



NEWS REPORT

Date:	21 March 2011
Expert:	Orlagh O'Farrell
Title:	Disproportionate budget cuts to Traveller education services
Country:	Ireland
<u>Context</u>	
Issue at stake:	Disproportionate budget cuts to Traveller education services
Ground of discrimination:	Race/ ethnic origin
Source:	Political development
Field:	(employment, social protection, social advantages, access to goods and services, education, housing, other)

Content

Political development: Traveller bodies say that massive cuts in Traveller education services are discriminatory.

On International Day Against Racism (March 21st) traveller bodies said that it needs to acknowledge that discrimination is still a reality for many Travellers living in Ireland. They pointed out that a survey carried out in 2007/2008 by Fr. Michael MacGréil and published last year, *Emancipation of the Travelling People*, documented that Travellers experience widespread discrimination and racism in Irish society. The survey found that 60.1% of respondents would not welcome a Traveller into the family because of their "way of life". In addition, 79.6% of those surveyed responded that they "would be reluctant to buy a house next door to a Traveller." The All Ireland Traveller Health Study published by UCD in 2010 also found that over 60% of Travellers felt they had been discriminated against in school.

Martin Collins, Director of Pavee Point, drew attention to the draconian cuts to the Traveller Education Service which the Department of Education announced for 2011. These include:

- Withdrawal of Resource Teachers for Travellers at Primary level
- Withdrawal of teaching hours for Travellers in post primary

- Withdrawal of Visiting Teacher for Travellers (Sept 2011)
- Phasing out of Senior Traveller Training Centres (June 2011)

Mr Collins said: “I’m hugely disappointed with the cuts to the Traveller Education Service announced in the budget last November. I find it unbelievable that any government could justify 66% of the cutbacks in resource teachers (800 of 1200 posts) at one of the most marginalised communities in Irish society and I call on the new Minister for Education to reverse these proposed cuts in Traveller educational supports and to implement the recommendations of the Traveller Education Strategy. We must all work together-Traveller children, Traveller parents, teachers and policy makers to change the situation whereby less than 1% of the Traveller community make it to third level education and only 10% of Travellers who enrol in post-primary education complete it. Travellers have begun to value education more highly and realise that it can be a passport to a better future for their community. We need to support them to stay in the education system and not remove the very supports which have begun to have a positive impact.”

Internet link source and additional information: (no newspaper links)