



**AN GARDÁ
SÍOCHÁNA**

Equality, Diversity & Inclusion

Strategy Statement &
Action Plan 2020 - 2021



Ag Coinneáil Daoine Sábháilte
Keeping People Safe

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1. Commissioner's Foreword



I am pleased to introduce our Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Strategy Statement and Action Plan for An Garda Síochána.

As an organisation, An Garda Síochána believes that a proactive approach to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion gives clear expression to our core values and commitments to respect and equality set out in the Garda Code of Ethics.

Fostering and increasing diversity and inclusion in our organisation is not only the right thing to do, but also improves service delivery by benefiting from the talents and life experience of people of all backgrounds. To be responsive and innovative as individuals and as an organisation we must seek out and learn from multiple perspectives.

This short term strategy identifies a number of priority action items, aligned with our external Diversity and Integration Strategy 2019 - 2021 which launched in late 2019. The approach adopted to this Strategy will also provide a longer term platform for strategic EDI planning - with key actions including the establishment of a new governance structure and a focus on strengthening our internal capacity to respond to EDI issues in the workplace.

Our vision is to create a working environment in which all Garda members, Garda Reserve members and Garda staff are treated fairly and respectfully, have equality of opportunities and resources, and can contribute fully to the success of An Garda Síochána. By this and other means we aspire to attract a diverse pool of applicants to join the organisation as we strive to reflect the diversity of the community we serve.

I wish to express my appreciation to all stakeholders who played a part in the development of this Strategy. In particular, I would like to acknowledge the valuable contribution made by Garda members, Garda Reserve members and Garda staff who participated in a series of internal EDI focus groups, as well as contributions by external stakeholders including respected academics, non-governmental organisations representing diverse groups, and police services in other jurisdictions.

I look forward to the implementation of this Strategy and I encourage each one of us in An Garda Síochána to play their part in creating a more diverse and inclusive organisation that will support us in our mission of Keeping People Safe.

Drew Harris

COMMISSIONER, AN GARDA SÍOCHÁNA

2. Introduction



An Garda Síochána is committed to fulfil its obligations under the Employee Equality Acts; in this regard, we strive to promote full equality for all Garda members, Garda Reserve members, and Garda staff, and to eliminate discrimination on the grounds of age, gender, disability, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, race, religious belief, or membership of the traveller community.

Beyond this, An Garda Síochána recognises that achieving greater diversity of socio-economic and educational background, as well as cognitive diversity among our personnel, are key priorities.

Our EDI Strategy Statement and Action Plan aims to proactively build a culture of awareness and respect for equality, diversity and inclusion matters which permeates the workplace.

The Strategy is consistent with the themes and objectives of the following:

- Strategy Statement 2019 - 2021
- People Strategy 2019 - 2021
- Diversity & Integration Strategy 2019 - 2021
- Ethics Strategy 2019 - 2021
- Human Rights Strategy 2020 - 2022
- Findings of the Cultural Audit
- Initiatives under the Implementation Plan, A Policing Service for our Future (“APSFF”) for the Report of the Commission on the Future of Policing in Ireland (“CoFPI”)

3. Background and Context

Section 42 of the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act, 2014 introduced a statutory provision, referred to as the “Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty”. The Duty requires public bodies to eliminate discrimination; provide equality of opportunity and treatment for employees and persons to whom it provides services; and protect the human rights of employees and service users.

In recent years An Garda Síochána has taken a number of steps to support the implementation of the Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty with respect to Garda personnel. A notable example includes the development of recruitment material in 12 different languages for our most recent Garda trainee recruitment campaign. It is heartening to see Garda video testimonials in multiple languages reach tens of thousands of views online. We have also made significant strides towards ensuring the Garda uniform accommodates religious diversity.

This Strategy aims to build-upon these efforts by placing EDI at the heart of how An Garda Síochána exercises our Human Resources & People Development function.

It will also align An Garda Síochána with the wider Public Sector reform programme, Our Public Service 2020, which includes actions that focus on employee engagement, public service culture and values, and equality, diversity and inclusion.

4. Impact of an Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Strategy

A proactive approach to EDI can help give expression to An Garda Síochána’s core values, most notably: respect; professionalism; and empathy. Although there is a strong moral case for diversity, there is also reason to believe it will bring benefits to An Garda Síochána. For example, research shows us that diversity of thought leads to organisational agility and innovation. It provides a wider talent pool of applicants to An Garda Síochána.

Building a culture of awareness and respect for equality, diversity and inclusion matters will further support the embedding of our Code of Ethics and key ethical behaviours in An Garda Síochána and support delivery of an effective policing service.



5. Key Definitions



EQUALITY is about treating each person with dignity and respect by reasonably accommodating their specific needs. It is about creating a fair and just environment for each person to achieve their full potential, and ensuring that discrimination, bullying, harassment, and sexual harassment are not accepted or tolerated.



DIVERSITY is about recognising, acknowledging, respecting and harnessing the visible and non-visible differences in our workforce and the unique cultures, personalities, experiences, abilities, knowledge and skills of our people.



INCLUSION is about valuing the differences between us and recognising that these differences are our strength. It is about ensuring that our working environment is one in which all Garda members and staff feel that diversity is to be valued.

6. Strategic Goals

Our vision is to create a working environment in which all people are treated fairly and respectfully, have equality of opportunities and resources, and can contribute fully to the success of An Garda Síochána. The following strategic goals will help us to realise this vision.

6.1. Our Leadership

We will engage leaders at all levels by developing a clear understanding of EDI responsibilities and strengthening our EDI support structures.

Promoting EDI must be seen as a responsibility of all Garda members, Garda Reserve members and Garda staff. Research also tells us that success in this area is directly related to the degree of commitment from senior leadership. It is also valuable to assign accountability and responsibility for organisational EDI commitments to ensure they are implemented.

6.2. Our People

We will attract, develop and retain a diverse workforce to support delivery of an effective policing service to the communities we serve.

An Garda Síochána recognises that our people are our greatest resource. If we are to compete for talent in the labour market, we must do more to be perceived as an employer of choice by people from diverse backgrounds. However, recruitment is just the start. We must also ensure that all Garda members, Garda Reserve members and Garda staff have equal opportunities to thrive and excel in an organisation that values them.

6.3. Our Culture

We will honour our core values and Code of Ethics through proactively building a culture of awareness and respect for EDI matters which permeates the workplace.

It is vital that all Garda members, Garda Reserve members and Garda staff have a voice and feel that they contribute to shaping change in An Garda Síochána. We will represent diverse interests through a new EDI governance structure to ensure that a range of perspectives is brought to bear in decision making, taking account of different identities, experiences and situations and their practical implication.

6.4. Our Supports

We will support and empower our people by creating a more inclusive work environment for all Garda members, Garda Reserve members and Garda staff.

A career in An Garda Síochána can be challenging. This Strategy aims to encourage a work environment where all employees can thrive. In particular, we will focus on improvements to worklife balance, reasonable accommodation (disability and mental health) and the promotion of an intercultural workplace.

7. Action Plan

An EDI Leadership Council, chaired by the Deputy Commissioner Strategy, Governance and Performance has been established with the following terms of reference:

- A. To provide strategic advice in respect of promotion of equality, diversity and inclusion across An Garda Síochána; and
- B. To monitor the implementation of the EDI Strategy through the delivery of short, medium, and long term actions as outlined below.

OUR LEADERSHIP

No.	Action Description	Indicators		Due
01	Introduce a new EDI governance structure.	01a	Establish an internal EDI Leadership Council to influence, own and take collective responsibility for the implementation of the EDI commitments of An Garda Síochána.	Q4 2020
		01b	Form a network of EDI Champions across An Garda Síochána who will support the embedding of a culture of awareness and respect for EDI matters.	Q4 2020
02	Develop an EDI Vision Statement.	02a	Develop and publish an EDI Vision Statement and set of key commitments in collaboration with partners on the OPS2020 Action-16 Team.	Q4 2020
03	Provide EDI training that enables our leaders and all Garda members, Garda Reserve members and Garda staff reach the standards set out in our EDI Policy.	03a	Deliver training for senior management and line management to ensure competent leadership on EDI matters.	Q1/Q2 2021
		03b	Deliver training for role-holders involved in policy and strategy formation to build EDI awareness in key organisational functions.	Q1/Q2 2021
		03c	Support all Garda members, Garda Reserve members and Garda staff in raising their awareness and understanding of our EDI standards.	

OUR PEOPLE

No.	Action Description	Indicators		Due
04	Support the development of HR&PD policies which accommodate diversity.	04a	Publish an amended 'Uniform Policy'.	Q3 2020
		04b	Examine ongoing procurement of equipment including PPE, firearms and vehicles to avoid inadvertent gender discrimination.	Q3 2021
		04c	Develop and publish a 'Gender Identity' Policy which will articulate commitments in relation to diverse gender identities and gender expressions.	Q3 2021
05	Support the development of a Diversity Recruitment Roadmap.	05a	Identify the key challenges related to the recruitment and retention of individuals from minority backgrounds.	Q4 2020
		05b	Implement a number of key initiatives which aim to resolve challenges in 05a.	Q1-Q4 2021
		05c	Develop an internship programme to increase the accessibility, understanding of, and potential for a career in An Garda Síochána for school-leavers and graduates, particularly those from groups typically underrepresented in the organisation.	Q4 2021

OUR CULTURE

No.	Action Description	Indicators		Due
06	Encourage and support the operation of diverse interest groups/networks.	06a	Collate and maintain a central record of formal and informal diverse groups/networks.	Q3 2020 - Q4 2021
		06b	Promote awareness of and participation in diverse interest groups/networks among personnel across An Garda Síochána.	Q4 2020 - Q4 2021
07	Introduce regular employee communications on EDI matters and encourage feedback.	07a	Develop and maintain a user-friendly point of access on the Garda Portal to publications and materials addressing EDI matters.	Q4 2020 - Q4 2021
		07b	Develop mechanisms for feedback which will provide access to qualitative data and support the development and implementation of EDI initiatives.	Q3-Q4 2020
08	Develop access to high quality diversity data.	08a	Use available diversity data to establish current baselines and agree targets in respect of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Gender balance across ranks and grades - The ethnic, gender and age profile of applicants to the Garda trainee competition, and end-to-end progression through the recruitment process. 	Q1-Q4 2021
		08b	Research and develop diversity data initiatives, informed by the human rights based approach to data collection, and seek to build trust in the secure and confidential management of diversity data.	Q1-Q4 2021

OUR SUPPORTS

No.	Action Description	Indicators		Due
09	Update guidelines on professional and non-discriminatory language.	09a	Develop & publish Guidelines on the use of professional and non-discriminatory language for an intercultural workplace - in conjunction with the Garda National Diversity & Integration Unit.	Q4 2020 - Q1-2021
10	Continue support for reasonable accommodation measures (disability & mental health).	10a	Develop a Code of Practice for the Employment of People with Disabilities to support better employment outcomes for people with disabilities in An Garda Síochána.	Q2-Q4 2021
11	Continue support for work-life balance options.	11a	Conduct a review of work-life balance arrangements in place in An Garda Síochána (including family friendly initiatives) and make recommendations.	Q1-Q4 2021

8. Conclusion

We have set out a vision to create a working environment in which all people are treated fairly and respectfully, have equality of opportunities and resources, and can contribute fully to the success of An Garda Síochána.

This document outlines a set of strategic goals and priority actions to guide us towards the realisation of this vision and which will lay the foundations to drive the equality, diversity & inclusion agenda forward within An Garda Síochána.

Over the next 18 months, we will put in place the infrastructure, resources and leadership to deliver the goals set out in this strategy. However, this Strategy alone is not enough. All Garda members, Garda Reserve members and Garda staff must play their part in developing An Garda Síochána as an equal, diverse and inclusive place to work.



Correspondence and queries in relation to this Strategy Statement & Action Plan should be forwarded to HRM.Inclusion@garda.ie or by post to:

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