



## NEWS REPORT

<b>Update of flash report nr:</b>	1099-IE-25
<b>Date:</b>	12 October 2011
<b>Expert:</b>	Orlagh O'Farrell
<b>Title:</b>	Irish Equality Authority intervenes in Traveller school admissions case
<b>Country:</b>	Ireland
<b>Context</b>	
<b>Issue at stake:</b>	Irish Equality Authority to be heard as amicus curiae for only the third time in a High Court appeal in the Traveller school admissions case
<b>Ground of discrimination:</b>	Race/ ethnic origin
<b>Source:</b>	National equality body
<b>Field:</b>	Access to education
<b>Legislative provisions:</b>	
<b>Content</b>	

**Case** (short summary of facts) The Irish Equality Authority has successfully applied to the Irish High Court to intervene in the Stokes Traveller school admissions appeal. Mrs Mary Stokes, with the assistance of the Irish Traveller Movement Law Centre, is appealing a decision of the Clonmel Circuit Court in favour of Christian Brothers College (CBC).

In December 2010, Mrs Stokes brought a case before the Irish Equality Tribunal on behalf of her son John who had been denied admission to CBC. Mrs Stokes, a member of the Traveller community, alleged that the admissions criteria for the secondary school indirectly discriminated against Travellers. The school's admission policy favoured applicants on the basis of three criteria: those who were Catholic, had attended a local primary school and whose father or older sibling had attended the school. While John met the first two criteria, he did not meet the third. Although the Equality Tribunal found in favour of Mrs Stokes, on appeal Circuit Court Judge Teehan found in favour of CBC.

The fact of the Equality Authority's intervention is significant, as it is only the third time that the organisation has made such an application. Such amicus curiae (friend of the Court) applications are still rare in Ireland, compared to other jurisdictions such as England and Wales.

**Decision of the Court:** There has been no hearing of the High Court case yet

**Internet link source and additional information:**

<http://www.pila.ie/bulletin/latestbulletin/2011/09/21/irish-equality-authority-intervenes-in-traveller-school-admissions-case/>