

Press Release

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Dublin's Lord Mayor Launches The Integration Centre

Lord Mayor of Dublin, Gerry Breen will today launch The Integration Centre. The Centre is the first of its kind in Ireland, and will engage in the monitoring of immigrant to inform legislation, policy and practice.

The event which will be held at the O'Callaghan Mont Clare Hotel from 12:30 to 2:00pm, July 13th, 2010 and will also include speakers Senator Ivana Bacik; Economist, Jim Power – author of *Picking Up the Pieces: Economic Crisis and Hope in Ireland*; and Joseph Nyirenda, Integration and Diversity Officer, Roscommon Integrated Development Company. This high profile event will be attended by Ambassadors, politicians, business people, representatives of the NGO sector, and the organisation's network members.

The Lord Mayor said "It is my honour to launch The Integration Centre today, as it is an invaluable resource for immigrants and Irish society. 18% of the population here in Dublin are immigrant and more than 10% across all other local authority areas. It is therefore of the utmost importance that diversity is embraced and adequate services provided to meet this new and emerging demand."

Senator Bacik said "I fully support the work of The Integration Centre and its goals to promote an integrated, successful Ireland. Coming from an immigrant background myself, I understand the challenges faced by immigrants. Immigrants have huge potential to contribute to Irish society and its economy as was the case of my own grandfather who established Waterford Crystal and The Integration Centre will undoubtedly aid this process nationwide."

Economist Jim Power said "Immigrants have made a huge economic and social contribution to Ireland over the last decade but in the midst of a deep recession the challenges for immigrants in Ireland are intensifying and it is essential that decision makers pursue policies that will ensure that immigrants continue to make a strong contribution to Ireland's future."

Pat Montague, Chairperson, The Integration Centre said "***It is the mission of The Integration Centre to promote the integration and inclusion of immigrants through developing good practice to be eventually mainstreamed by government.*** To achieve this, the organisation focuses on four work areas; integration monitoring, integration planning and the provision of an information and advocacy service". Evidence is drawn from these programmes to articulate the organisation's policy positions.

He went on to say "The Integration Centre is the first organisation in Ireland to develop and implement an integration monitoring strategy in consultation with government, business and the community, and the time is ripe to embrace this and the enormous contribution made by immigrants in Ireland."

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Editor's note

The Integration Centre is committed to the integration and inclusion of people from immigrant backgrounds in Ireland. The Centre specializes in planning, monitoring and advocacy at city, local, national and international levels and provides regionalized information, advice and training services. The Centre conducts evidence-based research to influence positive changes in legislation, policy and practice and proactively engage with all sectors of society to achieve this. We have more than 250 affiliated organisations as part of our national network.