



Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland

Traveller and Roma Education Strategy

Plan for implementation and action
2024–2026





MINCEIR ,PAVEE AN ROMA
GRANĒĻ OLSK-SUNNĪ

NACIONALNO STRATEGIA
VASH E PHIRUTNE THAJ
E ROMANE EDUKACIA

Contents

| | |
|--|----|
| Traveller and Roma Education Strategy 2030 | 3 |
| Values to guide delivery and implementation | 3 |
| Strategic goal | 4 |
| Strategic pillars | 6 |
| Driving implementation, monitoring progress, evaluating impact and reporting | 7 |
| Actions | 9 |
| Appendix 1. List of abbreviations | 49 |

Traveller and Roma Education Strategy 2030

Values to guide delivery and implementation

Implementation of this strategy will be guided by a set of core values that will help guide by a set of core values which will help guide decision-making and prioritisation over the life of the strategy.

1. Learner-centered

The views of children and young people have been central to the development of this strategy. Traveller and Roma children and young people will be supported and encouraged to participate meaningfully in decision-making that impacts them.

2. Collaborative

The strategy has been developed through a collaborative process involving the Traveller and Roma communities and organisations, and departments and agencies across the continuum of education. This strategy will be delivered and evaluated in collaboration with the Traveller and Roma communities and organisations.

3. Inclusive and respectful

Creating an inclusive and respectful environment is at the centre of this strategy. We are committed to supporting positive engagement of Travellers and Roma at all levels of the education system. We are committed to addressing racism, promoting diversity and creating learning environments where the unique identity and background of Traveller and Roma learners is acknowledged, respected and valued.

4. Accessible

Education is a human right and we value learning and its role in the development, cohesion and wellbeing of an inclusive society. We commit to ensuring that Traveller and Roma learners have the opportunity to participate positively in their educational journey where they are encouraged and supported to reach their full potential.

5. Positive outcomes

Through the delivery of this strategy, we commit to maintaining a focus on educational ambitions and positive outcomes for Travellers and Roma at all levels of education.

6. Accountable

Together we are responsible for the implementation of this strategy. We commit to the development, review and evaluation of, and reporting on the implementation plans with the involvement of the Traveller and Roma organisations. We will be adaptable and open to change where possible and act in an honest and respectful manner.

Strategic goal

The strategic goal was developed in consultation with the TRES advisory group and incorporates the rights-based approach that has underpinned all work on the strategy.

Ensure equity of access, opportunity and outcomes, as well as meaningful participation, across the continuum of education for all Travellers and Roma, including people with additional educational needs, in an inclusive system where Travellers and Roma are respected and supported to fulfil their potential, and where Traveller and Roma cultures and ethnic identities are acknowledged, visible and valued.



The diagram below captures each aspect of the strategic goal from the perspective of the Traveller and Roma learner. At its centre are the two areas of strategic impact for TRES: the experience of the Traveller and Roma learner, and the success of the Traveller and Roma learner.



At early learning and care level, the key focus of this strategy is for equal participation in the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) programme for Traveller and Roma children.

At school level, the key focus is to improve the learning experience and attainment levels for all Traveller and Roma children and young people but particularly to significantly increase the numbers of young people remaining in school to sixth year and achieving a Leaving Certificate.

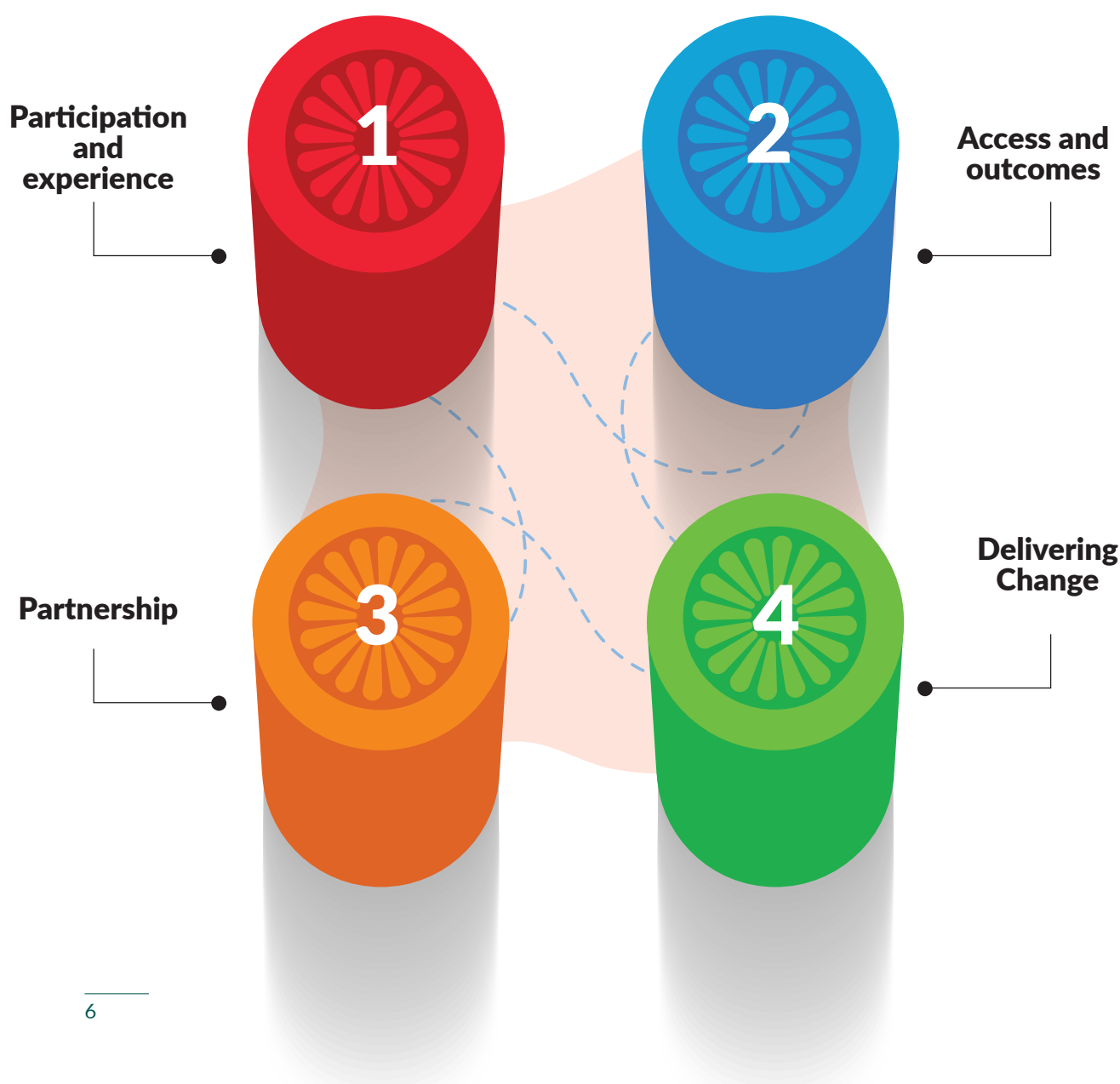
For the tertiary system, the aim of this strategy is to have the diversity of Ireland's population reflected in further and higher education and to provide the necessary supports to ensure that everyone, regardless of background or education, can access education without barriers.

Strategic Pillars

The six-year strategy is built around four strategic pillars. The tables below set out the actions, lead organisations, timeframe, indicators of progress and targets to be achieved by June 2026 for each pillar and strategic action.

This plan will be kept under review by an oversight group. This first implementation plan recognises that structures and resources are required for implementation and that there is further work to be done to build on the findings from the consultations and in particular from the evaluation of the STAR pilot project.

One of the findings of the evaluation of the STAR pilot project relates to the term ‘STAR’, which stands for ‘Supporting Travellers and Roma’ in education, and the significance and sense of positivity that this term holds for members of the Traveller and Roma communities. This strategy and implementation plan recognises this and, while the pilot project has come to an end, commits to using the term ‘STAR’ going forward to represent more generally the targeted supports for Traveller and Roma children and young people in schools. As such, where the term ‘STAR’ appears in an action, it does not refer to the pilot project unless otherwise specified, but rather denotes a targeted support for Traveller and Roma education.





Driving implementation, monitoring progress, evaluating impact and reporting

To drive the implementation of this strategy, the Department of Education, the Department of Children, Equality Disability Integration and Youth and the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science will continue to work together and in collaboration with the Traveller and Roma organisations. This 2024 to 2026 Plan for implementation and action sets out a series of actions to be achieved by mid-year 2026.

Pillar 4 of this plan sets out the intended structural changes that are being designed to bring about systemic change, including the establishment of new coordinator roles to work on the delivery of actions in this plan. For early learning and care (ELC) and school-age childcare (SAC), this includes the new Equal Start funding model and the introduction of new link workers and coordinator roles in ELC and SAC settings. For the school sector, this includes the identification of new coordinator roles to drive the implementation of the strategy. It also includes the intention to establish a permanent STAR coordinator role to scale the learnings from the STAR pilot project, including expanding the STAR communities of practice and the STAR Ambassador programme.

Equal Start is a new funding model with a set of associated universal and targeted measures to support access and participation in early learning and care (ELC) and school-age childcare (SAC) for children and their families who experience disadvantage. It prioritises Traveller and Roma children and families for additional supports. Measures will include communications initiatives to inform parents on supports and services, encourage parents' involvement in settings, supporting ELC and SAC settings to be more inclusive, and additional funding/tailored supports for target groups and areas of concentrated disadvantage.

Recognising the importance and value of having members of the Traveller and Roma communities engage in targeted work with children and young people from those communities, particular efforts will be made to encourage applications and support take-up of relevant posts by members of the Traveller and Roma communities. The implementation plan also includes measures in relation to increasing the diversity of the workforce across education.

To provide oversight and to monitor progress against plans, a Traveller and Roma Education Strategy (TRES) Oversight Group will be established. This group will mirror the membership of the TRES Advisory Group and will have representatives from the three different education sectors, other relevant departments and agencies, and the Traveller and Roma organisations. This group will use the implementation plan to monitor progress.

To ensure ongoing consultation with the Traveller and Roma organisations and individuals from the Traveller and Roma communities, a Traveller and Roma Education Forum will be established. This group will meet at least twice a year and, in addition, to providing feedback on implementation, it will also provide a Traveller and Roma perspective for other education policy areas.

To ensure the continued meaningful participation of Traveller and Roma children and young people, a specific consultation and engagement plan will be developed in consultation with this group. This will evolve as the work of the student participation unit in the Department of Education evolves, underpinned by the Lundy Model and the Government’s Framework on Children and Young People’s Participation.

To evaluate impact in the school system, a series of inspections with a focus on Traveller and Roma children and young people will be instigated. A profile of the child’s journey through the school system will be mapped using data from the various departments, the education system and the wider public service. Further research will be commissioned as appropriate and viable options for measuring the impact of targeted supports on specific cohorts, including Traveller and Roma children and young people, will be explored and developed.

An important part of the first phase of TRES will be taking stock of the enormous quantity of data gathered through the series of public and targeted TRES consultations and the evaluation of the STAR pilot project.

Reporting

Each of the three departments in this strategy is responsible for the delivery of their actions and for reporting progress to the National Traveller and Roma Inclusion Strategy (NTRIS) Steering Committee.



To streamline reporting and keep duplication to a minimum, the Department of Education will take overall responsibility for oversight of the Traveller and Roma Education Strategy (TRES). An annual report on the implementation of TRES, approved by the TRES Oversight Group, will be provided to the NTRIS Steering Committee.

The actions in TRES are designed to have clear timelines and outcomes to enable straightforward reporting. Progress reports, which will provide an update on progress against the plan, will be developed and provided to the TRES Oversight Group. Frequency of reporting will be determined by the TRES Oversight Group and, once approved, the progress reports will be published to the TRES webpage on gov.ie.

The publication of progress reports will provide a simple snapshot of progress on all actions, allowing stakeholders to track progress, identify issues and celebrate successes. Most importantly, members of the Traveller and Roma communities and the organisations that represent them will be able to review progress and to raise questions as appropriate.

The TRES implementation plans will be reviewed once every two years and updated accordingly. New actions will be added and completed actions removed through the regular review of progress.

Actions



Actions

Pillar 1: Participation and experience

Improve the learning experience of Travellers and Roma at all levels of the education system

| 1.1 | Strategic Action for Early Learning and Childcare settings (ELC) Work towards equivalent rates of young Traveller and Roma children participating in inclusive, quality early learning and care and school-age childcare services to the same level as the general population through the Equal Start funding model and its associated universal and targeted actions. | | | |
|---------------------------|---|------------|----------------------------|---|
| Action for implementation | | Timeline | Lead Other stakeholders | Targets, outputs and indicators |
| 1.1.1 | Diversity, equality and inclusion (DEI) guidelines, resources and training <i>Embedding inclusion in every setting</i> Engage an expert to review the Diversity, Equality and Inclusion Guidelines and training, and update in line with Equal Start and recent changes in policy and society Review the strategy for roll-out of diversity, equality and inclusion training with a view to significantly increasing the proportion of ELC and school-age childcare (SAC) settings and staff working within those settings who have undertaken the training Develop complementary resources for use in training and as learning aids for early years educators on including Traveller and Roma culture | Dec 2025 | DCEDIY | Updated Diversity, Equality and Inclusion Guidelines Reviewed DEI training strategy Resources developed |
| 1.1.2 | Track Traveller and Roma children's participation in the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) to best use the already established ethnic identifier and other related data systems to track and report on levels of participation in the ECCE programme of Traveller and Roma children | 2024- 2030 | DCEDIY, Pobal | Annual participation reports |

1.2 Strategic Action ELC

Ensure every Traveller and Roma young child experiences a high-quality, warm, welcoming, inclusive early learning and childcare environment that is culturally and linguistically prepared to welcome the child and family.

| Action for implementation | | Timeline | Lead Other stakeholders | Targets, outputs and indicators |
|---------------------------|--|----------|----------------------------|--|
| 1.2.1 | <p>Inclusion coordinator</p> <p><i>Embed inclusion within Equal Start settings</i></p> <p>Review the role of the inclusion coordinator in line with Equal Start commitments in Nurturing Skills, and review Leadership for Inclusion (LINC) training to support the updated inclusion coordinator role</p> <p>Develop a LINC-type training programme to be a requirement for the role, with priority initially for Equal Start-targeted settings with a focus on Traveller and Roma inclusion</p> | 2026 | DCEDIY | New in-settings roles developed with a distinct training programme |

1.3 Strategic Action ELC

Strengthen the capabilities of early years educators and school-age childcare practitioners to address and respond to diversity and to meet learning and care needs associated with the linguistic, socioeconomic, cultural and ethnic backgrounds of those from the Traveller and Roma communities.

| Action for implementation | | Timeline | Lead Other stakeholders | Targets, outputs and indicators |
|---------------------------|---|----------|----------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1.3.1 | <p>Appoint early years specialists to provide practice advice and support quality in settings</p> <p>Appoint two early years specialists with a specific focus and expertise in Traveller and Roma matters to work in Better Start</p> | Dec 2025 | DCEDIY | Two posts in place |

| 1.4 Strategic Action Schools Continue to strengthen inclusion and cultural awareness, and address racism in our schools including through teacher professional learning, implementation of the Cineáltas: Action Plan on Bullying and Bí Cineálta Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour, and through the Department of Education’s Intercultural Guidelines for schools. | | | | |
|--|--|-------------|--|--|
| Action for implementation | | Timeline | Lead Other stakeholders | Targets, outputs and indicators |
| 1.4.1 | Intercultural Guidelines Update and publish Intercultural Guidelines for schools, including a focus on children and young people from Traveller and Roma communities | Dec 2024 | Department of Education | Updated Intercultural Guidelines for schools published |
| 1.4.2 | Initial Teacher Education: inclusive education The Teaching Council will provide a report on standards, quality and good practice in ITE, based on findings from the cycle of accreditation of all initial teacher education programmes in accordance with Céim: Standards for Initial Teacher Education, with particular emphasis on core elements of inclusive education and global citizenship education to ensure a focus on inclusive education in initial teacher education (ITE) Review the findings of the report and identify next steps | Sep 2024 | Teaching Council Department of Education | |
| 1.4.3 | Teacher Professional Learning: inclusion and diversity Promote the availability of teacher profession learning on inclusion and diversity, including NEPS and Oide training to ensure school staff and school leaders are aware of, and encouraged, to take this up | 2024 – 2026 | Department of Education TRES national coordinators, TESS STAR coordinator, NEPS, education partners and key stakeholders | Increased take-up of teacher professional learning on inclusion and diversity by teachers, school staff and leaders. |

| | | | | |
|--------------|---|-----------------|--|---|
| 1.4 | Strategic Action Schools Strengthen the capabilities of early years educators to address and respond to diversity and to meet learning and care needs associated with the linguistic, socioeconomic, cultural and ethnic backgrounds of those from the Traveller and Roma communities. | | | |
| | Action for implementation | Timeline | Lead Other stakeholders | Targets, outputs and indicators |
| 1.4.4 | Promote diversity Build on the Teaching Transforms campaign to encourage both greater diversity in the teaching workforce and to increase awareness around the impact of teachers on the education and career pathways of children and young people from minority and seldom heard groups | June 2026 | Department of Education Teaching Council, Traveller and Roma orgs, education partners and key stakeholders | Teaching Transforms communications campaigns includes issues relevant to the Traveller and Roma communities |
| 1.4.5 | Promote diversity In conjunction with work on the first Special Needs Assistants Workforce Development Plan, promote employment opportunities for the Traveller and Roma community to special needs assistant roles | June 2026 | Department of Education Traveller and Roma orgs | Consultation with Traveller and Roma organisations to identify measures to promote diversity in the special needs assistant workforce |
| 1.4.6 | Wellbeing inspections As part of the Promotion of Wellbeing in Schools Evaluation, the Department of Education's Inspectorate will provide guidance to schools on ensuring that parent/guardian and child/youth engagement during the inspection process reflects the school's diversity. Additionally, the Inspectorate will support accessible communication with parents/guardians, considering potential language, literacy and digital literacy barriers | June 2025 | Department of Education's Inspectorate | Guidance provided to schools on representative diversity in inspection engagements |

1.4 Strategic Action Schools

Strengthen the capabilities of early years educators to address and respond to diversity and to meet learning and care needs associated with the linguistic, socioeconomic, cultural and ethnic backgrounds of those from the Traveller and Roma communities.

| Action for implementation | | Timeline | Lead Other stakeholders | Targets, outputs and indicators |
|---------------------------|--|-----------|--|--|
| 1.4.7 | Online safety Ensure provision of accessible information for parents, guardians and organisations (orgs) in the Traveller and Roma communities with relevant information on online safety, including online bullying | June 2025 | Webwise Department of Education, Traveller and Roma orgs | Accessible and relevant information on online safety available to the Traveller and Roma communities |
| | See also strategic action 3.3 on the meaningful participation of children and young people | | | |

1.5 Strategic Action Schools

Progress the work by the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) on supporting teaching and learning about Traveller culture and history within the curriculum, including providing supports for the Traveller community to assist in the development of relevant material for schools. Promote and encourage the participation of teachers and other members of the school community in targeted cultural awareness training.

| Action for implementation | | Timeline | Lead Other stakeholders | Targets, outputs and indicators |
|---------------------------|--|----------------------|--|---|
| 1.5.1 | Traveller culture and history Publish classroom exemplars of incorporating Traveller culture and history into the curriculum | Dec 2024 | NCCA, Department of Education | Exemplars available on NCCA website |
| 1.5.2 | Traveller culture and history Building on the NCCA's Audit of Traveller Culture and History in the Curriculum (2019) and the NCCA Traveller Culture and History report (2023), the NCCA will work with Traveller organisations to create lesson plans for schools on incorporating Traveller culture and history across the curriculum | Sep 2024 – June 2026 | NCCA, Department of Education, Traveller orgs | A variety of lesson plans available for schools to use |
| 1.5.3 | Teacher professional learning Building on Oide's current teacher professional learning offerings on inclusion in schools, Oide to work collaboratively with representative organisations to develop more targeted training in the area of cultural awareness, including through review of existing training and programmes related to cultural awareness and Traveller and Roma cultural awareness | June 2026 | Oide Department of Education, Traveller and Roma orgs | More targeted teacher professional learning on cultural awareness |

| 1.6 Strategic Action Schools Ensure a focus on meaningful participation by Traveller and Roma young people, including by monitoring the implementation of key policies and mechanisms such as the use of reduced school days, expulsions and suspensions, subject choice and exemptions, and the application of special education policies, as these apply to Traveller and Roma children and young people. | | | | |
|--|---|-------------|--|---|
| Action for implementation | | Timeline | Lead Other stakeholders | Targets, outputs and indicators |
| 1.6.1 | Reduced school days Continue to review and monitor the use of reduced school days, including for Traveller and Roma children and young people Publish reports on reduced school days on an annual basis Consider how schools use reduced school days, including for Traveller and Roma children and young people Engage with selected schools with a view to supporting the appropriate use of reduced school days, including for Traveller and Roma children and young people | 2024 - 2026 | Department of Education, TESS | Annual report on reduced school day published Series of targeted school engagements on reduced school days |
| 1.6.2 | Support Roma children and young people to develop competence in English to participate fully in school through providing resources for English as an additional language (EAL) initiatives to schools | 2024- 2026 | Department of Education | Appropriate English language supports available to Roma children and young people |
| 1.6.3 | Senior Cycle redevelopment Hold consultations with Traveller orgs and Roma orgs on Senior Cycle redevelopment; include young people from the communities Ensure that areas of concern and importance for the Traveller and Roma communities are captured, including on subject and module choices and options | Dec 2024 | Department of Education Traveller orgs, Roma orgs | Consultations held with the Traveller and Roma forum with meaningful participation of young people |

1.6 Strategic Action Schools

Ensure a focus on meaningful participation by Traveller and Roma young people, including by monitoring the implementation of key policies and mechanisms such as the use of reduced school days, expulsions and suspensions, subject choice and exemptions, and the application of special education policies, as these apply to Traveller and Roma children and young people.

| Action for implementation | | Timeline | Lead Other stakeholders | Targets, outputs and indicators |
|---------------------------|--|------------|---|--|
| 1.6.4 | Data on expulsions Expand data systems to enable the capture and monitoring of disaggregated data on expulsions, having due regard to data protection and privacy issues | June 2026 | TESS, Department of Education | Plans developed for capturing disaggregated data on expulsions |
| 1.6.5 | Suspensions and expulsions Produce targeted information on rights, obligations and appeals in relation to suspensions and expulsions by schools as part of the TRES information series to ensure that Traveller and Roma parents, guardians and organisations have accessible information about the education system | 2024- 2026 | Department of Education TESS, Traveller and Roma orgs | Targeted information available on suspensions and expulsion |

1.7 Strategic Action Schools

Encourage and support Traveller and Roma children and young people to participate in extra-curricular activities including Creative Youth programmes, homework clubs and other related activities.

| Action for implementation | | Timeline | Lead Other stakeholders | Targets, outputs and indicators |
|---------------------------|---|----------------------|---|--|
| 1.7.1 | Creative Youth Pilot a STAR strand of the programme Bringing Live Arts to Students & Teachers (BLAST) focusing on celebration of culture and identity for identified post-primary schools with high numbers of Traveller and Roma young people Carry out an evaluation of the programme's impact | Sep 2024 – June 2025 | Department of Education STAR coordinator, TESS | BLAST programme in selected schools Report on STAR BLAST programme |
| 1.7.2 | Creative Youth Pilot a STAR strand of the two-year Creative Clusters Initiative programme using innovative arts and creative learning to address a common STAR issue or challenge Carry out parallel research and evaluation on the programme's impact | Sep 2024 – June 2026 | Department of Education STAR coordinator, TESS | Two-year Creative Clusters programme in schools Report on STAR Creative Clusters initiative |
| 1.7.3 | Homework clubs Review arrangements and practices with respect to homework clubs for Traveller and Roma children and young people and consider how to improve access to homework clubs where this would be beneficial | June 2025 | Department of Education TRES coordinators, TESS STAR coordinator | Recommendations on the extension of homework clubs developed |

| 1.8 Strategic Action for Tertiary Support Traveller and Roma students in accessing tertiary educational opportunities and work to ensure that students have a positive and welcoming experience. | | | | |
|---|--|-----------------|--|---|
| Action for implementation | | Timeline | Lead Other stakeholders | Targets, outputs and indicators |
| 1.8.1 | Raise awareness of Traveller and Roma culture and history Engage with the university sector to establish the potential for further research into Traveller and Roma history and culture, and to consider the possibility of establishing a dedicated Traveller and Roma Studies Centre or Department in one of the universities | Mar 2026 | DFHERIS | Engagement with the university sector on Traveller and Roma history and culture courses completed |
| 18.2 | Promote a more diverse teacher workforce by supporting equity of access, participation and success in initial teacher education for Traveller and Roma students Provide supports under the National Access Plan (NAP) to broaden access to initial teacher education (ITE) Continue to support Centres for Teaching Excellence to strengthen their capacity to deliver access through innovative projects to improve diversity in the teacher workforce | 2024 –2026 | DFHERIS | Increased numbers of Traveller and Roma students in ITE programmes |
| 1.8.3 | Inclusion, equity and diversity in higher education institutions (HEIs) Assist institutions to build on universal design principles by supporting the provision of antiracism training and education on campuses | 2024-2025 | DFHERIS | Increased higher education completion rates |

Pillar 2: Access and outcomes

Ensure equity of access, opportunity and outcome for Travellers and Roma to fulfil their potential through our education system

| 2.1 | 2.1 Strategic Action ELC | | | |
|---|---|----------|---------------------------------|--|
| Ensure Traveller Roma children will experience effective transitions where they feel valued, actively supported and nurtured, at the start and through their early learning and care experience and on to school. | | | | |
| Action for implementation | | Timeline | Lead Other stakeholders | Targets, outputs and indicators |
| 2.1.1 | <p>Inclusive admissions policy</p> <p>Provide guidance on admissions policies and explore the introduction of regulatory requirements for ELC and school-age childcare (SAC) services to have an inclusive admissions policy</p> <p>As part of the introduction of comprehensive regulations for SAC services, introduce a regulatory requirement for SAC services to have an inclusion policy</p> | Feb 2025 | DCEDIY | <p>Easily accessible guidance on admissions to ELC and SAC services</p> <p>Published findings of the exploration of the possible introduction of an inclusive admissions policy</p> <p>All SAC services will an inclusion policy as per the regulatory requirement</p> |
| 2.1.2 | <p>National model of transitions</p> <p><i>Supporting transitions from home in to and through ELC and on to primary school</i></p> <p>Develop a national model of transitions with a particular focus on children from the Traveller and Roma communities</p> | Dec 2025 | DCEDIY, Department of Education | <p>Published model of transitions with resources on supported transitions for Traveller and Roma families</p> |

| 2.2 | Strategic Action ELC Ensure Traveller and Roma children have access to additional supports for language and literacy attainment in line with actions in the Literacy, Numeracy and Digital Literacy Strategy 2024 – 2033. | | | |
|---------------------------|---|-----------|-----------------------------|---|
| Action for implementation | | Timeline | Lead Other stakeholders | Targets, outputs and indicators |
| 2.2.1 | Language, literacy and numeracy Roll out Equal Start literacy and numeracy initiatives under the National Literacy, Numeracy and Digital Literacy Strategy including Little Library and other Traveller and Roma directed actions within the strategy, with a particular focus on English language supports through Early Talk Boost for Roma children and Traveller children in need of language support | 2024-2026 | DCEDIY, Better Start | Language, numeracy and digital literacy supports rolled out in particular the Early Talk Boost programme and Traveller and Roma book actions under Little Library |

| 2.3 | Strategic Action Schools Build on the success of the literacy initiatives piloted in the STAR pilot project to support Traveller and Roma children and young people to develop their literacy competency, and implement the actions in Ireland's Literacy, Numeracy and Digital Literacy Strategy 2024 - 2033, particularly those that target the Traveller and Roma communities, including parents and guardians from those communities. | | | |
|---------------------------|--|----------------------|---|---|
| Action for implementation | | Timeline | Lead Other stakeholders | Targets, outputs and indicators |
| 2.3.1 | STAR literacy project Consider how best to implement the learnings from the STAR pilot literacy project through the work of the STAR Working Group | Sep 2024 – Mar 2025 | STAR Working Group | Recommendations on implementing learnings considered for 2025/26 TRES implementation plan |
| 2.3.2 | Research – digital divide Carry out or commission research to identify any particular digital challenges for Traveller and Roma children and young people in accessing and participating in education | Sep 2024 – June 2026 | Department of Education TRES national coordinators, Traveller and Roma orgs | Research report on challenges of digital access and literacy for Traveller and Roma children and young people |

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|--------------|---|-----------------|---|---|
| 2.3 | Strategic Action Schools Build on the success of the literacy initiatives piloted in the STAR pilot project to support Traveller and Roma children and young people to develop their literacy competency, and implement the actions in Ireland's Literacy, Numeracy and Digital Literacy Strategy 2024 - 2033, particularly those that target the Traveller and Roma communities, including parents and guardians from those communities. | | | |
| | Action for implementation | Timeline | Lead Other stakeholders | Targets, outputs and indicators |
| 2.3.3 | Literacy, Numeracy and Digital Literacy Strategy Commence implementation of the actions in Ireland's Literacy, Numeracy and Digital Literacy Strategy 2024 - 2033, particularly those that target the Traveller and Roma communities, including parents and guardians from those communities | 2024 - 2026 | Department of Education Other relevant stakeholders | Implementation of actions from Ireland's Literacy, Numeracy and Digital Literacy Strategy 2024-2033 commenced |

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|--------------|--|-----------------|------------------------------------|---|
| 2.4 | Strategic Action Schools Support Traveller and Roma children and young people at the transition points of our education system. In particular, focus resources on transitions to post-primary school and progression and retention beyond year three of Junior Cycle into and through Senior Cycle and to the Leaving Certificate examination. Provide guidance to and support and encourage schools to identify the specific guidance-related needs of the Traveller and Roma communities and include strategies to meet the specific needs of this cohort within the whole-school guidance plan. | | | |
| | Action for implementation | Timeline | Lead Other stakeholders | Targets, outputs and indicators |
| 2.4.1 | Transition supports Expand the transition supports provided by TESS with a focus on transitions for Traveller and Roma young people in each year of the post-primary journey Expand the transitions supports developed through the STAR pilot project to other schools | 2024 - 2026 | TESS | Expansion and targeting of TESS transition supports |

2.4 Strategic Action Schools

Support Traveller and Roma children and young people at the transition points of our education system. In particular, focus resources on transitions to post-primary school and progression and retention beyond year three of Junior Cycle into and through Senior Cycle and to the Leaving Certificate examination. Provide guidance to and support and encourage schools to identify the specific guidance-related needs of the Traveller and Roma communities and include strategies to meet the specific needs of this cohort within the whole school guidance plan.

| Action for implementation | | Timeline | Lead Other stakeholders | Targets, outputs and indicators |
|---------------------------|--|---------------|--|--|
| 2.4.2 | Role model and mentoring Scope a role model and mentoring programme for Traveller and Roma children and young people to increase awareness, ambition and expectations in relation to education and career paths | December 2025 | TRES national coordinator, Traveller and Roma orgs TESS STAR coordinator, National Access Officers | Recommendations on developing a role model and mentoring programme |
| 2.4.3 | Inclusive guidance Produce a new information note on access, inclusion and diversity for guidance in all schools, including for Traveller and Roma children and young people, to encourage and support an inclusive approach to guidance and for schools to include a clear outline of how this will be done within the whole school guidance plan | June 2025 | Department of Education | Information note on access, inclusion and diversity for guidance issued to all schools |

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|---------------------------|--|-------------|---|---|
| 2.5 | Strategic Action Schools Expand data collection systems to enable monitoring of attendance patterns for Traveller and Roma children and young people in our schools. Informed by the data, take affirmative action in partnership with Tusla Education Support Service (TESS), schools and the Traveller and Roma communities, including Traveller and Roma organisations, to address poor attendance and support children and young people to re-engage and stay engaged. | | | |
| Action for implementation | | Timeline | Lead Other stakeholders | Targets, outputs and indicators |
| 2.5.1 | Attendance Develop a five-year attendance improvement plan, including a strategic focus on improving the attendance of Traveller and Roma children and young people | June 2025 | Department of Education TESS | Attendance improvement plan |
| 2.5.2 | Attendance data Focus on improving access to attendance data to allow monitoring of attendance patterns for Traveller and Roma children and young people | 2024 - 2026 | Department of Education Tusla, TESS | Improved access to disaggregated attendance data |
| 2.5.3 | Transport Continue to provide transport for Traveller and Roma children under the terms of the Department's School Transport Scheme Continue to consider exceptional circumstances on a case-by-case basis, where Traveller and Roma children may require transport and where their individual situation/personal situations leave them outside of the eligibility criteria, in order to minimise the risk of non-attendance at school | 2024 - 2026 | Department of Education | Improved school attendance and engagement among Traveller and Roma children |

| 2.6 | Strategic Action Schools | | | |
|---------------------------|--|----------|--|---|
| | Support schools working to ensure that their admission policies are compliant with all aspects of the Education (Admission to Schools) Act 2018, including with regard to non-discrimination, and ensure awareness of parents and guardians in the Traveller and Roma communities around school admissions, including rights and obligations. | | | |
| Action for implementation | | Timeline | Lead Other stakeholders | Targets, outputs and indicators |
| 2.6.1 | School admissions information Produce targeted information about school admissions, including rights, obligations and appealing school decisions, as well as addressing specific concerns and challenges around accessing education within the Roma community, to ensure that Traveller and Roma parents, guardians and organisations have relevant and accessible information, as part of the TRES information series | 2026 | Department of Education TESS STAR coordinator, Traveller and Roma orgs | Targeted information on school admissions available to Traveller and Roma communities, including parents, guardians and organisations |



| 2.7 Strategic Action Schools Support Traveller and Roma children and young people’s wellbeing through further implementation of the Wellbeing Policy Statement and Framework for Practice, which promotes a whole-school, preventative approach so that children, young people and staff experience a sense of belonging and feel safe, connected, heard and supported in our schools. | | | | |
|---|---|-------------|---|---|
| Action for implementation | | Timeline | Lead Other stakeholders | Targets, outputs and indicators |
| 2.7.1 | Wellbeing Consider the wellbeing needs of Traveller and Roma children and young people in schools in the actions and new implementation plan of the Department’s Wellbeing Office | June 2025 | Wellbeing Office – NEPS | Wellbeing implementation plan includes actions relevant to Traveller and Roma children and young people |
| 2.7.2 | Wellbeing Implement good practice in supporting Traveller and Roma children and young people in schools when impacted by critical incidents in line with the NEPS guidelines on responding to critical incidents | 2024 - 2026 | NEPS Traveller and Roma organisations | Good practice for supporting Traveller and Roma children and young people in the event of a critical incident guidance to be developed. |
| 2.7.3 | Trauma-informed training Promote the availability of the teacher professional learning course, ‘ <i>Introducing a Trauma Informed Approach - The Stress Factor</i> ’, which supports a whole school and class trauma-informed approach, to school staff working with Traveller and Roma children and young people | 2024 - 2026 | NEPS Department of Education | Increased awareness around trauma in schools |

| 2.8 Strategic Action Tertiary Provide flexible and responsive learning opportunities that support Traveller and Roma students across the tertiary education system. | | | | |
|--|--|-----------------|---|--|
| Action for implementation | | Timeline | Lead Other stakeholders | Targets, outputs and indicators |
| 2.8.1 | <p>Ensure Traveller and Roma students with disabilities, who have the greatest level of need, have access to the greatest level of supports (National Disability Strategy)</p> <p>In line with the objectives of the National Disability Strategy, create a more inclusive education system for Traveller and Roma students with disabilities</p> | 2024 - 2026 | DFHERIS, DCEDIY, Department of Education | Increased numbers from the Traveller and Roma communities at all levels of education |
| 2.8.2 | <p>Improve communication on literacy and numeracy supports</p> <p>Put in place culturally appropriate language and literacy training for Roma parents across all ETBs</p> <p>Within the focus on family literacy under the Adult Literacy for Life Strategy, strengthen support for family literacy for the Traveller and Roma communities</p> <p>Support NALA's continued engagement in outreach to target priority groups, including members of the Traveller and Roma communities</p> <p>Continue to prioritise members of the Traveller and Roma communities as a priority cohort under the Adult Literacy for Life (ALL) strategy and recruit literacy ambassadors from these communities to share their lived experience dealing with unmet literacy, numeracy and digital needs to guide and inform the ALL strategy</p> | 2024 - 2031 | SOLAS, ETBs, ETBI, NALA, Regional literacy coordinators | Increased Traveller and Roma participation in adult literacy programmes |

| 2.8 Strategic Action Tertiary Provide flexible and responsive learning opportunities that support Traveller and Roma students across the tertiary education system. | | | | |
|--|--|-----------------|--|--|
| Action for implementation | | Timeline | Lead Other stakeholders | Targets, outputs and indicators |
| 2.8.3 | Examine the potential to simplify the common learner details form and adapt its use for adult literacy and community programmes | Q4 2024 | SOLAS, ETBs | Increased Traveller and Roma participation in adult literacy and community programmes |
| 2.8.4 | Youthreach Provide supports to enable young Travellers in Youthreach to overcome barriers such as low levels of literacy and numeracy skills Through the partnerships between the ETBs and local Traveller organisations, take steps to build culturally appropriate pathways to further education or employment | 2024-2030 | ETBs, ETBI, SOLAS, NALA | Progression rates from FET to apprenticeship, higher education and employment |
| 2.8.5 | Transition supports from further education and training Support Traveller and Roma participants transition from further education and training programmes to further and higher education, including apprenticeship options, and the world of work Monitor completion and certification rates for Traveller and Roma learners in further education and training and support the alignment of certification rates with those of the overall population | 2024-2027 | SOLAS, ETBs, DFHERIS, HEA, HEIs | Progression rates from further education and training to apprenticeship, higher education and employment |

| 2.8 | | Strategic Action Tertiary | | |
|---------------------------|--|---|----------------------------|--|
| | | Provide flexible and responsive learning opportunities that support Traveller and Roma students across the tertiary education system. | | |
| Action for implementation | | Timeline | Lead Other stakeholders | Targets, outputs and indicators |
| 2.8.6 | Safe and inclusive higher education campuses Continue to implement the Healthy Campus Charter and Framework and build on supporting HEIs to develop student wellbeing through community connectedness, purpose, engagement and belonging. Institutional culture needs to reflect diversity, inclusivity and compassion | 2024 - 2026 | DFHERIS HEA | Increased higher education completion rates |
| 2.8.7 | Accomodation Develop national student accommodation strategy and schemes for the delivery of state-supported student accommodation with targeted accommodation supports for Traveller and Roma students to enable inclusive participation in higher education | 2024-2026 | DFHERIS | Increased higher education completion rates for Traveller and Roma students |
| 2.8.8 | Apprenticeships Actively continue to support awareness, access and uptake of pre-apprenticeship programmes and apprenticeships for the Traveller and Roma communities through the Access and Inclusion Subcommittee of the National Apprenticeship Office and through programmes such as the Traveller Apprenticeship Incentivisation Programme currently funded through the Dormant Accounts Fund | 2024-2026 | DFHERIS | Increased awareness, access and participation by members of the Traveller and Roma community in apprenticeships Support work to break down barriers with employers of apprentices |

Pillar 3: Partnership

Working together across the system and with the Traveller and Roma communities, including Traveller and Roma organisations, to support the delivery of this strategy

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|---------------------------|---|----------|----------------------------|--|--|
| 3.1 | Strategic Action ELC Work with Traveller and Roma parents and guardians as partners in their children's early learning and childcare journey and utilise these opportunities to build trust as the primary partner in children's development and signpost families to wider supports inside and outside of early learning and care. | | | | |
| Action for implementation | | Timeline | Lead Other stakeholders | Targets, outputs and indicators | |
| 3.1.1 | Family link worker <i>Connecting families to services</i> Appoint six family link workers to support the full roll out of the Traveller Parenting Support Programme in all 17 Tusla areas, with new responsibilities on family link workers to engage with Traveller parents of children aged 1-5 years, supporting them to attend and participate in early learning and childcare, avail of the ECCE programme and where applicable applying for the National Childcare Scheme (NCS) | Dec 2024 | Tusla, DCEDIY | Full roll out of the Traveller Parenting Support Programme | |
| 3.1.2 | Support partnership with parents to ensure parental involvement in settings Support – and at a later date require – ELC and SAC settings to develop policies on partnership with parents Develop guidance for ELC and SAC services on introducing 'parent partnership groups', partnership committees, or other mechanisms to give parents structured and more formal roles in ongoing engagement with settings Parent partnership groups membership should reflect the make up of the families using the service | Sep 2025 | DCEDIY | Guidance on partnership with parents available including the inclusion of Traveller and Roma parents | |

3.1 Strategic Action ELC

Work with Traveller and Roma parents and guardians as partners in their children's early learning and childcare journey and utilise these opportunities to build trust as the primary partner in children's development and signpost families to wider supports inside and outside of early learning and care.

| Action for implementation | | Timeline | Lead Other stakeholders | Targets, outputs and indicators |
|---------------------------|---|----------|-------------------------------|---|
| 3.1.3 | <p>Accessible communications</p> <p>Develop communications initiatives to support Traveller and Roma parents to know about what services are available to them (both ELC and SAC settings and parenting supports), how to access them, and what financial supports can help them. Provide this information in a number of languages</p> <p>Develop particular and appropriate communication pathways to support participation of Traveller and Roma families in the National Childcare Scheme (NCS)</p> <p>Develop a targeted communication plan to ensure Traveller and Roma parents are fully aware of the Access and Inclusion Model (AIM) for including children with additional needs</p> | Dec 2024 | DCEDIY | Communication strategy developed and rolled out |

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|----------------------------------|--|-----------------|--|---|
| 3.2 | Strategic Action ELC Develop roles and structures including, Tusla Traveller Family Support workers to link families to services and roles within Better Start and early learning and childcare (ELC) and school-age childcare (SAC) services to link services to families. | | | |
| Action for implementation | | Timeline | Lead Other stakeholders | Targets, outputs and indicators |
| 3.2.1 | Family and community partnership coordinator Develop a new role in ELC and SAC settings of family and community partnership coordinator, introducing training to support the new role, and support parents' involvement in settings, including Traveller and Roma families | Sep 2025 | DCEDIY | New roles developed in ELC and SAC settings |
| 3.2.2 | Collaboration with communities Work with representative organisations of the Traveller and Roma communities to co-create effective solutions to address barriers to access and participation in ELC and SAC for children from those target groups | 2024-2026 | DCEDIY | Targeted participation of Traveller and Roma communities |
| 3.2.3 | Collaboration across education Work with all partners in the education system at an appropriate level to ensure the needs of Traveller and Roma children and their families are identified, supported and reflected in the work that they do on behalf of DCEDIY | 2024-2026 | DCEDIY, Department of Education, NEPS, Inspectorate, Tusla, NCCA | Support plans from partners including both Inspectorates (early years and school) |

3.3 Strategic Action Schools

Develop structures to facilitate ongoing collaboration with the Traveller and Roma communities and organisations in the development, implementation and monitoring of education policies. Ensure the meaningful participation of Traveller and Roma children and young people in the development, implementation and monitoring of education policy. Encourage and support engagement between schools and Traveller and Roma parents and guardians, organisations and communities.

| Action for implementation | | Timeline | Lead Other stakeholders | Targets, outputs and indicators |
|---------------------------|--|-----------|--|---|
| 3.3.1 | Participation in policy Use the Traveller and Roma Education Forum (strategic action 4.2) to ensure the participation of the Traveller and Roma communities in the development of education policy and practice | 2024-2026 | Department of Education Traveller and Roma orgs | Forum established to provide advice and guidance on matters across the education system |
| 3.3.2 | Participation of children and young people Traveller and/or Roma children or young people will be represented in the work of the Department of Education's Student Participation Unit to ensure the meaningful participation of Traveller and Roma children in the policy development work of the Department of Education and its aegis bodies | 2024-2026 | Department of Education | Participation in the development of education policy |

3.4 Strategic Action Schools

Ensure a focus on effective engagement and communication between the education system and the Traveller and Roma communities and organisations, through providing targeted, accessible information resources on the education system and related supports and developments. Support strong engagement with Traveller and Roma parents and guardians, including through targeted supports and increasing awareness and good practice with respect to language, literacy and digital literacy across the system.

| Action for implementation | | Timeline | Lead Other stakeholders | Targets, outputs and indicators |
|---------------------------|--|-----------------------------|---|---|
| 3.4.1 | TRES feedback Provide feedback to all those that participated in the TRES consultation process on how the information and perspectives they shared are being used | Dec 2024 | Department of Education DCEDIY, Hub na nÓg, Traveller and Roma orgs | Clear feedback provided to all TRES consultation participants |
| 3.4.2 | Information series Plan, put together and disseminate accessible information on a series of key education matters and policies as they relate to Traveller and Roma children and young people, including those identified through TRES consultations as being of particular importance to Traveller and Roma education Ensure materials are available in a variety of formats and languages | Sep 2024 – June 2026 | Department of Education, Traveller and Roma orgs | Dedicated and accessible information on key education matters and policies available to Traveller and Roma communities |
| 3.4.3 | TRES website Keep TRES website updated and ensure up-to-date relevant material is available TRES information Publish TRES information series Publish all TRES consultation, research and other reports and materials Provide links to other relevant webpages and materials | 2024 – 2026 Dec 2024 | Department of Education | TRES information available STAR information series available Up-to-date information on Traveller and Roma education available |

3.4 Strategic Action Schools

Ensure a focus on effective engagement and communication between the education system and the Traveller and Roma communities and organisations, through providing targeted, accessible information resources on the education system and related supports and developments. Support strong engagement with Traveller and Roma parents and guardians, including through targeted supports and increasing awareness and good practice with respect to language, literacy and digital literacy across the system.

| Action for implementation | | Timeline | Lead Other stakeholders | Targets, outputs and indicators |
|---------------------------|--|----------------------|---|---|
| 3.4.4 | Communities of practice Using the current STAR community of practice as a basis, create a national community of practice, or network of communities, that include key staff members working with Traveller or Roma cohorts (for example, HSCLs, STAR Ambassadors, community education workers) | Sep 2024 – June 2025 | TESS STAR coordinator TESS, DCEDIY, NEPS, Traveller and Roma orgs | Communities of practice expanded nationally |

3.5 3.5 Strategic Action Schools

Provide resources to all schools to address educational disadvantage and to address the cost of school for all families through universal supports; continue work on the review of resource allocation to schools for students at risk of educational disadvantage and carry out the work arising from the review. Continue to provide extra capitation for schools with Traveller enrolments and continue to include Traveller and Roma enrolments in the DEIS identification model.

| Action for implementation | | Timeline | Lead Other stakeholders | Targets, outputs and indicators |
|---------------------------|--|-----------|----------------------------|--|
| 3.5.1 | <p>OECD review and recommendations</p> <p>Complete the OECD review of school resourcing to address educational disadvantage and develop future policy direction to support schools to remove socio-economic barriers to achievement in education for Traveller and Roma children</p> <p>Develop an action plan to implement recommendations of the OECD review, including those in relation to addressing potential cost related barriers for children and young people experiencing disadvantage, including Traveller and Roma children to support schools to remove socio-economic barriers to achievement in education for Traveller and Roma children</p> | June 2025 | Department of Education | Report published, action plan for implementation of recommendations agreed |

| 3.6 Strategic Action Schools Build on and apply existing information and knowledge around Traveller and Roma education including that gained through the development of this strategy and the evaluation of the STAR pilot project. Carry out further research, consultation and evaluation as required. Ensure a focus on identifying and sharing good practice. | | | | |
|--|---|----------------------|--|---|
| Action for implementation | | Timeline | Lead Other stakeholders | Targets, outputs and indicators |
| 3.6.1 | TRES reports Review and consider in detail all of the TRES reports, including to identify where information might be used to support TRES and current TRES actions; areas for possible follow-up actions; areas for possible further research | Sep 2024 – June 2026 | TRES Oversight Group | All reports given due consideration by TRES Oversight Group |
| 3.6.2 | Literature review Commission a literature review (Irish and international) of 'what works' in education for Traveller and Roma and other relevant minority and indigenous groups in education in order to learn from successful strategies, programmes and initiatives and identify gaps in the research Include an examination of structures that provide services in the area of intercultural education, such as advice, guidance and focused support for schools, families and children and young people from diverse backgrounds, including ethnic minority backgrounds | June 2026 | Department of Education | Literature review on 'what works' |
| 3.6.3 | Mapping projects Carry out a national scoping and mapping exercise of projects, programmes and initiatives on Traveller and Roma education at school level outside of those provided or funded by the Department of Education | Sep 2024 – June 2025 | TRES national coordinators TESS STAR coordinator, DCEDIY, Department of Education, Traveller and Roma orgs | Overview of all work on Traveller and Roma education being carried out nationally |

3.6 Strategic Action Schools

Build on and apply existing information and knowledge around Traveller and Roma education including that gained through the development of this strategy and the evaluation of the STAR pilot project. Carry out further research, consultation and evaluation as required. Ensure a focus on identifying and sharing good practice.

| Action for implementation | | Timeline | Lead Other stakeholders | Targets, outputs and indicators |
|---------------------------|--|----------------------|--|--|
| 3.6.4 | STAR initiatives webpage Create a webpage to host examples of practical STAR initiatives aimed at improving attendance, participation and retention of Traveller or Roma children and young people; set up a review system for initiatives to be included; and promote awareness of the resource | Sep 2024 – June 2025 | TESS STAR coordinator TRES national coordinators, TESS | Resource with reviewed STAR initiatives aimed at improving attendance, participation and retention |
| 3.6.5 | Digital resource pack Create and disseminate a digital pack for schools on existing resources on Traveller and Roma education, and make the resource available online for schools | Sep 2024 – June 2025 | Department of Education TRES national coordinators, TRES Oversight Group | Comprehensive set of resources on Traveller and Roma education available for all schools |

| 3.7 Strategic Action Tertiary Through research, identify the barriers and enablers for Traveller and Roma women accessing tertiary education and consider how to support Traveller and Roma women on their educational journey. | | | | |
|--|---|----------|----------------------------|---|
| Action for implementation | | Timeline | Lead Other stakeholders | Targets, outputs and indicators |
| 3.7.1 | Supports for Traveller and Roma women in tertiary education Establish the supports required for Traveller and Roma women to avail of tertiary education opportunities by conducting a research project on the barriers and enablers to the participation of Traveller and Roma women in tertiary education | 2025 | DFHERIS, DCEDIY | Publication of research findings |
| 3.7.2 | Research development Engage with the Irish Research Council in relation to potential topics for research funding programmes to support the development of relevant research output and capacities | Q1 2026 | DFHERIS | Funded research projects in Traveller and Roma affairs Development of suitable research expertise in Ireland |
| 3.7.3 | Transition supports from further to higher education Explore the possibility of introducing a transition coordinator role to consider how marginalised groups could be supported when transitioning from further to higher education in order to enhance the participation rates of Traveller and Roma students in higher education | 2025 | DFHERIS | Increased transition rates for marginalised groups from further to higher education |

| 3.7 Strategic Action Tertiary Through research, identify the barriers and enablers for Traveller and Roma women accessing tertiary education and consider how to support Traveller and Roma women on their educational journey. | | | | |
|--|--|--------------------|----------------------------|--|
| Action for implementation | | Timeline | Lead Other stakeholders | Targets, outputs and indicators |
| 3.7.4 | Information sharing Share best practice and learnings from projects focused on members of the Traveller and Roma communities that are supported by the Adult Literacy for Life Collaboration and Innovation Fund or the Reach Fund Continue to focus on members of the Traveller and Roma communities as a priority cohort for support from the Reach Fund to access and participate in community education | 2024-2027 | ETBs, SOLAS, ETBI | Best practice, information and learnings being shared across the further education and training system |
| 3.7.5 | Continued collaboration Maintain and strengthen SOLAS collaboration with Pavee Point to transform engagement and participation of Travellers and Roma in further education and training with a focus on intersectionality and the barriers facing particularly marginalised groups of Travellers and Roma including women | 2024-2027 | SOLAS | Increased higher education completion rates for Traveller and Roma students |
| 3.7.6 | Partnerships between educational institutions and community organisations Encourage and support higher education institutions to continue building community partnerships with Traveller and Roma organisations to support participation and progression of Traveller and Roma students in higher education Develop partnership agreements between the ETBs and local Traveller and Roma organisations | NAP (2022 to 2028) | DFHERIS ETBs, ETBI | Increased participation rates in higher education Increased engagement between ETBs and Traveller and Roma communities, facilitating participation in FET |

Pillar 4: Delivering change

Drive the implementation of this strategy and implementation plan, monitor progress and evaluate

| 4.1 Strategic Action ELC | | | | |
|--|--|------------|----------------------------|--|
| Working through the Equal Start funding model and Oversight Group, develop and deliver universal and targeted supports through an extensive system of implementation, monitoring and evaluation and report on progress through the TRES process. A dedicated Equal Start project team within the DCEDIY will lead on Equal Start implementation. | | | | |
| Action for implementation | | Timeline | Lead Other stakeholders | Targets, outputs and indicators |
| 4.1.1 | <p>Provide additional funding/ support for Equal Start target settings</p> <p>Equal Start will provide additional staff and other targeted funding/ support for services with higher numbers of marginalised children including Traveller and Roma children. These services will be identified using an identification model based on data including the established ethnic identifier</p> <p>Introduce, child-level targeted funding (that is, tailored responses and funding to services to support disadvantaged children with practical needs in all services) along with new and updated guidance and associated training and supports</p> | 2024- 2026 | DCEDIY | Additional funding/ supports rolled out to target settings |
| 4.1.2 | <p>Wider use of the Equal Start identification model</p> <p>Use the Equal Start identification model in complementary policy areas to identify services in need of additional funding and resources, on top of the universal funding and supports available to all services or to prioritise the allocation of other supports, as well as to inform other prioritisation in resource allocation especially and including resources that support Traveller and Roma children and families</p> | 2025 | DCEDIY | List of Equal Start target settings identified |

4.1 Strategic Action ELC

Working through the Equal Start funding model and oversight group, develop and deliver universal and targeted supports through an extensive system of implementation monitoring and evaluation and report on progress to the TRES process. A dedicated Equal Start project team within the DCEDIY will lead on Equal Start implementation.

| Action for implementation | | Timeline | Lead Other stakeholders | Targets, outputs and indicators |
|---------------------------|---|------------|--|--|
| 4.1.3 | Implementation, monitoring and evaluation of Equal Start Develop an implementation, monitoring and evaluation plan for Equal Start, including baseline data, with specific metrics relating to Traveller and Roma participation | 2025 | DCEDIY | Fully developed implementation, monitoring and evaluation plan for Equal Start |
| 4.1.4 | Implement the Traveller and Roma Early Education Strategy Strive to implement all aspects of the Early Education Traveller and Roma Strategy and closely monitor across the education continuum including participating in the TRES Oversight Group to ensure all aspects of the strategy are delivered | 2024 -2030 | DCEDIY with Department of Education and Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science | Regular and timely reports as part of TRES |



| 4.2 | Strategic Action Schools Establish a Traveller and Roma Education Forum to inform the review of progress and identify areas where further action, consultation, research and evaluation are required, and to facilitate consultation with members of the Traveller and Roma communities on matters across the education system. | | | |
|---------------------------|---|----------|---|--|
| Action for implementation | | Timeline | Lead Other stakeholders | Targets, outputs and indicators |
| 4.2.1 | Traveller and Roma Education Forum Establish a Traveller and Roma Education Forum Set up a structure that will ensure all units and sections across the relevant departments are aware of the Forum and can consult with this group in developing or planning education policy or action | Jan 2025 | Department of Education Traveller and Roma orgs | Forum established with engagement by the relevant Departments Consideration of Traveller and Roma interests and issues in education policy development and implementation |



| 4.3 | Strategic Action Schools | Establish an oversight and governance structure to actively drive the implementation of the strategy and the implementation plan. Establish a monitoring and evaluation framework and reporting mechanisms, including reporting to the NTRIS committee. | | |
|---------------------------|---|---|--|---|
| Action for implementation | | Timeline | Lead Other stakeholders | Targets, outputs and indicators |
| 4.3.1 | TRES monitoring and oversight Establish a TRES Oversight Group to monitor progress and oversee the implementation of TRES | Sep 2024 | Department of Education DCEDIY, DFHERIS, TESS, Inspectorate, NEPS, Traveller reps, Roma reps | Group in place and functioning effectively, including monitoring progress and reporting |
| 4.3.2 | TRES monitoring and evaluation framework Develop and implement a robust monitoring and evaluation framework for TRES | 2024 -2025 | Department of Education | Monitoring and evaluation framework established and appropriate targets agreed |



| 4.4 | 4.4 Strategic Action Schools Through the Department of Education’s Inspectorate, gather information about the key actions of this strategy relating to the experiences and outcomes of Traveller and Roma children and young people and the whole-school climate and environment. Ensure data on the numbers of Traveller and Roma children and young people are available to the Inspectorate to inform its annual planning processes. | | | |
|---------------------------|--|----------------------|--|--|
| Action for implementation | | Timeline | Lead Other stakeholders | Targets, outputs and indicators |
| 4.4.1 | School inspections Ensure schools with a high number of Traveller and Roma children and young people are represented on the annual inspection programme of the Inspectorate Ensure data and information on Traveller and Roma children and young people in schools are available to the Inspectorate to inform their annual planning processes Through inspection, evaluate and report on the extent to which specific agreed actions in the TRES are having a positive impact on the educational experience and outcomes of Traveller and Roma children, including in relation to attendance, participation and retention | Sep 2024 – June 2026 | Department of Education’s Inspectorate Department of Education, TRES Oversight Group | Report arising from inspection programme |

4.5 Strategic Action Schools

Recruit appropriate personnel and establish support structures to co-ordinate and drive implementation at a national and local level, including working with schools, the Traveller and Roma communities and organisations, and the wider community as appropriate.

| Action for implementation | | Timeline | Lead Other stakeholders | Targets, outputs and indicators |
|---------------------------|--|-------------|--|--|
| 4.5.1 | National coordinators Put in place a team of two national coordinators working together to implement and support implementation of certain actions in TRES with clear terms of employment and clear support and reporting structures to ensure effectiveness of role coordinators to take up their roles as soon as possible | 2024 – 2030 | TESS Department of Education, TRES Oversight Group | TRES national coordinators in place for duration of the strategy |
| 4.5.2 | STAR coordinator Put in place a full-time national STAR coordinator role to support Traveller and Roma education | 2024 – 2026 | TESS Department of Education | STAR coordinator in place |



| 4.5 Strategic Action Schools Recruit appropriate personnel and establish support structures to co-ordinate and drive implementation at a national and local level, including working with schools, the Traveller and Roma communities and organisations, and the wider community as appropriate. | | | | |
|---|--|---------------------|--|--|
| Action for implementation | | Timeline | Lead Other stakeholders | Targets, outputs and indicators |
| 4.5.3 | Community link workers In line with recommendations from the OECD, and the evaluation of the STAR pilot project, pilot the introduction of 20 community link workers in areas with high numbers of Traveller, Roma and migrant students and students experiencing educational disadvantage. Working in partnership with schools and TESS, they will support and promote improved attendance, participation and retention, including through working to increase children and young people's sense of belonging and pride in their identity; supporting the engagement of parents/ families with education; increasing school engagement with and awareness of these cohorts; and sign-posting and linking to community services Encourage applications for these posts from members of the Traveller and Roma communities | 2024 – 2026 | Department of Education TESS, schools, Department of Education's Inspectorate, NEPS | Community link workers in place |
| 4.5.4 | STAR Working Group Set up and convene STAR Working Group to review STAR recommendations, and recommend options for an effective targeted support structure for Traveller and Roma children and young people in schools, including consideration of the roles of schools, parents/guardians, families and communities | Sep 2024 – Mar 2025 | Department of Education TESS, Department of Education's Inspectorate, NEPS, DCEDIY, Traveller and Roma Education Forum, other stakeholders as required | Options paper for consideration by Minister(s) |

4.6 Strategic Action Schools

Continue to develop the range of data related to Traveller and Roma education that is collected, analysed and published, with a focus on making data publicly available where it is used for decision-making; increasing the range of disaggregated and qualitative data that is captured; increasing data-sharing between departments and agencies; enhancing the collection of ethnicity data; and analysing more data to assist in monitoring progress; understanding trends, particularly relating to attendance and retention; and designing policy interventions.

| Action for implementation | | Timeline | Lead Other stakeholders | Targets, outputs and indicators |
|---------------------------|---|----------------------|---|---|
| 4.6.1 | <p>Publish more disaggregated data: in addition to the data on Traveller retention currently published in the Department of Education's annual retention report, include Roma retention data, and Traveller and Roma retention data disaggregated by gender</p> <p>Publish the next five-year Traveller statistics report (2021 – 2025)</p> | Mar 2025 and ongoing | Department of Education | <p>Annual retention report has more data on Traveller and Roma students</p> <p>Next Traveller statistics report published</p> |
| 4.6.2 | <p>Take measures to improve the Department's capture of ethnicity data</p> <p>As part of this, issue a Circular to schools on these measures and on effective communication with parents and guardians from the Traveller and Roma communities</p> <p>Create video resources for Traveller and Roma parents and guardians with the support of the community on the value and importance of providing ethnicity data, the reasons the data are collected, and the right of parents/ guardians in relation to their child's ethnicity data</p> | June 2025 | <p>Department of Education</p> <p>Traveller and Roma orgs</p> | <p>Circular on the collection of ethnicity data</p> <p>Communications materials available and disseminated to Traveller and Roma parents/ guardians on collection of ethnicity data</p> |

List of abbreviations

| | |
|---------|--|
| AIM | Access and Inclusion Model |
| ALL | Adult Literacy for Life |
| BLAST | Bringing Live Arts to Students and Teachers |
| DCEDIY | Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth |
| DEI | Diversity, Equality and Inclusion |
| DEIS | Delivering Equality of opportunity In Schools |
| DFHERIS | Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science |
| EAL | English as an additional language |
| ECCE | Early Childhood Care and Education Scheme |
| ELC | Early learning and Care |
| ETB | Education and Training Board |
| ETBI | Education and Training Boards Ireland |
| FET | Further education and training |
| HEA | Higher Education Authority |
| HEI | Higher education institution |
| HSCL | Home School Community Liaison coordinator |
| ITE | Initial teacher education |
| LINC | Leadership for Inclusion |
| NALA | National Adult Literacy Agency |
| NAP | National Access Plan |
| NCCA | National Council for Curriculum and Assessment |
| NCS | National Childcare Scheme |
| NCSE | National Council for Special Education |
| NEPS | National Educational Psychological Service |
| NTRIS | National Traveller and Roma Inclusion Strategy |
| OECD | Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development |
| PfG | Programme for Government |
| POD | Primary Online Database |
| SAC | School-age childcare |
| STAR | Supporting Travellers and Roma in education |
| TESS | Tusla Education Support Service |
| TRES | Traveller and Roma Education Strategy |

