

Migrants and Equality & Diversity

Are you involved in developing or refreshing your Local Authority's Equality and Diversity strategy? Are you being consulted? Are you not being consulted, when you feel you should be? Do you want to make sure that new migrant communities are included? Or are you working on your council's standards for procurement and contracting out of services? Are you concerned with the diversity of your council's workforce and keen to ensure it reflects the community you serve? This briefing is for you. You may be:

- An officer or elected member with responsibility for equality and diversity
- An officer or elected member with responsibility for human resources or procurement
- An officer in an equality network or group
- A neighbourhood manager
- A voluntary or community organisation involved with equality, diversity and cohesion in your area
- A migrant organisation

Equality and Diversity: what is the problem?

Local authorities are required by the [Public Sector Equality Duty](#), created by the Equalities Act 2010, to have **due regard** to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, **advance** equality of opportunities and **foster good relations** between communities.

The Act does not specifically mention migrants, but they will normally be protected from discrimination under the Act, even if they are white, on grounds of race, which is understood to include nationality and national origins, as well as colour, race and ethnicity.

Nevertheless, some current measures of race equality may not adequately cover new migrants, while the specific needs of new arrivals may be overlooked if they are not distinguished from those of more established communities. Of course, new arrivals will have different needs from members of their own group who are already established in the UK.

The closely related area of community cohesion, which should help foster good relations, is addressed by another leaflet in this series.

Time to review

Four years after the Equality Duty came into force in 2011, a number of local authorities, including Kirklees and Bradford, are reviewing and refreshing their equality and diversity strategies. Strategies need to adjust to the likely impact of continued austerity on communities, as well as on local authorities themselves. 82% of Chief Executives think some Local Authorities will fail to deliver essential services in next 5 Years¹. Local authorities will be considering the equality implications of shrinking workforces and services increasingly being delivered by partners or contractors. Councils are changing their relationship with “the citizen” and communities and moving to one based on collaboration. Meanwhile the populations local authorities serve are changing as immigration continues at relatively high levels.

Benefits of managing Equality and Diversity well

If groups, such as migrants, are properly identified and their needs addressed according to an effective Equality and Diversity strategy, a local authority can:

- prevent discrimination and litigation without “tick-boxing”;
- develop services that better meet users’ needs, improving public satisfaction;
- develop more efficient and cost-effective services;
- demonstrate the values it professes to uphold;
- deliver good quality information that leads to better decision-making and policy development.

Applied to a local authority’s workforce, an effective Equality and Diversity strategy can:

- create a supportive working environment that increases productivity.
- develop a more representative organisation that draws on and retain a broader range of talent.
- foster innovation through the “diversity of thought” generated by diverse teams.

An Equality and Diversity strategy for a local authority requires attention to two main dimensions: firstly, an outward facing dimension, demonstrating public commitment to Equalities and Diversity, engaging communities in a range of ways and ensuring equality in services, both those provided by the authority and those contracted out. Eurocities found in its work with European cities that strong political and senior management leadership was always vital². The second is an inward-facing, corporate dimension focussed on the

¹ The Local State We’re In, 2015. PWC. 2015. <http://www.pwc.co.uk/government-public-sector/local-government/publications/local-state-were-in/index.jhtml>

² Managing diversity and promoting equality in cities’ administration and service provision, Eurocities, 2014. http://www.integratingcities.eu/integrating-cities/resources/implementing_toolkits ; Integrating Cities toolkit: anti-discrimination policies, Eurocities, 2012 <http://www.migrationwork.org/resources/>

workforce and covering leadership & coordination, monitoring & evaluation and staff development and inclusion.

Local authorities need to make an explicit commitment to ensuring that the composition of their workforce reflects the diversity of their residents across all staff levels. In order to do this, they may need to review their monitoring and evaluation schemes to be sure data needed about migrants is gathered and recorded. Some migrant communities, particularly those that have recently arrived, or Roma, for example, may be under-represented at all levels. Different strategies may be needed to encourage and support applications, including ensuring that visual materials represent the full range of communities. Some describe “climbing a mountain that is diverse in the lower levels of the organisation but white at the top” and they may need tailored support, such as English language or buddying/mentoring schemes.

Involving migrants in developing and delivering services is essential, and emphasises that their role is about solving rather than causing problems. Eurocities provides comprehensive guidance on [making participation effective in diverse neighbourhoods](#) and [engaging migrant communities in policy-making processes](#). Consultation should be as much about finding out what migrants can contribute to the area as about enabling the authority to find out about migrants’ views.

Dos and don'ts

- ✓ **Do** actively demonstrate the Local Authority's commitment by adopting an explicit strategy to promote diversity and prevent discrimination, backed by a set of actions designed to ensure equal opportunities for migrants.
- ✓ **Do** ensure the equality and diversity strategy has political backing at the highest level, and is implemented by managers with sufficient seniority to coordinate different departments effectively, such as the Chief Executive.
- ✓ **Do** involve a cross section of the whole work force in reviewing and refreshing the local authority's equality & diversity strategy.
- ✓ **Do** look for innovative ways of communicating with migrant communities, such as mobile phone technology. Bradford's housing department successfully reduced its waiting list by several thousand people by sending SMS messages to hard to reach clients. The offer of free mobile phone charging can be a way of getting contact details.
- ✓ **Do** look for different ways of becoming better informed about migrant communities, such as by drawing on the knowledge of Council employees living in those communities.
- ✓ **Do** ensure that procurement rules support partnership bids and break large contracts into discrete elements that small migrant-run organisations could tender for.
- ✓ **Do** ensure that contractors for services are required to apply the same equality and diversity standards in recruitment and service delivery that would be expected of the local authority.
- ✓ **Do** review the city's monitoring and evaluation systems, both of workforce and service delivery to and ensure that data are gathered on migrants

- × **Don't** fall into the trap of thinking that equality is a luxury at a time of austerity: inclusive workforces are happier, more innovative and more productive, while good communication and dialogue with communities can lead to more effective and efficient services.
- × **Don't** assume that the migrant communities with the loudest voices are those with the greatest needs: look for new ways of reaching the quieter communities or members of communities, such as women and children.
- × **Don't** assume that diversity issues have been resolved once the local authority has appointed a BAME Chief Executive or people from migrant communities have been elected as Councillors.
- × **Don't** overlook the basics: many staff in one workshop agreed that a key characteristic of an inclusive manager was simply saying hello to you in the morning.

Examples of good practice

Barnsley commissioned a small social enterprise, 360 Engagement to support the city's equality forums. The Race Equality Forum is represented within public services by 12 'delegates', selected by an independent process. The term 'delegate' is used, in light of past experience, to make it clear that their remit is broader than a single community. A development programme includes support for interpreting and transport (although not funded), and meetings are arranged at convenient times. The Forum usually meets on a Saturday. After a delegate assigned to the education department mentioned a problem with school attendance, a booklet was created for new arrivals explaining that all children not only had the right but were also obliged to go to school.

<http://www.360engagement.co.uk/page4.php>

'**Munich** loves Diversity! The southern German city's backs up its jaunty slogan with comprehensive integration strategy known as the "Intercultural Integration Concept". Every three years the city publishes a report that shows how far people with a "migrant background"³ are integrated in education, the labour market and other areas of social policy and highlights where continuing disadvantage or discrimination needs addressing. In 2013 over 90% of residents surveyed from both migrant and non-migrant backgrounds reported feeling "comfortable" or "very comfortable" with their city's "intercultural climate".

<http://citiesofmigration.ca/elibrary/munich-the-intercultural-integration-concept-outline/>
http://www.muenchen.de/rathaus/dms/Home/Stadtverwaltung/Sozialreferat/wohnungsa mt/Interkult/Der-Integrationsbericht-im--berblick_english/Der%20Integrationsbericht%20im%20Ueberblick.pdf

In **Manchester**, leadership on equality and diversity comes from the very top of the council. It forms the core of the deputy leader's portfolio, elected councillors champion each aspect of equality and the deputy chief executive has overall responsibility for delivery. All subcontracted service providers must meet equality performance standards. Emphasis is placed on partnership with voluntary groups, communities and business to improve services and migrants are represented on the Manchester Equality Hub and Partnership Board. Shared priorities and actions are agreed with partners and progress on a set of indicators is monitored in an Annual State of the City report.

www.manchester.gov.uk/info/200041/equality_and_diversity

Vienna's population with a "migrant background" rocketed from 9% in 1995 to 45% in 2008. Tensions were inevitable, but social housing provider Wohnpartner, whose neighbourhood support services include conflict resolution, has a 'Lived Diversity' strategy that sees conflict as an indicator of social change, a way to better understand diverse and

³ The term "migrant background" is widely used in Europe, but has no clear or fixed definition. In Germany it can include children of a couple where at least one parent was born abroad.

changing needs and develop better services. It works with tenant groups, local communities and grassroots initiatives and helps residents talk to city authorities. In one initiative staff cycled around housing estates talking to residents, which led to a greater focus on mothers with young children. www.eu-mia.eu/cases/vie_infosheet

The French city of **Nantes** has a highly structured approach to engaging with migrant communities. The Council for the Citizenship of Foreigners (CNCE), does not just advise city councillors, but develops proposals jointly with them, municipal departments and other partners. Councillors request that a problem be analysed or task carried out and the CNCE has to come up with a “citizens’ opinion”. In return, councillors are obliged to consult the departments concerned, evaluate the feasibility of the CNCE proposals and prepare a reasoned response with clear commitments by the city.

<http://www.nantes.fr/home/a-vous-nantes/dialogue-citoyen/conseils/conseil-nantais-pour-la-citoyenn.html>

An initiative in **Birmingham** is targeted specifically at migrants. The city works with local civil society organisations to provide ‘Places of Welcome’, offering local information, contact and assistance for new arrivals. All the organisations in the network sign up to the “5P” principles, which are about providing a place to mingle informally; an unconditional welcome in a relaxed environment; basic refreshments; local information and signposting to key organisations and services; and encouraging newcomers to participate by sharing their talents, experiences and skills.

<http://www.placesofwelcome.org/>

Help!

- Migration Yorkshire - www.migrationyorkshire.org.uk
- The Human Rights and Equalities Commission www.equalityhumanrights.com has lots of clear guidance on Local Authorities' duties under the Equality Act 2010. Although it predates the Act, the Commission's 2009 research report provides a helpful overview of equality with respect to migrants, The Equality Implications of Being a Migrant in Britain by Eleanor Kofman et al. www.equalityhumanrights.com/sites/default/files/documents/research/19_the-equality-implications-of-being-a-migrant-in-britain.pdf
- The web site of the Equality and Diversity Forum (www.edf.org.uk), a network of national organisations committed to equal opportunities, social justice, good community relations, respect for human rights and an end to discrimination, is an excellent resource and its information bank has a specific section on refugees and migrants (<http://www.edf.org.uk/blog/?tag=refugeesmigrants>). See also its briefing for local authorities on Refugee, Migrants and the Equalities Act 2010, June 2011. www.dianaprincessofwalesmemorialfund.org/sites/default/files/documents/publications/EDF%20Briefing_Public%20Authorities_Web_draft%203.pdf
- Managing diversity and promoting equality in cities' administration and service provision is one of four toolkits produced by Eurocities for the Integrating Cities Implementing project that cover many areas of practice associated with equality and diversity and include good practice from all over Europe. They are available at www.integratingcities.eu/integrating-cities/resources/implementing_toolkits
- More toolkits and other resources are available on MigrationWork's website, including Integrating Cities toolkits on Anti-discrimination policies, Promoting Cultural Diversity and Introductory and language courses. <http://www.migrationwork.org/resources/>

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