

## AGIY launch four new publications

Beginning on 30 June in Dublin and culminating on 26 July in London, the Action Group for Irish Youth (AGIY) is launching four new publications.

### Educational Equivalents

On 30 June 1993 AGIY launched a new leaflet, aimed at young Irish people and their advisers, providing information on English equivalents to Irish educational and training qualifications.

At the launch at the Dail, the Minister for Education, **Ms Niamh Bhreathnach TD**, said that she was *"concerned that young Irish people are fully informed of the value of their educational and training qualifications"* and was anxious to ensure that *"the high level of attainment achieved by Irish young people receives its full recognition at home and abroad"*.

### Racial Attacks and Racial Discrimination

On 8 July 1993, AGIY launched two publications on a common theme: the Irish experience of Racism in Britain.

The two documents, a report **"Racial Attacks and Harassment of Irish People"** and a leaflet **"Racial Discrimination and Irish People: How to make a Complaint against Racial Discrimination"** place the Irish experience in Britain in the context of Race and Racism and highlight that experience and offer a starting point in combating anti-Irish racism.

At the launch, speeches were heard from Martin Tucker, AGIY; Angela Campbell, a successful Irish complainant against racial discrimination;

Chris Boothman, Director, Legal Division, CRE, Andrew Zimuto, Chair, Racial Discrimination Legal Defence Fund; and Marc Wadsworth, National Secretary, Anti-Racist Alliance (ARA).

Marc Wadsworth in welcoming the publications said that the Black and Irish communities have common experiences of injustice and struggle and that the message must be got across to the respective communities *"we stand together against racial intolerance or we'll fall separately."*

The two documents are reported in more detail on the inside pages.

### Identity Crisis

On 26 July 1993 at the National Council for Voluntary Organisations, AGIY are launching **"Identity Crisis: Access to Social Security and ID Checks."**

This report, which follows the theme of racism and discrimination, demonstrates how rules regarding the verification of ID are used to discriminate against Irish people and serve to deny access to social security entitlement.

The report also shows how the same rules discriminate against Travellers, single homeless people and Black people.

The report suggests ways of establishing practices and procedures that would assist in ensuring equal treatment of people who are entitled to claim social security benefit and outlines ways of improving service to claimants.

Speakers at the launch will be: **Robin Richardson**, The Runnymede Trust; **Beth Lakhani**, Child Poverty Action Group; **Heather Petch**, CHAR; and **Mike Garnett**, Benefits Agency.

The report is available from AGIY, 5-15 Cromer St., London. WC1H 8LS and is priced at **£4.95** (Inclusive of postage and packing).

# "Racial Attacks and Harassment of Irish People."

This report which is based on AGIY's submission to the Home Affairs Select Committee Inquiry into Racial Attacks and Harassment.

The report represents evidence of racial attacks and harassment of Irish people in Britain today.

It provides case histories from all over the country that demonstrate the level of hostility and anti-Irish prejudice that the established Irish community in Britain is subjected to.

It examines the response of the police and relevant governmental bodies to the problems of racial attacks on Irish people.

It highlights the failure of the authorities, both at local and national level to recognise and acknowledge such incidences as anti-Irish in nature and origin or to take appropriate steps to challenge and appropriately deal with such attacks on Irish people.

In particular, it highlights the failure of the authorities to protect or safeguard Irish people or to support them in their efforts to seek recompense when reporting incidences of racial attack and harassment to the appropriate authorities.

It makes a series of recommendations to various authorities on what steps should be taken to address the issues raised in the report.

The report argues that Racism results in prejudicial and discriminatory treatment of people causing a denial of social and economic rights.

Racism also results in racial attack, harassment, victimisation, intimidation, and fear. Irish people, together with other ethnic groups in this country, have experienced racial abuse, racial harassment, and racial attacks.

## Racial Attacks and Harassment of Irish People

Written by  
Joan O'Flynn, Dave Murphy and Martin Tucker.

Produced by

**AGIY** ACTION GROUP  
FOR IRISH YOUTH

"Racial Attacks and Harassment of Irish People" highlights incidences such as verbal abuse including name-calling, spitting, hate mail, physical assault and injury including that in schools by older children on younger Irish children, damage to Irish people's homes, graffiti,

bullying by teachers, damage to Irish community premises, intimidation, attacks on women and children, and attacks on Irish elders.

The ten case studies quoted in the report illustrate the endemic nature of anti-Irish racial attacks in Britain.

In its recommendations the report emphasises the crucial need for the Irish community to be recognised and included as a distinct ethnic group and monitored as a separate category in all equal opportunity programmes.

Only then can proper statistics be produced to quantify the level of disadvantage, discrimination, and racism that the Irish community experience.

Only then can effective action plans and programmes be initiated to tackle this disadvantage, discrimination, and racism.

The report also calls on the Home Office to sponsor research into the hidden and overt ways that anti-Irish racism is expressed, its origins and consequences and should seek to extend understanding of why it appears to be more socially acceptable than some other forms of racism.

It also recommends that a new offence of racial harassment should be introduced.

The report can be obtained from AGIY at a cost of **£3.00** (inclusive of postage and packing)

# Racial Discrimination: How to make a complaint

The leaflet "**Racial Discrimination and Irish people How to make a Complaint against Racial Discrimination**" was launched together with the report on racial attacks.

The reason behind producing such a document is, again, an acknowledgement that Irish people do face Racism, and do experience Racial Discrimination whether that is in employment, housing, access to benefits, or provision of services.

The leaflet is intended to be an introduction to the concept that Irish people can and do experience Racial Discrimination and is intended to offer a starting point for Irish people who have experienced Racial Discrimination.

This experience can be a stressful, hurtful, and painful one which can have serious effects and consequences for individuals.

The leaflet tries to help those who have been discriminated against and those who they turn to for help and advice.

The leaflet sets out to answer these questions:

- What is Racial Discrimination?

- Can Irish people suffer Racial Discrimination?
- What are my rights?
- How and where can I get help?
- What happens when I make a complaint?

There are a number of precedents of Irish people successfully making complaints against racial discrimination, there are four such quoted in the leaflet.

Despite these precedents however, there is still a need to support Irish people who feel they may have been discriminated against.

This leaflet, together with training sessions for advice workers, is viewed as a starting point in enabling and supporting Irish people make successful complaints against racial discrimination. At the London Irish Youth Forum meeting in September, an Introductory Training Workshop on Racial Discrimination will be held.

AGIY together with the Racial Discrimination Legal Defence Fund will be providing a series of training programmes and workshops for workers and volunteers in Irish community groups and agencies to enable them to identify racial discrimination and to support Irish people to make complaints against racial discrimination.

The leaflet is free to members of the London Irish Youth Forum, only postage and

packing costs will be charged. For other organisations please contact AGIY as we are willing to negotiate costs for bulk orders.

## MTS Training Developments

The EEC and several London Boroughs have been resourcing the Migrant Training scheme (MTS) since 1989. MTS provides high quality training to Irish and other migrant workers in Britain.

The training programme begins in January and July each year and lasts for 21 weeks and trainees attend the course on a full-time basis. There are 65 vacancies on the next course which starts on 26th July.

The programme concentrates on information technology and includes a four week work experience placement. Trainees attend a one day course which involves help with CVs, job applications and interviews.

If a person is interested in pursuing the course they can be referred on to it by Irish and other welfare/advice agencies or you can contact the Migrant Training Company directly.

### Getting Paid

The basic training allowance is £35 per week and there is a range of additional supplements which a trainee may qualify for.

For more information contact:  
**Migrant Training Company, 6-20 St. John's Mews, Holborn, WC1X 8PA Tel. (071) 916 1638**

# AGIY-FIS Project Update

The Action Group for Irish Youth/Federation of Irish Societies jointly commissioned project to carry out a feasibility study into establishing a centralised statistical information database across a range of welfare agencies providing services to the Irish community in Britain has now ended its first phase.

Charities Evaluation Services (CES), the charity undertaking the study have now examined comparable data collection system models and interviewed 22 Irish welfare organisations about their existing data collection systems.

The initial fieldwork has revealed that all the agencies visited have some form of record system on clients/users and their service provision. Most of the organisations have a manual data collection system while some groups have a computerised system; one organisation is able to directly input information into a computerised information collection system.

The statistical information that is collected has brought out a wealth of information about the issues facing clients on a local basis and some of the groups have indicated that the pooling of such statistics should assist them in identifying the needs presented by Irish people using their services on a much wider basis.

The information gathered so far has also indicated that most agencies collect similar core data on the issues presented by their clients. The ways in which this information is categorised can vary considerably and for several agencies has identified the need for such information to be collected and categorised on a more consistent basis.

The material collected by CES has also revealed some interesting trends in the needs presented by Irish clients. More people appear to be presenting with mental health problems and there is a growth in the number of repeat contacts with clients. It is also apparent that where groups have ensured that their services are welcoming to Irish women there has been an uptake of these services particularly amongst women attempting to escape from domestic violence.

It is also clear that most organisations participating in the feasibility study have good working links with other Irish groups working locally/in a similar field and there is a recognition that these links could be strengthened further with information being pooled together. One of the ways in which this information could prove useful is if welfare groups want to work together when negotiating service level agreements with local authorities in their area of operation.

Agencies have also stressed that they provide emotional support which is a very important qualitative aspect to their work and needs to be included alongside any quantitative assessment in relation to the collection of statistical information.

Some agencies also indicated that they are keen to explore the development of monitoring and evaluation systems particularly with regard to the delivery of their services and of user satisfaction.

CES are currently developing a standardised manual information collection system and appropriate computer software for the implementation of a pilot study with 10 of the welfare agencies who are participating in the study.

Agencies will then receive training in the use of the data collection system at the end of September and the pilot will be carried out in October and November. The results of the pilot will be known in December and a project report will be published in February.