
30. The Local Enterprise Offices (LEOs) are the “first stop shop” for providing advice and guidance, financial assistance and other supports to anyone interested in starting or growing their own business. A number of LEOs have undertaken targeted initiatives to engage with prospective entrepreneurs amongst the Traveller and Roma communities and other ethnic and minority groups. The LEO Centre of Excellence in Enterprise Ireland will promote best practice activities in this area amongst all LEOs nationally.
31. SICAP Programme Implementers will ensure that Traveller and Roma participants availing of SICAP supports are made aware of the opportunities for local self-employment (which may include social entrepreneurship) and, where appropriate, receive training to enhance their skills to take up these opportunities.
32. The Department of Social Protection, in collaboration where appropriate with the Department of Justice and Equality, will support Traveller MABS.

There should be clear links and progression routes between education, training, and employment.

33. All Departments will equality proof measures to ensure they are accessible for Travellers and Roma.
34. The Department of Education and Skills will develop a national policy on recognition of prior learning by 2018, which will benefit Travellers and Roma as well as other target groups identified in the National Access Plan.
35. The Department of Education and Skills will develop an accessible and inclusive model of Recognition of Prior Learning in collaboration with Traveller and Roma organisations to support the accreditation and employment of Travellers and Roma.
36. The Department of Social Protection will ensure that Travellers and Roma under the age of 25 who register as unemployed claimants of Jobseekers’ payments will receive a good quality offer of employment, continued education, apprenticeship or traineeship within a period of four months under the Youth Guarantee.

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