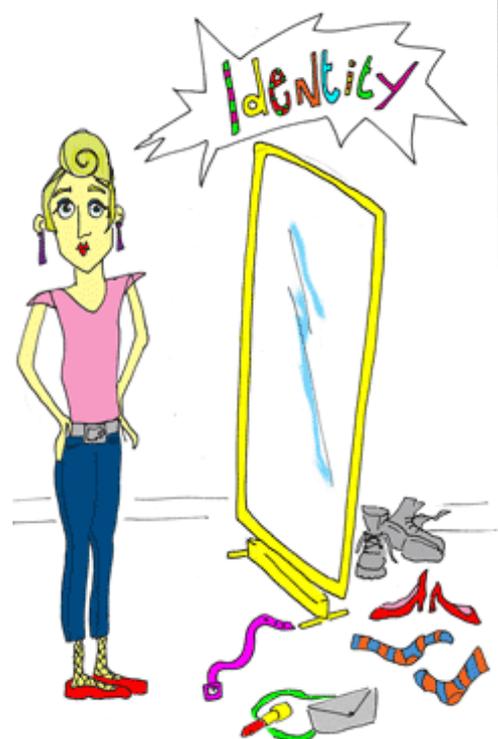


# CHAPTER ONE

## Promoting inclusive youth work practice - organisational support

### Introduction

'Access All Areas' has been designed to be used by trained youth workers, by volunteers in local youth groups, by directors and managers of youth services and anyone else working with young people in both the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland. The toolkit invites us to look at the support that is needed - at a personal and organisational level - to make sure that **all** young people feel they belong and are actively participating in their community.



### Terminology

This resource has been developed for youth workers on the island of Ireland. At times it is necessary to make distinctions between our two jurisdictions and we have had to choose a terminology to reflect this. We have chosen for the most part to use Northern Ireland (NI) and Republic of Ireland (ROI). At times we also use North and South. Where there are large tracts of text that refer specifically to the different jurisdictions we have used coloured boxes:

Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland

## Overview of chapter

This chapter looks at specific support that an organisation might need to embed inclusive youth work practice. The chapter includes the following:

- 1. A definition and deeper understanding of equality and inclusion**
- 2. An overview of youth work policy in relation to equality and inclusion**
- 3. An overview of legislation that aims to ensure equality and inclusion in youth work**
- 4. Developing an equality and inclusion policy**
- 5. A master checklist to be used by youth leaders and managers**
- 6. A master checklist that young people can use to assess the youth activities they attend**
- 7. A discussion on collecting and using data (ethnic identifiers). A sample registration form is included**
- 8. Using Access All Areas to carry out a regional survey**

# 1 A definition and deeper understanding of equality and inclusion

**Equality** is the notion that **everybody** is of equal value and deserves equal respect, dignity and opportunity. It is based on four key objectives:

1. Access to services
2. Inclusion in decision making and shaping one's own community
3. Relationships based on love, care, respect and solidarity, and
4. Acknowledgement of diversity and the right to social status<sup>i</sup>

**Inclusion** Inclusion is identifying, understanding and removing barriers that exist to ensure participation and belonging. It focuses on allocating resources to achieve equality of outcome for all.

Inclusive youth work is responsive to the needs of all young people. It involves:

- Openness and dialogue
- A willingness to change
- A commitment to equality

**Equity** Equity, similar to inclusion, ensures that young people have equality of outcome regardless of background. This means that support is provided to meet the specific needs of diverse groups. It is also about making sure that young people are not directly or indirectly excluded and that positive steps are taken to include those who might otherwise feel excluded.

**Diversity** Diversity encourages respect for, and expression of, the range of identities represented by children and young people involved in youth work and those who work with them<sup>ii</sup>

## What does an inclusive group look like?

Creating a service based on equality and inclusion means asking if our projects, programmes and activities are based on the norms and values of the majority group or do they include the needs of young people from diverse living circumstances and identities? An inclusive service is one that reflects the range of diversity within a community. In a mainstream, volunteer or universal service this will mean engaging with the young people in the community in a way that is responsive to the numbers of young people from diverse backgrounds that live within that community. For example, demographic studies indicate that 16% of the young people in the country come from a minority ethnic background, about 10% have a disability, 20% will, at some stage, have a mental health issue, 1.5% are Travellers, and 7.5% is an accepted estimate for numbers who are LGBTI+. Small numbers will be involved in juvenile justice, will have left school early, will experience homelessness or will be a young parent. A mainstream, volunteer or universal youth group should reflect this diversity in their membership relative to their overall numbers. For example, the number of young people in a youth group from a minority ethnic background would ideally be similar in percentage to that in your own community. Furthermore, all diversities should be included, either by actual targeting and inclusion or within regular programme activities and conversations – for example developing an LGBTI+ friendly environment, doing disability and mental health awareness programmes etc.



Sometimes services work exclusively with marginalised and diverse young people and may not see how, or why, they might become even more inclusive. However, diversity is never a single identity issue. All young people have multiple identities and all aspects of exclusion should be addressed even in specialised services. For example, a person with a disability will have a sexual orientation, a gender and an ethnicity etc. Some of these aspects of identity will sometimes put them into other minority groups. An inclusive service challenges prejudice and looks at what diversity is **not** represented or included in the group. This may involve looking at more invisible diversities such as sexual orientation, early school leaving or mental health or it may involve looking at more obvious diversities such as ethnicity, disability, young parenthood etc. and finding ways to address these.

The principle of equality and inclusion needs to be firmly embedded in our society and promoted from an early age. Youth work is an ideal setting for working towards this goal by exploring issues and developing awareness with young people.

## How do we ensure equality?

Equality means that everybody should have equal prospects of well-being, having their needs met, and to develop themselves. Resources should be distributed in such a way to provide for this. <sup>iii</sup>

Therefore, equality means asking if your service offers the same level of outcome to all young people in your community? For example:



- **Do some young people feel intimidated by the dominance of the majority group?**
- **Is it harder for some young people to physically access and participate in your project or group?**
- **Is there racism or homophobia in the project or group which makes it difficult for young people from diverse backgrounds to participate?**
- **Does your service accommodate the various learning needs of young people?**

## **How do we ensure inclusion?**

Inclusion is a process that is relevant to all young people but particularly focuses on those groups who have historically been marginalised or at risk. It involves a process of identifying, understanding and breaking down barriers to participation and belonging. It recognises the need to involve parents/carers in its practices and decision-making processes. It also asserts that inclusion is not possible without those being 'included' playing a full part in the process.<sup>iv</sup>

Inclusion is about the quality of young people's experience; how they are supported to learn, achieve and participate fully in the life of the youth service. In essence it involves adapting policies and practices within youth services to remove barriers to learning so that nobody is marginalised. Inclusion moves away from labelling young people, towards creating an appropriate learning environment for all children.<sup>v</sup>

The specialised chapters in this toolkit will assist you to include a range of diverse young people and leaders in your organisation and youth groups.

## 2 An overview of youth work policy that relates to equality and inclusion

There are a number of key policy documents that underpin the delivery of youth services across the island of Ireland and provide a mandate for delivering a service based on the principles of equality and inclusion.

### Northern Ireland (NI)

#### 10 Year Strategy for Children and Young People (2006 – 2016)

The Strategy for Children and Young People highlights the need to provide equality across services and to ensure provision is inclusive of **all**.

#### Youth Work Strategy (2005-2008)

A new youth work policy for Northern Ireland ‘**Priorities for Youth**’ will be available for consultation in due course. It is hoped that delivering an ‘inclusive’ service will be a key priority.

One of the key themes of the current strategy is ‘Delivering Effective and Inclusive Youth Work’. It aims to:

“Ensure that high quality youth work is inclusively and effectively delivered to facilitate the personal and social development of young people within a supportive public policy framework”

#### Department of Education Priorities

One of the key priorities for the Department of Education NI in the delivery of education across the formal and non-formal sectors is ‘**Reducing the Gap** –

**Removing Barriers to Access’.** The intended youth service outcomes under this priority are:

- Commitment to promoting equality of opportunity
- Targeted provision for disadvantages or marginalised young people
- Responsive and coordinated service
- Outreach provision

### **Community Relations, Equality and Diversity Policy (CRED)**

The Department of Education (NI) has a policy for delivering Community Relations, Equality and Diversity (CRED) across education.

The CRED policy aims to:

“...develop self-respect and respect for others, promote equality and work to eliminate discrimination...”

It also seeks to provide opportunities for young people to build relationships with those of different backgrounds and traditions.

The intended outcome of the policy is that children and young people will have a greater understanding of equality and diversity for all section 75 groups, respect the rights of all, and have developed the skills, attitudes and behaviours that enable them to value and respect difference and to engage positively with it.

It is anticipated that the main themes of this policy will underpin the development of ‘Priorities for Youth’.

A number of other policies will have a direct impact on the delivery of youth work including, for example, the Department of Social Development ‘Volunteer Strategy’ and the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister ‘Cohesion, Sharing and Integration Strategy’.

## **Republic of Ireland (ROI)**

### **Youth Work Act (2001)**

The Youth Work Act governs all Youth Work in Ireland and commits youth services to meet the needs of all young people equally and fairly.

### **National Youth Strategy (2015-2020)**

This aim of this strategy is to enable **all** young people to realise their maximum potential, by respecting their rights and hearing their voices, as they transition from childhood to adulthood. One of the key principles is that: “An equality perspective is integrated into all policy and practice.”

Linking to ‘Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures’, the key national children and young people’s strategy, one of the five outcomes of the NYS is that all young people will be “connected, respected and contributing to their world”.

### **Quality Standards in Youth Work (NQSF and SLVYG)**

The National Quality Standards Framework (NQSF) and the Standards for Local Voluntary Youth Groups (SLVYG) are mechanisms by which all youth groups and organisations assess their practice. A core principle under which youth groups measure themselves is on how equality and inclusiveness are ensured and showing how all young people are welcomed and valued.

### **National LGBTI+ Youth Strategy 2018 – 2020**

A key national strategy developed to support and include LGBTI+ young people.

### **National Traveller and Roma Inclusion Strategy 2017 - 2021 (NTRIS)**

A key national strategy designed to reverse the effects of discrimination experienced by Travellers and Roma.

### 3 An overview of legislation that aims to ensure equality and inclusion in youth work

#### Republic of Ireland legislation

##### Equal Status Act (2000) and the Equality Act (2004) – in relation to Youth Work

The Equal Status Act 2000 and Equality Act 2004 prohibit services from discrimination and harassment on nine grounds. 'Services' includes all youth services, whether they are run by volunteers or paid staff, or whether fees are paid by participants or not.

##### The nine grounds are:

- Age
- Gender
- Religion
- Disability
- Family status
- Sexual orientation
- Civil / marital status
- Membership of the Traveller community
- Race (ethnicity, skin colour or national origin)



## Northern Ireland legislation

### Section 75 (a) – in relation to Youth Work

Similarly Section 75(a) of the NI Act (1998) requires public bodies to have due regard to the need for promoting equality of opportunity across nine equality grounds:

- **Age**
- **Racial group**
- **Marital status**
- **Sexual orientation**
- **Between men and women generally**
- **Between persons of different religious belief**
- **Between persons of different political opinion**
- **Between persons with a disability and persons without**
- **Between persons with dependants and persons without**



Other relevant equality legislation in the North, which protects young people through the provision of education and services, includes:

- Fair Employment and Treatment (NI) Order 1998 (as amended)
- Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (as amended)
- Special Education Needs and Disability (NI) Order 2005 (as amended)
- Sex Discrimination (NI) Order 1976 (as amended)
- Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulations (NI) 2006 (as amended)
- Race Relations (NI) Order 1997 (as amended)

## Discrimination

Discrimination is treating a person less favourably than another person. It includes making distinctions between people and denying them opportunities on the grounds of issues other than ability or qualifications, for example their gender, sexual orientation, ethnic background, disability, family circumstances etc.

Under Equality Legislation there are three kinds of discrimination:

1. **Direct** (e.g. refusing someone a service, being hostile to young people because of an aspect of their identity). Direct discrimination occurs when a person receives less favourable treatment, or a less favourable outcome, than another person in the same situation would have received on the grounds of their identity under the nine grounds.
2. **Indirect** (e.g. creating barriers to a young person's participation in a youth service). Indirect discrimination occurs when a seemingly neutral policy or requirement actually has an adverse impact on a person from a minority background. Indirect discrimination can be unintentional. It can happen when services fail to take into consideration that different groups of people have different needs. Treating people with different needs as the same can have the effect of being an indirect form of discrimination. For example, failing to provide for the mobility needs for people who are wheelchair users, such as providing wheelchair ramps, is a form of indirect discrimination that is fundamentally inequitable as it clearly denies access to this group of people.
3. **By association** – a young person is discriminated against not because of their identity or status but because of their association with someone else (e.g. treating someone unfavourably because they are a family member or friend of a gay person, member of the Traveller community, person with a disability etc).

**Please note: In Northern Ireland, this would be known in equality legislation as 'Victimisation'.**

## Harassment

Harassment is any form of unwanted conduct related to any of the discriminatory grounds that has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity and creating a hostile, humiliating or offensive environment for the person.

Harassment, including sexual harassment, on any of the nine grounds is prohibited. This prohibition applies to all aspects of a youth service: in programmes, in drop-ins, on trips, on the sports field, and so on.

A person who is responsible for the operation of a youth service must not permit a young person to be harassed, or to be sexually harassed, because of their identity or status linked to the nine grounds. This responsible person will be liable for the harassment unless they took reasonably practical steps to prevent it.

In this way, a person could take a case against a youth service if they are being harassed or sexually harassed by another person in the group. Therefore, the responsibility is on the youth service to prove that they took all reasonable measures to ensure that it was stopped.

Youth services are liable for discrimination or harassment committed by an employee in the course of their work, whether or not it was done with the youth service's knowledge or approval. However, a service has a defence against being liable for the discriminatory actions or harassment of an employee if it can prove that it took such steps as were reasonably practical to prevent the employee from committing the actions.



**Please note: Harassment applies to both the actions of workers and of young people.**

## Positive action (Affirmative action)

Positive action occurs when measures are taken to correct an unequal state of affairs, for example where equality of outcome has been verifiably absent because of discrimination in the past. Examples would be where previously under-represented groups (such as women) are deliberately targeted.

Under the Equal Status Act in the Republic of Ireland, youth services are allowed to:

- Provide preferential treatment, and
- Take positive actions that are genuinely intended to promote equality of opportunity for young people covered by the nine grounds.

Under Section 75 of the NI Act 1998 Public Authorities are 'bound' to have regard to the need for affirmative action (positive action) when considering their duty under the clause.

<p>Further info:  <b>Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission</b>  <b>Phone:</b> 01 858 9601  <b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:info@ihrec.ie">info@ihrec.ie</a>  <b>Website:</b> <a href="http://www.ihrec.ie">www.ihrec.ie</a></p>	<p>Further info:  <b>The Equality Commission</b>  <b>Phone:</b> 028 90 500 600  <b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:information@equalityni.org">information@equalityni.org</a>  <b>Website:</b> <a href="http://www.equalityni.org">www.equalityni.org</a></p>
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## 4 Developing an inclusion policy

You may have identified the need to develop an equality and inclusion policy or to review your existing policies. The following section will help you to develop your equality and inclusion policy.

An equality and inclusion policy should be developed in consultation with all team members. It should be reflective of practice and offer workable guidelines toward maintaining an inclusive and equal youth work setting.

### Contents of an equality policy

It should include the following sections:

1. Your organisations mission statement.
2. Your organisation's general principles, core values and/or guiding principles.
3. Statement of your organisation's commitments to equality and inclusion.
4. A statement of who is targeted in an equality and inclusion policy. At minimum these must include all of the following 9 grounds:
  - Gender
  - Civil / marital status
  - Disability
  - Race (colour; ethnic or national origin)
  - Membership of the Traveller community
  - Family status
  - Sexual orientation

- Political or religious belief
- Age

Ideally you would also include the following grounds:

- Socio-economic status
- Address / geographic location

You might also consider including:

- Trade Union membership
- Criminal conviction
- Recovering from addiction



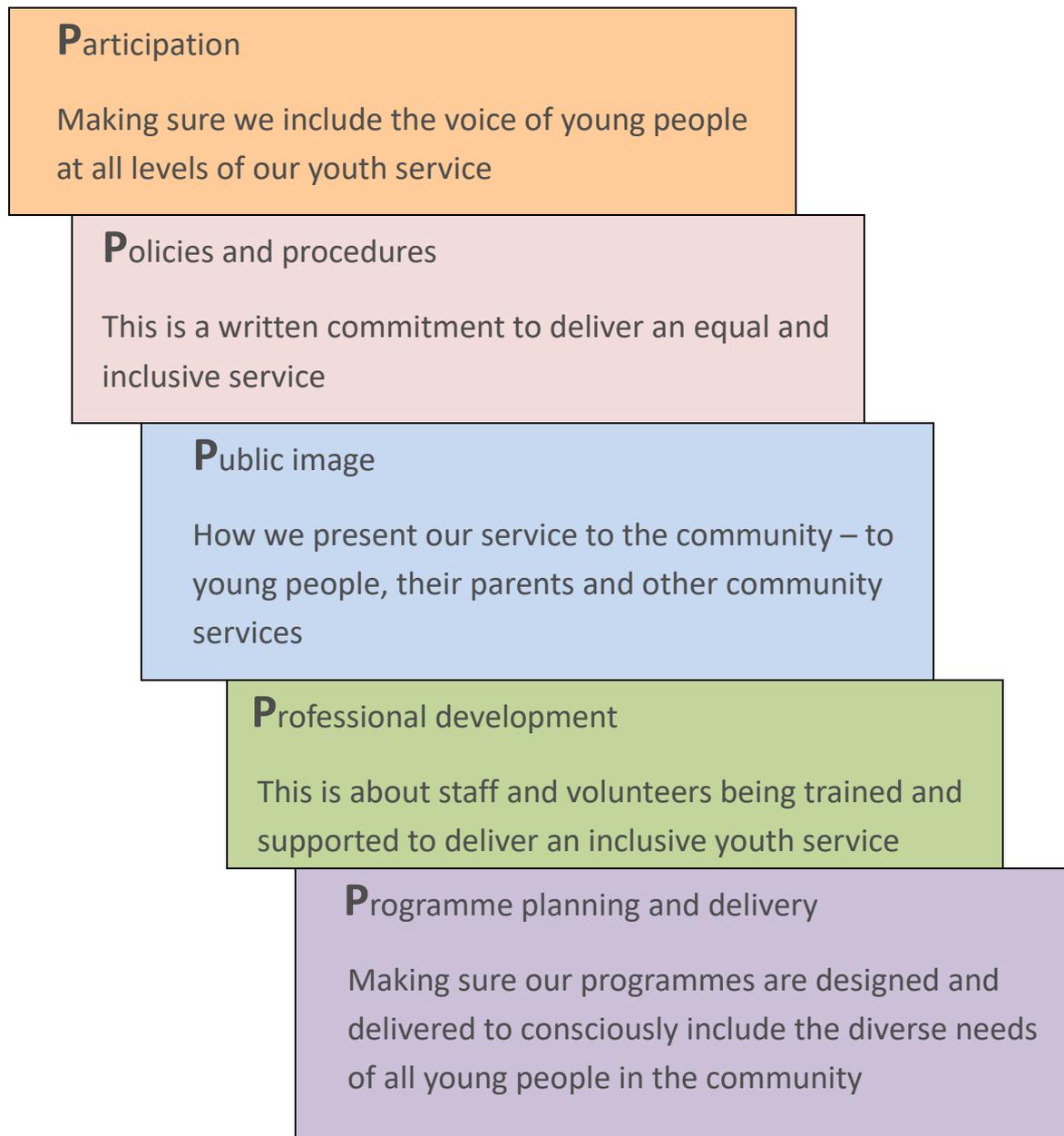
5. Statements outlining the responsibility of your organisation and its staff with regard to equality and inclusion.
6. Policy implementation statements about your:
  - Programmes and practices
  - Publications
  - Training
  - The work / service environment
  - Policy review and evaluations
7. Outline of your organisation's complaints procedures.
8. Clearly outline legislation and definitions in relation to equality and inclusion (e.g. discrimination—direct and indirect, harassment including sexual harassment, and interculturalism)

### **The NYCI Equality and Intercultural Programme can support you in developing an Equality and Intercultural Policy**

This chapter was developed by Anne Walsh (NYCI), Marie Fitzpatrick (Pavee Point), Michael Barron (BeLonGTo), Matthew Seebach (YWI) and Ben Ewan (Youthnet) for 'Access All Areas – a Diversity Toolkit for the Youth Work Sector' published by NYCI and Youthnet 2012 – updated 2020

## 5 A master checklist on equality and inclusion

The checklists are all framed under a proofing model referred to as the 5 P's which are outlined here:



Encompassing these five criteria at all times is the question of practice:

## Practice

This is about looking beyond the practical application of youth work to the values and attitudes that pervade the youth service. It is crucial that this is fully considered in all youth work provision.

## A note on other checklists in Access All Areas

Each specialised chapter has a checklist designed to look in more detail at your inclusion practice in relation to specific groups. These allow you to assess how well your service is doing in offering equality of outcome to young people who have diverse lives in your community. They are self-assessment exercises and can be used repeatedly and by all members of an organisation in an ongoing process of monitoring and evaluation. Ideally all of the checklists should be completed by each youth service over a period of time. International best practice says that obvious improvements should be planned for and monitored by repeating the self-assessments on a regular basis. This allows groups to assess their current position and to measure their achievements from this position over a defined period. At all times it is important to compare your current levels of inclusion with local demographics to get an accurate reading of how inclusive your service is relative to the diversity of the community in which you work. An inclusive service is one that fully reflects all the diversity within a community.



## Using the checklists

- 1. Try to do the checklists as a team and have people from different roles in your organisation involved, ideally including the full spectrum from management to young people. Some groups have done each checklist during team meetings and followed them up with a discussion.**
- 2. Go through the 'checklist' as a group or in pairs - discuss which points should be answered 'YES', which should be answered 'NO' and which should be answered 'PARTLY' and agree them as a group.**
- 3. As a team identify 3 - 5 questions you answered 'NO' or 'PARTLY' to that you can work on over the next 6 months.**
- 4. Put together a set of ACTIONS that will address these points (you can use the template provided on page 29). Use the appropriate chapters in Access All Areas to help you decide on a course of action - each chapter has practical advice and a list of resources and contacts.**
- 5. Develop a work plan, indicating when the action will be completed and the milestones on the road to its completion.**
- 6. Identify who in your youth group/organisation is going to be responsible for making sure the ACTIONS happen.**
- 7. Plan to meet regularly to review how the ACTION PLAN is working.**
- 8. When the work plan is completed, evaluate your progress and choose your next set of goals.**

## Using the master checklist

The master checklist will help you determine, in a general sense, how well equality and inclusion are embedded in your organisation. It will point you to actions that need attention and it may help you identify groups that you may not be targeting successfully. The specialised chapters will then help you to work more effectively with those young people that are not currently included in your youth groups.



You may be filling out this checklist as a leader of a youth group, youth club or youth service. Alternatively, you may be working within a youth organisation as an administrator or at organisation headquarters. Therefore, the degree to which you engage directly with young people may differ from others. You should answer the questions as they apply to your situation. **Be careful about questions that you initially think are ‘not applicable’ to you as this can be another way in which we inadvertently exclude people by evading the role or influence we may have – ask yourself instead how the questions can be made applicable to your own situation.**

When completing the master checklist, you should think about a range of diversities. Where it is not stated specifically, the checklist always refers to young people from minority ethnic backgrounds, young LGBTI+ people, young Travellers, young people with a disability, young people with mental health issues, young people involved in the juvenile justice system, young parents, early school leavers or those not in training employment or education, young people at risk of homelessness, young carers and geographically isolated young people. Follow steps 1-9 above in completing the master checklist.

# Master Checklist

## Public image

To be successful in making people from diverse backgrounds feel included they need to be visible in our organisation, [even if we do not work directly with young people]:

How do we present our services - to young people, their parents and other community services?

- |    |   |            |               |           |
|----|---|------------|---------------|-----------|
| 1. | A range of diverse young people are visible, or are specifically mentioned, in advertising, promotional materials, publications and photos of our organisation. | <b>YES</b> | <b>PARTLY</b> | <b>NO</b> |
| 2. | Promotional material about our group/ organisation (flyers, posters, news articles, newsletters etc.) is inclusive:   |            |               |           |
|    | • We use simple English to describe our programmes and activities   | <b>YES</b> | <b>PARTLY</b> | <b>NO</b> |
|    | • We use visual images to show what we do and where we meet   | <b>YES</b> | <b>PARTLY</b> | <b>NO</b> |
|    | • We have a disability accessible website (a blind person can use a voice activated screen reader to access the content)  | <b>YES</b> | <b>PARTLY</b> | <b>NO</b> |
|    | • Our material is available in the different languages most commonly used in our community  | <b>YES</b> | <b>PARTLY</b> | <b>NO</b> |
|    | • In the material, we state that we are accessible and inclusive of all people  | <b>YES</b> | <b>PARTLY</b> | <b>NO</b> |

- 3. There are lots of ways to get in contact with our organisation/ group. You can:**
- Phone the youth organisation/leader **YES** **PARTLY** **NO**
  - Text (SMS) the youth organisation/ leader **YES** **PARTLY** **NO**
  - Email the youth organisation/ leader **YES** **PARTLY** **NO**
  - Drop in to the youth group/ organisation **YES** **PARTLY** **NO**
  - Follow us and contact us on Facebook **YES** **PARTLY** **NO**
  - Use Twitter to communicate with us **YES** **PARTLY** **NO**
- 4. The building(s) where we meet are accessible for wheelchair users, those who have sight loss or are deaf (see Access all Areas chapter 5 for a more detailed checklist on being accessible to people with a disability)** **YES** **PARTLY** **NO**
- 5. We (staff, volunteers and young people) are open to and welcoming of all members of the community:**
- Young people from a minority ethnic background including those who are asylum seekers, refugees, and undocumented **YES** **PARTLY** **NO**
  - Young people who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex or who identify sexual orientation in other terms (LGBTI+) **YES** **PARTLY** **NO**
  - Young Travellers **YES** **PARTLY** **NO**
  - Young people with a disability **YES** **PARTLY** **NO**
  - Young people with mental health issues **YES** **PARTLY** **NO**

• Young people who have been involved with the juvenile justice system	<b>YES</b>	<b>PARTLY</b>	<b>NO</b>
• Young parents	<b>YES</b>	<b>PARTLY</b>	<b>NO</b>
• Young people who have left school early	<b>YES</b>	<b>PARTLY</b>	<b>NO</b>
• Young people from all gender identity expressions	<b>YES</b>	<b>PARTLY</b>	<b>NO</b>
• Young people experiencing homelessness	<b>YES</b>	<b>PARTLY</b>	<b>NO</b>
• Young people who are geographically isolated	<b>YES</b>	<b>PARTLY</b>	<b>NO</b>
<b>6. We tell all young people in our community about our youth group and encourage them to join:</b>			
• We ask the members to invite their friends	<b>YES</b>	<b>PARTLY</b>	<b>NO</b>
• We tell all the schools in the area about our group/ organisation	<b>YES</b>	<b>PARTLY</b>	<b>NO</b>
• We put up notices in local libraries and community space/ centres	<b>YES</b>	<b>PARTLY</b>	<b>NO</b>
• We advertise in local newspapers	<b>YES</b>	<b>PARTLY</b>	<b>NO</b>
• We put notices in local shops	<b>YES</b>	<b>PARTLY</b>	<b>NO</b>
• We tell all the local places of worship (mosques, temples, synagogues, churches, evangelical church groups etc.) about our group/ organisation	<b>YES</b>	<b>PARTLY</b>	<b>NO</b>

- |    |  |            |               |           |
|----|--|------------|---------------|-----------|
| 7. | <b>We seek to meet all parents in our community, tell them about our youth group/ organisation and reassure them about concerns they have about their children joining our youth group(s).</b> | <b>YES</b> | <b>PARTLY</b> | <b>NO</b> |
| 8. | <b>We display information and awareness raising material (LGBTI+ information, Traveller pride week, anti-racist posters, disability awareness etc.).</b>                                       | <b>YES</b> | <b>PARTLY</b> | <b>NO</b> |

## Professional development

Our staff and volunteers are trained and supported to deliver an inclusive youth service?

- |     |  |            |               |           |
|-----|--|------------|---------------|-----------|
| 9.  | <b>Our youth group/ organisation applies equality principles and legislation (e.g. staff and volunteers are committed to equality and follow inclusive practice.</b>             | <b>YES</b> | <b>PARTLY</b> | <b>NO</b> |
| 10. | <b>Job descriptions/ volunteer roles require staff and volunteers to have awareness of equality and inclusion issues.</b>  | <b>YES</b> | <b>PARTLY</b> | <b>NO</b> |
| 11. | <b>Staff and volunteers receive training on equality and inclusion issues and working with specific groups of people (LGBTI+, minority ethnic, Travellers, disability etc.).</b> | <b>YES</b> | <b>PARTLY</b> | <b>NO</b> |

## Participation

To be effective in developing relevant, useful services, it is necessary to consult with diverse communities and young people [even if we do not provide direct work, or are currently working with diverse groups]:

How do we make sure we include the voices of young people at all levels of our youth organisation?

- |     |  |            |               |           |
|-----|--|------------|---------------|-----------|
| 12. | <b>The management committee of our group/ organisation includes members from a diverse range of backgrounds.</b>   | <b>YES</b> | <b>PARTLY</b> | <b>NO</b> |
| 13. | <b>Our group/ organisation provides a range of informal ways for young people to have their say about the group</b> (advisory groups, forums, group contracts, surveys, consultations, reviews, evaluations etc.). | <b>YES</b> | <b>PARTLY</b> | <b>NO</b> |
| 14. | <b>Our group/ organisation has young people from a range of backgrounds involved in making decisions.</b>  | <b>YES</b> | <b>PARTLY</b> | <b>NO</b> |

## Policies and procedures

Does our organisation have a written commitment to deliver an equal and inclusive service?

- |     |  |            |               |           |
|-----|--|------------|---------------|-----------|
| 15. | <b>Our group/ organisation has a written commitment to equality and inclusion</b> (charter, code of practice, mission statement, policy etc.). | <b>YES</b> | <b>PARTLY</b> | <b>NO</b> |
| 16. | <b>Volunteers/ staff understand what equality and inclusion means.</b>   | <b>YES</b> | <b>PARTLY</b> | <b>NO</b> |
| 17. | <b>We put what is written in our policy about equality and inclusion into practice</b> (e.g. we model inclusive language; we address           | <b>YES</b> | <b>PARTLY</b> | <b>NO</b> |

identity bullying, hate speech and name calling: racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, disablism, islamophobia, classism etc.).

## Programme planning and delivery

To be successful in addressing current issues faced by young people and youth workers, our youth groups need to be aware of who young people are and how they live [even if we do not provide direct work]:

How do we make sure our programmes are designed and delivered to consciously include the diverse needs and identities of all young people in the community?

- |     |   |     |        |    |
|-----|---|-----|--------|----|
| 18. | Our group/ organisation has up to date information about the ethnicity of young people in our local areas, and the numbers of Traveller families in the area.                       | YES | PARTLY | NO |
| 19. | We learn about the cultural or ethnic backgrounds of young people who are part of our group/ organisation.  | YES | PARTLY | NO |
| 20. | We collect information on requirements in relation to disabilities.   | YES | PARTLY | NO |
| 21. | We have information on the gender breakdown of our group/ organisation and we include options on our forms to self-define and identify as non-binary/gender fluid, transgender etc. | YES | PARTLY | NO |
| 22. | We compare the makeup of our local area with the people who attend our group and identify groups of young people who are under-represented.   | YES | PARTLY | NO |
| 23. | We consider the needs of all young people in our community when planning programmes (cultural, religious, mobility, literacy, family  | YES | PARTLY | NO |

responsibilities, diverse abilities, educational, health, etc.).

24.	<b>We ask a broad range of young people including those who do not attend what they would like to get involved in.</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>PARTLY</b>	<b>NO</b>
25.	<b>We run programmes or activities on diversity and equality that challenge prejudice and promote inclusion of:</b>			
	• Young people from a minority ethnic background	YES	PARTLY	NO
	• Young LGBTI+ people	YES	PARTLY	NO
	• Young Travellers	YES	PARTLY	NO
	• Young people with a disability	YES	PARTLY	NO
	• Young people with mental health issues	YES	PARTLY	NO
	• Young people involved in juvenile justice	YES	PARTLY	NO
	• Young parents	YES	PARTLY	NO
	• Young people who have left school early	YES	PARTLY	NO
	• Gender roles and stereotypes are explored and challenged	YES	PARTLY	NO
	• Young people experiencing homelessness	YES	PARTLY	NO
	• Young people who are geographically isolated	YES	PARTLY	NO

## Develop your Action Plans

Use the checklist above and the information in the toolkit to develop an action plan.

Refer to the checklists you have reviewed. **Consider the explanations you gave to the 'no' and 'in progress' responses.** Choose the areas where you feel you can make some concrete improvement in the:

- Short term (1-2 weeks)
- Medium term (1-3 months)
- Long term (6 months – 1 year)

Write up an action plan with:

1. Timeframes for completing your chosen tasks.
2. Allocate the person in the team responsible for ensuring the various tasks are completed. Ensure the tasks are divided across the team.
3. Determine what supports need to be put in place to complete these tasks.

## Action Plan Template

Section (e.g. working with young LGBTI+ people)	Description of action to be taken	Date for completion	Person responsible	Supports needed
<b>Short term (1-2 weeks)</b>				
<b>Mid term (1-3 months)</b>				
<b>Long term (6–12 months)</b>				

## 6 A master checklist that young people can use to assess the youth activities they attend

Young people/ youth members can use this checklist to assess the youth group/ organisation they are a part of (or other voluntary groups in your community). It can be done as a youth activity.

Use the checklist to identify how your youth group/ organisation can be more inclusive of young people who have diverse lives and identities. When reading the checklist consider the following groups of young people: young people from minority ethnic backgrounds, young LGBTI+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, and other gender identity descriptors) people, young Travellers, young people with a disability, young people with mental health issues, young people involved in the juvenile justice system, young parents, young people who have left school early, young people who are geographically isolated and young people experiencing homelessness.

### How do I get started?

1. Invite a team of young people to come together to assess the youth group/organisation (ideally young people from different backgrounds).
2. Ask them to go through the 'checklist' as a group – they may also decide to change some questions.
3. Together they discuss which questions should be answered 'YES', which should be answered 'NO' and which should be answered 'PARTLY' to convey their experience of inclusion and equality in the youth group.
4. Identify between 3 and 5 of the questions that were answered 'NO' or 'PARTLY' that your group/ organisation can work on over the next 6

months. At this stage you will need to involve the youth leaders too.

5. Put together a set of **ACTIONS** that will address these issues (use the template at the end of this document if it helps). You can also use the appropriate sections in **Access All Areas** to help you decide on a course of action (there are more detailed checklists in each section which may help you along with practical tips and a list of resources and contacts).
6. Identify who in your youth group/ organisation is going to be responsible for making sure the **ACTIONS** happen.
7. Plan to meet regularly to review how the **ACTION PLAN** is working.
8. After 6 months you can go back to the checklist and re-do this process over again identifying 3 to 5 new points to work on.

## Master Checklist for youth members to use

### Public image

To be successful in making people from diverse backgrounds feel included they need to be visible in our organisation.

How do we present our services - to young people, their parents and other community services?

1. **A range of diverse young people are visible, or are specifically mentioned, in advertising, promotional materials, publications and photos of our group/ organisation.** YES PARTLY NO
  
2. **Promotional material (flyers, posters, news articles, newsletters etc) about our group/ organisation is inclusive:**
  - We use simple English to describe our programmes and activities YES PARTLY NO
  - We use visual images to show what we do and where we meet YES PARTLY NO
  - We have a disability accessible website (it is written in a way that a blind person can use a screen reader to access its content) YES PARTLY NO
  - Information about our group is available in the different languages most commonly used in our community YES PARTLY NO
  - In the material, we state that we are accessible and inclusive of all young people YES PARTLY NO
  
3. **There are lots of ways to get in contact with our organisation/ group. You can:**

- Phone the youth organisation/leader **YES PARTLY NO**
  - Text (SMS) the youth organisation/ leader **YES PARTLY NO**
  - Email the youth organisation/ leader **YES PARTLY NO**
  - Drop in to the youth group/ organisation **YES PARTLY NO**
  - Follow us on Facebook **YES PARTLY NO**
  - Use Twitter to communicate with us **YES PARTLY NO**
4. **The buildings where we meet are accessible - for wheelchair users, those who have sight loss, are Deaf, parents of babies and young children, for people of different religions or none, etc** (Chapter 5 has a more detailed accessibility checklist). **YES PARTLY NO**
5. **The youth group (youth members, youth leaders, staff and volunteers) are open to and welcoming of all members of the community, for example:**
- Young people from a minority ethnic background including those who are asylum seekers, refugees and undocumented. **YES PARTLY NO**
  - Young people who are lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender, intersex or who identify their gender identity or sexual orientation in other terms (LGBTI+) **YES PARTLY NO**
  - Young Travellers **YES PARTLY NO**
  - Young people with a disability **YES PARTLY NO**
  - Young people with mental health issues **YES PARTLY NO**

- Young people who have been involved with the juvenile justice system **YES PARTLY NO**
  - Young parents **YES PARTLY NO**
  - Young people who have left school early **YES PARTLY NO**
  - Young people with all gender identity expressions **YES PARTLY NO**
  - Young people experiencing homelessness **YES PARTLY NO**
  - Young people who are geographically isolated **YES PARTLY NO**
- 6. Youth leaders have information and a list of specialist services they can refer young people to.** **YES PARTLY NO**
- 7. Youth leaders take part in meetings, partner and network with other community groups** (e.g. health professionals, Community Gardaí/ PSNI, schools, social workers, community workers, specialist organisations). **YES PARTLY NO**
- 8. We tell all young people in our community about our youth group and encourage them to join:**
- We tell our friends **YES PARTLY NO**
  - The youth leaders tell all the schools in the area about the group **YES PARTLY NO**
  - We put up notices in our local library and community space/centres **YES PARTLY NO**
  - We advertise in local newspapers **YES PARTLY NO**
  - We put notices in local shops **YES PARTLY NO**

- We tell all the local places of worship (mosques, temples, synagogues, churches, evangelical church groups etc.) about our group **YES PARTLY NO**
9. **Youth leaders seek to meet all parents in our community, tell them about our youth group and reassure them about concerns they have about their children joining our youth group.** **YES PARTLY NO**
10. **We display information and awareness raising material in our meeting place (LGBTI+ information, Traveller pride week, anti-racist posters, disability awareness etc.).** **YES PARTLY NO**

### Professional development

**Our staff and volunteers are trained and supported to deliver an inclusive youth service?**

11. **Our youth group/ organisation operates under equality principles and legislation in relation to employment and involvement of volunteers (e.g. members of the staff and volunteers come from diverse backgrounds, youth leaders are committed to equality etc.).** **YES PARTLY NO**
12. **Staff and volunteers are committed to equality and inclusion** **YES PARTLY NO**
13. **Staff and volunteers receive training on equality and inclusion issues and working with specific groups of young people (minority ethnic, Travellers, LGBTI+, disability etc)** **YES PARTLY NO**

## Participation

To be effective in developing relevant, useful services, it is necessary to consult with diverse communities and young people [even if the organisation does not work directly with young people]:

How do we make sure we include the voices of young people at all levels of our youth organisation?

- |     |   |                      |
|-----|---|----------------------|
| 14. | <b>The management/ advisory committee of our group/ organisation includes members from a diverse range of backgrounds.</b>  | <b>YES PARTLY NO</b> |
| 15. | <b>Our group/ organisation provides a range of ways for young people to have a say about the group (advisory groups, forums, group contracts, surveys, consultations, reviews, evaluations etc.).</b> | <b>YES PARTLY NO</b> |
| 16. | <b>Our group/ organisation has young people from a range of backgrounds involved in making decisions.</b>   | <b>YES PARTLY NO</b> |

## Policies and procedures

Our organisation has a written commitment to deliver an equal and inclusive service?

- |     |   |                      |
|-----|---|----------------------|
| 17. | <b>Our group/ organisation has a written commitment to equality and inclusion (charter, code of practice, mission statement, policy etc).</b> | <b>YES PARTLY NO</b> |
| 18. | <b>Our youth leaders understand what equality, interculturalism and inclusion means.</b>  | <b>YES PARTLY NO</b> |

19. Our group/ organisation puts what is written about equality and inclusion into practice (e.g. we act on our rules on bullying, name calling, etc). **YES** **PARTLY** **NO**

### Programme planning and delivery

To be successful in addressing current issues faced by young people and youth workers, our youth groups need to be aware of who young people are and how they live.

How do we make sure our programmes are designed and delivered to consciously include the diverse needs and identities of all young people in the community?

20. Our group/ organisation has up to date information about the ethnicity of young people in our local areas, and the number of Traveller families in the area. **YES** **PARTLY** **NO**
21. We collect information on the cultural or ethnic background of young people who are part of our group/ organisation. **YES** **PARTLY** **NO**
22. We collect information on member's requirements in relation to disabilities. **YES** **PARTLY** **NO**
23. The youth group has information on the gender breakdown of our group/ organisation and they have included options for us to self-define and identify as non-binary/gender fluid, transgender etc. **YES** **PARTLY** **NO**
24. The youth leaders compare the makeup of our local area with the people who attend our group and identify groups of young people who are underrepresented. **YES** **PARTLY** **NO**
25. We consider the needs of all young people in our community when planning programmes (cultural, **YES** **PARTLY** **NO**

religious, mobility, literacy, family responsibilities, diverse abilities, educational, etc.).

- |     |   |                                    |
|-----|---|------------------------------------|
| 26. | <b>The youth leaders ask a broad range of young people, including those who do not attend, what they would like to get involved in.</b> | <b>YES</b> <b>PARTLY</b> <b>NO</b> |
| 27. | <b>We run programmes or activities on diversity and equality that challenge prejudice and promote inclusion of:</b>                     |                                    |
|     | • Young people from a minority ethnic background  | <b>YES</b> <b>PARTLY</b> <b>NO</b> |
|     | • Young LGBTI+ people   | <b>YES</b> <b>PARTLY</b> <b>NO</b> |
|     | • Young Travellers  | <b>YES</b> <b>PARTLY</b> <b>NO</b> |
|     | • Young people with a disability  | <b>YES</b> <b>PARTLY</b> <b>NO</b> |
|     | • Young people with mental health issues  | <b>YES</b> <b>PARTLY</b> <b>NO</b> |
|     | • Young people involved in the juvenile justice system  | <b>YES</b> <b>PARTLY</b> <b>NO</b> |
|     | • Young parents   | <b>YES</b> <b>PARTLY</b> <b>NO</b> |
|     | • Young people who are not in school, employment or training/ early school leavers  | <b>YES</b> <b>PARTLY</b> <b>NO</b> |
|     | • Gender roles and stereotypes are explored and challenged  | <b>YES</b> <b>PARTLY</b> <b>NO</b> |
|     | • Young people experiencing homelessness  | <b>YES</b> <b>PARTLY</b> <b>NO</b> |
|     | • Young people who are geographically isolated  | <b>YES</b> <b>PARTLY</b> <b>NO</b> |

## Action Plan Template

	Description of action to be taken	Date for completion	Person/s responsible
<b>Short term (1-2 weeks)</b>			
<b>Mid term (1-3 months)</b>			
<b>Long term (6 – 12 months)</b>			

## 7 Good practice on collecting, storing, and using identity data

### Ensuring equality and inclusion practice: identifying diversity in your youth organisation

It is impossible to determine how inclusive your service is if you do not have data on the identity or circumstances of the young people who use your service. If you are unsure how to address this, the following section will give you some guidelines on collecting, collating and using data.

Collecting identity data is not straightforward. The sensitivity and expertise needed to support young people who have not as yet come out openly as LGBTI+ for instance, or those who are concerned about their mental health, or who have a disability but don't want to reveal this information, or whose immigration status is something they fear disclosing, is considerable. Collecting data on these aspects of identity are therefore not recommended. Readers are advised to work with relevant organisations for advice on how to go about collating more sensitive data and to be clear why they would need it. You must also comply with GDPR guidelines on storage and use of data and why you are asking for information.

However, it is totally appropriate and indeed good practice that some aspects of a young person's identity are asked about. These include asking whether a young person has a disability, have any special requirements, what religion they practice, what their ethnic identity is, what gender they



identify as, and whether they come from a Traveller background. It is up to those answering to decide whether to impart the information, and this option should be clear, but it is appropriate to ask.

Therefore, registration forms in all youth services should invite young people to identify their special requirements, any disability, their gender, their religion (or none) and their ethnic or cultural identity. An example of how to do this and how to use the information you collect, in accordance with good practice, is laid out below.

If your organisation does not use registration forms, there are other ways of collecting this information – through one to one conversations or through activities for example. For more information on this, see page 46.

## **Rationale for asking about ethnicity, gender etc.**

In order to be able to meet the needs of the young people who attend your organisation (and also your staff or volunteers) it is important to know what is important to them. This may include our ethnic or cultural identity, gender identity, religious practice and any special requirements or disabilities we might have. In order to plan effectively it is important for youth services to know this information. You might, for example, decide to acknowledge the diversity within your organisation by celebrating important festivals or religious days. You would need to know which ones are important to the group you are working with. You might also need to understand what cultural practices your members live by – for example certain foods might cause offence, or members may have to abide by specific dress codes. When planning an event, you would also need to know in advance what special supports you would have to put in place with regard to young people with a disability. For example, the need to ensure wheelchair access, to provide visual aids or to use different learning and communication styles. Ensuring safer spaces is also critical. This will include knowing – and using - the preferred pronouns of members of your group.

## What is the best approach to collecting information on ethnic identity, disability, gender, religion etc.

One of the more obvious ways to gather information about your members is through the use of registration forms. Good practice research asserts that information about a person's ethnicity and gender should always be self-described, by the person themselves if aged 11 or older – and by parents/guardians for participants under 11. Young people may prefer to have someone present to explain aspects of a registration form and sometimes to help them fill it out. Always respect a person's right not to disclose information about themselves. Non-disclosure is common, especially in relation to disabilities. Some organisations are concerned initially about the lack of responses to identity questions. But given time, trust-building and a realisation by young people that it is used to improve services the rate of responses does increase so perseverance is important.

Asking identity questions raises the question of data protection and confidentiality. Be clear to your members that this information will be kept confidential and safe and that it will be used to meet the needs of all those using the organisation. Also explain that you are committed to inclusiveness and equality, and that without this data you cannot assess how well you are meeting this goal.

## Reviewing and adapting your registration forms

We would recommend using the questions in the sample registration form below which you might like to copy or use to adapt your own forms. You can also use this form to do a once-off inclusion survey. There may be situations when parents or youth members ask questions about using the registration form. In practice though, we find that most people are very happy to fill it out as it is. However, a fuller rationale has been included after Table 1 that you can copy and use.

**Table 1 – Sample registration form<sup>vi</sup>**

**Our youth centre believes in equality, diversity and inclusion.**

We would like all people to feel **included** here. In order to **respond/plan for individual needs** and interests we are asking you to complete the form below.

**Only reveal what you are happy for us to know.**

The information given will be **treated confidentially** and used only to make this a safe and relevant youth group that meets your needs and interests

<b>Name:</b>	<b>Phone:</b>
	<b>Email:</b>
<b>Address:</b> 	<b>Date of birth:</b> /    /
	<b>Religious tradition:</b> _____ Practising <input type="checkbox"/> Non-practising <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Gender</b> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female <input type="checkbox"/> Non-binary <input type="checkbox"/> Other descriptor <input type="checkbox"/> Please describe if you wish to .....	
Does this match the sex you were assigned at birth? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Your National / Cultural / Ethnic Identity:</b> _____ <small>(Give your answer to describe the identity that best describes who you are – what cultural heritage you most identify with. Examples others have given to this question include Irish, Irish-Traveller, Polish, Irish-Polish, Nigerian, Nigerian-Irish, British, Northern Irish etc.)</small>	
<b>Individual Requirements:</b> <small>(Please mention anything that we need to know about e.g. disability, allergies, medical conditions, dietary requirements etc. and the supports you need to allow you to participate)</small> _____	
<b>Languages you speak:</b> 1 <sup>st</sup> language (mother tongue) _____ 2 <sup>nd</sup> language/s _____	<b>Interests</b> Friendships Music       Sport Self-Confidence       Computers Art Direction in your life Other  _____
<b>How did you hear about us?</b> _____	

This chapter was developed by Anne Walsh (NYCI), Marie Fitzpatrick (Pavee Point), Michael Barron (BeLonGTo), Matthew Seebach (YWI) and Ben Ewan (Youthnet) for ‘Access All Areas – a Diversity Toolkit for the Youth Work Sector’ published by NYCI and Youthnet 2012 – updated 2020

## Supplementary information to offer those filling out the registration form

### Why is it important to ask about ethnicity, religion, gender and disability?

Our ethnic identity, gender, religion and any special requirements or disabilities we have identify us in very deep ways, especially when these are key signifiers of a minority identity. It is important to ask these questions in order to plan effectively and to be able to be able to meet the needs of the young people who use our service (and also our staff or colleagues).

**Ethnicity & language:** We might, for example, want to acknowledge the cultural diversity of our members by celebrating important festival days. We would need to know which ones are important to our group members and also which languages are relevant if we wanted to put up welcome signs in different languages in our meeting spaces. We might also need to source information in other languages so we can explain our activities more clearly to parents or our members (for example, NYCI has translated flyers that explain what youth work is in 8 different languages and some youth organisations have resources available in several different languages). We would also need to understand what cultural practices your group members live by – for example certain foods that might cause offence or specific dress codes or gender rules our group members may have to abide by.

Moreover, many young people from migrant or mixed ethnic backgrounds who have been brought up in Ireland may describe themselves as Irish. However, the language spoken at home and associated cultural heritage will have a significant influence on their personal understanding of diversity. Equally, an experience of being part of a migrant family may mean that they have different needs and experiences from others who have been established in an area for a long time especially in regard to having a sense of belonging.

**Gender:** We ask about gender to respect the young person's personal expression of their gender identity, to not assume a binary identity, and to know to ask what pronouns to use. The question that asks whether the gender described is the same as the sex assigned at birth is to know if someone is transgender – or intersex – so we can plan around practical issues such as gender neutral toilets, changing spaces in swimming pools etc. and when going on residential.

**Disability:** When planning an event, we would also need to know in advance what special supports to put in place to meet the specific needs of young people with a disability who would like to attend our service. For example, we may need to ensure wheelchair access

or have visual aids or accommodate an assistant for a member. We may also need to adapt our activities, our way of work or our ways of communicating.

**Religion:** We would also need to know if we can plan an event on specific days and whether our members' religious services might clash with an event and prevent them from being able to attend.

### **What is meant by ethnic identity?**

Ethnicity can, and is, defined in several different ways. Language by its very nature changes over time and meaning is often not fixed. We use the term ethnicity\* to be able to describe how we are different to other people. That difference, however, is what we interpret it as and not how others (often wrongfully) would believe. Ethnicity, at its simplest, means the group of people to which we feel we belong. Where we belong to two (or more) groups of people then we have dual ethnicity or we are multi-ethnic. This will be the case for children of mixed parents, or for people who have lived for a considerable time in two or more different countries, or in the case of Northern Ireland where a person might feel they belong to Ireland, Britain and Northern Ireland. We believe it is better to use the term quite loosely and for people to respond to the question as they see fit. It is important to know that the group that we belong to – i.e. our ethnic identity - might, or might not necessarily, be linked to our genetic ancestry.

**National identity & ethnic identity:** We used the term 'national or ethnic identity' in this registration form. We have included the term national because people understand it as a term referring to their country of origin. However, while the term national is a legal definition of the country you belong to, ethnicity is more about where you truly feel you belong to. These are not necessarily the same. Where possible the person's ethnicity is the preferred description to include. However, if you travel abroad is part of what you offer then it is important to know what the nationality a person holds.

\*In common terminology the term 'race' is often used to denote difference in peoples. It is no longer appropriate to use the term 'race' in this way. The term needs to be understood as a social construct that is linked to assumptions of superiority of some groups of people over others most often linked to an assumption of genetic superiority. This has been proven to be false science and completely discredited but we live with its legacy in the form of racism. For this reason, many use the term in the context of racial justice work.

## Reviewing your staff and volunteer forms

For staff and volunteers, it is valid to ask similar identity questions to those in the young person's form, again always stating that the questions are optional and explaining why you are asking them.

## Alternate ways of doing an inclusion survey - using interactive methods to collect data on diversity

Doing a survey is an alternate way of doing an equality audit. However, it may not give you a 100% return as some members will be absent on the night you do it or parents may not get around to returning the forms. Other ways to collect data on the identity of individuals in your youth group is through conversations with parents or the young people themselves. You can also do it through the activities that you run.

### Activities for collecting data

You can develop a **picture of cultural diversity** (or influence) for your membership by putting up a world map, an Irish map and a county map and asking the young people and volunteers to say what parts of the world/country/county they have lived in or their parents have lived in. It helps to use pins and string to create lines from their own name (placed around the outside of the maps) to the place/s they want to talk about. In this activity don't forget to ask about different cultural connections from within the country such as those of the Traveller community. Also fully include those from the majority culture who may have significant connections to other areas in the country or who may have family living abroad.

You can discover how many **languages** are used in the group by asking the young people to draw flags, or stamp their painted hands, on a wall and write 'welcome' beside it in their home language/s.

You can explore **gender identity** in groups by asking the young people to create a name badge and to include their pro-noun on it. This activity will involve doing awareness raising on the importance of pronouns and understanding gender as not being only a binary concept.

If you are doing these activities as part of a data collection survey it helps to have someone observing and writing down the information. If some information is unclear it can be clarified later. Make sure the young people know you are also doing a data collection exercise.

## Using the data collected to assess how diverse your organisation is

An identifier process helps you with your organisational review (planning). You can use it to establish whether the membership of your youth group reflects the diversity within your wider community. By comparing the statistics from your youth group with demographic data, you can see if you are engaging – in relative numbers - with the young people from diverse backgrounds in your community. This will be easier with some data sets than others. For many groups you can use the demographic data included in the various chapters of Access All Areas.

### Ethnic diversity

Ethnic identity is one area that takes some in-depth research. To look at your ethnic diversity relative to local demographics you will be asking:

**Does the % of minority ethnic young people attending my organisation reflect the % of people from a minority ethnic background in my area – and in relative numbers to the population of different ethnic groups that live in the community?**

To do a comparison you will need to determine the ethnic diversity in your community.

- Don't forget that in any data set in the Republic of Ireland, people with UK citizenship are included as a minority ethnicity.
- Travellers are a minority ethnic group in both Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland.
- **Whatever source of data you find you will need to be able to compare like with like. This means you will need to collate your data in the same way as your comparative data set.**

To find out the local demographics you can try a number of sources:

### Republic of Ireland:

- Ask your local schools for their statistics. All schools collect these statistics and your local schools may be able to give you the information.
- The Department of Education and Skills may be able to give you statistics for the schools in your area. You would need to know the Department codes for the schools. The schools can give you these. GDPR considerations may put restrictions on this service.
- Pavee Point did an all-Ireland health survey of the Traveller community in 2010. Their statistics can be accessed for each county on [www.paveepoint.ie](http://www.paveepoint.ie) or <http://pavee.ie/ourgeels/>
- Ask a local Traveller support service for information about Travellers in your community. They may know the families in person and will be able to advise you. They may know if the Travellers in your area are keen to engage. They might also know whether they would be comfortable disclosing that they are Travellers and other sensitivities that you should be aware of. Many Travellers do not like to self-identify, especially in youth groups where settled young people are in the majority.
- Look up the central statistics website – [www.cso.ie](http://www.cso.ie). You can find statistics for each town in Ireland, with over 5000 residents classified by ethnic or cultural background. Be aware that research from Pavee Point

suggests that the CSO figure may not represent the actual number of Travellers in the Republic of Ireland.<sup>vii</sup>

- The Central Statistics office (CSO) [[www.cso.ie](http://www.cso.ie)] can provide a full report for your area that includes breakdowns by age and ethnicity but there may be a small charge for it.

### **Northern Ireland:**

- The Department of Education Northern Ireland Statistics and Research branch can provide you with a breakdown of ethnicity in primary and post primary schools by district council area
- Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency can provide more general information on migration and population [www.nisra.gov.uk](http://www.nisra.gov.uk). The statistics on the population comes from two main sources: ‘The Registrars General Annual Report’ which give an annual overview of the NI population and ‘The Census’ which gives a once in a decade detailed breakdown of the population (next one due 2021). Detailed population and migration small area statistics can also be obtained from the Northern Ireland Neighbourhood Information Service [www.ninis.nisra.gov.uk/mapxtreme/DataCatalogue.asp?button=Population](http://www.ninis.nisra.gov.uk/mapxtreme/DataCatalogue.asp?button=Population)

If you have no sources:

- In the absence of more detailed information you can use a 16% figure for ethnic identity as the figure you compare your data to in the Republic of Ireland as this is the national average. This would mean that ideally 16% of your group come from a minority ethnic background.
- You could use a 1.5% figure for Traveller ethnicity to compare your data against as this is the national average in the Republic of Ireland. However, this will not be relevant in many communities and it would be much too low in others.

## Collating and storing your data for comparative purposes

The exercise above shows the importance of collating your data in such a way that it can be used effectively. This will involve creating a database that will accurately give you the data you need. Ideally you will be working toward increasing your diversity over time, setting realistic goals and implementation plans. Collating this data well and future proofing it should help you measure this. It will need to:

- Have options for different gender descriptions – at a minimum it should include male, female, non-binary, other descriptor, and also have fields for transgender and intersex
- Have options for ethnic identity that correlates with national data sets - ideally use the descriptors from the national census but leave fields for new descriptors to be added. Use the most up-to-date fields – for example, Roma and Arabic will be new fields added to the Republic of Ireland census in 2021. In 2026, when the census goes online, there may be more fields added. The UK example may be a good example to look at - see [www.ethnicity-facts-figures.service.gov.uk/style-guide/ethnic-groups#list-of-ethnic-groups](http://www.ethnicity-facts-figures.service.gov.uk/style-guide/ethnic-groups#list-of-ethnic-groups). However, there will be national differences, much less from Caribbean backgrounds in Republic of Ireland and perhaps more – relatively - from Brazil. Moreover, if you are comparing your data with schools data a fuller list of descriptors is more useful and you can identify the young people from specific ethnic groups in your area that are not attending your youth groups and you can look at new ways of engaging with these groups.
- If you leave the ethnicity question open for description – which is good practice – there is a task in translating that into any fields you are using in your database (for example if you follow the census descriptors). If you have room in your registration form it is good to use the same fields that are in your database, but it is always best practice to include an open descriptor question.
- Alternatively – depending on what you are using the data for you could

decide to use just 3 ethnicity fields – white Irish/Northern Irish, Traveller and minority ethnic background. This will give you an overall percentage of ethnic diversity in your groups (there may be some discrepancies with comparative data sets as there could be a number of members who are white Irish/Northern Irish and who are also from minority ethnic backgrounds such as naturalized Irish/UK citizens from a white background). If you are using this method, it is advisable to count the number of different ethnic backgrounds the young people come from so that you know the breadth of ethnic diversity in your groups.

- Use the national census for religious descriptors.
- One way to record disability and special needs is by the type and level of support that may be needed. This could include fields such as PA/extra staff support, adapted toilets, adapted activities, sensory adaptations, time out rooms, additional training, dietary needs, medication requirements, etc.

## **Determining supports for those that have a disability or special requirements**

- Ask the young person or their parent/ guardian who has told you about a disability what you can do to meet their needs.
- Put plans in place to make the necessary provisions.
- Do relevant disability awareness training based on your members identified needs with every member of staff and volunteers including staff that have minimal contact such as admin, security or maintenance staff. For example, in the case of an emergency a warning alarm is not appropriate if one of your members has hearing loss, or flashing signs will not be appropriate for someone who is blind.

**For more information see Chapters 5 and 6 Working with young people with a disability.**

## Determining supports for transgender, intersex and non-binary young people

- In spaces that you manage or can influence, ensuring that you have gender neutral toilets.
- Ask each young person what their preferred pro-noun is, use it and support others to use it.
- Each situation relating to toilets, changing areas and residentials will be developed in a case by case basis in consultation with the young person. This will include asking for:
  - Managing toilet preferences when gender neutral options are not available
  - Managing changing room preferences in sports/ swimming centres you use
  - Deciding what needs to happen on residentials in terms of room sharing etc
- Do awareness training with staff and volunteers including staff that have minimal contact such as admin, security or maintenance staff.



**For more information see Chapter 4 Working with LGBTI+ young people.**

## What to do if your membership is not diverse

There may be several reasons why your group is not diverse. It may be because ethnic diversity in your area is low. It may be that another youth group in your area is engaging with young people with a disability or with LGBTI+ young people. Or you may be targeting a particular minority group that has little diversity within it. To embed inclusion in youth work it is important to approach it with a community focus.

- Make contact with other youth groups in your community. Determine if other groups are actively engaging with young people in the area from minority groups. Together, assess whether the minority young people who would like to engage in youth work in your area are accessing a youth group. Determine if there are any gaps in provision and decide how to fill those gaps.
- Run diversity inclusion programmes in your youth group. This could include doing ongoing activities on equality, identity and inclusion. It could also include doing visits and exchanges – especially with groups that are already engaging with young people from diverse backgrounds.



## 8 Using Access All Areas to carry out a regional or county-wide survey

### Why run a regional or county-wide diversity survey?

Because youth activities are by definition 'voluntary', those who decide to attend a given youth group, will, by their actions, make up the demographic of a group. This can result in a group that reflects the inherent inequalities that exist within wider society i.e. it will consist of those young people who are the most 'privileged' or have the strongest, and most mainstream, social networks.

Nevertheless, much work has been done to target young people who come from diverse backgrounds and diversity in youth groups is growing. However, we do not know what the true picture of diversity is across all youth groups and youth organisations as there are no central reporting systems in place.

Moreover, to get a clearer picture of diversity in youth services we would need to assess it on a county or regional level. Without this knowledge youth organisations and decision makers are not in a strategic position to know which minority groups are not accessing youth work opportunities. For strategic planning to fill these gaps it is important to know:

- Which groups of young people with diverse lives and identities are being reached and where?
- Which groups of young people with diverse lives and identities are not being reached, in what areas, and what are the reasons?
- In what ways can we support youth organisations to be more inclusive in the areas, and with identity groups, where diversity is not evidenced?

Access All Areas can be used to carry out a regional or county-wide survey.

## Who would be involved in carrying out a survey?

A survey could be coordinated by an ETB/ ELB Youth Officer or Regional Manager of a national or regional organisation with support from other youth organisations. It only has a value if the vast majority of youth organisations in the region or county are involved as a survey would need to look at youth engagement in an entire geographical area to have validity in terms of who is engaging. Sports bodies could also be included.

The actual tasks involved could be carried out or coordinated by Youth Development Officers or Regional Managers during a visit to each youth group or youth leader under their remit in the chosen area. A typical county wide or regional survey could involve up to 30 youth groups or more.

Collection of the results from each youth group should go to the co-ordination body that would collate the data, compare it with demographics from the area and then map out and disseminate the results to the participating organisations.

## What tasks are involved in doing a diversity survey?

There are 4 tasks involved in doing a survey:

1. To know the strengths and gaps that exist amongst youth groups in the area (as youth leaders perceive them) we can use the Master checklist in Access All Areas and ask all youth leaders to fill it out for their group.
2. To capture a picture of the diversity that exists and what areas of inclusion need a greater focus, we can capture a snapshot picture of diversity across youth groups in the region by adapting the registration form (or a diversity activity) discussed earlier in this chapter and ask each youth member to fill it in. It can help to choose one meeting and ask everyone attending to fill it in. For a research survey it is appropriate to anonymise it by taking out the name and contact details.

You can add questions to the form to capture other specific information you might want such as asking what inclusion activities or topics they have covered.

3. To capture a snapshot of inclusive practice, coordinators of the survey (or researchers) can observe the visual messages conveyed within the youth group setting – posters, signs, flyers, existing diversity, etc.
4. To capture how inclusion is practiced the coordinators of the survey (or researchers) can ask the youth group about the activities they held, or discussions they had in the previous few months on equality and inclusion topics. Alternatively, the survey form (task 2) can include a question asking if the young people have done activities on inclusion in the previous few months and if so on what topics of inclusion.

## Analysis

**Task 1** By asking youth leaders to fill in the checklists and collating all of these together the coordinating body/ researchers will identify strengths and weaknesses within the region. This can help identify areas that need attention such as training needs, networking events, partnership building, etc.

**Task 2** By asking young people and leaders – on any given night - to fill out a registration/ survey form (or take part in a diversity activity) that captures data on the ethnic, religious, gender and disability diversity within the youth group you get a clear picture of diversity in the group. This can then be compared with demographics on minority ethnic groups, minority religions, Traveller groups and those with a disability living in the area. This provides a very clear picture of the levels of engagement of young people from diverse backgrounds and identifies who is not engaging and where they are (see the section above on where to find area demographics and see the demographics section in each chapter in Access All Areas).

**Task 3** Observing the youth setting, and their publicity and notices in the area can demonstrate how people from diverse backgrounds will see the youth group/ service.

- Is there anything to show that it is an LGBTI+ friendly environment?
- Is there anything to show that it is culturally diverse or welcoming?
- Is it an accessible building?
- Is there information, or an invitation to talk to someone, if a young person needs support on issues such as mental health, sexual health or pregnancy advice, back to education or training possibilities etc?

**Task 4** By asking questions about the activities that have been run in the previous few months that have focussed on diversity and inclusion you can get a very good sense of how embedded inclusion is in the youth service. Also of importance is how they run activities. For example:

- Do they use a number of ways to explain and run activities to accommodate the diversity of learning needs in the groups?
- Do they have a learning ethos as leaders, to deepen their understanding of inclusion issues and a commitment to social justice?

Ideally the data collated above would be backed up by interviews with other key organisations and stakeholders in the county or region. These might include minority religious bodies, disability support groups, refugee and migrant support groups, Traveller organisations, LGBTI+ organisations or networks, and sporting organisations.



## Follow on

The Access All Areas individual chapters can be used by each participating youth group/organisation to look more closely at their practice and to develop action plans.

Support on the process is available from NYCI.

## Useful Contacts

<p><b>Department of Children, Disability, Equality and Integration</b></p> <p><a href="http://www.dcyi.ie">www.dcyi.ie</a></p>	<p><b>Department of Justice, Equality &amp; Law Reform</b></p> <p><a href="http://www.justice.ie">www.justice.ie</a></p>
<p><b>Department of Education and Skills</b></p> <p><a href="http://www.education.ie">www.education.ie</a></p>	<p><b>Central Statistics Office</b></p> <p><a href="http://www.cso.ie">www.cso.ie</a></p>
<p><b>Department of Education NI</b></p> <p><a href="http://www.deni.gov.uk">www.deni.gov.uk</a></p>	<p><b>Northern Ireland Statistic and Research Agency</b></p> <p><a href="http://www.nisra.gov.uk">www.nisra.gov.uk</a></p>
<p><b>The Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission</b></p> <p>Phone: 01 858 9601</p> <p>Email: <a href="mailto:info@ihrec.ie">info@ihrec.ie</a></p> <p>Web: <a href="http://www.ihrec.ie">www.ihrec.ie</a></p>	<p><b>The Equality Commission</b></p> <p>Phone: 028 - 90 500 600</p> <p>Email: <a href="mailto:information@equalityni.org">information@equalityni.org</a></p> <p>Web: <a href="http://www.equalityni.org">www.equalityni.org</a></p>

## Community and Voluntary Sector

<p><b>Activelink</b></p> <p><a href="http://www.activelink.ie">www.activelink.ie</a></p>	<p>Online network for Irish non profit organisations: information on seminars, events, employment and volunteering opportunities and general news relating to the community and Voluntary sector in Ireland.</p>
<p><b>Changing Ireland</b></p> <p><a href="http://www.changingireland.ie">www.changingireland.ie</a></p>	<p>Changing Ireland is an independent community development magazine published quarterly and located in a disadvantaged community where positive change is taking place, in Moyross, Limerick.</p>
<p><b>The Wheel</b></p> <p><a href="http://www.wheel.ie">www.wheel.ie</a></p>	<p>Support and representative body connecting Community and Voluntary organisations in Ireland.</p>

<p><b>NICVA</b></p> <p><a href="http://www.nicva.org">www.nicva.org</a></p>	<p>NICVA, the Northern Ireland Council for Voluntary Action, is a membership and representative umbrella body for the entire voluntary and community sector of Northern Ireland. NICVA offers a range of services including advice (governance and charity advice, HR), fundraising, research, policy and lobbying, training and consultancy.</p>
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## References

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- <sup>i</sup> Inequality and the Stereotyping of young people, Maurice Devlin published by The Equality Authority 2006 p16-17
- <sup>ii</sup> Model of Effective Practice, Curriculum Development Unit (2003)
- <sup>iii</sup> Based on Baker J, Lynch K, Cantillion S, and Walsh J (2004), *Equality: From Theory to Action*, Palgrave Macmillan, Bakingstoke
- <sup>iv</sup> [www.bristol-cyps.org.uk/services/eit/definitions.html](http://www.bristol-cyps.org.uk/services/eit/definitions.html)
- <sup>v</sup> [www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/deliveringservices/multiagencyworking/glossary/?asset=glossary&id=22998](http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/deliveringservices/multiagencyworking/glossary/?asset=glossary&id=22998)
- <sup>vi</sup> This registration form was developed from one devised by Gurranabraher Youth Service (YWI Cork) after they reviewed their practice using Access All Areas checklists
- <sup>vii</sup> See <http://pavee.ie/ourgeels/>