

Towards a  
City of Equals



Galway City Partnership, 3rd Floor The Plaza, Headford Road, Galway, Ireland  
Telephone 091 773466, Fax 091 773468, Web [www.gcp.ie](http://www.gcp.ie)



Galway City Partnership  
Comhpháirtíocht Cathrach na Gaillimhe



Galway City Development Board  
Bord Forbartha Cathrach na Gaillimhe



DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL AND COMMUNITY WELFARE

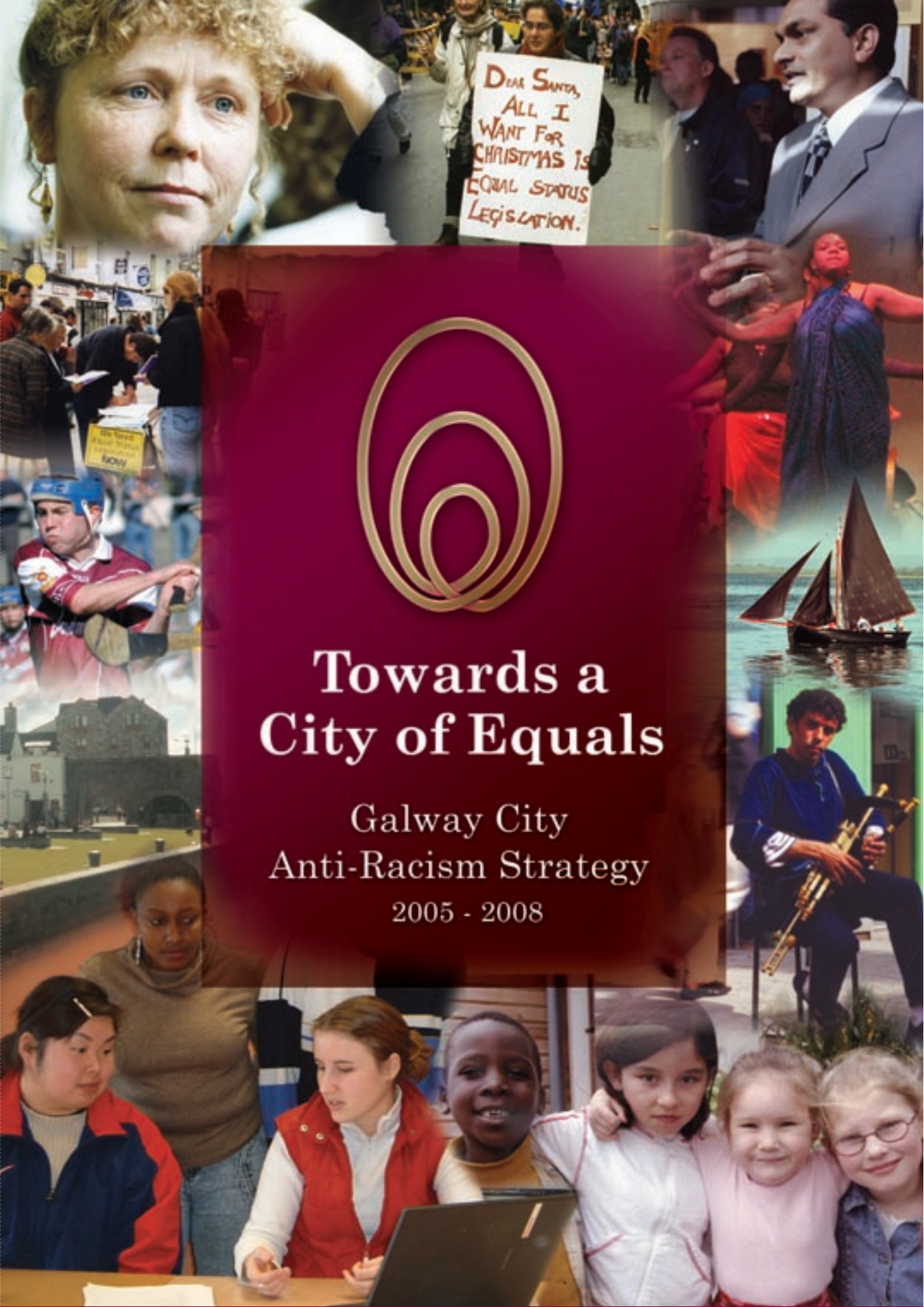


KNOW  
RACISM  
The National Anti-Racism  
Awareness Programme



RAPID

GALWAY CITY PARTNERSHIP



# Towards a City of Equals

Galway City  
Anti-Racism Strategy  
2005 - 2008



# Towards a City of Equals

## Galway City Anti-Racism Strategy

2005 - 2008

### Vision

*Galway City - An Intercultural City Free of Racism - Let's Do It!*

### Mission

*To eliminate racism from Galway City.*

### Aim

*To welcome diversity, eliminate racism, and promote interculturalism.*

## Introduction

Galway City Partnership is pleased to introduce *Towards A City Of Equals – Galway City Anti-Racism Strategy 2005-2008*, the first initiative of its kind in Ireland. The strategy is the outcome of an extensive research and consultation process commenced in 2003 which sought to identify a collective and strategic response to combating racism and promoting interculturalism locally.

The development of this anti-racism strategy has been informed by a number of core principles:

- **The Need to Combat Racism** to ensure that racism is challenged and ultimately eliminated.
- **Racism and Human Rights** that racism is understood as an abuse of the Human Rights of the person experiencing racism.
- **Protection** to ensure that racism is recognised as a crime in both Irish and international law, and to ensure that those experiencing racism are afforded the full protection of the law.
- **Interculturalism** to ensure that Galway City becomes an intercultural society by promoting equality, respect, and understanding between all communities.
- **Community Development** to ensure that the principles of community development are central in any approach to combat racism.

## Context

Recent years have seen an increase in the diversity in Ireland and in Galway City. The latest Census of Population (2002) estimates that there are a total of 224,261 people that identify their nationality as non-Irish living in Ireland, accounting for just over 5.5% of the overall population. The corresponding figure for Galway City is 5,972, accounting for approximately 9% of the overall population. This broadening of diversity is to be warmly welcomed. However, this increase in diversity has also seen an increase in racism and racist incidents in Ireland and in

Galway City. The fact that this needs to be addressed and challenged was identified by a number of organisations working with minority groups in the City and it was in this context that *Towards a City of Equals – Galway City Anti-Racism Strategy* was developed.

### What is Racism?

Racism is a specific form of discrimination and exclusion faced by cultural and ethnic minorities. It is based on the false belief that some 'races' are inherently superior to others because of different skin colour, nationality, ethnic or cultural background. Racism denies people their basic human rights, equality, and respect. This is the understanding of racism that is used by *Planning for Diversity - the National Action Plan Against Racism* and is the one adopted by *Towards a City of Equals - Galway City Anti-Racism Strategy*.

There are essentially 2 forms of racism – individual racism and institutional racism:

**Individual Racism** includes offensive acts or comments based on colour, religion, nationality, or ethnicity of the individual experiencing racism. These acts and comments are designed to intimidate, insult or humiliate and can take the form of verbal abuse, attacks on the person, discrimination and prejudice.

**Institutional Racism** acknowledges, at least to an extent, that society and the political system are responsible for racism. Institutional racism can have two causes:

- When members of ethnic minority groups are *deliberately* discriminated against by institutions
- When institutions *inadvertently* discriminate against members of ethnic minorities by failing to plan for their diverse needs.

### Who experiences Racism?

- Travellers on the basis of their distinct and nomadic identity.
- Recent migrants, which includes labour migrants, refugees, asylum-seekers and overseas students studying in Ireland.

- 'People of colour' and minority ethnic groups, including black people, on the basis of their skin colour and ethnic and/or national identity, irrespective of their legal status.
- Jews and Muslims in the form of anti-Semitism and Islamophobia.

## What are the effects of Racism?

Racism against the individual can result in loss of life and serious personal injury; criminal damage to property, including to homes; long-term health problems, including mental health problems; relocation of homes by those who have experienced racism, sometimes to another country. It can also cause low self-esteem, low self-worth, restrict life chances and reduce expectations in relation to education, employment and health status. It can result in people being 'othered' and being taught that they do not belong. Group effects can include an increased risk of living in poverty, an increased risk of being unemployed or being in low-skilled employment, an increased risk of poor education attainment, and an increased risk of a poor health status at collective group level.

### What is happening at a national level?

*Planning for Diversity – The National Action Plan Against Racism 2005-2008* was launched in 2005. The overall aim of the action plan is to provide strategic direction to combat racism and to develop a more inclusive, intercultural society in Ireland. Planning for Diversity will now provide the framework within which racism will be challenged and interculturalism promoted.

### What is happening in Galway City?

Galway City is leading the way by being the first area to produce a local anti-racism strategy. Essentially, the strategy represents a plan of action to combat racism and promote interculturalism across all sectors of the city over the coming years.

### Why Interculturalism?

Interculturalism is essentially about creating the conditions for interaction, equality of opportunity, understanding and respect between all cultures and ethnic groups, without glossing over issues such as racism in the belief that Irish society as a whole will benefit and be enriched. Included in this notion is the need to plan for diversity, not as an add-on or as an afterthought, which would mean an ad hoc approach to planning for a more diverse society, but by design. To take this approach will ensure the development of a more inclusive society, a society where racism is eliminated, where cultural diversity is accommodated and celebrated, and where positive action to support the full equality of minority groups is provided for. This approach has been fully adopted by *Towards a City of Equals* in its vision to achieve an intercultural city free of racism.

### What can I do now?

**You are now encouraged to express your solidarity with and commitment to *Towards A City Of Equals* by signing the enclosed Declaration and return it to Galway City Partnership.**

## Summary of the Action Plan for the Galway City Anti-Racism Strategy

There are a total of thirty-three actions in the Galway City Anti-Racism Strategy to be implemented between 2005 and 2008. These are summarised below:

### INTERCULTURAL FRAMEWORK

#### Theme 1 Protection

*Enhancing protection against racism.*

- Objective 1.1 To ensure adequate protection and legal redress for those experiencing racism in Galway City
- Objective 1.2 To create the appropriate environment for challenging racism and promoting interculturalism locally, nationally and at EU level

#### Theme 2 Inclusion

*Ensuring economic inclusion and equality.*

- Objective 2.1 To facilitate the development of an intercultural ethos in all local organisations in the public, private and voluntary sectors
- Objective 2.2 To ensure there is a focus on the impact of poverty
- Objective 2.3 To ensure that national initiatives are facilitated at local level

#### Theme 3 Provision

*Accommodating cultural diversity in service provision.*

- Objective 3.1 To foster an environment of intercultural learning throughout Galway City
- Objective 3.2 To ensure equal access to all services by ethnic minorities
- Objective 3.3 To promote the further development of dedicated support services and facilities for ethnic minorities

#### Theme 4 Recognition

*Recognition and awareness of cultural diversity and racism.*

- Objective 4.1 To reduce racism in Galway City through raising local awareness on cultural diversity and interculturalism
- Objective 4.2 To develop and celebrate the cultural diversity of Galway City

#### Theme 5 Participation

*Enhancing the participation of cultural and ethnic minorities in Irish society.*

- Objective 5.1 To achieve effective participation by ethnic minorities and immigrants in the political, community and local development processes.

1

2

3

4

5