

FRAMEWORK TO GUIDE DUBLIN'S NEW INTEGRATION STRATEGY



DCC's Intercultural Ambassadors Programme for the North East Inner City, launched in May 2021 by the then Lord Mayor Cllr Hazel Chu, aims to promote integration and cultural dialogue between communities.

In response to the growing migrant population in Ireland's capital city in recent years, Dublin City Council has commissioned its new Integration and Intercultural Strategy for 2021-2025. Mary Lynch, DCC's Integration Officer, says it is now an opportune time to consolidate all efforts to address, facilitate and embrace this growth in diversity.

Dublin is now a microcosm of the culturally diverse world in which we live. The landscape has greatly changed since Dublin City Council's inaugural integration strategy (2012-2016) – a strategy that provided initiatives and collaborations under the themes of Training, Inclusive Communities, Language & Education and Employment & Business.

Creating and building relationships, it paved the way for work to begin on the new strategy. Transformation in policy since then and radical changes to the social fabric of the city has now required a broader vision and a commitment to align ourselves not only with national plans but with our European counterparts.

More recent documents such as 'The EU Action Plan for Integration and Inclusion 2021-2027' and 'The EU Anti-Racism Action Plan 2020-2025' have provided valuable context for the new strategy. And as a core element, the Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty

also provides significant direction, keeping Dublin City Council's responsibilities to equality and human rights on track.

Reflective and impartial consideration of a growing migrant population is required now, by including those from a migrant background and ethnic minorities specifically the Travelling and Roma Communities. There has never been a more important or opportune time to consolidate our efforts to address, facilitate and embrace diversity.

LORD MAYOR LENDS SUPPORT

Dublin City Council has commissioned a new Integration and Intercultural Strategy for 2021-2025, which forms part of the Local Community and Development Committee's Plan for 2021, under the stewardship of DCC's Housing and Community Services Department.

Work first started on the new strategy in January 2021, which was prioritised and supported by the former Lord Mayor Cllr Hazel Chu, who promoted it as an



Kenya's George Njeri, who has now made Dublin his home, is one of 16 intercultural ambassadors from 12 countries and four continents chosen to take part in the programme.



“Dublin City Council’s Local Community Development Committee will continue to develop and support the strategy at all stages and remains aware of the national policy and guidelines on integration to issue later this year.”

initiative during her 2020-2021 term of office.

The Lord Mayor hosted an online external stakeholder engagement and two internal stakeholder conferences, and also took an active role in advancing the progress of a Framework for the new strategy.

Through consultations with our internal and external stakeholders and individuals, it became clear that Dublin City Council would be expected to take the lead in cultivating a vibrant, multicultural city with diversity, inclusivity, and acceptance at its core. Encouraging active citizenship and participation for all will be paramount.

However, most importantly the need to endorse an ethos of anti-racism for the city was very much at the fore of every engagement. The responsibility of the local authority to set the tone for meaningful connection and relationship-building between communities is evident and pivotal to a better society for all.

A series of actions will be developed for each section within Dublin City Council to initiate positive responses to the issues raised for inclusion in the new integration and intercultural strategy.

ROADMAP FOR THE STRATEGY

Taking responsibility to implement the actions of a new plan, we have created the space and a framework for a variety of stakeholders to actively participate in its development and implementation, both

internally and externally.

‘The Framework Towards an Integration an Intercultural Strategy for Dublin City Council 2021-2025’, adopted by Dublin City Council in June 2021, is the foundation for the development of the new strategy.

Using the Framework as a guide, our networks, stakeholders and DCC’s staff and services will be encouraged and supported to implement initiatives/ actions, transformation, training, funding and the roll-out of specific integrative and intercultural proposals.

When the draft of the strategy is completed in the first quarter of 2022, a series of citywide public consultations will commence to gather input, ideas and feedback. Dublin City Council’s new strategy will aspire to create a template, to support, inspire and educate our colleagues and collaborators. It also aims to encourage them to provide the necessary environment, services and understanding to develop a best practice model of meaningful integration and intercultural practices.

In developing a fit-for-purpose plan, the council will seek to address the full spectrum of minority ethnic groups living, working, or visiting Dublin City, with an emphasis on migrants and those of a migrant background and minority ethnic people at the intersections with other grounds exposed to discrimination and inequality.

The freedom to live, work and actively

DUBLIN CITY’S MISSION STATEMENT ON DIVERSITY

Dublin City celebrates, supports and protects the cultural, ethnic, linguistic and religious diversity among all who live in, work in and visit the city. Dublin City will ensure that all residents are empowered and enabled to participate in the city’s cultural, social, economic, and political life fully and equally, and they can access the benefit from the services they need on an equal and culturally appropriate basis.

Dublin City will ensure that all can pursue their aspirations free from all forms of discrimination and racism, in a manner that reflects and is informed by our Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty.

Some facts and figures....

A total of 535,000 people from diverse backgrounds now live in Dublin City; 1 in 5 residents were born outside Ireland or the UK; one in 12 Dubliners with Irish Citizenship do not identify as White Irish; 1 in 4 Dubliners who are Irish citizens do not identify as Roman Catholic; 1 in 20 Dubliners is a person of Asian or African descent; 1 in 12 citizens are not white; 65 languages (other than English or Irish) are spoken at home while all of the world’s religions are practiced.



participate in a society without being labelled or discriminated, based on Race, Gender, Ethnicity, Sex, Age, Disability, Religion etc, should be the expectation for every citizen.

FIVE CORE VALUES

Dublin City Council will address the issues and concerns experienced by residents, workers and visitors to the capital city, fulfilling the human rights standards which Ireland has committed to through The Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty, through these five core values:

* **Dignity and Respect:** People being treated in a manner that recognises their intrinsic human worth.

* **Diversity and Accessibility:** Difference is welcomed and valued, while diversity is accommodated in access to our services and in employment.

* **Inclusion and Social Justice:** The diversity of people have the resources and opportunities to participate fully in all aspects of life in the city.

* **Participation and Engagement:** The diversity of people have opportunities to have a say on matters and in decisions that affect them.

* **Choice and Autonomy:** The preferences and choices of the diversity of people are acknowledged with appropriate options available in service delivery and employment where possible.

And the local authority also aims to achieve these core values by:

- Advancing and achieving full equality in practice in resources, status, decision-making, and relationships.
- Recognising and adapting for cultural and linguistic diversity.
- Eliminating discrimination and ensuring compliance with equality legislation.
- Respecting, promoting, and fulfilling the human rights standards that Ireland has committed to through various international instruments.

COLLABORATION AND ENGAGEMENT

In order to create the space for a comprehensive and inclusive integration strategy, we sought to engage those stakeholder groups and individuals



Cllr Hazel Chu, who engaged with the strategy as Lord Mayor of Dublin and as a person from a migrant background, spoke publicly about her personal experiences of racism and discrimination.

who wanted to collaborate with Dublin City Council to create mechanisms for progressive change.

The on-the-ground experience, in addition to the expertise of organisations, state agencies, voluntary groups, individuals and NGOs, have been invaluable. Dublin's Lord Mayor Cllr Hazel Chu engaged with the strategy both as Lord Mayor and as a person from a migrant background; her candour in

speaking publicly about her personal experiences of racism and discrimination was both insightful and constructive.

In addition, organisations such as the UN International Organisation for Migration, Dublin City Interfaith Forum, New Communities Partnership, Tulsa, Pavee Point, Intercultural Cities Europe, the European Commission, Euro Cities, Dun Laoighre Rathdown County Council, South Dublin County Council and Fingal



INTEGRATION STRATEGY

www.dublincityppn.ie



Further information integration@dublincity.ie



An online information session for the new migrant and intercultural thematic group, part of Dublin City's Public Participation Network (PPN), was held on 15 July.

Migration to pilot a Migrant Forum for Dublin City.

DCC is working with Dublin City's Public Participation Network (PPN) to create a migrant and intercultural thematic group to provide capacity building and support to minority communities. This will enable them to take part in the decision-making processes of the city.

The first targeted information session was held online on 15 July.

A Pilot Community of Practice on integration and intercultural matters for Dublin's four local

County Council have all greatly enhanced our efforts.

City businesses and individuals have also come on board to collaborate. The input from these groupings is vital to inform our actions in implementing an authentic document. We have really appreciated these opportunities to take the shared learning and experiences of how integration works well and how Dublin City Council could produce a strategy that is liveable, simple to understand and a tool to advance integration and intercultural practices inside and outside of our organisation. These are changes that could also greatly enhance the lives of migrant and intercultural groups and individuals within the city.

FRAMEWORK BUILDS MOMENTUM
Dublin City Council's Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) will continue to develop and support the strategy at all stages and remains aware of the national policy and guidelines on integration to issue later this year.

Aligning Dublin City Council's Integration Strategy with National Policy is imperative for the new strategy and ensures a unified message from all local authorities on integration and intercultural concerns.

While awaiting this direction Dublin City Council has started a series of actions for the Integration and Intercultural Strategy including Collaboration with the UN International Organisation for

authorities has also been initiated by Dublin City Council to facilitate knowledge exchange, combined initiatives and collaboration. It is envisaged that each of the four local authorities will take the lead on a rotational basis with Dublin City Council, convening this year, following the inaugural meeting in July.

COMMUNITY INTEGRATION

The Intercultural Ambassadors Programme for the North East Inner City (NEIC) was launched in May 2021; 16 intercultural ambassadors from 12 countries and four continents were chosen to take part in the programme to promote integration and cultural dialogue between communities. Many other actions are also in development for the strategy.

Social cohesion has always been a crucial point of reference for integration and in our awareness of what it means to belong, a basic but powerful human need. It is a fundamental practice in activating any working integration strategy.

People do not integrate into cities; they integrate into communities. Dublin City Council will endeavour to create the conditions to provide space and supports for our new and existing migrant and intercultural communities to become truly active and welcome citizens of Dublin and a model of best practice in the field of diversity.

Tús maith leath na hoibre (A good start is half the battle)

Mary Lynch, Dublin City Council's Integration Officer, would like to thank her colleagues in Dublin's four local authorities, the LCDC, Dublin City PPN, the external stakeholders and everyone who has continued the process of engagement over the last ten months. "In what was a difficult and trying year due to COVID, we are grateful for the continued support and interest in delivering our strategy," she said.

