STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE TO BECOMING AN ANTI-RACIST ORGANISATION

FINGAL
INTEGRATION

Comhairle Contae
Fhine Gall
Fingal County
Council

Immigrant
Council of
Ireland

WHAT IS RACISM?

Racism is when an individual, group, structure, or institution intentionally or unintentionally abuses their power to the detriment of people because of their actual or perceived racialised background.

Racism in Ireland presents itself in many forms, some of which are influenced by global racism, with others more specific to an Irish context. The seven aspects of racism in Ireland are Anti-Black racism, Anti-Traveller racism, Anti-Roma racism, Anti-Muslim (Islamophobia) racism, Anti-Jewish (Anti-semitism) racism, anti-migrant (xenophobia) racism and gendered racism which is a simultaneous experience of both racism and sexism (Irish Network against Racism-Responding to Racism).

Racism can be individual, structural, institutional, and historical whether intentional or unintentional, and can have a serious impact on the health and well-being of those who experience it.

Racism in the workplace can come in many forms, be it through racist comments and language, or through discriminatory policy or practice.

RATIONALE

LEGAL CONTEXT:

There are two key pieces of legislation that employers are bound to uphold with regard to racism and discrimination in the workplace: The Employment Equality Act 1998 and the Equal Status Act 2000. The Employment Equality Act 1998 prohibits certain types of discrimination in private and public sector employment and the Equal Status Act 2000 prohibits racism and discrimination beyond the workplace and into the public arena for the provision and supply of goods and services. Employers are duty-bound to uphold both acts which prohibit discrimination under the nine grounds which are: Gender, Marital Status, Family Status, Age, Disability, Sexual Orientation, Race, Religion, and Membership of the Traveller Community.

THE PUBLIC SECTOR HUMAN RIGHTS AND EQUALITY DUTY

The Public Sector Human Rights and Equality Duty is a legal obligation for public bodies to eliminate discrimination, promote equality of opportunity, and protect the human rights of employees and service users. It requires public bodies to be proactive. You can learn more about Public Sector Duty here: https://www.ihrec.ie/our-work/public-sector-duty/

RACISM ON THE RISE:

Unfortunately, racism is on the rise in Ireland (INAR iReport data report, 2022), but it is not a new phenomenon. It is necessary to understand the forms of racism that are present in Ireland. For further reading on racism in Ireland, check out the Understanding Racism: Defining Racism in an Irish Context by the Irish Network against Racism-Responding to Racism which can be found here: https://inar.ie/understanding-racism-in-ireland/

DIVERSIFICATION OF IRELAND'S POPULATION

Over the last number of years, Ireland has become an increasingly culturally diverse place. Cultural diversity is about appreciating that society is made up of many different groups with different interests' skills, talents, and needs. It also means that you recognise that people in the society can have different religious beliefs and sexual orientations.

WHAT IS CULTURAL DIVERSIFICATION IN THE WORKPLACE?

At work, cultural diversity means developing a workforce that is not only comprised of, but values, employees from different cultures. Diversity does mean people of different "races", ethnicities, gender identities, and sexual orientations but it also goes beyond surface-level diversity. Regardless of ethnicity, it is important to recognise everyone as an individual.
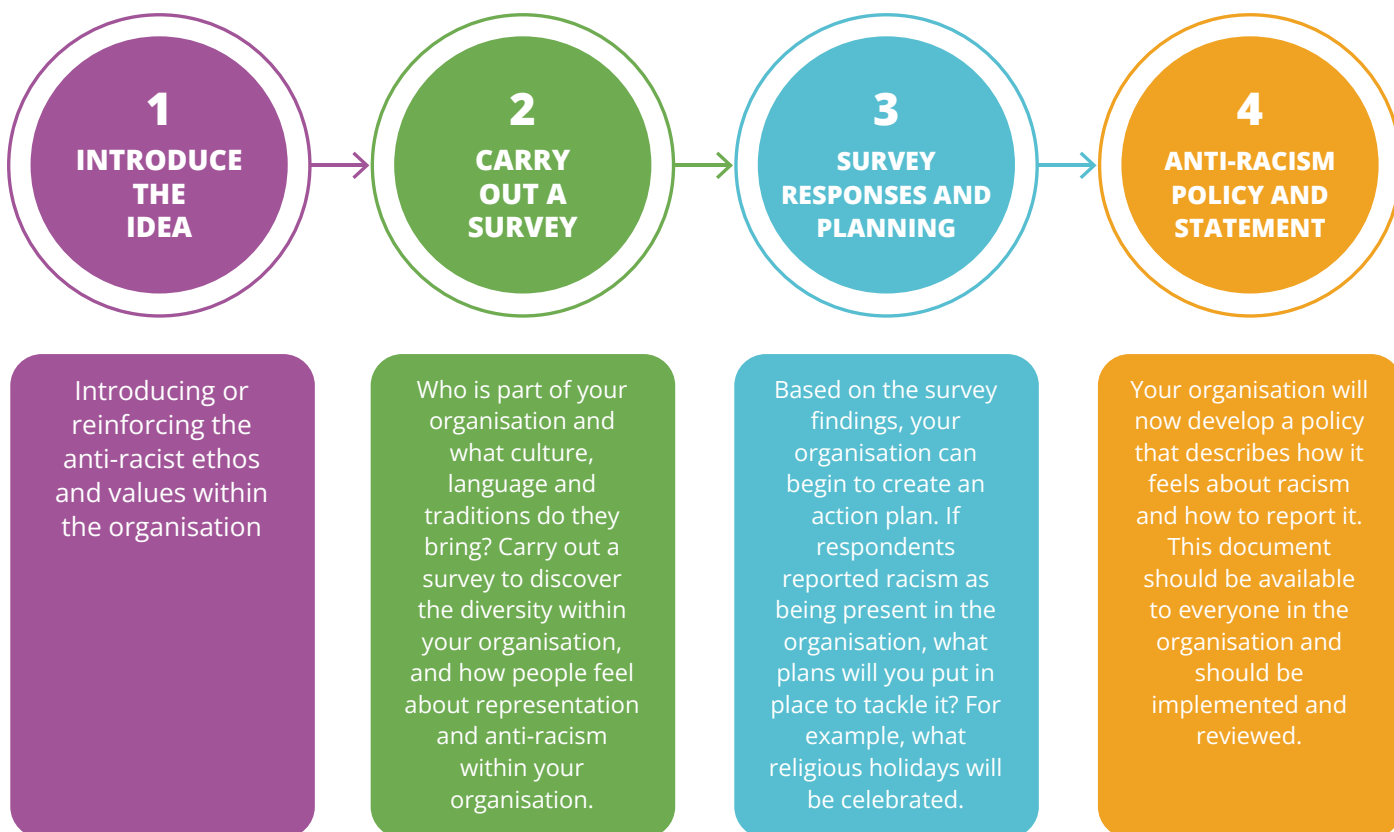
The benefits of cultural diversity can only be realised where a successful integration of different cultures is achieved in the workplace. Integration means doing business in a way that values all cultures in the workplace and enables the contribution of all cultures to business success in a context characterised by non-discrimination, inclusion, and equality.

Integrated workplaces are free from discrimination and harassment, acknowledge and provide for cultural and linguistic diversity among employees and customers, make adjustments for diversity among all migrant workers and other black and minority ethnic employees including those with disabilities, take practical steps in order to achieve full equality in practice for all migrant workers, and other black minority ethnic employees and communicate a message promoting greater equality within the wider culturally diverse community served by the business.

Find out more about intercultural workplaces on the IHREC website here: https://www.ihrec.ie/guides-and-tools/human-rights-and-equality-for-employers/promoting-human-rights-and-equality-in-intercultural-workplaces/

DEVELOPING A STEP -BY -STEP GUIDE TO BECOMING AN ANTI-RACIST ORGANSATION

The aim of this guide is to support organisations and community groups across Fingal in becoming actively anti-racist through a set of steps that can be implemented in your work or voluntary space so that it is a welcoming and proactive place for everyone.

1 INTRODUCE THE IDEA	2 CARRY OUT A SURVEY	3 SURVEY RESPONSES AND PLANNING	4 ANTI-RACISM POLICY AND STATEMENT
Introducing or reinforcing the anti-racist ethos and values within the organisation	Who is part of your organisation and what culture, language and traditions do they bring? Carry out a survey to discover the diversity within your organisation, and how people feel about representation and anti-racism within your organisation.	Based on the survey findings, your organisation can begin to create an action plan. If respondents reported racism as being present in the organisation, what plans will you put in place to tackle it? For example, what religious holidays will be celebrated.	Your organisation will now develop a policy that describes how it feels about racism and how to report it. This document should be available to everyone in the organisation and should be implemented and reviewed.

1. Introduce the idea: Decide on and make your organisation aware of its anti-racist ethos. Your organisation may wish to collaborate with others to kick-start the process of becoming actively anti-racist. Invite people from across your community to join in your awareness-raising exercise. Ensure that everybody is aware and welcome. Your kickoff day may include but is not limited to, presentations from community groups or leaders, learning sessions and introductions to cultural awareness, and inviting community or anti-racism leaders into your space. Make sure that everyone is aware of your organisation's commitment by creating posters for your notice board and newsletter. Investment from senior management, team leaders, and managers is important here to ensure a top-down approach, modeling behavior and attitudes that organisations would like to see in employees.

2. Carry out a survey: This is a good way to understand how people feel within a given organisation. An Anti-Racism Survey allows an organisation to assess the level of awareness, understand the attitudes or perceptions and provide elements that will guide the Anti-Racism Policy. A sample survey can be found here: https://qrco.de/beIfr3

3. Survey response and planning: At this point, the organisation will reflect on the findings of the survey to identify strengths and weaknesses in relation to inclusion or racism within the organisation. It will provide an opportunity for your organisation to come up with ideas to ensure the workspace is welcoming and inclusive. It will also support the organisation in identifying if racism is an issue, which should prompt you to consider how your organisation deals with reports of racism. It is crucial that management is involved at this stage to model the organisations' vision when it comes to anti-racism and discrimination.

4. Anti-Racism policy and statement: When developing your anti-racism policy, it should express how the organisation feels about racism and how it tackles racist incidents, behaviors, policies, and processes. It should be implemented, reviewed, and make clear the process of reporting, follow-up care, etc. It may also choose to develop an anti-racist mission statement and tangible actions.

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