

# INTERCULTURAL NEWS

Autumn Briefing Donegal Intercultural Platform 2017



## Arrival of Syrian refugee families in Donegal has been suspended

Following the devastating floods in September that caused havoc in the Inishowen area, the team coordinating the arrival of the first group of 70 refugees from the Syrian conflict had to suspend the resettlement efforts as the accommodation was no longer available. The resettlement programme was always a two-stage project and the two resettlement staff employed in late August will be re-focusing their work on the Letterkenny and Stranorlar areas - which were planned for round two in the early new year. The platform will be working in partnership with the resettlement team staff to help prepare the way for the next group of Syrian families. This will involve working with the Islamic Association, youth projects, schools and early years pre-schools in providing training, awareness raising and cultural activities on preparation for the new year. If you would like to get involved text your name and number to 0860841433 or email [donegalip@gmail.com](mailto:donegalip@gmail.com)

Working for Interculturalism, Equality & Human Rights

## Uniting Ethnic Minority Voices across county Donegal

We are proud to say that the Donegal Intercultural Platform continues to grow in both membership and capacity as we are building the organisation following our really successful Annual General Meeting (AGM) held at the end of May 2017.

We now have an expanded steering group of 12 people drawn from 10 different ethnic backgrounds that help us understand and involve a wide spread of knowledge &

experience. We are part of the newly re-vamped Donegal Intercultural Training Initiative that was launched at the start of October (see below) that brings high quality training or community and statutory organisations on the themes of Intercultural Awareness and Competence. This initiative is coordinated by Kate at Donegal Travellers Project (Tel: 07491 29281). They are fully booked for 2017 but are keen to take training bookings for 2018. In addition, the Platform has successfully completed its work in writing and designing the new Intercultural Health & Wellbeing Bulletin which will be distributed across the county between now and Christmas. Some will go to state offices and agencies, some to community health centres and the rest will be delivered by platform members themselves to ethnic minority groups, door to door and in key venues that minority community members attend. We have a whole raft of new projects so why not drop us a line or call in any Friday 10am to 12noon at the office.

**WE ARE ALWAYS LOOKING FOR NEW MEMBERS TO HELP DEVELOP OUR WORK!**

## Launch of Donegal Intercultural Training Initiative

Monday the 9th of October saw the launch of the new revamped Intercultural Training Initiative offering awareness and skills development training in all aspects of Interculturalism, respect and Human Rights. Thus work has been coordinated by Donegal Travellers Project for the last decade or more, and has been expanded and refreshed and is starting to deliver training from the end of October. Members of the Platform are part of the training team. We all took part in a new course in Intercultural Studies at QQI level 5 earlier this year and are ready for action. The launch was made by the Chair of Donegal County Council (Cathaoirleach), formerly known as the Mayor, Gerry McMonagle at the start of Social Inclusion Week at the Public Services Centre, Letterkenny. To book a training course or get more information speak to Kate Hagan on 0749129281

## Get involved in the Donegal Intercultural Platform

The Donegal Intercultural Platform is a voluntary organisation made up of individual members and affiliated organisations who are interested in building inclusion and equality in Donegal and in promoting Human Rights and opposing discrimination and racism. We hold monthly members meetings, debates and discussions. Join or affiliate now! Text 0860841433; Find us on Facebook



This bulletin is produced by Donegal Intercultural Platform

**Donegal Intercultural Platform**

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People in Donegal working towards Interculturalism, Equality and Human Rights



Launch of health & wellbeing bulletin in English & six major languages at the Connecting For Life conference in Gweedore on Friday 6th October.

## English conversation workshops for migrants

The Donegal Intercultural Platform helps organise free English conversation classes every week at Letterkenny library between 10.30am and 12.30. The classes take place in the basement events room and are open to anyone who would like to improve their English - from beginner to advanced level. The classes are in partnership with Fáilte Isteach - the national organisation that coordinates language supports for migrant workers and their families. If you would like to become a volunteers tutor call/text 0860841433.



Left: members of the Intercultural Training Team with Donegal Cathaoirleach Gerry McMonagle. Above: Billy Banda speaks at the launch of the DITI on 9th October.

# INTERCULTURAL NEWS

Briefing Donegal  
Intercultural Platform



## New multi-lingual information bulletin on health & wellbeing launched on 6th October

Following discussion at the County-wide Suicide Prevention initiative 'Connecting For Life - Donegal' steering group the Intercultural Platform was commissioned to draft, design and produce a multi-lingual information bulletin for people living in the county who do not have English as their mother tongue. The platform undertook to look at best practice across Ireland and further afield to help them produce a publication in English and six commonly used languages. These are Russian, Polish, French, Arabic, Romanian & Mandarin Chinese.

### Key messages about health provision

The Connecting For Life initiative was concerned that many people living in the County may not have very strong English, and wanted a simple and clear message about how and where people can access health services, emergency care, as well as mental health supports. The bulletin will also explain how non-English speakers can access translation and interpretation services at both emergency and primary care services at local level.

### Hands-on distribution

The project intends to deliver the multi-lingual health message in an interesting way - one third via community venues, a further third through information and health outlets and the final third with a Platform member attached! The ideas is to call door to door with some of the leaflets and visiting members of ethnic minority communities and providing an outreach into housing estates and smaller towns outside Letterkenny to link people to supports, services and into the Intercultural Platform.

**Volunteers wanted:** If you would like to help in this project and distribute copies of the bulletin in your community or to ethnic minority community organisations and associations, or if you would like to join the platform and get involved in our wider work - please...

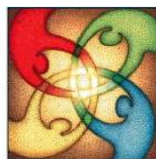
Call/text 0860841433 or email us on [donegalip@gmail.com](mailto:donegalip@gmail.com)

## Join us in the fight for an intercultural Ireland

The Intercultural Platform is committed to helping establish a more inclusive, welcoming and anti-racist society. We are a voluntary Non Governmental Organisation (NGO) that welcomes people who are interested in building inclusion and equality in Donegal and in promoting Human Rights and opposing discrimination and racism.

### Representing the Priorities for Minorities...

We are widely recognised by minority communities and state agencies as the representative forum for intercultural inclusion and we have representatives on the Connecting for Life initiative, The Community Health Network, Donegal Women's Centre, The PEACE IV Partnership, DLDC Working Groups, Social Inclusion Measures Group, Social Inclusion Linkage Group (PPN) etc. Join or affiliate now! Text 0860841433; Find us on Facebook. Organisations can affiliate for small fee.



## iReporting system... gathering the facts about racist incidents across Ireland

The Donegal intercultural Platform are linking with their affiliate organisation ENAR Ireland (European Network Against Racism) to promote the on-line scheme for reporting racist incidents. We hope to establish a reporting centre along with Donegal Travellers Project in the new year.

Authored by Shane O'Curry (ENAR Ireland) and Dr Lucy Michael (Ulster University) the [iReport Racist Incident Reporting System](#) was launched in July 2013. Reports can be made directly through the website or through a partner organisation. Questions are designed to capture a large amount of detail about racist incidents, including information about where, when and how the incident occurred and details about the victim (s) and perpetrator(s). The system also captures information about why the incident has been perceived as racist, its impact on the victim and/or witnesses, and the interplay with age, gender, sexuality and disability.

The recording system has been designed to allow comparison with international patterns and to facilitate understandings of racism which are particular to the Irish context. Analysis of the data has been carried out by Dr. Lucy Michael in consultation with Shane O'Curry, Director of ENAR Ireland. Check out our next update for more details on this new project.



### Syrian Refugee clothing appeal

The Platform was happy to work with the Letterkenny Islamic Association over the summer months to promote, publicise and coordinate an urgent appeal on behalf of refugees from the Syrian Civil War living in camps in the middle east. The Islamic Association issued the appeal to try and gather clothes, blankets, over the counter medicines and toys for the families in good time before the winter rains (and in some areas snow as well) set in. Millions of Syrians are living in degrading and insanitary conditions in all the countries that border the Syrian Arab Republic and we hoped to be able to do something to help their plight. We set up collection centres in Falcarragh, Buncrana and Letterkenny and within three weeks we were able to fill two vans of goods for export. The Islamic centre was able to ensure that all the goods were delivered by the end of the summer period. The organisers extended their thanks to the platform and everyone who donated so generously. NB. The Islamic Centre also donated a large sum to benefit the Letterkenny Food Bank. Míle Buíochas achan nduine.



## Members meetings of 'Platform'

The members of the Intercultural Platform hold a monthly meeting to discuss issues, hear guest speakers and often we select special topics for debate and exploration. In the October meeting (26th at 5pm) we will be exploring the possibilities in partnering with the two resettlement workers, Marie and Fadl. We have drafted a range of joint actions and we hope to deliver on these over the coming 10 weeks. The actions will include a CAFÉ ARABIA cultural evening in Letterkenny, work with secondary schools students, training for pre-school staff in intercultural awareness and we are hoping members and friends of the Platform will 'sign up' to work on this.

If you have any ideas for special themes for discussion, films to share or speakers to invite please contact us via email or phone/text 0860841433

### Connecting with Bryson in a cross border cultural, ethnic understanding & engagement programme

The Intercultural Platform has partnered with the Bryson Charitable Group in Northern Ireland to work on a new mutual understanding initiative that will engage with people from a wide range of social, religious, ethnic and cultural backgrounds with the aim of building sustainable relationships, respect and understanding. The project called 'DARE to Lead Change' will involve the Platform, Bryson Charitable Group along with TIDES Training and Consultancy and is funded through the PEACE IV Programme managed by the Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB).

The project hopes undertake this work within Northern Ireland and the Border Counties through hosting workshops, large community dialogues, smaller café culture events and the establishment of a digital learning resource that can be used by individuals and communities. We hope to organise a special presentation on this project at our December members meeting.

