

THE ROMA EDEM PROJECT

Promotion of Roma/Traveller Integration and Equal Treatment in Education & Employment

EDUCATION ROUNDTABLE 2006

'Building on Progress – Achieving Equality'

at the offices of the Northern Ireland Commissioner for Children and Young People, Belfast, 28 June



PURPOSE

The purpose of the event was to set out a vision for achievement of equality for Travellers in education within a ten-year timescale and agree how this vision will be achieved (implementation of strategy)

Programme

9.30am Registration/Tea and coffee

10.00am *Introduction*

Chair: Dr Maurice Hayes

Mr Bob Collins, Chief Commissioner, Equality Commission for NI

10.15 am *Perspective from the Department of Education*

Mr Will Haire, Permanent Secretary, Department of Education

10.30am *A partnership approach to developing a strategy on Traveller Education in the Republic of Ireland*

Ms Breda Naughton, Principal Officer, Department of Education & Science (Republic of Ireland)

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Programme (continued)

10.45am *A Traveller NGOs' perspective on Education*

Ms Cristina Hurson, Co-ordinator, Tullamore Travellers Movement

11.00am Tea/Coffee Break

11.15 am Roundtable Discussion: *Are the vision and strategic targets right?*

1.00pm LUNCH

(*'Travellers in Third Level Education'* video shown)

2.00pm Roundtable Discussion: *Effective implementation: the use of partnership approaches to achieve the strategic priority*

3.30pm Plenary Session

Chair: Dr Maurice Hayes

4.00pm *Close*

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Participants

- **Total of 43 participants**
- **Government Departments**
(Education; Employment and Learning; Office of the First Minister and the Deputy First Minister)

Participants (cont.)

- **Education & Library Boards; Council for Catholic Maintained Schools; Teacher Training Colleges; NI Commissioner for Children and Young People.**
- **Teachers**
- **Traveller Support Groups and other NGOs**

Conclusions

- **Need for a strategy for equality for Travellers in education that harnesses the efforts of all the actors- public authorities, the Traveller community and NGOs**
- **The Department of Education must take a lead role in developing such a strategy**

Conclusions

- **There is a need for the Department, in consultation with other actors, to set clear targets for improvement that are realistic and achievable**
- **Immediate targets should focus on the requirements of the education legislation**

Conclusions

- **The target cohort must be all school-age Traveller children plus children of pre-school age**
- **Need for constant interaction with Traveller parents**
- **Need for pre-service and in-service training for teachers**

Conclusions

- **Need for as multicultural approach including cross curricular appreciation of difference and tackling of racist bullying**
- **Need to disseminate best practice**
- **Nomadic Travellers must be facilitated with education services**

Conclusions

- **Monitoring role for the Equality Commission**
- **Need for action not just further discussion**
- **Next step is to get together actors at senior level – ECNI can facilitate**

Key Speakers



Left to right: Bob Collins (Chief Commissioner, Equality Commission); Cristina Hurson (Irish Traveller Movement), Breda Naughton (Department of Education & Science), Dr Maurice Hayes (Chair), Will Haire (Permanent Secretary, Department of Education)

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**Dr Maurice
Hayes,
Roundtable
Chair**



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**Bob Collins,
Chief
Commissioner,
Equality
Commission NI**



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**Will Haire,
Permanent
Secretary,
Department of
Education**



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**Breda
Naughton,
Department of
Education
and Science
(ROI)**



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**Cristina
Hurson,
Irish Traveller
Movement**



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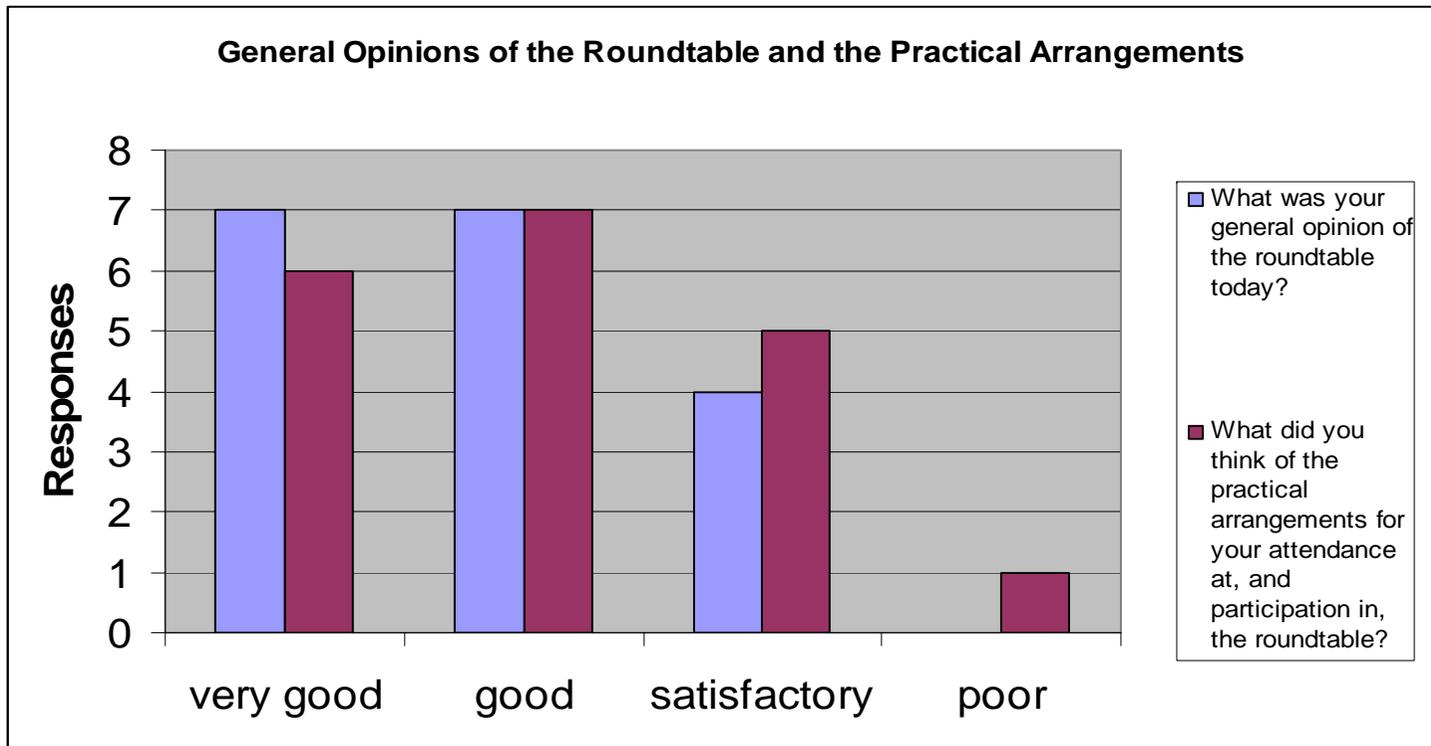
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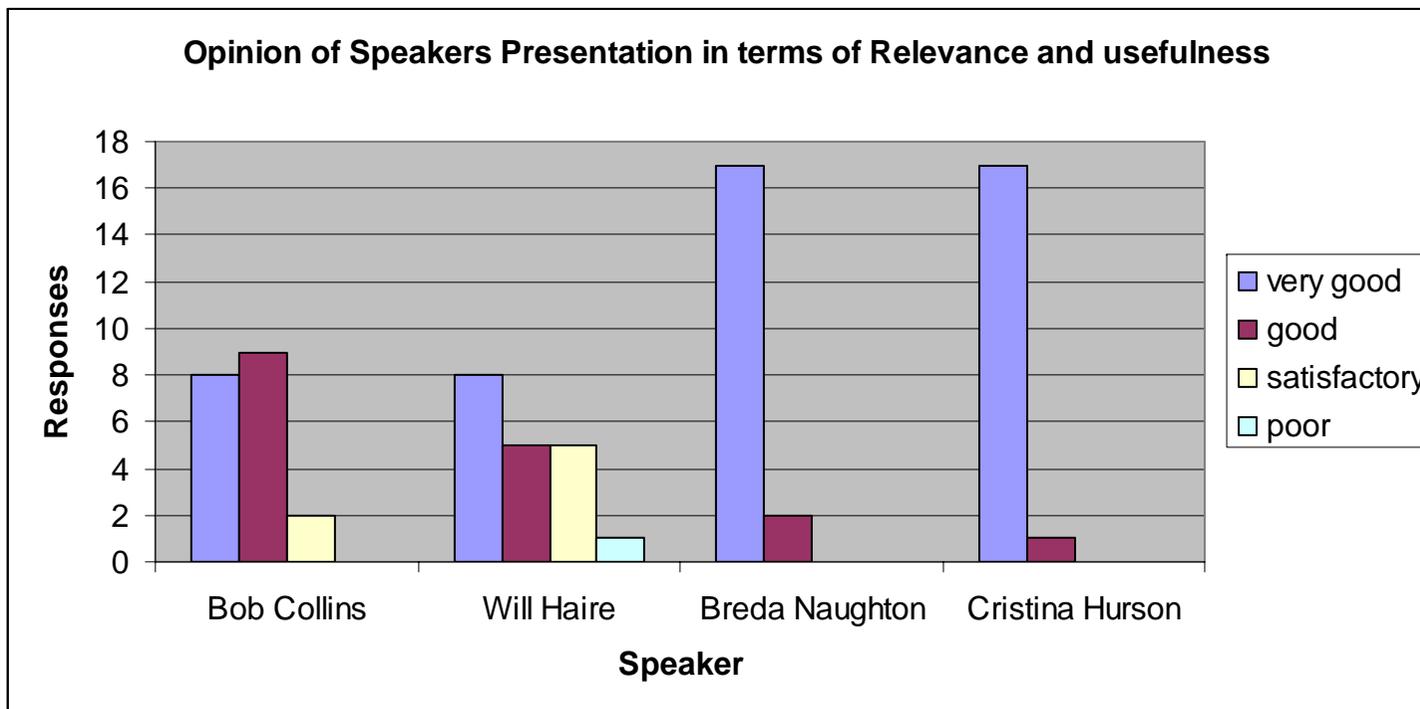
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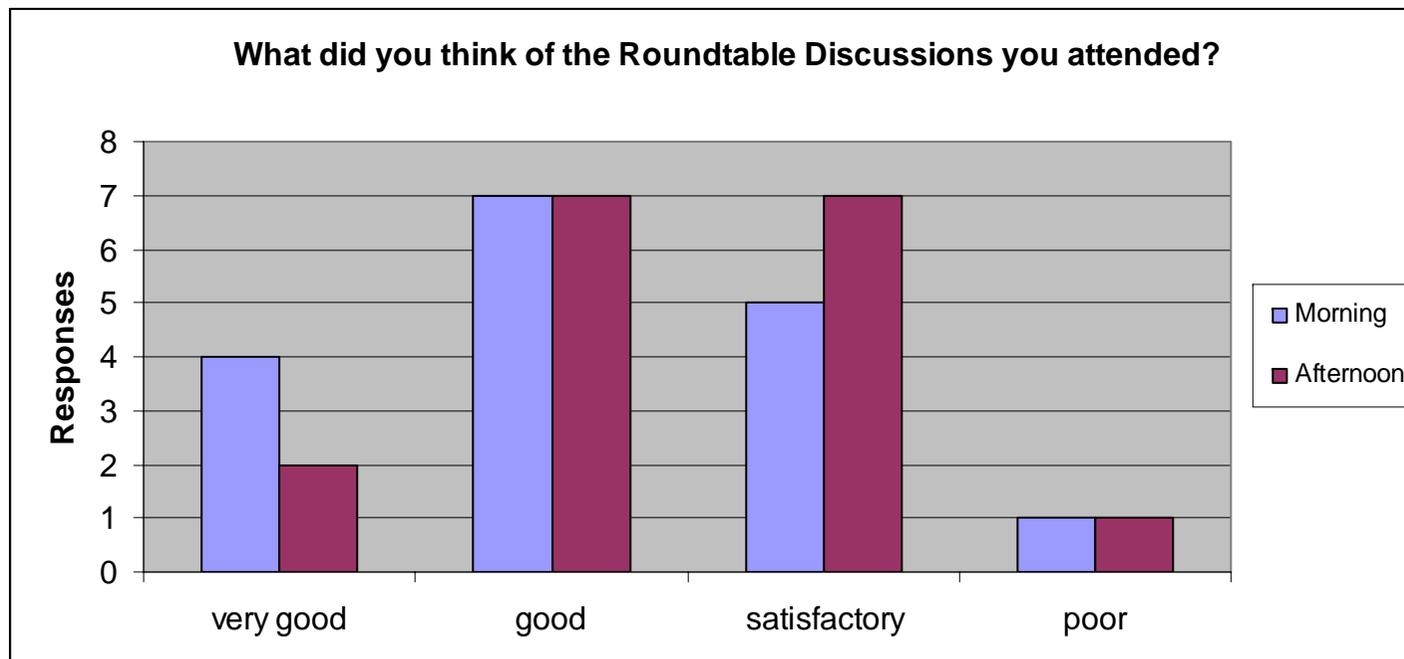
Evaluation of roundtable by participants



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