



Promoting & Progressing the Rights of Persons from Minority Groups

Monday, April 20th 2015

[Renehan Hall](#), South Campus, Maynooth University

1.30 – 2.00pm

Welcome & Introduction to Seminar

- Anastasia Crickley, Head of Dept. of Applied Social Studies, Maynooth University
- Prof. Michael Doherty, Head of Dept. of Law, Maynooth University
- Dr. Delia Ferri, Dept. of Law, Maynooth University
- Marianne O'Shea, Dept. of Applied Social Studies, Maynooth University

2.00 - 2.35pm

Session I: Global Perspective on Minority Rights

Prof. Patrick Thornberry Emeritus Professor of International Law, Keele University (UK) & Former Member of the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination

2.35 - 2.50pm

Clarifications & Discussion

2.50 - 3.00pm

Response: Rosaleen McDonagh, Traveller & PhD Candidate at Northumbria University

Coffee Break

3.30 – 4.05pm

Session II: Current Challenges for Protection and Progression

Prof. Francesco Palermo Professor of Comparative Constitutional Law, University of Verona (Italy) & President, Advisory Committee, Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities

4.05 – 4.20pm

Clarifications & Discussion

4.20 – 4.30pm

Response: Maria Joyce, National Traveller Women's Forum

4.30-5.00pm

Session III: Reflections & Responses

- Deaglán Ó Briain, Principal, Equality Division, Department of Justice and Equality
- Brigid Quilligan, Director, Irish Traveller Movement
- Dr. Noelle Higgins, Dept. of Law, Maynooth University
- Martin Collins, Director, Pavee Point

Rapporteur Comments

Seamus Taylor, Dept. of Applied Social Studies, Maynooth University

Chair: Anastasia Crickley, Head of Department of Applied Social Studies, Vice-President UN CERD & Former Member of the Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities

Speaker Biographies

Prof. Patrick Thornberry is Emeritus Professor of Law at Keele University in the United Kingdom. He has published widely in the field of public international law and human rights, specialising in the rights of minorities and indigenous peoples, and racial discrimination. Professor Thornberry was a member (2001-2014) of the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, a body dedicated to critical examination of the reports of states under the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination. He chaired the UN Forum on Minority Issues for 2014 and has been chairman of Minority Rights Group, the international human rights NGO, and maintains links with a range of NGOs and organisations of indigenous peoples.

Prof. Francesco Palermo is Professor of Comparative Constitutional Law at University of Verona in Italy and Director of the Institute for Studies on Federalism and Regionalism at the European Academy of Bolzano/Bozen. In addition, he is currently President of the Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities and a Senator of the Italian Republic. He has worked as Senior Legal Advisor at the Office of the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities. He has published widely in comparative and European constitutional law, focusing on the rights of minorities.

Anastasia Crickley is Head of the Department of Applied Social Studies, which plays a key role in education and training for social justice and rights work and is the leading provider in Ireland of professional education for Community Work and Youth Work. She was first Chairperson of the European Union Fundamental Rights Agency 2007 – 2011, Personal Representative of the Chair in Office of the OSCE on Combating Racism, Xenophobia and Discrimination from 2004 – 2008, and is currently Vice-President of UN CERD. Anastasia is a founder member of Pavee Point and Migrant Rights Centre Ireland and from 1998-2008 was Chairperson of the National Consultative Committee on Racism and Interculturalism.

Prof. Michael Doherty is Head of the Department of Law at Maynooth University. He lectures and researches in the areas of employment and labour law, industrial relations law and policy, and EU law. He has worked on a number of projects on migrant workers for the European Commission as part of European-wide research networks and as co-investigator on a major, EU-funded project on public procurement. Michael's recent work has focused on the impact of the economic and social crisis on employment rights in the EU, including an ongoing project for the European Parliament. He is a frequent media contributor on labour market issues and has been actively involved in working with civil society organisations, such as the Irish Congress of Trade Unions and the Ballymun Community Law Centre.

Dr. Delia Ferri is Lecturer in Law in the Department of Law at Maynooth University and attorney at law registered to the Italian bar. She holds a *Laurea in Giurisprudenza magna cum laude* from the University of Verona, a LL.M. from Trinity College Dublin, and a PhD in European and Italian Constitutional Law from the University of Verona. Delia was a legal observer in the negotiation process of the UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions, and has taken part into different academic research projects and policy-oriented studies mainly covering the fields of EU Law and European Constitutional Law. Her current research focuses on the protection and promotion of the rights of persons with disabilities.

Marianne O'Shea lectures in the Dept. of Applied Social Studies. She worked in community work for a number of years, including with the South Dublin Community Platform, a network of organisations committed to social inclusion and equality and has also worked in internationally, including with indigenous women in Peru, as a member of the capacity development team in the UNDP Regional Centre in Johannesburg and with the policy team at The Elders. Marianne has a particular interest in gender equality, most recently contributing as a member of the Consultative Group in the development of Ireland's National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security (2015-2017) as a member of the Liberia Solidarity Group, Ireland. She is currently completing a Doctorate in Social Science.

Rosaleen McDonagh is an author and playwright. Her work includes journalistic contributions, poetry and drama, including pieces for theatre and radio, including *Stuck*, *She's Not Mine* and *Rings*. She was shortlisted for the P.J. O'Connor Radio Play Awards, 2010. Upcoming productions with Fishamble Theatre Company include *Mainstream* and *Protégée*. Rosaleen is an adjunct lecturer at Trinity College Dublin and a PhD candidate at Northumbria University, looking at the *Affirmative Model in Relation to Traveller Identity*. Rosaleen previously worked in Pavee Point, managing the Violence against Women programme and other Traveller women's initiatives for ten years.

Maria Joyce is Co-ordinator of the National Traveller Women's Forum (NTWF). She is a Traveller activist who has worked in the Traveller movement and human rights fields for over 20 years. She is a graduate of the professional Diploma in Community & Youth work and the Bachelor Degree in Applied Social Studies at Maynooth University. Maria is committed to the achievement of full gender equality for Traveller women and the recognition of Traveller ethnic status. Maria represents the NTWF in a number of National Traveller policy committees and has also represented the NTWF at national and European levels in the area of equality and human rights.

Deaglán Ó Briain is a Principal Officer in the Dept. of Justice and Equality, where he has responsibility for human rights and equality legislation, including the merger of the Equality Authority and Human Rights Commission to form IHREC. Since mid-2014, he is responsible for disability and Traveller Policy within the Department, including upcoming consultation processes which will lead to new strategy and implementation plans for both these areas, from January 2016. He also deals with implementation in domestic legislation of EU anti-discrimination directives and Ireland's national report to the UN UPR process. He played an active role during the Irish Presidency in the first half of 2013 and was responsible for the June 2013 JHA Council Conclusions which called on the Commission to take forward a debate on the need for a mechanism to better protect fundamental rights and promote the Rule of Law.

Brigid Quilligan is Director of the Irish Traveller Movement (ITM). Brigid is a Traveller woman from Killarney and a feminist. She has worked in the community development field for twenty years and represents ITM on a number of national and international committees. In her previous role as a Regional Development Worker with ITM, she delivered a series of workshops on Ethnicity and saw first-hand how important it is to Travellers to be acknowledged as an indigenous ethnic group. Her passion for recognition of Traveller ethnicity comes from living a life less equal to her non-Traveller peers.

Dr. Noelle Higgins is a Senior Lecturer in the Department of Law at Maynooth University, where she specialises in public international law. She is the director of the LLM in International Justice programme in the university and teaches a minority and indigenous rights course. She is an 'Academic friend' of the United Nations Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and has published widely in the fields of human rights and minority rights. She currently sits on the Ethical, Political, Legal and Philosophical Studies Committee of the Royal Irish Academy.

Martin Collins is a founding member of Pavee Point Traveller and Roma Centre, of which he is now Co-Director. He has represented Pavee Point, Irish Travellers and Roma both nationally and internationally and is presently the Irish delegate to the Council of Europe European Roma Traveller Forum. He was a member of the Irish Human Rights Commission from 2001-2007 and represented Pavee Point on the Task Force Report on the Travelling Community, which was published in 1995. Martin has contributed to various pieces of research and numerous articles in a variety of publications on Traveller rights. He has extensive experience in providing anti-racism/intercultural training for both the statutory and voluntary sectors.

Seamus Taylor (FRSA, CBE) coordinates the Masters in Social Science (Rights and Social Policy) which provides policy understanding and analysis from a rights, equality and justice perspective. He was Director of Equality and Diversity at the Public Prosecution Service, London and Director of Strategy at the UK Commission for Racial Equality (CRE). He served on the Commission on the future of Multi Ethnic Britain and as a Runnymede Trust trustee. He is vice chair of the Irish Penal Reform Trust. Seamus was awarded a CBE in 2010 for his work 'to place equality at the heart of the UK legal system'.