

Social Inclusion Horizontal Principle Reporting Template

For the period Jan. to Dec. 2011

1. Name of Activity:

No.: ESF __2.9__

2. What actions have taken place over the last year to incorporate the principle of social inclusion into the Activity?

(Examples: new objective created; new indicator developed; altered project selection criteria; collecting new data or collecting it in different way; pursuing case studies; carrying out impact assessments; interpreting existing data in a different way; gender proofing exercises).

(a) Ongoing Actions:

The objective of this activity is to contribute to addressing labour market gaps for specific groups that are experiencing barriers to participation and employment, including those created by gender inequality and wider inequalities. The programme aims to put in place measures to improve labour market access and participation of groups experiencing inequality across the nine grounds covered by the equality legislation.

(b) New Actions:

The EMU focused on the following areas of work across 4 strands of activity in 2011:

STRAND A: Support packages to promote Equality Mainstreaming within the VEC and Further Education sector

The Equality Mainstreaming Unit issued a public Call for Proposals on 21 April 2011 seeking applications from VECs (Vocational Education Committees) to develop projects that would apply an equality mainstreaming approach for the inclusion of Travellers in mainstream vocational education and training. The VEC sector was in the process of reviewing its services in order to ensure that Traveller learners would not be disadvantaged in accessing mainstream courses once the Senior Traveller Training Centres are phased out.

During 2011, we funded 7 VECs to develop and implement action plans to prepare VECs to facilitate the inclusion and integration of Traveller learners. The receivers of funding were – County Cork VEC, Limerick College of Further Education, County Wicklow VEC, North Tipperary VEC, City of Galway VEC, County Galway VEC and Roscommon VEC. All of these participants successfully concluded their projects with a minimal seed funding and carried out a number of significant actions: focus groups, training sessions on Traveller culture and Equality, consultations with Traveller learners and VEC staff, senior management meetings and the drafting of action plan on Traveller inclusion into mainstream VEC provision. The projects followed loosely the process model that had been developed by Co. Louth VEC in a similar project funded by EMU in 2010.

STRAND B: Sectoral Projects to support workplace equality

The aim of this strand of funding is to support the formation of strategic partnerships to devise and implement projects that support workplaces to be planned and systematic in their approaches to equality. The intention is that these workplaces become proactive in combating discrimination and promoting equality. Five sectoral projects were successfully concluded during 2011. Each of these projects demonstrated a partnership approach including employer and employee representatives in the design and delivery of their actions. The following are some of the project achievements.

The **Irish University Association's Equality Network** developed and tested an online equality and diversity training module on workplace equality for all staff within the university sector. The online programme allows each participant the flexibility to complete the course at times and places that are most convenient to them. The need for this type of flexibility was identified early in the project. The programme consists of 5 modules and participants can save their progress and return at any time.

Module 1 – Understanding Diversity

Module 2 – What's it got to do with you?

Module 4 – From Compliance to Commitment

Module 4 – Recruitment & Selection

Module 5 – Dignity & Respect

Six universities were actively involved in the implementation of this project. These were:

- Trinity College Dublin
- University of Limerick
- National University of Ireland Galway
- University College Cork
- University College Dublin
- Dublin City University

Full details of this project can be viewed on www.leadequalitynetwork.com.

SIPTU (Services Industrial Professional Trade Union) and the Commercial Mushroom Producers (CMP) reviewed the existing employment policies and procedures for workers in the mushroom industry to ensure their compliance with equality legislation. They developed an Employment Handbook for employees in the mushroom industry. Given the variety of languages spoken by employees in this sector, the Employment Handbook was translated into Polish, Russian, Latvian, Lithuanian and Romanian.

Irish Business and Employers' Confederation (IBEC) undertook to research, develop and pilot a gender pay audit tool. Tackling the gender pay gap remains an ongoing issue in the Irish and European labour market. Results from the CSO National Employment Survey of August 2011 reports that the gender pay gap in Ireland has widened. The purpose of the project is to assist employers to carry out a gender equal pay audit. IBEC successfully developed a template and guidelines for companies who wish to conduct a gender equal pay review.

During the pilot phase of this project, IBEC engaged with a range of organisations to ensure the review tool was relevant and effective. The review tool was piloted amongst different companies across a variety of sectors. These included a number of Irish Medical Devices Association companies and a multinational financial services company based in Dublin. The gender review tool will be disseminated and promoted with employers at HR forums, IBEC events and networks. It is also envisaged that the Gender Pay review tool will be available to member via the members section of the general IBEC website.

The Gay and Lesbian Equality Network (GLEN) developed and piloted a high quality interactive online self-assessment tool on lesbian, gay and bisexual diversity, for employers in the financial services and in the information technology sector. Citigroup, Ernst and Young, Ulster Bank, Microsoft, Dell and IBM participated in the pilot phase. The tool includes 15 downloadable resource guides. These guides include information on good practice from a range of organisations including An Garda Síochána, IBM, Microsoft, University College Cork, Irish National Teachers Organisation and the Public Service Executive Union. The online assessment tool is available here. www.diversitychampions.ie

One Family developed a project in partnership with Marks & Spencers, Boots and Superquinn. They produced a practical tool-kit on tips for employing and retaining lone parents. *Six Steps to Promote Equality for Lone Parents in the Retail Sector* introduces the key elements of successful retail businesses as well as detailing six practical steps to promote equality for lone parents in the workplace. Finally, it showcases a number of good practice examples from retail businesses.

STRAND D: Research and Resources

Equality Mainstreaming Annual Conference

The Equality Mainstreaming in Further Education and Training conference took place on 25th October in Dublin Castle. Minister of State Ciaran Cannon T.D. officially opened the conference. The sub-title of the conference was “Achievements and Challenges”. The conference provided an opportunity to showcase the work of the Equality Mainstreaming Unit to date through a presentation by the Head of the EMU Carole Sullivan.

The conference also featured as keynote speaker Professor Sheila Riddell from the University of Edinburgh. A third speaker was Dr Pádraig Kirk, CEO of Co. Louth VEC, who presented the learning from the 2010 EMU funded project on the inclusion of Traveller into VEC Mainstream provision. The second part of the conference featured the presentation and testing of two on-line equality training tools. The first one was the on-line employment equality training programme developed by the Irish University Association Equality Network as part of a sectoral project funded by EMU. The second tool was the on-line disability equality training programme developed and funded by the National Disability Authority (NDA). The testing of these e-learning tools provided for an interactive session during the conference.

During the conference, various equality mainstreaming tools were disseminated. The Equality Benefits Toolkits for the Public and Private Sector were distributed in hard copy to conference participants.

The Equality Mainstreaming Unit also launched a new Equality Mainstreaming USB key at the conference. These USB keys contain many of the equality resources which have been developed and produced with funding from the EMU. They also usefully contain a number of Equality Authority resources and research publications. The USB keys have proved very popular with a continued demand for them. A limited number of USB are available from the Equality Mainstreaming Unit.

3. Progress against Indicators (where established):

(This should be presented if possible in the tabular form laid out below)

Indicator	Baseline Position	Latest Position
Number of Enterprises Supported	Target to support 60 enterprises	0 enterprises supported in 2011

4. Taking account of the material presented under 2 and 3 above, what contribution is the Activity making to the promotion of social inclusion

Examples:

Are participation levels of women or men increasing?

Are different needs of women and men being addressed?

Are different levels of access for women and men being addressed?

Are differential outcomes for women and men being measured?

During 2011, there were no enterprises supported by the SME Grant Scheme. A sectoral approach to supporting workplaces became the focus during 2011 with 5 projects funded (as described above). By facilitating and supporting institutional change within providers of vocational education and training, labour market programmes and within small to medium enterprises, this measure is contributing to the promotion of social inclusion and the needs of groups experiencing a combination of poverty and inequality will be more systematically identified.

5. Identify any issues arising that need to be drawn to the attention of the Managing Authority, the Equal Opportunities and Social Inclusion Co-ordinating Committee or other Departments.¹

n/a

¹ The issues could relate to specific implementation concerns e.g. collection of data, or could relate to more general findings concerning the principle in question e.g. a particular policy in another department is obstructing your Activity from promoting the principle.

6. Please feel free to attach any relevant additional material to this reporting template.

n/a