

Report on 'What's doing?' – NYCI event for 21 March 2009

In the 2009 annual implementation plan for Intercultural Youth Work (Section Practice Development), the National Youth Council of Ireland planned to host an event to mark 21 March, the International Day for the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination and the European-wide Action Week against Racism. On 25 March, NYCI hosted an event to showcase intercultural youth work entitled "What's doing?" in Cork city. Following the success of that showcase, the event was brought to both Dublin city (2 April) and Galway (14 May) to reach youth workers across the country. The 'What's doing?' event is a two hour showcase and workshop for

The events

Each event took place over two hours on a week-day evening. This time slot was considered to be an 'excellent use of time', allowing many youth workers to attend without cutting into working hours, or personal commitments. At the showcase, the NYCI Intercultural team welcomed those in attendance, and refreshments were served on arrival. As all projects were exhibited, time was given at this stage for youth workers to tour the room and read about the projects. The Intercultural Outreach



A YMCA stand at 'What's doing?', Cork

Youth workers, aimed at promoting an intercultural approach in voluntary youth work by drawing on the experience of successful intercultural youth projects in the three regions.

Worker then opened proceedings by introducing the work of NYCI, the idea behind 'What's doing?' and the short schedule of the evening. Over the next 15 minutes or so, each project worker introduced the project they were exhibiting and explained briefly what the project entailed. Based on these short introductions, the youth workers in attendance decided which projects they would like to learn more about, and noted any questions arising from the exhibitions.



Participants at 'What's doing?', Dublin

The showcases were very much aimed at discussing good practices, lessons learned and meeting particular challenges in intercultural youth work. The showcase was not necessarily of projects which are strictly intercultural in their aim/objectives, but simply involve ongoing youth work where different cultures and nationalities are represented and are active members of the group, and as a result, the project is contributing to an intercultural approach.

At 'What's doing?', approximately 30 youth workers had the chance to break into smaller groups - led by the project workers of the showcased projects - to discuss the successes of and barriers to intercultural youth work, by putting questions to the project leaders around the implementation, challenges and

opportunities of their intercultural projects. The format was based partly on 'Open Space Technology' giving youth workers the opportunity to move from one discussion to the next based on their interest and questions. This session lasted for one hour.

Questions were recorded on post-it notes and flip-chart paper by the project workers, and also by way of a short evaluation questionnaire completed by each group at the end of the discussion. 'What's doing?' finished up with a short feedback from each group, Each group shared one point with the plenary session which they wished to highlight as particularly important, surprising or something not previously considered.

All types of practical questions were raised, from sharing resources and information to promoting contacts between agencies and organisations in the sector. The discussion also gave youth workers the opportunity to discuss more challenging questions around interculturalism such as the need to examine Irish identity with young people; tackling racism and bullying; identifying volunteers from different ethnic backgrounds, and building trust between the youth organisations and the parents and communities of minority ethnic groups in their communities.

The cost

The 'What's doing?' events cost an average of €1,182 each. Funding for the 'What's Doing?' events was provided by the Office of the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs, the One Foundation and Irish Aid.

EVENTS	Cork	Dublin	Galway
Room hire	100	0	60
Food 50 participants	480	265	120
Support to showcase projects	0	42.8	50
Publicity material	4.43	0	0
Stand Hire	524.88	0	0
Travel	388.5	0	212.3
Speakers Fees	300	500	500
<u>Sub-total</u>	<u>1797.81</u>	<u>807.8</u>	<u>942.3</u>
Estimated Cost	6000		
Actual	3547.91		

The follow-up

1. NYCI noted many of the opportunities in Cork, Dublin and Galway for intercultural youth work. In order to make these tips and good practice available as widely as possible, NYCI is developing guidelines "*Towards a Quality Mark in Intercultural Youth Work: 12 steps to Best Practice*" which includes providing information and contact details of successful intercultural youth work projects on the website: www.intercultural.ie.
2. During 'What's doing?' many barriers to intercultural youth work were also brought up, and NYCI is implementing the work plan to help overcome such barriers as much as possible, as below:

BARRIERS TO INTERCULTURAL YOUTH WORK	NYCI WORK PLAN
1. Contacts and Networking	
Volunteers and staff from different cultures	What's next?' Networking event
Outreach to young people and parents from a minority ethnic background	What's next?' Networking event Training on Intercultural Communication
2. Sustainability	
Funding	Best Practice promotion on-line
Performance Indicators	NYCI 12 steps to Intercultural Youth Work
Resources	NYCI training and on-line resources

How to get examples of intercultural youth work to policy makers and government	Best Practice promotion on-line
How a small project can influence national policy to address the broader issues facing the young people we work with	Best Practice promotion on-line
3. Training	
How cultural training is implemented/planned	NYCI training and regional contacts
How to implement intercultural training within our organisation	NYCI training and regional contacts
Understanding traditional practices	NYCI training 'Cultural Competency'
Lack of experience	NYCI training and resources
The availability of a list of facilitators with experience	NYCI pilot training of trainers; NYCI ToT manual (available late 2009)
Tensions between the young people such as racism, wanting to speak another language, not mixing)	NYCI training 'Tackling Racism'
Questions around cultural diversity	NYCI training 'Cultural Competency'

3. 'What's next?' is the planned networking event between youth work organisations and organisations and individuals from a minority ethnic background (including asylum seekers and refugees) in their local area. The event is planned to take place in September/October 2009 in four locations (to be confirmed); provisional locations are Galway, the South-East (Waterford), North Dublin and South Dublin. Research is ongoing and contacts have been made with Integrating Ireland, the Galway Refugee Support Group, the Galway County Council. The idea is that at the networking event, youth work organisations would have the opportunity to outreach to young people, parents and other members of minority ethnic communities, and establish links with volunteers and organisations from these communities. It will also give members of minority ethnic groups a chance to ask questions around youth work and the programmes of youth work organisations in Ireland. Both sides would then have the chance to work together in the roll-out of NYCI's development education pack for 'One World Week' which begins on 14 November 2009, and whose theme is "Just Us or Justice?"

Annex – Projects showcased

Projects showcased in Cork city at the Victoria Hotel on 25th March from Munster were:

- 'Ninos' project (YMCA Cork)
- Bishopstown Youth Project (Ogra Chorcaí)

- projects run in Bandon and Mahon, Co. Cork, (Foroige)
- Global Education Project (Mayfield Community Arts Centre)
- Kerry Diocesan Youth Services.

In attendance¹: 29 youth workers

At the Dublin event in Dublin City Public Library, Pearse Street on 14 May projects showcased from Leinster were:

- Tyrresltown Youth Initiative (Foroige Blanchardstown)
- Navan Travellers' Workshop
- Community Action (Peace Corps Localise)
- Integration of African Children in Ireland, and
- Intercultural Policy (Scouting Ireland)

In attendance: 24 youth workers

On 14 May, at the GAF Youth Café in Galway, 5 projects were showcased from the West:

- Big Sing Multicultural Choir & Community Storytelling Initiative
- Castlebar Neighbourhood Youth Project (Foroige)
- 'Street Soccer League', Galway Diocesan Youth Services
- Galway Youth Circus
- SPARK Project, Youth Work Ireland Galway
- Diversity Links, (M.A.R.D.I., Donegal)

In attendance: 25 youth workers

¹ This number includes project workers showcasing their project, but not NYCI staff in attendance.