DIVERSITY IRELAND

**A Website for Newcomers to Ireland and
Ethnic Minority Communities in Ireland**

Feasibility Study Report

- June 2002 -

models research

Diversity Ireland:

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Ethnic Minority Communities in Ireland

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R E P O R T   C O N T E N T S

-> Executive Summary ->

This report is the outcome of a study exploring how a proposed new website may meet the information and communication needs of newcomers to Ireland, ethnic minority communities, and others interested in multiculturalism in Ireland.

The research began with a international survey of websites about immigration, multiculturalism and racism, and ended with a survey of groups and organisations working in Ireland as well as a survey of owners and users of Internet cafes in Dublin.

The study findings are discussed in chapters covering the central issues: making information available on the Web; producing and promoting the website; linking with information and service providers; organisation, staffing and technical resources; and funding and sustainability. The report concludes with recommendations in all five areas.

* Making information available on the Web *

The study found a clear need for a new website with information relevant to newcomers to Ireland and ethnic minority communities in Ireland.

The new website should identify existing information on the web of interest to newcomers and ethnic minority communities and then link to this existing information, enhancing and revising it where required to meet the needs of the target group. The role of the website should also include identifying gaps in information provision, encouraging existing providers to produce new information, and producing information that no other source is providing.

The potential users of the new website include: newcomers to Ireland, members of ethnic minority communities; groups and organisations working with newcomers and ethnic minority communities; students, teachers and researchers; journalists; civil servants and policy-makers; members of local government and local authorities and health boards; business managers; legal advice professionals; and the general public.

While the proposed website may be useful to all these potential users, the study found that the greatest need is for information aimed at those facing social exclusion because of cultural and socio-economic factors. Many of these potential users may not be currently using the Internet.

The new website will have a wide brief because the types of potential users and their information needs are very diverse. The website should grow organically according to the information needs of the users, identified primarily by user feedback to the website. It should also be expected that many website users, especially among newcomers to Ireland, will have different information needs related to different stages of their lives in Ireland.

The new website should provide a range of information on: ethnic minority communities in Ireland; working in Ireland; being an entrepreneur; training and education opportunities; accommodation and housing; a range of services and support; government policies and NGO position papers; laws, legislation and rights; general information about Ireland; general information about Europe; mainstream and alternative news sources; and Internet resources.

* Producing and promoting the website *

Considerable information already exists on the Internet - or is being produced for the Internet - that would be of interest to newcomers and ethnic minority communities. However what is missing is a central information portal to link this information and identify gaps in information provision.

The new website should not duplicate existing information but rather make it more accessible, by linking to it, introducing it, and revising or rewriting it where required. The website will need to follow a clear editorial policy.

The new website will need to be timely and kept up to date. Information needs to be relevant and accessible to all. It also needs to be produced professionally and objectively. Whenever possible, information should be made available in languages other than English.

The new website should not have a campaigning role but rather present information objectively and provide information links to relevant campaigns.

The report makes a number of practical suggestions for promoting the new website. It should not be promoted exclusively by any existing organisation; this would compromise its perceived objectivity.

* Linking with information and service providers *

The new website should develop relationships with three categories of information and service providers: NGOs and community-based groups; government departments and agencies, including local governments; and other providers and the general public.

First, the new website should forge a strong working relationship with the Integrating Ireland (II) network, as well as other organisations and groups not affiliated with II. Integrating Ireland is a new network of 129 groups and organisations working with newcomers and ethnic minority communities.

Second, the new website should form good working relationships with information providers in: Comhairle; Department of Enterprise Trade and Employment; Department of Social, Community and Family Affairs; Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform; and Department of Foreign Affairs. The new website should also work with the other government departments and agencies listed in the report.

Third, links and relationships will need to be developed with a range of information providers, so that the new website avoids duplicating information already existing on the Internet.

* Organisation, staffing and technical resources *

The staffing needs of the website should be determined in conjunction with the website's editorial policy; decisions on the extent to which the website will support user requests for information and referrals may determine the staffing levels needed. If the website decides

to have a high level of interaction with its users, there will be a continual growing need for staff resources.

The report makes suggestions for staffing levels and recommendations for technical resources. In addition to paid staff, volunteers and possibly trainees on work placement should have a central role in the operations of the website; they should be offered meaningful payback for their input.

* Funding and sustainability *

The goal should be to secure core funding and have a mixed funding base, including grants and foundations, government funding, and European Union funding. Specific suggestions for sources of funding are made in the report. Sponsorships from commercial organisations should also be explored.

The sustainability of the new website will depend largely on its ability to provide timely, up-to-date information relevant to newcomers to Ireland, ethnic minority communities in Ireland, organisations working with these groups, and others interested in multiculturalism in Ireland. If it succeeds in this task, the website will be assured strong support from its users that may help it through any funding crisis.

-> Introduction ->

This report explores how a proposed new website may meet the information and communication needs of newcomers and ethnic minority communities and others interested in multiculturalism in Ireland.

DiversityIreland, a new Irish non-profit organisation, commissioned this study after identifying a number of information and communication needs.

First, many newcomers to Ireland and ethnic minority communities in Ireland are not properly informed of matters relevant to their own circumstances. There is a need to improve the quality and quantity of information on these matters and to provide new opportunities for newcomers and members of ethnic minority communities to communicate with each other about common interests.

Second, many Irish citizens are also poorly informed about matters relating to newcomers and ethnic minority communities in Ireland. Relevant information needs to be more widely available about their lives and circumstances.

Third, people outside of Ireland may be interested in the activities of newcomers and ethnic minority communities in the country. Most of the outside world still thinks of Ireland as mono-cultural and mono-ethnic. A website may be a good way to tell a story about Ireland's transformation into a multicultural society.

DiversityIreland asked Models Research to conduct a study to develop the new website. The research began with an international survey of websites about immigration, multiculturalism and racism, and ended with a survey of groups and organisations working in Ireland as well as a survey of owners and users of Internet cafes in Dublin.

The study findings are discussed in chapters covering the central issues: making information available on the Web; producing and promoting the website; linking with information and service providers; organisation, staffing and technical resources; and funding and sustainability. The report concludes with recommendations in all five areas.

- **Some statistics on newcomers to Ireland and ethnic minority communities in Ireland**

Few statistics are available on ethnic minority communities in Ireland and those researching the area have noted the paucity of information. Published statistics on inward migration into Ireland are unclear. The information in this brief overview is sourced from documents published by the Irish Centre for Migration Studies (MacEinri, 2000), the Comhlámh Refugee Solidarity Group (2001), the Central Statistics Office (2001), the NCCRI and Equality Commission of Northern Ireland (NCCRI, 2000), Pavee Point (2000), the National Anti-Racism Awareness Programme (2002), and Ward (2000).

Ireland has a long history of inward migration. What is new is that since 1995 the number of immigrants to Ireland has been considerably greater than the number of emigrants. This phenomenon is a result of unprecedented economic growth and greater employment

opportunities in Ireland and the international trend of increased East-West migration and South-North migration.

Prior to the 1990s immigration to Ireland was sporadic. The main immigrant groups were: retirees from the US and Britain; "counter-cultural" immigration from Britain and continental European countries; and high-skills immigration, often non-permanent, within the multinational sector.

After joining the United Nations in 1956, as part of its duty under the Geneva Convention, Ireland reluctantly accepted refugees in response to conflicts. For example in 1956, 539 Hungarian refugees came to Ireland after the Soviet invasion of Hungary; less than 60 of these refugees were still in Ireland after two years.

The largest ethnic minority group in Ireland is the Traveller community. In 2000 there were an estimated 25,000 Travellers in the Republic of Ireland (Pavee Point, 2000; the inclusion of a question on membership of the Traveller community in the 2002 Census will supplement this statistic).

There is a long-established Jewish community in Ireland and growing Islamic, Asian and Chinese communities. Refugees and asylum seekers in Ireland are from more than 100 countries and from ethnic groups that transcend national boundaries.

In April 2001, according to the Central Statistics Office (CSO) household survey, the population of Ireland was 3,840,000. In 2001 inward migration (excluding returned Irish migrants) to Ireland was estimated to be 28,000 persons. Of these, over half (15,600) were from the UK, the rest of the EU, and the US. Less than half (12,300) arrived from the rest of the world. The CSO acknowledges that its household survey is subject to a wider margin of error than other estimates in relation to immigrant populations as it does not account for asylum seekers who are accommodated in institutions such as hotels and hostels (CSO, 2001).

However, statistics published on the KNOW RACISM website of the National Anti-Racism Awareness Programme (2002) appear to contradict the CSO statistics. According to KNOW RACISM, inward migration to Ireland in 2001 was 40,189. This indicates either that the KNOW RACISM figure includes the thousands of returned Irish persons in that year or that the CSO figure is grossly underestimated.

An employer wanting to employ someone from outside the EU must apply for a work permit. In 2001, 36,436 work permits were issued for immigrants seeking work in Ireland, a 200 percent increase from the previous year. The highest number of applicants came from Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and the Philippines (from the KNOW RACISM website, cited as from the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment).

An asylum-seeker is someone seeking to be recognised as a refugee, under the terms of the 1951 Geneva Convention. The number of asylum-seekers entering Ireland in 2001 was 10,325. Applications came from persons originating in 103 different countries. The largest groups were Nigerians and a decreasing number of Romanians.

Figures available for Northern Ireland indicate that the largest ethnic minority group is the Chinese community, with an estimated population of 8,000 (NCCRI, 2000). In 1993 there were

1,115 Travellers in Northern Ireland (Pavee Point, 2000). The UK 2001 Census included for the first time a question on ethnicity and so more detailed statistics on ethnic minority groups in Northern Ireland will soon be available.

- eGovernment and eInclusion policies

The Irish Government is committed to ensuring all public service information is available online through the websites of its departments and agencies, at the same time as it is delivered through traditional channels. The government is also committed to delivering public services online, enabling complete transactions to be conducted though email and the Web.

Ethnic minorities, Travellers, refugees and asylum-seekers have been identified in national anti-poverty policy as groups at risk of social exclusion in Ireland. Other research has also suggested that these groups are at risk of exclusion from the information society. The government publishes a significant amount of information of interest to newcomers to Ireland and members of ethnic minority communities.

Many newcomers to Ireland and members of ethnic minority communities in Ireland are not using the Internet. Many face a range of restraints and barriers to Internet use, including not having affordable access to the Internet, not coming from a culture where Internet use is common, not having good IT skills, and not being familiar with the English-language information on the Internet.

There are exclusions within exclusions. For example, anecdotal evidence suggests that asylum-seeking women in Ireland have very low rates of Internet access if they come from cultures where most women are illiterate and would not use public facilities such as Internet access in libraries.

Government policies related to anti-poverty strategies and building the information society have encouraged the development of information on the Internet related to groups at risk of social inclusion in Ireland, including newcomers and ethnic minority communities.

Providing information on the Internet that will be useful and relevant to them - and the community and voluntary organisations working with them - may encourage more of them to use the Internet. In this way, the proposed new website would address government policy concerns with eInclusion in Ireland (see Department of the Taoiseach, 2002).

- Study methodology

The study was conducted in the Spring of 2002 by Models Research, an independent company based in Dublin specialising in research on social aspects of the information society. The study had three parts: an international survey, interviews in Ireland, and analysis and recommendations.

International survey - An international survey was conducted of websites providing information of interest to immigrants, refugees, asylum-seekers and ethnic minority communities.

First, a comprehensive list of websites in Europe and North America was developed, and from this list, a smaller list of 13 was drawn up of the different types of websites. Representatives from

eight of these websites agreed to be interviewed for the study; these websites are highlighted in the report and listed in the Appendix.

To complement the international survey, a review was conducted of academic and newspaper articles on websites for immigrants, refugees and asylum-seekers. These articles are highlighted in the report and listed in the References.

Interviews in Ireland - Interviews were conducted with representatives from key organisations providing information and services to newcomers and ethnic minority communities in Ireland.

A comprehensive list of these organisations in Ireland and Northern Ireland was drawn up, and from this list, 15 were selected to take part in the study. Representatives from 13 agreed to be interviewed, including 10 non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and community-based groups, and three government departments or agencies; these organisations are listed in the Appendix. Only one organisation in Northern Ireland was interviewed for the study; this study focused on the Republic of Ireland.

To complement this organisational survey, shorter interviews were conducted with owners or managers of 10 Internet cafes in Dublin's city centre frequented by ethnic minority users. Interviews were also conducted with 20 ethnic minority users of these Internet cafes; all these interviews focused on information needs and provision.

Analysis and recommendations - The findings from the international and Irish interviews were analysed for common themes and issues. These findings are discussed in the following chapters of this report, ending with recommendations for the proposed new website in Ireland.

- Defining our terms

The research team faced a considerable challenge defining its terms. The report uses the term *"newcomers"* to refer to people new to Ireland who have come to the country as *"immigrants," "refugees," "asylum-seekers,"* students and others settling in Ireland. The researchers began the study using these three different terms but soon realised that these classifications are ambiguous and put too much emphasis on highlighting perceived differences between them.

Although *"newcomers to Ireland"* is also an ambiguous term, the researchers chose it as the best way to describe people settling in Ireland for the first time while emphasising commonalities rather than differences among them.

"Ethnic minority communities" is also an ambiguous term. This report uses it to refer to communities of individuals who share a common ethnic culture within the larger multicultural Ireland. The Traveller community is one of the many ethnic minority communities in Ireland.

-> Making Information Available on the Web ->

Findings from the International Interviews ***

- Who are the international websites for?

Settlement Org

The Settlement Org website provides newcomers to the province of Ontario, Canada with the tools and answers needed to settle in their new home land; the website contains a range of practical information.

www.settlement.org

The target audiences for the international websites surveyed are primarily groups and organisations working with immigrants, refugees and asylum-seekers, and ethnic minority communities - such as NGOs, voluntary organisations and community-based groups.

Other website users include legal advice professionals, individual newcomers, students looking for information on immigration and racism, academics, activists, civil servants and policy-makers, and the general public. One website is aimed at senior management in large corporations.

- What information is on the international websites?

The websites surveyed provide information responding to the needs of the target groups and individuals. The main types of information are listed below.

- ▼ Database of organisations providing services for immigrants and ethnic minority communities, with contact information.

- ▼ Calendar of activities of interest to immigrants and ethnic minority communities.

- ▼ News and news headlines on racism and other issues of concern to immigrants and ethnic minority communities.

- ▼ Information resources for NGOs doing advocacy and lobbying for immigrants and ethnic minority communities.

- ▼ Information on a variety of issues provided by NGOs working with immigrants and ethnic minority communities.

- ▼ Practical information for immigrants settling - and considering s ettling - in a new country.

- ▼ Stories written by immigrants who have settled in a new country.

- ▼ Articles and features on groups working with immigrants and ethnic minority communities.

- ▼ Information and links to research on issues of concern to immigrants and ethnic minority communities.

▼ Information and links to national, EU and international initiatives related to immigrants and asylum seekers.

▼ Information on EU integration activities.

▼ A "First Day Guide" for new immigrants.

▼ Information on migrant workers and human rights.

▼ News and analysis of managing diversity in organisations - aimed at managers in large corporations.

▼ Database of English, European and overseas case law on immigration and asylum issues.

- **What communication opportunities do the international websites offer?**

In addition to the information on the websites, many offer other communication opportunities. These include:

▼ One-way mailing list or newsletter to inform subscribers of updates to the websites; this is considered essential by the websites because their readers need to be reminded to visit the website for new information.

▼ One-way newsletter or news digest, generally sent out weekly or fortnightly.

▼ Bulletin boards for information exchange by website users.

▼ Links to interactive mailing lists on relevant topics.

Electronic Immigration Network (EIN)

The EIN website aims to link major information providers with advice workers and practitioners working on immigration, refugee and nationality law and practice in the United Kingdom.

www.ein.org.uk

- **How could the international websites be improved?**

Several survey respondents stressed the importance of asking the website users what they want and continually responding to user needs and demands. The ultimate aim of the website should be to ensure good quality information - which can be measured through website log analysis as high rates of traffic on the website.

Staff and volunteers with three of the websites would like to improve them by making them more interactive, especially to allow readers and subscribers to put up information themselves on current activities and events.

Several websites are trying to improve the presentation of the material by using more low-end technology, with fewer graphics and digital images, to make everything easy to print. This makes it easier for users accessing the websites in Internet cafes or other public Internet access points.

Other plans for improvement include expanding the information to make the website a one-stop shop for readers; making information available in more languages; adding audio interviews with people working on anti-racism issues; and developing distance learning courses. One website is developing content partnerships with information and service providers as a way of improving the information on the website.

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* Finding from the Irish Interviews *

- **Is there a need for the proposed website?**

Everyone interviewed for the study believes there is a need for the proposed website if it addresses the information needs of newcomers and minority ethnic communities. A challenge will be the low rates of Internet access by many of these potential users.

One interview respondent suggested that the website might be slightly ahead of its time; another suggested that the website would not be sustainable if newcomers and members of ethnic minority communities were not themselves involved. The new website might stimulate increased Internet use among these users if the content is relevant and appropriate.

The new website should not duplicate existing information but rather make it more accessible, by linking to it, introducing it, and revising or rewriting it where required. The website will also need to be identifying gaps in information provision, encouraging existing providers to produce new information, and producing information that no other source is providing.

- **Who would use the proposed website?**

The study suggests that the proposed website could serve the same types of users as those using the international websites. These include: newcomers to Ireland, members of ethnic minority communities; groups and organisations working with newcomers and ethnic minority communities; students, teachers and researchers; journalists; civil servants and policy-makers; members of local government and local authorities and health boards; business managers; legal advice professionals; and the general public.

While the proposed website may be useful to all these potential users, the study found that the greatest need is for information aimed at those facing social exclusion because of cultural and socio-economic factors. These potential users include people on low income, those with few formal qualifications, those who do not speak English as a first language, those living in marginalised or isolated communities, and newcomers and ethnic minority communities experiencing social disadvantage for a range of other reasons.

- **Do all newcomers and minority ethnic communities have similar information needs?**

The new website will have a wide brief because the types of potential users and their information needs are very diverse. It should also be expected that many website users, especially among new-comers to Ireland, will have different information needs related to different stages of their lives

in Ireland. For example, some members of the Irish Sudanese community may be interested in opportunities for starting a small business and making links with minority business owners. Some members of the Traveller community may be interested in proposed changes to the Accommodation Act.

Some newcomers arriving for work in Ireland in high-paying high-technology employment may want information about the tax system and would use the Internet on their notebook computers to find this information. Some asylum-seekers may want to know more about the process of their application for asylum but would not be coming from a culture of using the Internet and would not think of using it to find this information, or they might try to access it at a public library but be discouraged by the long waiting times.

- **Are newcomers and minority ethnic communities using the Internet in Ireland?**

The study raised but did not answer the question of how many newcomers and members of ethnic minority communities in Ireland are currently using the Internet. Many of the organisations interviewed believe that income and cultural factors are crucial to Internet access and that few members of ethnic minority communities are using the Internet. On the other hand, the survey of Internet cafe owners and managers found that newcomers to Ireland are a major client group; however they believe that the more marginalised members of minority ethnic communities are not using the Internet.

Although the study spoke directly to only a small number of these users - in Internet cafes - the findings were consistent. The information they are looking for may be available on the Internet but it is not easy to find and they do not have or cannot afford the time to find it. The main barrier to using the Internet by these users is the cost - Internet access is too expensive for many, especially for those on a very low income. Many of those attempting to use the free Internet access in libraries are discouraged by the long waiting times. Other restraints and barriers cited include lack of IT skills, no content in their own language; online information not precise enough; public access computers not equipped with software to read Chinese characters; and not having the time to use the Internet.

It was noted by several of those interviewed that the cost of Internet access in Ireland is very high, among the highest in Europe, putting it out of reach for those on a very low income. Free public Internet access points are under considerable strain in Dublin city centre. For example, the central ILAC library in Dublin requires aspiring Internet users to book a computer days in advance; dropping in without booking can result in long and frustrating waits for a few minutes on a computer.

Indian Voices on the Internet

An analysis of Indian voices on the Internet suggests that the Internet allows marginalised voices to link together. Combined, these individualised voices lead to the formation of communities whose collective voice may be able to question the dominant world view (Mitra, 2001).

- **What are newcomers and members of ethnic minority communities in Ireland currently using the Internet for?**

The small survey of Internet cafe owners and ethnic minority users in these Internet cafes found that email to friends and family is the most popular use of the Internet for these users, followed closely by seeking information on job and training opportunities in Ireland.

Reading news and newspapers from home is the third most popular use of the Internet for these users, followed by general links to their communities, both in Ireland and at home.

The next most popular use of the Internet is seeking information on accommodation as well as other services in Ireland. Seeking links to support and service organisations was ranked last to the uses above.

Other possible uses of the Internet mentioned in the interviews in Internet cafes are: shopping, checking college results, meeting people who speak English, general information about Ireland, sports, health information, maps and directions, places to visit in Ireland, booking hotels in other countries, practical information such as how to send a letter, information on visas and travel.

- **What other kinds of information could the proposed website link to or provide?**

The study found a great need for a central resource with information on support groups for newcomers and ethnic minority communities, including contact information. The NGO representatives interviewed highlighted that many newcomers to Ireland need support from existing groups but that it is difficult for a newcomer to find out about the groups and how to access them. The proposed website could link newcomers and ethnic minority communities to support structures that could be of considerable benefit.

A number of the organisations interviewed spend substantial time and resources answering basic questions from students in Ireland doing school projects about newcomers and minority ethnic communities, and more complex questions from university-based researchers. They suggested that a central information resource could be a very useful reference for students doing projects and their teachers and university researchers. Policy documents and position papers from NGOs should be linked on the website.

**Internet Use
to Re-Connect
War Refugees**

A report from London describes how refugees from war-torn Kosovo are using the Internet to find out what has happened to family members. Aid agencies such as the Red Cross have set up family-tracing websites. Internet newsgroups are another popular means of re-establishing family contact (Ryan, 1999).

The organisations interviewed see a need for information available on the Internet on a wide range of issues and topics of interest and concern to newcomers and ethnic minority communities in Ireland. Information in languages other than English is a particular need.

There is an increasing entrepreneurial spirit within many immigrant communities in Ireland and many newcomers are setting up their own businesses or companies. The proposed website could provide a commercial space for these businesses to sell their services to the broader community. The website could also provide information on setting up a business.

The proposed website could also produce original news stories about racism and multiculturalism in Ireland that are missing from the mainstream media. However several interview respondents pointed out that writing news is a time-consuming and expensive activity. The website could link to sources of alternative news and information in Ireland on the Internet, such as Community Exchange and Indymedia.

- What specific types of government information could the proposed website link to?

The NGOs interviewed listed a range of information that could be provided by government bodies to which the new website could provide links and pointers. Some of this information is already provided on government websites, particularly those of OASIS, the Citizens Information Database, and the Department of Social, Community and Family Affairs.

Useful information from these sources includes: citizenship rights and obligations, statutory and legal rights; equality legislation; human rights law; entitlements and responsibilities; the tax system and paying taxes; employment conditions and minimum wage legislation; services available and how to access services; and how to vote in local elections.

Other government departments could provide information on: work permits and requirements to work; refugee and asylum policies; how to apply for visas; general government policy and practice updates; monthly updated figures for applicants, refugees and deportees; evictions, moving on and trespass law; the Accommodation Act; structures of local government and names of local representatives; procedures for marriages and deaths; and general information from the department of justice. In some cases, the application process for these services could be provided online by the government.

- What other specific information could the proposed website link to or provide?

In addition to the general information needs identified above, the organisations interviewed mentioned the following: information on Travellers as an ethnic minority community; cultural events; information on the coin and note denominations of the Euro currency, the EU, and inter-culturalism in Europe; how to form a support group and how to apply for grants for new groups; lists of funders, statutory, philanthropic and NGO; social inclusion issues; training, education and scholarships; how to join a union; sharing requests such as finding an interpreter; research from the UK which exists on successful integration and how to avoid mistakes; practical information about Ireland such as how to post a letter; NGOs and the work they do; practical information about cultural and religious practices; publications from research at universities and research institutes; things for sale by support groups such as cookbooks; religious support and location of churches; links to search engines.

In addition to the above, the general public would also benefit from information on: anti-racism training; campaigns and how to campaign; links to international agencies, such as UNHCR and international websites of NGOs; information on the home countries of newcomers; articles and features on groups working with newcomers and minority ethnic groups; and position papers on government policies written by NGOs. It was also suggested that the new website should have information on how to support the website financially or work with it as a volunteer.

Suggestions for information that could be useful to business included: equality legislation; how to construct a dialogue of communication and diversity in the workplace; information on the qualifications of newcomers; information on companies with an openness to hiring newcomers; how to recruit people from ethnic minorities; how to develop anti-racist codes of practice, with examples.

Suggestions for information that could be useful to legal advice professionals included: key legal decisions and case law; the names of good people in the field.

- **What communication opportunities could the proposed website provide?**

UNITED for Intercultural Action

The United for Intercultural Action website links a network of more than 550 organisations across Europe working in support of migrants and refugees and against nationalism, racism and fascism.

www.united-non-profit.nl

As noted earlier, the interviews in the Internet cafes found that email to friends and family is the most popular use of the Internet for users from ethnic minority communities, and that using the Internet for linking to their communities both in Ireland and at home is also important. The proposed website could contain information on how to set up an email address and search for information on the Web.

Most people interviewed for the study are not aware of email discussion lists. Some representatives of organisations interviewed are subscribed to email discussion lists for exchanging information on relevant issues with people around the world. However many said that they lacked the time to contribute to these discussions and were not sure that new email lists are needed.

Email discussion lists open to everyone will certainly attract users wanting to express racist views; not having a public discussion facility on the website will eliminate the need to spend considerable time responding to and dealing with racist commentary.

It was also suggested that confidentiality would be a major consideration for users of the new website, and that many users may not want to participate in email discussion lists with people they do not know.

The proposed website could provide links to existing discussion lists on issues related to racism and multiculturalism, to allow users to subscribe to existing lists if they so wish.

-> Producing and Promoting the Website ->

Findings from the International Interviews ***

- **Who produces the information on the international websites?**

Two of the websites surveyed sell subscriptions to users who can then view the information online; all the other websites have free information available to all users. One website with free information also has a private intranet website restricted to a network of 70 NGOs working on immigration issues.

On most of the websites, the information is produced elsewhere - primarily by NGOs and voluntary organisations - and reformatted or summarised for the website by staff or volunteers.

Only two websites surveyed had the information entirely produced in-house by paid staff members, journalists or other information professionals.

Other production processes include scanning published information to put up on the website, and compiling hyperlinks to news stories or information sources on outside webpages.

Three of the websites are updated every day by full-time workers, including one website with a full-time volunteer. The frequency of updates for the other websites varies from once a week to two or three times a month, to rarely.

Anti-Racism Net

The Anti-Racism Net website provides a directory of anti-racism groups and links to headlines and news stories about anti-racism activities in the United States and wider internationally.

www.igc.org/igc/gateway/arnindex/html

- **Who makes decisions about the information on the international websites?**

Three of the websites follow an editorial plan or information strategy policy, and they believe it is important to stick to the plan and stay focused on the overall message and direction of the website.

In three other cases, one individual makes decisions about the information with little or no external guidance. In another case, the web information mirrors a newsletter, which provides a filter and discussion process for all new information before it is published on the website.

- **Is there viewer feedback on the international websites?**

Only one website reported being overwhelmed with feedback from readers - with much of the feedback in the form of questions that creates new information; this website is run by a well-resourced team and aimed at new immigrants to the area. Most of the other websites reported low levels of viewer feedback.

One website with fee-based access to the information reported that when the information had been free, users posted many racist comments to the bulletin boards but after introducing the fee structure, only paid subscribers can post to the bulletin boards and racist comments dropped considerably.

- How are the international websites promoted?

Promoting the website is a priority for most of the websites surveyed. Two websites employ full-time staff working exclusively on website promotion.

Website promotion follows a common pattern. When a new website is launched, it is promoted widely at conferences and other events attended by the target readership. Information about the new website is posted on the Internet and entered in all the search engines.

Hyperlinks are established where possible with similar websites. The website URL is displayed on all materials sent by post and on emails from staff and volunteers. As a website becomes established, it may be promoted widely by word-of-mouth from regular users.

A staff member of one website believes it is important for a new website to be promoted by a major established immigrant or refugee organisation, in order to encourage widespread support and use by other organisations.

Other reported promotion methods include direct mail to potential members of the website (for a subscription-access website).

Innovative promotion methods used by one website include sending staff to ESL (English as a Second Language) classes and having information booths at conferences and conventions of ESL teachers, making presentations to staff and clients of organisations working with immigrants, and distributing brochures and posters in local libraries.

One commercial website buys listings on search engines and banner ads on other websites and works with corporate sponsors to promote the website to their employees.

Several websites indicated that promotion needs to be very proactive and ongoing, with staff and volunteers attending meetings regularly and making new contacts.

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* Finding from the Irish Interviews *

- Does the relevant information already exist on the Internet in Ireland?

A range of information needs in Ireland were identified earlier in this report. Many organisations and Internet cafe owners interviewed for the study believe that considerable information already exists on the Internet - or is being produced for the Internet - that would be of interest to newcomers and ethnic minority communities. However what is missing is a central information portal to link this information and identify gaps in information provision.

- Are there other plans to provide an information portal for newcomers and
  ethnic minority communities in Ireland?

A number of organisations working with newcomers or minority ethnic groups have websites or plan to put one up. However there are no other plans for a central information portal in Ireland on these issues.

A new closed (private) intranet for a new umbrella network, Integrating Ireland, will be going live in June this year. It will provide a space for 129 groups working with newcomers and ethnic minority communities in Ireland.

The design team for the Integrating Ireland private website is working on a chat room space and a calendar of events as well as other information about the groups. However, the website hosting all this information will be available only to the members of Integrating Ireland - a website such as that proposed by DiversityIreland will also be needed to give the public information about these groups and services.

Immigrant Children Reconnect With Their Homelands

A report from Washington explains how immigrant children are using the Internet in schools and libraries across the US to learn more about or reconnect with their homelands. For immigrant children, the stories of their parents and grandparents can come to life in photographs over the Internet (Wax, 2000).

- **What should be the information-provision role for the proposed website?**

Many of those interviewed stressed that the proposed website should not duplicate existing information but rather make it more accessible.

The interviews with government representatives found that their own as well as other government departments or agencies have produced considerable information of relevance to newcomers and minority ethnic communities in Ireland. However some of this information is not currently available on the Internet, or if it is, there is no central source linking this information or identifying gaps in government information provision for newcomers and ethnic minority communities.

All those interviewed from the study from NGOs and government bodies identified information from their organisations that could either be made available on the new website, or through links from the website, such as reports, policy documents, information about the organisation, information booklets for newcomers, and other relevant materials.

- **How should the proposed website produce the information needed?**

Interview respondents stressed that the information on the proposed website will need to be timely and kept up to date. Information needs to be relevant. The website needs to be accessible to people with disabilities, following the accessibility guidelines in place for public information websites.

It also needs to be produced professionally and objectively, suggesting that the website should have trained journalists or similar information professionals compiling existing information and writing new information.

Many of those interviewed stressed the need for accessible language, especially considering that many users will not have English as their first language. The information should be written to engage the readers. Whenever possible, information should be made available in languages other than English.

A number of those interviewed also stressed that the new website should not have a campaigning role but rather present information objectively and provide information links to relevant campaigns.

They also stressed the need for the new website to reflect the diversity of ethnic minority communities in Ireland, including Travellers.

- How should the proposed website be promoted?

The ideal situation would be to have potential users of the website learn about it from friends, family, work colleagues and other contacts. However until a critical mass of users is reached, the website will need to be promoted proactively. Many of those interviewed for the study offered to promote the new website through their own organisations and outreach activities.

Some specific suggestions for promotion suggested by the interview respondents are: including information about the new website in the welcome packs given to asylum-seekers at government reception and integration centres and on posters displayed in these centres; having links to the proposed website from websites of relevant government departments and agencies and NGOs; encouraging public libraries and Internet cafes to use the proposed website as their home page or putting up information notices and posters promoting the website; promoting the website to schools with children who are newcomers to Ireland; promoting it through recruitment agencies for non-nationals; having a media partner such as The Irish Times to promote the website; and having Irish embassies abroad promote the website to those considering immigrating to Ireland.

A number of those interviewed believe the proposed website should not be linked closely to and promoted exclusively by any existing organisation; this would compromise its perceived objectivity.

-> Linking with Information and Service Providers ->

Findings from the International Interviews ***

- Are the international websites involved with networks?

Most of the websites surveyed, or their parent organisations, are members of networks or working actively with organisations for immigrants and refugees. Most of the European websites are involved in European networks. Several websites are involved in wider international networks.

Several staff and volunteers interviewed stressed the need to make the website part of an overall information and communications strategy. Other means of disseminating information within networks include postal mailouts to groups not using the Internet.

One survey respondent, an immigrant himself, noted that his work on the website was very useful to him as a means to build personal networks in his new country and help him settle and meet people.

- What are the information links with organisations internationally working with immigrants and refugees?

Most of the websites have active links with organisations working with immigrants and refugees - or would like to have more active links with these organisations. Several websites have all or almost all their information produced by these organisations. For example one website is part of a network of 200 NGOs, all of whom send information regularly for the website.

One respondent stated that if NGOs think a website is useful to them, they will participate and share information; however if they do not think it is useful they will not participate.

One website for new immigrants - the one that is overwhelmed with user feedback and questions - has a policy of directing people back to local groups and organisations in their local communities, so as to support rather than duplicate information and services available locally.

> **Vancouver for New Immigrants**
>
> The Vancouver for New Immigrants website provides information useful for people immigrating to Canada and thinking of settling in Vancouver.
>
> modena.intergate.ca/personal/rajanr

- What are the information links with government on the international websites?

Several of the websites occasionally receive research reports and articles from government that can be linked to the websites. Some of the websites have hyperlinks to government websites.

Government agencies and departments may also contribute information for calendars of activities. Several websites reported a high level of use of the websites by civil servants.

Several of the websites are operated by organisations who do not want closer government links; in particular they are suspicious of surveillance by government authorities.

- What are the information links with commercial organisations on the international websites?

One commercially-oriented website has 24 consulting companies that are experts who advertise on the website and also provide comments for the journalists who write the information. None of the other websites reported information links with commercial companies.

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* Finding from the Irish Interviews *

- Which information and service providers should DiversityIreland be working with?

The study suggests that DiversityIreland should develop relationships with three types of information and service providers: NGOs and community-based groups; government departments and agencies, including local government; and other providers and the general public.

The new website should not duplicate existing information from these information and service providers but rather make it more accessible, by linking to it, introducing it, and revising or rewriting it where required to make it more suitable to the needs of newcomers to Ireland and ethnic minority communities in Ireland.

- What links should be developed with NGOs and community-based groups?

Much of the content on the proposed website will be useful to NGOs and community-based groups. These groups and organisations may also be the original source of much of the content on the website.

The study suggests that DiversityIreland should develop a strong working relationship with Integrating Ireland, a new network of groups and organisations nationally providing services and support to newcomers and minority ethnic groups. As discussed earlier in this report, Integrating Ireland is in the advanced stages of setting up a private intranet website for its members only.

DiversityInc.Com

The DiversityInc.Com website provides news and information aimed at corporate managers who are managing diversity in their workplace. The information includes best practice, situations and solutions.

www.diversityinc.com

This working relationship should include ongoing discussions and decisions about a variety of practical issues, including: which information produced by Integrating Ireland members may be suitable for the public, through the proposed website; how this information may be made available on the website, either through direct links to the information, redrafting or summarising the information and so on; where the gaps are in information provision and who should be responsible for providing this information; and how the proposed website should redirect email requests to the organisations and groups locally.

The study also suggests that DiversityIreland should forge links with groups and organisations not affiliated with the Integrating Ireland network. All the organisations interviewed for the study

should be approached to discuss possible working relationships. Other organisations to contact include the trade unions.

- **What links should be developed with government departments and agencies?**

The study also suggests that DiversityIreland should develop good working relationships with information and service providers in a number of government departments and agencies.

The central government department and agencies concerned are:

▼ Comhairle (agency with a remit to make information available on entitlements to state services; responsible for the OASIS website and the Citizen's Information Database). The Citizen's Information Database online contains the Irish Refugee Council Resource Pack. The OASIS website has information on moving to Ireland in French and Romanian.

▼ Enterprise, Trade and Employment (employment rights, work permits, companies registration office); FAS.

▼ Department of Social, Community and Family Affairs: Information Service (information on a wide range of services and programmes). They have produced an informative booklet, Returning to Ireland.

▼ Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform: Asylum Policy; Reception Integration Agency; Refugee Applications Commissioner; Refugee Appeals Tribunal; Immigration and Citizenship Division (includes policy, visa, general immigration, repatriation and citizenship sections); the Equality Authority. They have produced a number of useful booklets and information sheets.

▼ Department of Foreign Affairs: Development Education unit; they have many useful and relevant publications.

Other government departments and agencies include:

▼ Department of Health and Children: General Register Office (births, deaths, marriages registration); Health Boards.

▼ Department of Education and Science: Further Education Services (includes adult education); Higher Education Services.

▼ Combat Poverty Agency (range of information for support groups).

▼ Department of Revenue (taxes and PRSI, vehicle registration).

▼ Department of the Environment and Local Government (housing information).

▼ Local government bodies.

Similar to the relationship with NGOs and community-based groups, the working relationships with the government departments should include ongoing discussions about online provision of government information on the proposed website, including: which information produced by the government may be suitable for the proposed website; how this information may be made available on the proposed website, either through direct links to the information, redrafting or summarising the information and so on; where the gaps are in information provision and who should be responsible for providing this information; and how the proposed website should redirect email requests to the relevant government departments and agencies.

Somali Refugees in London use the Internet

A study of the oral culture of Somali refugees in London found that most Somali professionals and students are likely to have email addresses. Some were members of the Internet network Somaliland Forum, a focus of online debate about issues concerning the community (Olden, 1999).

- **What links should be developed with other information providers and the general public?**

Links and relationships will need to be developed with a range of information providers, so that the proposed website avoids duplicating information already existing on the Internet.

The general public and users of the new website should be encouraged to feedback into the development of the site - suggesting new sources of information, identifying new information needs, and commenting on the relevance or appropriateness of information on the website.

The study suggests that the proposed website may be the target of unwanted emails from individuals and groups promoting anti-immigration policies and racism, both in Ireland and abroad. A policy will be needed for dealing with these emails effectively and efficiently.

-> Organisation, Staffing and Technical Resources ->

Findings from the International Interviews ***

- Are there organisations behind the international websites?

Four of the websites surveyed are projects of an existing organisation or a partnership of two organisations. For three others, the website is inseparable from the organisation that exists solely to run it. One website is produced by an individual with no organisation involved.

Most of the organisations are charities or non-profit organisations; one is a commercial company.

December 18

The December 18 website is a portal for the promotion and protection of migrant workers, especially migrant women. December 18 is the International Day of Solidarity with Migrants.

www.december18.org

- How are the international websites staffed?

On most of the websites, paid staff members, or a combination of staff and volunteers, compile or produce the website information. On two websites, the information is compiled or produced entirely by volunteers. Most of the websites believe they could use more staff and skilled volunteers. The staffing arrangements vary widely among the websites:

- ▼ The most well-resourced website employs 23 full-time staff, including seven journalists and three webmasters, with the remainder in marketing, sales, administration and finance.

- ▼ Next is a website employing five full-time staff: a project manager, webmaster, content manager, outreach and promotions coordinator, and data entry support.

- ▼ One website has 50 person-days per month devoted to it, including half-time by three full-time paid staff of the organisation plus one volunteer per day.

- ▼ One website has a full-time volunteer devoted to it, working with 15-20 part-time volunteers internationally, most of whom she has never met.

- ▼ Another website has a part-time paid Webmaster plus some time from a full-time paid staff person.

- ▼ Another organisation does not keep track of the hours devoted to the website but it involves some time from each of the five staff and volunteers.

- ▼ One website has 84 hours per month from a part-time paid staff person, with additional technical staff time.

- ▼ Finally, one website is run by a volunteer on a part-time basis, according to the time he has available for it.

Most of the websites are run by staff and volunteers working in offices but some are run from home offices or with some staff working from home. Two of the websites have experienced difficulties with virtual working arrangements. In one case a home-based worker is isolated from her boss who works in a different city; she is dealing constantly with bad news and needs more personal support.

In another case, the information producers are distributed internationally and rarely meet face to face; when a staff member leaves an organisation it can be difficult to establish new contacts without this face-to-face contact.

- Are technical resources for the international websites in-house or outsourced?

Six of the eight websites surveyed are hosted by a commercial service provider. One is currently in-house but will soon move to a commercial provider; the remaining website is hosted by a semi-commercial provider in a sponsorship arrangement with several companies donating web space.

In addition to the webmasters running the websites in-house, most websites have third-party outsourced commercial technical support, or are moving in that direction. Several of the smaller websites have contacts who handle technical support on a volunteer basis.

Many websites are moving to open source software where possible, or are using pre-packaged software. One website developed in-house by a programmer would not recommend doing this now that open source software is available.

The APC (Association for Progressive Communications) or its British member GreenNet was mentioned by a number of the interview respondents as a source of website hosting, software development, or shared databases.

One website uses services available at low cost on other websites for non-profit organisations: topica.com for listserves (they have an arrangement so no ads are included); idealist.org for jobs; protest.net; and egrants.org for online donations.

- Do the international websites use databases?

At least four websites surveyed are database-driven, with some built in-house and others outsourced. One website has a database currently in development in-house. Two websites have no database and no plans to build one.

One website is looking to develop shared applications with APC (Association for Progressive Communications) to migrate news and events to their system. This involves sharing a common database and deciding which information on the database should be available on their own website.

- **Do the international websites use cookies and log analysis?**

Five of the websites surveyed do not use cookies to track users. Two use "low-level" cookies to customise greetings, and one uses cookies more extensively. One of the sites not using cookies is strongly against the idea of using cookies to keep non-profit organisations on the site longer, because they have limited time available and should be facilitated quickly.

Scheduling log analyses varied among the websites surveyed. The commercial website checks the log every day to see popularity ratings of different articles. The other websites check their logs at intervals ranging from two or three times a week, to weekly, monthly, or every few months.

Most of the websites would like to have more traffic. However one small volunteer-run website is not interested in more traffic because they are too busy now answering emails from website users. One website that charges a subscription fee is not directing its efforts at gaining more hits but rather at increasing paid subscribers.

A Global Russian Community

Research by Fillip Sapienza (2001) found that Russian immigrant webpages connect participants not only to local communities and resources but also to a global Russian ommunity. Russian immigrant websites thus provide collections of cultural archives in Russia itself while balancing them with localised information.

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* Finding from the Irish Interviews *

The interviews with groups and organisations did not include discussion of technical issues.

- **What staffing arrangements are suggested for the proposed website?**

Most of those interviewed for the study had an opinion about the staffing arrangements. Most believed strongly that paid staff members would be necessary to run the website. The responsibilities of the paid staff will include: having overall responsibility for the website; keeping it professional and even-handed; updating it regularly; being available as a contact person; monitoring information needs; coordinating volunteer input; and possibly supervising newcomers and members of ethnic minority communities on work experience.

Earlier in this report it was suggested that the information on the proposed website should be compiled and produced by information professionals such as journalists.

It was suggested that volunteers should have a role to play. They can offer considerable enthusiasm and have specialist knowledge that would be expensive to pay for. Volunteers play an active role in many of the non-governmental organisations interviewed and their contributions to these organisations are welcomed. If volunteers contribute to the proposed website there needs to be some payback for them, such as meaningful training.

Those offering an opinion about the number of staff members suggested two to three full-time staff members. If the proposed website is successful, there will be increasing pressure on staff to respond to the increased volume of email requests for information and referrals. The extent to which website staff should respond to emails from users should be a key factor when deciding on staffing levels.

-> Funding and Sustainability ->

Findings from the International Interviews ***

- **How much does it cost to operate the international websites?**

The initial costs of setting up the websites ranged widely. Three websites surveyed were established for almost no cost, with volunteers writing the html pages and paying the Internet Service Provider, computer and other costs from their own pockets.

At the other end, two of the websites cost more than 500,000 euro to set up. One of these spent almost that amount on the technical side alone and the other had 12 people working full-time for a year just to produce the information for the new website.

Likewise, the annual operating costs of the websites vary widely. At the low end, three of the websites reported having a budget of less than 5,000 euro annually; some costs not included in this figure include time spent by paid staff and technical costs.

At the other end, two of the websites have annual budgets of more than 250,000 euro for staffing alone. Other websites reported annual budgets of 25,000 euro, about 60,000 euro and more than 100,000 euro.

Technical costs are not included in many of the website budgets, with these donated in some cases or covered under other organisational budgets in others.

- **Who funds the international websites?**

Only one of the websites surveyed is funded entirely by subscription fees; it is a profitable, self-sustaining business. This website provides information on managing diversity in the workforce for corporate managers; the website is using a business model suitable for the US market that would not work in Ireland.

One of the websites is funded entirely by government - it provides information for new immigrants and is therefore similar to a government information service, although operated by a non-profit advocacy organisation with strong links to immigrant networks and organisations in communities.

Refugee Net

Refugeenet is the website of the EU Networks on Reception, Integration and Voluntary Repatriation of Refugees and is a source of information and ideas related to the integration of refugees in Europe.

www.refugeenet.org

One website is funded by a combination of subscription fees and grants. Another is funded by the European Commission as part of an EU project.

The remaining websites are funded through a combination of grants and support from foundations, and private donations by volunteers.

- **Is sustainability of international websites an issue?**

The international survey highlighted the important point that if a goal of a website is to increase readership, then a successful website will always need more resources in the future as the number of users increases; this requires long-term planning to ensure adequate resources.

The website funded entirely by government is now looking for other sources of revenue and is thinking of a sponsorship programme. The website funded as part of an EU project may cease to exist when the project funding ends.

Neither of these websites is concerned about editorial independence from government. In the first case, the website publishes information for new immigrants and does not engage in advocacy activities, although their parent organisation is an active advocacy organisation on immigration issues. In the second case, the website publishes a disclaimer indicating that the European Commission is not responsible for the information on the website.

One website that charges subscription fees for its information is a commercial organisation and self-sustaining.

Another website is operated solely by a part-time paid staff person who worries about continuity when she is away; she believes the website needs at least two people sharing the tasks.

One website staffed entirely by volunteers is concerned that the website will be at risk if a key volunteer has to get a paying job in the near future. Another volunteer-operated website suffers from lack of time to invest in necessary updates and expansion.

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* Finding from the Irish Interviews *

- **How should the proposed website be funded?**

Most of those interviewed believe the new website should have a mixed funding base.

Private grants and foundations are seen as a suitable source of funding by most of those interviewed. However it was pointed out that this may be a short-term funding source.

Most also see the government as a suitable source of funding, provided that the proposed website does not depend entirely on government funding. Several respondents believe that government funding may inhibit editorial freedom but others believe this will not be an issue if the website does not have a lobbying function.

European Union funds are also perceived to be a suitable source, with the major caveat being the lack of sustainability with this option.

Respondents were mixed about the idea of sponsorships from large corporations. Most see it as feasible but have concerns about objectivity and ethics. One suggestion is to have a clear policy about sponsorships. It should not be the major source of funding. One possibility is that minority-owned businesses may want to sponsor the website as a promotional tool.

One interview respondent believes that the proposed website should be a community-owned project, with ownership developed around community media principles. Another believes it may be possible to have advertising content on the website.

All those interviewed believe that asking the website users to pay a fee to access the information is not feasible, nor is asking volunteers to pay for the operation of the website.

Specific suggestions for funding sources are: KNOW RACISM - the National Anti-Racism Awareness Programme; large agencies such as Trocaire; three government departments - Social Community and Family Affairs, Foreign Affairs, and Justice, Equality and Law Reform; IBEC and ICTU; Microsoft; the Roundtree Trust; and Dublin Corporation.

The Internet Can Support an Ethnic Diaspora

Analysis by David J. Elkins (1997) suggests that the Internet allows ethnic communities to find ways to support their diaspora and retain their culture and language. This allows for multiple identities that enhance rather than inhibit their options in everyday life.

- **Any suggestions for sustainability?**

Several respondents believe that obtaining start-up funds will not be overly difficult for the proposed website; however securing ongoing core funding will be very difficult. There were no specific suggestions for ensuring sustainability other than obtaining funding from a variety of sources and making it a priority to obtain core funding from the outset.

-> Recommendations ->

Making Information Available on the Web ***

The study found a clear need for a new website with information relevant to newcomers to Ireland and ethnic minority communities in Ireland.

The primary function of the new website should be to:

▼ Direct newcomers and ethnic minority communities - and those seeking information on multiculturalism in Ireland - to appropriate government and non-government sources of information;

▼ Link information resources available on the Web of interest to newcomers to Ireland, ethnic minority communities in Ireland, and others interested in multiculturalism in Ireland;

▼ Introduce this existing information and revise or rewrite it where required to meet the needs of the users;

▼ Identify gaps in information provision, particularly by inviting feedback from the website users;

▼ Encourage government, local authorities, and non-governmental organisations to produce this information and make it available on the Web;

▼ Encourage newcomers and ethnic minority communities to produce information for the website;

▼ Produce only the information identified as not being available elsewhere, as well as a series of brief FAQs (frequently-asked questions) on the central issues.

Chart 1 in next page illustrates the proposed website information structure.

Contact Us	Info about DiversityIreland and who is working on the website; contact information and request for feedback on the site; background to the website; how to support the website financially; how to work as a volunteer on the website
Ethnic Minority Communities in Ireland	FAQs about newcomers and ethnic minority communities; links to ethnic minority communities websites and support groups (in cooperation with the Integrating Ireland network); research on newcomers and ethnic minority communities in Ireland; how to start a new group for your ethnic minority community; possible sources of funding for new support groups; stories from newcomers and ethnic minority communities; info on anti-racism training
Working in Ireland	FAQs on jobs and employers in Ireland; Irish government and NGO info on jobs, employers, entitlements and responsibilities; how to apply for visas and work permits; the tax system; working conditions and minimum wage legislation; commercial jobs sites; links to trade unions
Being an Entrepreneur	FAQs on starting a small business in Ireland; the Small Firms Association; links to and examples of small businesses with ethnic minority owners; equality and anti-racism policies for business; how businesses can sponsor this website
Languages and Literacy	FAQs on Irish and English languages in Ireland; services and information available in other languages; language training; where to go to have conversations with English speakers; literacy training and services
Training and Education	FAQs on training and education in Ireland; Irish government and NGO info on training and education; other lifelong learning info; scholarships
Accommodation and Housing	FAQs on housing and accommodation in Ireland; Irish government and NGO info on housing and accommodation; links to accommodation sites, the Evening Herald classified ads
Services and Support	Government services and support, such as health and social services; NGO and community services and support; religious support and services
Government Policies and NGO Position Papers	FAQs about government policies and non-government position papers on newcomers and ethnic minority communities; links to government policy documents; links to position papers by NGOs; links to international organisation and NGO websites on these issues
Laws, Legislation and Rights	Links to info on citizenship rights, voting rights; links to information on asylum law and processes; links to NGOs working in this area; links to FLAC and IRILA (refugee and immigration lawyers association); links to free legal aid centre
Ireland - General Information	Irish Government web site; local government websites; travelling around Ireland; practical information such as how to post a letter; maps and webcams of Ireland; where to shop in Dublin; sports in Ireland; recreation facilities; cultural events
Europe - General Information	Europa Web site; info on European integration and cultural diversity in Europe; links to Anti-Racism websites in Europe; links to email discussion lists in Europe
General News Links	Irish news sources; news sources in other countries; Community Exchange; other alternative news sources
Internet Resources	How to access the Internet free or at low cost in Ireland; FAQs on how to use email and links to email sites; FAQs on how to use the Web and links to search engines; how support groups can use the Internet

*Producing and Promoting the Website ****

The new website should develop an editorial policy that outlines:

- ▼ the role of the website
- ▼ the information it will provide
- ▼ the users the information will be provided for
- ▼ the extent to which the website will provide information in languages other than English
- ▼ the extent to which the website will link with information and services in Northern Ireland
- ▼ how the users will provide feedback to the website
- ▼ to what extent the website will support user requests for information and referrals
- ▼ the relationships and links with outside information providers
- ▼ how the information on the website will be produced and kept up-to-date
- ▼ how racist emails sent to the website will be dealt with effectively and efficiently
- ▼ the participation of volunteer workers
- ▼ the participation of newcomers and ethnic minority communities in producing information for the website
- ▼ how the website will be promoted, including organisations that will be approached to assist with promotion

The draft editorial policy should be developed before potential funders of the website are approached. Ideally, the editorial policy should be developed in consultation with the outside information providers - including both non-governmental organisations and government departments and agencies.

The website should be produced with all newcomers to Ireland and ethnic minority communities in mind; however the focus should be on potential users from these groups who need the most support, such as those who:

- ▼ Are using public Internet access rather than home Internet access and may not have much time to spend on the Internet;

- ▼ May not speak English as their first language;

- ▼ May not have good IT skills;

- ▼ May be experiencing social exclusion in Ireland for a range of socio-economic and cultural reasons;

- ▼ May be living in marginalised or isolated communities;

- ▼ May need to contact the website for support on how to access information and services.

The report chapter "Producing and Promoting the Website" contains many suggestions from the international and Irish interviews that will be useful for promoting the new website.

The new website should not be promoted primarily by any one sponsoring organisation but rather by a wide range of non-governmental and community organisations and also government departments and agencies.

An immediate consideration will be the name of the new website. DiversityIreland may not be appropriate as the new website name because the term "diversity" refers to more than ethnic diversity and may imply a wider focus than it the website actually has.

*Linking With Information and Service Providers ****

It should be expected that some of the existing information on the Web of interest to newcomers to Ireland and ethnic minority communities in Ireland is not currently written or presented in an accessible manner. This information will need to be enhanced, revised and rewritten where necessary. The website staff will therefore need to work closely with outside information providers to ensure that the information provided on the Web is suitable for the target users.

As discussed in the report chapter on this topic, the new website should develop relationships with three categories of information and service providers: NGOs and community-based groups; government departments and agencies, including local governments; and other providers and the general public.

In the first category, the new website should forge a strong working relationship with the Integrating Ireland (II) organisation, as well as other organisations and groups not affiliated with II.

In the second category, new website should form good working relationships with information providers in: Comhairle; Department of Enterprise Trade and Employment; Department of Social, Community and Family Affairs; Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform; and Department of Foreign Affairs. The new website should also work with the other government departments and agencies listed in the relevant chapter of this report.

In the third category, links and relationships will need to be developed with a range of information providers, so that the new website avoids duplicating information already existing on the Internet.

From the start, the new website will need to actively encourage feedback from its users, through a feedback mechanism and invitations to feedback on the website. The website should grow organically according to the information needs of the users identified primarily by user feedback.

*Organisation, Staffing and Technical Resources ****

The new website should be run by a non-profit organisation existing solely to produce the website. This organisation should not be affiliated to any existing organisation.

The international website surveyed most similar to the one proposed for Ireland is Settlement Org in Ontario, Canada (www.settlement.org). DiversityIreland should contact this organisation to learn more about its operations.

The staffing needs of the new Irish website should be determined in conjunction with the website's editorial policy - in particular, decisions on the extent to which the website will support user requests for information and referrals may determine the staffing levels needed. If the website decides to have a high level of interaction with its users, there will be a continual growing need for staff resources.

One possible staffing structure is three full-time staff:

▼ A coordinator, having overall responsibility for the website, developing management-level relationships with the outside information providers, promoting the website;

▼ Two journalists with web production skills, having responsibility for producing the website and coordinating and training volunteers and trainees on work placements.

Volunteers and possibly trainees on work placement should have a central role in the operations of the website; they should be offered meaningful payback for their input. A possible role for volunteers is responding to requests by email for information and referrals, after having received training in this area.

The staff and volunteers should work in dedicated premises. Renting serviced offices with onsite reception, secretarial and IT support could be considered - a range of serviced office packages are available in Dublin.

The new website will need to tender for the website design; the request for tender should specify services by an individual or company with experience working with non-governmental and community organisations and familiar with the design needs of users from disadvantaged communities.

All technical support outside the capacity of the core staff should be outsourced. Website hosting should also be outsourced. The request for tender for website hosting should specify that open source software should be used. The new website should explore the possibility of sharing information databases with APC (Association for Progressive Communications), as discussed in the report chapter on technical resources.

Funding and Sustainability ***

An immediate priority for DiversityIreland should be to engage a consultant to: develop the draft editorial policy for the website; develop a business plan for the new website, including start-up costs and operational costs for the first three years; have preliminary talks with potential funders; and develop proposals for funding the website.

The goal should be to secure core funding and have a mixed funding base, including grants and foundations, government funding, and European Union funding. Specific suggestions for sources of funding were made in the relevant chapter of this report. One source recommended by a number of those interviewed is KNOW RACISM – the National Anti-Racism Awareness Programme.

Sponsorships from commercial organisations should also be explored - especially commercial organisations with services for newcomers and ethnic minority communities such as private

English-language schools. Minority-owned businesses may also be interested in sponsoring the website as a promotional tool.

The sustainability of the new website will be dependent largely on its ability to provide timely, up-to-date information relevant to newcomers to Ireland, ethnic minority communities in Ireland, organisations working with these groups, and others interested in multiculturalism in Ireland. If it succeeds in this task, the website will be assured strong support from its users that may help it through any funding crisis.

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-> Appendix ->

Websites in the international survey
Anti-Racism Net (the US)
December 18 (Belgium)
DiversityInc.Com (the US)
Electronic Immigration Network (Britain)
RefugeeNet (Belgium)
Settlement Org (Canada)
UNITED for Intercultural Action (the Netherlands)
Vancouver for New Immigrants (Canada)

Groups and organisations interviewed for the Irish survey
Non-governmental organisations (NGOs):
Amnesty International Irish Section (Ursula Fraser)
ARASI (Association of Refugees and Asylum Seekers in Ireland) (Iwa Sebit)
Comhlámh (Colm O Cuanacháin)
Doras Luimní (Ann Scully)
Irish Refugee Council (Pat Guerin)
Irish Sudanese Support Group, African Support Centre (Dier Tong)
NASC (Irish Immigrant Support Centre) (Brendan Hennessey)
NCCRI (National Consultative Committee on Racism and Interculturalism) (Philip Watt)
Northern Council for Ethnic Minorities (Belfast) (Patrick Yu)
Pavee Point (Caoimhe McCabe)

Government bodies:
Comhairle (Anne Cox)
Department of Justice - Reception and Integration Agency (Noel Waters)
Department of Foreign Affairs - Development Education Unit (formerly NCDE) (Thomas Tichelmann)

Possible website links for the proposed website
The interview respondents suggested a number of website links that could be appropriate for the proposed website. These are:

- OASIS
- University College Cork, Centre for Immigration Studies
- the NCCRI in Ireland
- Comhlámh
- UNITED
- International Migration Organisation
- Amnesty International
- World Conference Against Racism
- EHRI
- ECRE
- UNHCR

- Council of Europe
- European Monitoring Centre
- Danish Refugee Council
- US State Department
- ILO in Geneva
- The Hunger Website
- Drop the Debt
- Mercy Sisters International website, refugee section
- ENR anti-racism website
- European Anti-Poverty Network
- Irish Traveller Movement
- KNOW RACISM
- ICARE
- UK Refugee Council
- UK Commission for Racial Equality
- NCADC (National Coalition Anti-Deportation)

About the authors
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www.models-research.ie/publications/list.html