



THE EQUALITY TRIBUNAL
AN BINSE COMHIONANNAIS

ANNUAL REPORT 2007

CONTRIBUTING TO A FAIRER SOCIETY

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OUR MISSION

To contribute to a fairer society through providing a fair, accessible and impartial forum to remedy unlawful discrimination.

OUR MANDATE

The Employment Equality Act 1998, which established the Equality Tribunal, provides a statutory framework whereby we mediate and/or investigate claims of unlawful discrimination in accordance with the provisions of the Act. Various legislative changes have occurred since our establishment and we now have a unique responsibility for mediating and investigating complaints of unlawful discrimination under the following legislation:

- Employment Equality Acts 1998 - 2007
- Equal Status Acts 2000 -2004
- Pensions Acts 1990-2004.

OUR VALUES

Since its establishment, the Tribunal has sought to reflect a series of core values that support the implementation of its Mission Statement and underpin the manner in which the Tribunal would like to see its services operate. We will continue to be guided by the fundamental service principles set out in our first two Statements. These include:

For Service

- Professionalism
- Impartiality
- Accessibility
- Timeliness

For Staff

- Optimum training and development
- Collaborative working

For Government

- Cost effectiveness and value for money
- Impartial resolution of discrimination disputes

FOREWORD BY THE DIRECTOR

I am delighted to introduce the ninth Annual Report by the Equality Tribunal. It shows a record number of new claims to the Tribunal and an increasing output rate despite significant staff changes.

The Tribunal offers a vital, impartial forum both for people who feel that they have been discriminated against and for those who are alleged to have discriminated. Our mediation helps the two sides to reach an agreement which suits them both and which can resolve very difficult situations in a way which both sides can support. Our decisions are based on a fair hearing of both parties, clarify the law and give an unbiased finding. Both decisions and mediation agreements are legally binding. Our decisions are important beyond the individual sphere; they can change how systems work to make them fairer in future.

New claims are up by 36 percent. Employment related claims now dominate, accounting for four-fifths of the Tribunal's new business. They showed an increase of 47% in the single year 2007, on top of an increase of 12 percent the previous year. Many of these claims involve significant new points of law or large numbers of people, and have implications for employees and employers in every area of the economy.

In equal status, the number of new claims is up some 10%, and increasingly they are about complex issues of interacting areas of legislation and caselaw. Claims about access to public services particularly dominate, but again virtually they relate to every area of the economy.

The output of the Tribunal has increased year on year, in relation to decisions, mediated agreements and other closures (many of which involve much work by Tribunal staff). This has enabled significant progress in reducing the waiting list for equal status cases and an active degree of case management for employment claims.

Overall, during 2007 the Tribunal increased its efficiency and started a wide-ranging process of reviewing all its operations, which will over the next couple of years enable it in effect to re-invent itself in a new location as an agile and learning organisation. Additional planning commenced for the interim decentralisation of up to one-third of Tribunal staff to a new



Melanie Pine, Director

location in Portlaoise, pending its final move to Portarlinton in 2010. In the meantime staff were understanding of the constraints on Dublin accommodation required by the increase in numbers.

I am particularly pleased with this progress, coming as it does at a time of significant staff turnover and an inflow of additional staff numbers. By the time the building is ready for the Tribunal in Portarlinton, more than 90% of the staff will have changed. During 2007 there was a very strong investment in training for all staff, and this is continuing in 2008. When all staff are on board, it will have meant an increase of 40% in the number of equality officers and some 100% in the number of administrative staff.

The Equality Tribunal has a very specialised remit, requiring high degree of familiarity with the governing legislation from all staff. General support staff deal with intricate queries about jurisdiction and procedures from the public, Equality Mediators facilitate many agreements which transform people's lives and of course the work of Equality Officers has been very public for many years. I would like to thank them all for their work in making the Tribunal's services as accessible as possible and for ensuring that Tribunal decisions do clarify the law and help to establish a robust and durable framework of equality caselaw. Their high level of motivation and sense of dedication has made a real difference to the work and life of the Tribunal.

Melanie Pine
Director

DEVELOPMENTS IN 2007

Expansion

The Tribunal is undergoing very significant expansion. The Department of Justice Equality and Law Reform has committed to allocate to the Tribunal a further 10 posts at administrative level and 4 posts of equality officer, subject to review after two years. This will give the Tribunal a 40% increase at equality officer level, and virtually 100% increase in administrative capacity and will enable the Tribunal to deal with its caseload in a much more efficient and effective manner. A review of procedures will be carried out in the light of the new capacity. A number of these posts were in place by the end of 2007.

Decentralisation

Decentralisation will also see up to 80% turnover in the Tribunal's staff. The process of recruitment to replace staff has already been initiated. By the end of 2007 the management team for Portllington was virtually complete and a substantial number of new Equality Officers were in place. In 2006 the Tribunal received sanction from the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform to a 6 months overlap to balance the departure of experienced Equality Officers and the arrival of new Equality Officer appointees, in order to facilitate essential specialist training. At the end of 2007 there were 4 additional Equality Officers assigned to the Tribunal under this arrangement. A key priority with our expanded capacity coupled with relocation will be to retain, develop and enhance our specialised expertise and experience.

Approval in principle was received in 2006 for a pilot programme of outsourcing part of our mediation service, partly to deal with inevitable skills gaps during decentralisation and partly to help smooth out peaks in demand for mediation. To date final sanction is still outstanding. Assuming sanction is provided, it will be a key task ahead to ensure that this is carried out in a way which meets the parties' needs and offers value for money.

Legal Developments

The Civil Law (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill 2006 includes provisions for amendments to the Equal Status Acts 2000 to 2004 to give effect to certain elements of the Gender Goods and Services Directive (2004/113/EC). This Bill was before the Oireachtas in 2007.

Staff

By 31 December 2007, 37 staff members were serving in the Equality Tribunal (for details see Appendix 4). During the year 5 staff members left the office: Anne-Marie Lynch, (Equality Officer), Aileen O’Gorman (Officer Manager), Frances Flynn (Legal Research Assistant), Paul Johnson and Kristian Reiman (Secretariat Support Officers). We thank them all for their hard work and wish them well in their future careers.

In 2007, we welcomed Fiona Lafferty (Head of Corporate Resources Unit), Stephen Bonnländer, Tara Coogan, Hugh Lonsdale, Orlaith Mannion, Enda Murphy, Gary O’Doherty and Conor Stokes (Equality Officers), Frank Bergin (Office Manager), Deirdre Gallagher (Legal Research Assistant), Roisin Cahill, Amanda Cullen, Noelle Doody, Siobhan Lynch and Finbarr O’Mahoney (Secretariat Support Officers) and Avril Graham (Corporate Resources Support Officer).

SERVICES OF THE TRIBUNAL IN 2007

Note: All statistical information contained in tables and charts in this chapter is given as grouped cases rather than individual claims. Each case therefore may have more than one complainant.

Overview

As a statutory, independent, quasi-judicial body to remedy discrimination, the Equality Tribunal's primary role supports the Government commitment to uphold the entitlement of equal treatment for all people. The Tribunal decides or mediates claims of unlawful discrimination. Where such discrimination is found, redress is provided which compensates for the discrimination and has a deterrent effect. The Tribunal continues to fulfil this function in two ways by providing effective investigation and mediation services.

Referrals and Outcomes

In 2007 the Tribunal had the highest ever number of referrals, 25 higher than the previous peak in 2002. Overall more than 1,000 individuals made complaints to the Tribunal in 2007. The number of claims referred to the Tribunal in 2007 rose by 36% compared to 2006. The rise was particularly striking for Employment Equality.

Referrals to the Tribunal 2006 and 2007

Referrals	2006	2007	
Employment Equality Acts	448	659	+47%
- Collective Agreements	0	1	+100%
Pensions Acts	14	7	-50%
Equal Status Acts	166	185	+11%
Overall referrals	628	852	+36%

Outcomes

In 2007 the Tribunal issued 171 Decisions (9% increase on 2006) and 65 cases were resolved at Mediation. A total of 607 cases were investigated, mediated or otherwise closed by the Tribunal in 2007 (539 in 2006) which is an increase of 13% compared to 2006. All Decisions were published and included the reasons for the decisions reached.

Outcomes 2006 and 2007

Outcomes	2006	2007	
Employment Equality Acts	336	351	+5%
- Decisions	63	77	+22%
- Mediated agreements	65	45	+31%
- Otherwise closed	208	229	+10%
Pensions Acts	3	8	+167%
- Decisions	0	0	0%
- Mediated agreements	0	0	0%
- Otherwise closed	3	8	+167%
Equal Status Acts	200	248	+24%
- Decisions	94	94	0%
- Mediated agreements	19	20	+5%
- Otherwise closed	87	134	+54%
Overall outcomes	539	607	+13%

EMPLOYMENT EQUALITY UNIT

Role

In 2007 Equality Officers in the Employment Equality Unit continued to deliver an expert and effective investigation process in line with the Tribunal's core values of impartiality, professionalism, accessibility and timeliness.

The continuing challenge facing the Unit in 2007 was to ensure that it maintained the Tribunal's core values in the face of an increasing workload.

Staffing as at 31 December 2007

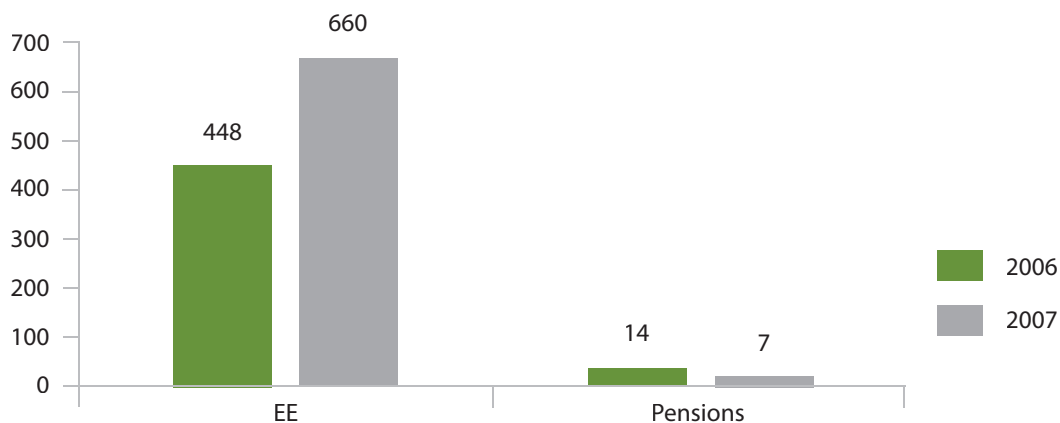
Head of Unit	Deirdre Sweeney
Equality Officers	Stephen Bonnlander, Gerardine Coyle, Vivian Jackson, Hugh Lonsdale, Orlaith Mannion, Mary Rogerson, Conor Stokes, Raymund Walsh

Overview of Unit's Activities in 2007

Referrals

There was an increase of 44% in employment cases referred to the Tribunal over 2006. A total of 667 claims (covering 814 complainants) were referred in 2007. Of these, seven (7) were referred under the Pensions Acts.

Referrals to the Tribunal (Employment Equality and Pensions) 2006 & 2007



Grounds

In 2007 Race continued to be the most frequently cited ground for claims in relation to Employment Equality. Particularly striking were the increase of 106% in the number of race claims and 59% in the number of disability claims. Gender now accounts for only 12% of claims.

Grounds for referral (Employment Equality and Pensions) 2006 and 2007

Breakdown By Ground	2006	2007	
Age	50	43	-14%
Disability	56	89	+59%
Family Status	4	10	+150%
Gender	75	79	+5%
Marital Status	2	1	-100%
Race	149	307	+106%
Religion	3	5	+67%
Sexual Orientation	7	4	-43%
Traveller Community	1	3	+200%
Multiple Grounds *	98	113	+15%
No Grounds Listed	17	13	-24%
Total	462	667	+44%

* Where a claim is made under more than one ground it is not counted in each of the grounds on which the claim is based but only in the "Multiple Grounds" category. A full breakdown of referrals including referrals on Multiple Grounds is given in Appendix 5.

Outcomes

Notwithstanding the heavier demand, the commitment of Equality Officers to providing expert and effective investigations remained high. The hard work and commitment of Equality Officers in the Unit coupled with an overlap of 4 new Equality Officer appointees is evidenced by a 21% increase in cases closed in 2007. There was a 22% increase in decisions on claims of discrimination in employment in 2007 with 77 decisions issued (covering 131 individual complaints) compared to 63 decisions issued in 2006. Equality Officers found in favour of the complainant in approximately 42% of decisions.

In addition to these findings, 229 other cases were closed in 2007 (208 in 2006). These were either found to be inadmissible, settled or withdrawn during the course of the investigation or dismissed for non-pursuit. Many of these cases involved significant work for Tribunal staff at all levels prior to their closure.

Eight Pensions cases were closed in 2007 by being found to be inadmissible or by being withdrawn during the course of the investigation. No decisions issued in 2007 under the Pensions Acts.

A further 45 Employment Equality cases were resolved by the Mediation Service in 2007.

Employment Equality and Pensions Cases	2006	2007	
Decisions Issued	63	77	+22%
- For Complainant	28	32	+14%
- For Respondent	31	43	+39%
- Preliminary	2	1	-100%
- Split Decision	1	0	-100%
- No Jurisdiction	0	1	+100%
Mediation agreements	65	45	-31%
Other outcomes	208	229	+10%
- Inadmissible	16	20	+25%
- Out of time	6	6	0%
- Dismissal	23	12	-48%
- Withdrawn	117	171	+46%
- Not pursued	14	3	-79%
- Closed at mediation	29	17	-41%
- Otherwise closed	3	0	-300%
Total	336	351	+5%

Awards and Directions

Amounts totalling €461,816 (excluding equal pay and pay arrears etc.) were awarded in compensation where discrimination was found. The average award was €14,431 compared to €10,113 in 2006. The highest award was €125,000. Awards in relation to equal pay were made in 4 cases.

Awards for a person employed by the respondent can be up to two years' pay, or equal pay and arrears where appropriate. The maximum award for someone who is not an employee of the respondent is €12,697.

In a number of cases Equality Officers used their power to direct action that would help to prevent future discrimination. Orders included:

- that the respondent should develop a Code of Practice on Harassment (modelled on the Employment Equality Act, 1998 (Code of Practice)(Harassment) Order, 2002) on all of the nine discriminatory grounds covered by the Employment Equality Acts, 1998-2007. The Code should be put in place within 3 months from the date of the decision and a copy of the Code given to all existing and to new staff on arrival and displayed in prominent positions in the respondent's premises. Appropriate training in the policy should be given to all staff with staff management functions and that this training be kept under review in light of developments/best practice in the area
- that the respondents adhere to good practice selection procedures in all future promotions including applying a formal marking system agreed prior to any consideration of CVs, ranking candidates by reference to that marking system and retaining all notes
- that the complainant shall be entitled to seek redress under the Unfair Dismissals Acts 1977 to 1993, in accordance with the provisions of section 101 (2) (b) and section 101 (5) of the Employment Equality Acts 1998-2007
- that the respondent ensures that all staff receive training in disability issues with the emphasis on the requirements of the Employment Equality Acts, 1998-2007
- that the respondent put in place proper procedures of notification/warning to employees in respect of dismissible offences, to carry out investigations of allegations and to afford employees the right of response in the event of an employee being dismissed.

EQUAL STATUS UNIT

Role

The Equality Officers in the Equal Status Unit have continued to operate on the basis of the Equality Tribunal's core values of impartiality, professionalism, accessibility and timeliness. The Equal Status Unit's aim continues to be the issue of legally sound, effective and clear decisions in as timely a manner as possible and in accordance with the principles of natural justice.

Staffing as at 31 December 2007

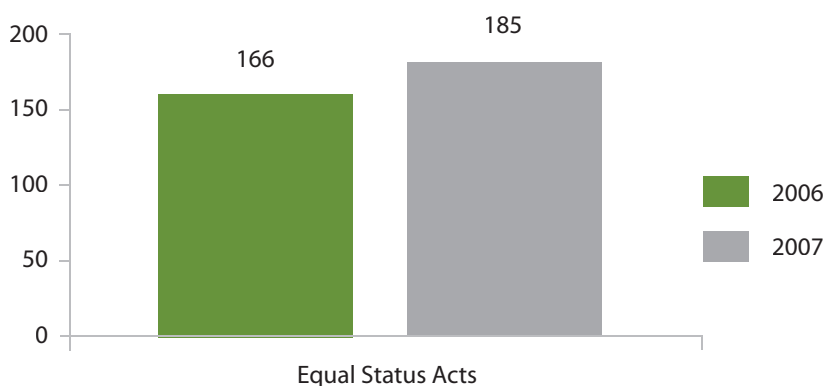
Head of Unit	John Hurley
Equality Officers	Tara Coogan, Marian Duffy*, Dolores Kavanagh, Enda Murphy, Brian O'Byrne, Mary O'Callaghan*, Gary O'Doherty, Bernadette Treanor. *these officers are on special leave to complete studies in Kings Inns.

Overview of Unit's Activities in 2007

Referrals

There was an increase of 11% in equal status cases referred to the Tribunal over 2006. A total of 185 claims (covering 260 complainants) were referred in 2007.

Referrals to the Tribunal (Equal Status) 2006 and 2007



Grounds

As in 2006, disability continued to be the most frequently cited ground for claim in relation to Equal Status in 2007 with an increase of 65% in the number of disability claims.

Grounds for referral (Equal Status) 2006 and 2007

Breakdown By Ground	2006	2007	
Age	9	8	-11%
Disability	52	86	+65%
Family Status	0	4	+400%
Gender	7	6	-14%
Marital Status	7	1	-86%
Race	15	10	-33%
Religion	1	1	0%
Sexual Orientation	2	0	-200%
Traveller Community	18	17	-6%
Multiple Grounds	49	47	-4%
No Grounds Listed	6	5	-16%
Total	166	185	+11%

*Where a claim is made under more than one ground it is not counted in each of the grounds on which the claim is based but only in the "Multiple Grounds" category. A full breakdown of referrals including referrals on Multiple Grounds is given in Appendix 5.

Outcomes

A total of 94 decisions were issued in 2007 (covering 244 individual complaints). Equality Officers found in favour of the complainant in approximately 30% of decisions. In addition to these findings, 134 other cases were closed in 2007 through being found to be inadmissible, being settled or withdrawn, being dismissed for non-pursuit or other reasons. Many of these cases involved significant work for Tribunal staff at all levels prior to their closure.

A further 20 Equal Status cases were resolved by the Mediation Service in 2007.

Outcomes (Equal Status) for 2006 and 2007

Equal Status Cases	2006	2007	
Decisions Issued	94	94	0%
- For Complainant	31	27	-13%
- For Respondent	59	64	+8%
- Preliminary	2	3	+50%
- Split Decision	2	0	-100%
- No Jurisdiction	0	0	0%
Mediation Agreements	19	20	+5%
Other outcomes	87	134	+54%
- Inadmissible	17	16	-6%
- Out of time	13	6	-54%
- Dismissal	1	0	-100%
- Withdrawn	28	61	+118%
- Not pursued	21	38	+81%
- Otherwise closed	1	3	+200%
- Closed at mediation	6	10	+67%
Total	200	248	+24%

Awards and Directions

The maximum award under the Equal Status Acts is €6,348. In 2007 amounts totalling €74,300 were awarded in compensation where discrimination was found (compared to €60,550 in 2006). The average award was €2,751, up on 2006 (€1,187). The highest award was €12,750, compared with €6,000 in 2006.

In a number of cases Equality Officers used their power to direct action that would help to prevent future discrimination. Among the specific actions ordered by Equality Officers were that the respondent(s):

- examine the criteria for accepting children on its soccer school programmes with the aim of accommodating children regardless of their ability or disability on the full range of programmes where this can be achieved at a nominal cost
- implement a system which can afford reasonable accommodation to disabled clients in terms of Section 4 of the Equal Status Act 2000
- send a personal letter to the complainant acknowledging that he may have been wrongly refused entry to their store on the date in question and offering him an apology for any hurt experienced by him on the day
- immediately proceed, on certain conditions, to either construct a suitable extension to the complainant's dwelling or to re-house the complainant and her family, the construction or re-housing is to be completed within twelve months of the decision
- make arrangements for the payment to the complainant, with immediate effect, of Supplementary Welfare Payments at his local Health Centre and any further alternative venue at which payment of the allowance is available to non-Travellers and, with immediate effect, arrange for payment of Supplementary Welfare Allowance to Travellers at all outlets at which payment is available to non-Travellers
- put systems in place within a business to ensure that disabled customers receive prompt attention and service when they attend his premises
- arrange for comprehensive training of all members of staff in the terms and application of the Equal Status Acts, 2000-2004, with such training to have commenced within three months from the date of the decision.

MEDIATION SERVICE

Role

The Employment Equality Act 1998 (Section 78) provides for the establishment of a mediation service, staffed by Equality Mediation Officers. A similar approach to mediation is also found in the Equal Status Act 2000 (Section 24) and the Pensions Act 2004. Equality Mediation Officers are normally recruited from the ranks of Equality Officers and are given specialised training for mediation resulting in professional accreditation.

The Mediation Service continues to operate under its Code of Ethics as set out in its Principles of Mediation.

Staffing as at 31 December 2007

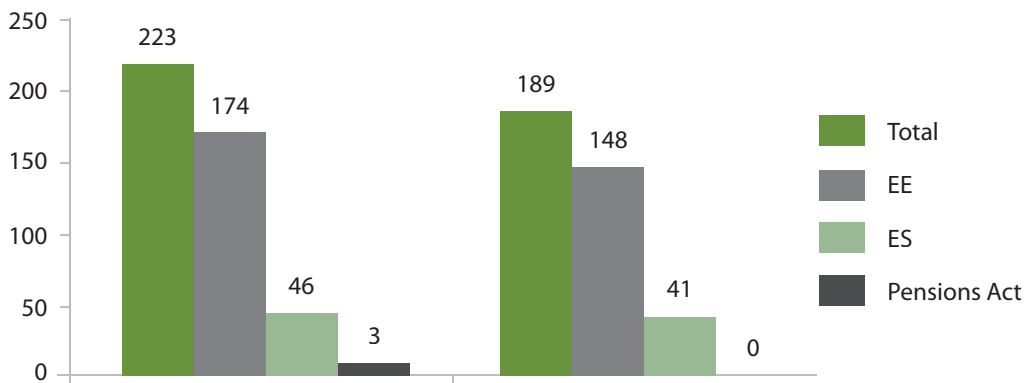
Acting Head Of Service	Brian O’Byrne
Mediation Officers (these officers also act as Equality Officers)	Gerardine Coyle, Marian Duffy*, Vivian Jackson, Dolores Kavanagh, Mary O’Callaghan* , Mary Rogerson, Bernadette Treanor, Raymund Walsh. *these officers are on special leave to complete studies in Kings Inns

In order to maintain the continuity of the Mediation Service over the period of the forthcoming planned decentralisation of the Tribunal to Portarlinton, seven new Equality Officers/Mediators were recruited during 2007. On foot of a tendering process, trainers were recruited in late 2007 to commence MII Part 1 Accredited Training for these new members in early 2008. In addition, the Tribunal has also sought and received approval in principle for a pilot programme of outsourcing part of the mediation service, partly to deal with inevitable skills gaps during decentralisation and partly to help smooth out peaks in demand for mediation. To date final sanction is still outstanding.

OVERVIEW OF SERVICE'S ACTIVITIES IN 2007

Referrals

As a result of the Tribunal's decision to "screen" cases to determine if they could be resolved by mediation before assignment to a mediator, there was a 15% reduction in the number of cases referred for mediation in 2007 with 189 cases referred (27% of all cases referred to the Tribunal) compared to 223 cases in 2006 (36% of cases referred). The screening procedure helps to contribute to an improvement in resolution rates.



Grounds for referral (Mediation) 2006 and 2007

Breakdown By Ground	2006	2007	
Age	27	13	-52%
Disability	37	55	+49%
Family Status	1	4	-300%
Gender	48	34	-29%
Marital Status	1	0	-100%
Race	57	36	-37%
Religion	1	2	+100%
Sexual Orientation	5	4	-20%
Traveller Community	15	11	-27%
Multiple Grounds	31	30	-3%
Total	223	189	-15%

Outcomes

The Mediation Service conducted 109 mediation sessions in 2007 of which 60% (65) were resolved compared to 56% in 2006. Overall 74% of the 136 cases which were referred to the Mediation Service in 2007 did not return to investigation either through agreement, through parties settling between themselves or through the complainant deciding not to pursue the complaint further after mediation.

Outcomes Mediation for 2006 and 2007

Mediation Cases	2006	2007	
Cases Resolved			
- Employment Equality Acts	65	45	-31%
- Pensions Acts	0	0	0%
- Equal Status Acts	19	20	+5%
Cases not resolved			
- Employment Equality Acts	56	38	-32%
- Pensions Acts	0	1	+100%
- Equal Status Acts	10	5	-50%
Cases closed			
- Employment Equality Acts	29	17	-41%
- Pensions Acts	0	0	0%
- Equal Status Acts	6	10	+67%
Total	185	136	-26%

A detailed analysis of the operations of the Mediation Service can be found in the Tribunal's Mediation Review 2007 which also outlines sample outcomes.

SUPPORT SERVICES IN 2007

Support Services to the Tribunal comprise three units:

- Secretariat Unit
- Legal Unit
- Corporate Resources Unit

SECRETARIAT UNIT

Role

The Secretariat of the Equality Tribunal provides a unified approach to addressing preliminary issues associated with claims under the equality legislation. This includes the carrying out of preliminary admissibility checks and the offer of mediation initially to the parties to a claim. The Secretariat also provides the electronic support services necessary to facilitate the work of the office and carries out website maintenance and development in-house. They also answer general queries from parties to claims before the Tribunal and provide administrative support to the Director, to the Heads of the Employment Equality, Equal Status and Mediation Units of the Tribunal and to Equality Officers.

Staffing as at 31 December 2007

Head of Unit	Sile Larkin
Secretariat Unit Manager	Alan McDonnell
Executive Officer	Brian Farrell
Secretariat Support Officers	Roisin Cahill, Amanda Cullen, Noelle Doody, Susan Fetton, Siobhan Lynch, Finbarr O'Mahoney

OVERVIEW OF UNIT'S ACTIVITIES IN 2007

Website

The Tribunal's website www.equalitytribunal.ie continues to be used as an important resource for both Tribunal staff and customers alike. The website contains information on employment equality, equal status and mediation procedures. Its information leaflets are available in English, Irish, Polish, Russian and French. The decision database contains all decisions of the Tribunal and the search function allows users to identify specific decisions under a variety of search criteria. The website also contains Equality Legislation and the Tribunal's Decentralisation Implementation Plan.

The Tribunal uploads decisions to the website on the third Monday of every month following issue of the decision to the parties.

The Tribunal's website continues to be used as an important service delivery tool, and greater attention to accessibility auditing under National Disability Authority guidelines has been given with a view to undertaking extensive accessibility audits in 2008.

The average monthly hit rate for the website in 2007 was 92,866.

E-Government

The Tribunal have been in discussion with the Web development company with a view to developing a system whereby complaints are referred online under the Employment Equality Acts, the Equal Status Acts 2000 to 2007 and the Pensions Act 1990-2007.

ICT

In 2007 the Tribunal undertook initial implementation work to migrate its Information Technology structure to the Citrix Environment. In this the Tribunal is supported by the IT Division of the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform.

Citrix is an integrated enterprise system whereby all the Tribunal's IT functions and applications will be centralised. This will enable the smooth delivery of network services to our decentralised offices. It will also facilitate staff members who require e-working facilities or need to access Tribunal data during hearings around the country.

The Tribunal has also undertaken initial development work on upgrading its existing telecommunications system.

LEGAL UNIT

Role

The role of the Legal Unit is to resource and support the legal quality of the Equality Tribunal's work, contributing to Tribunal's objectives of expert, effective investigation of cases referred to the Tribunal and of developing a balanced, fair and sustainable body of equality caselaw. The Unit has responsibility for providing legal advice to the Director and to Equality Officers on the exercise of their functions and the analysis of overall legal issues arising from the Tribunal's work. The Unit also provides and facilitates ongoing legal training and is responsible for the expansion and maintenance of the Tribunal's growing reference library.

Staffing as at 31 December 2007

Legal Advisor	Sile Larkin
Legal Research Assistant	Deirdre Gallagher
Legal Unit Support Officer	Deirdre McCormack

OVERVIEW OF UNIT'S ACTIVITIES IN 2007

Training

The Unit continued its demanding training programme, designed to facilitate pooling the expertise and enhancing the quasi-judicial, analytical and legal skills of Equality Officers as well as implementing a rigorous training programme for newly appointed Equality Officers. During 2007 the Unit held internal workshops and maintained a programme of external speakers, on different aspects of equality law and on related areas of Irish and European Community law.

Library

The Tribunal's library provides a comprehensive reference and resource centre for equality officers, both on Irish and European Community equality law, and on developments in discrimination law across a wider field. The library was further expanded in 2007. Equality Officers also have immediate access to new equality caselaw as it develops, through online legal databases which provide full-text and search facilities across the Irish, European Community, UK, US and Commonwealth caselaw.

CORPORATE RESOURCES UNIT

Role

The role of the Corporate Resources Unit is to provide front-line support services to the Director and the other units in the office to enable them carry out their functions efficiently and effectively. The Unit looks after the day-to-day operations of the office in respect of accommodation, finances, customer services and the provision of goods and services. It has responsibility for the physical environment within the Tribunal and for health and safety and accessibility matters. It is also responsible for organising non-legal training and for the preparation and publication of leaflets, forms and other corporate documents.

Staffing as at 31 December 2007

Head of Unit	Fiona Lafferty
Corporate Resources Manager	Brenda Ward
Office Manager	Vacancy
Acting Office Manager	Frank Bergin
Corporate Resources Support Officers	Avril Greham, Noel Kelly
Services Officers	John Fitzgerald, Joe Pettigrew

OVERVIEW OF UNIT'S ACTIVITIES IN 2007

Finance

The Equality Tribunal is funded by the Exchequer, through the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform. Expenditure totalling €2.4m was incurred by the Tribunal during 2007. This comprised €1.9m in respect of pay and €0.52m in respect of non-pay. Expenditure is monitored constantly and is reviewed on a monthly basis by an internal Budget Committee, chaired by the Director. *For details see Appendix 2: Financial Report for 2007.*

Customer Service

The Tribunal's Customer Service Charter outlines our commitment to providing a quality customer service, based on the principles of quality customer service for the Public Service and the Civil Service Code of Standards and Behaviour endorsed by the Government. The Tribunal considers that it met the commitments undertaken in the Customer Service Charter. The Charter will be reviewed and updated in 2008 and a Customer Service Action Plan will be formulated. The Tribunal continued to operate its complaints procedures. In 2007 there was one complaint to the Tribunal's Customer Services Manager under the formal complaints procedure.

Decentralisation

Since the decentralisation programme was announced by the Government the Equality Tribunal has made excellent progress in making the move to Portarlington a reality.

The site which the Office of Public Works (OPW) has identified for the Tribunal and three other agencies who are moving to Portarlington is a prime location alongside Portarlington train station. At the end of 2007, the Tribunal already has 12 Portarlington - bound staff in place within the Tribunal, and a further 30 Portarlington - bound staff yet to be assigned to the Tribunal. In order to facilitate staff who wish to move earlier than the projected permanent building completion date will allow, the Tribunal has been progressing the option of an advance move to an interim office situated in Portlaoise. The OPW has indicated that work on this option is progressing and subject to the availability of suitable accommodation, could allow for the movement of approximately 14 decentralising staff to Portlaoise during 2008.

The Tribunal's Decentralisation Implementation Plan was updated in 2007 and further revised to take account of reviews of business processes and opportunities for business change identified by decentralising areas during the course of 2008.

Training and Development

The Unit's goal is to support the work of the Equality Tribunal through providing a high quality working environment for staff and through optimising staff performance and development. The Equality Tribunal is very supportive of individuals seeking to gain relevant additional academic qualifications. During 2007,

- two members of staff were given special leave to complete studies in Kings Inns leading to qualification as a barrister
- one staff member obtained an MA in Digital Media Technologies in the Dublin Institute of Technology
- one staff member obtained a BA(Distinction) in Humanities in the Dublin City University

In addition to pursuing or completing formal qualifications, Tribunal Equality Officers also pursued a continuing programme of in-house training. In-house, commissioned or specialist training was given to staff during 2007 in Quasi-Judicial Training, Mediation Training, Management Skills and Personal Development.

Support staff underwent wide-ranging training to enable them deliver a professional administrative service to internal and external customers. With the range of enquiries that the Tribunal deal with on a daily basis it is essential that support staff have a good general

knowledge of the working of the Acts and are aware of the issues and concerns that encompass the equality area as well as having a professional approach to administration, communication and customer service matters. Training for support staff therefore includes an introduction to the legislation, Customer Service Skills, Communication Skills as well as necessary IT Skills, Health and Safety and Awareness Training.

The Corporate Learning Unit of the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform continued to provide support to the Tribunal's staff in generic Civil Service training and development identified through the operation of PMDS.

Direct training expenditure alone amounted to €77,000 in 2007 which represents 4% of direct payroll costs. This excludes expenditure by our parent Department and generic civil service training.

Health and Safety

The Tribunal has responsibilities as the main tenant of the offices in Clonmel Street. These include the structural safety of the whole building. In 2007 the Tribunal's Safety Statement was reviewed and comprehensively updated for the purpose of safeguarding the health, safety and welfare of the Tribunal staff while they are at work. The Statement was designed to ensure compliance with the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 2005.

In order to ensure the effective implementation of the commitments set out in the safety statement and protect the welfare of staff and customers, a Fire Procedures Handbook was also prepared in 2007 and fire wardens and first aiders were appointed from among the Tribunal's staff. The purpose of the handbook is to provide a simple way of listing and explaining the features and evacuation routes of the office. Training for fire wardens and in first aid also began in 2007.

Accessibility

In 2007 the Tribunal continued to ensure optimum accessibility in the office premises at Clonmel Street, Dublin 2. The Tribunal's services are free of charge. Parties to a dispute do not need to be legally represented to avail of the services.

The Tribunal provides modern and accessible offices and meeting rooms that fully meet with occupational, health and safety standards. The Equality Tribunal has a range of technology, which improves accessibility and assists in delivering quality service and facilities to our staff and customers, including documents in Braille and audio format, full wheelchair access and sign language and other language interpretation when sought, and hearing rooms which are air-conditioned and equipped with "deaftech" for hearing-impaired clients. For customers outside Dublin, during 2007 Equality Officers and Mediators travelled to hearings in numerous different locations to suit complainants and respondents.

The Tribunal maintains an accessible, informative and updated website at www.equalitytribunal.ie.

Publications

During 2007 the Tribunal published the following documents -

- Annual Report 2006
- Legal Review 2006 (in CD format)
- Mediation Review 2006
- Revised information leaflets

The Tribunal works closely with the National Adult Literacy Agency (NALA) in the revision of its leaflets and with their help the leaflets have gained the NALA Plain English Quality Mark. Copies of information leaflets are available in large print, Braille or audio tape on request and in Irish, French, Russian, Polish and Chinese at reception, by post and on the website.

A full list of available publications is given in Appendix 1 and all publications can be downloaded from the Tribunal's website www.equalitytribunal.ie.

Communications

As required by the legislation, the Tribunal published all Decisions issued during the year, both in the media and on the website. The Tribunal also published in June 2007 its Annual Report for 2006, its Legal Review of decisions issued in 2006 and its Mediation Review of agreements signed in 2006, all of which can be viewed and downloaded from the website.

The Director, the Legal Advisor and the Heads of Unit made presentations on the functions and case law of the Tribunal to a number of organisations within Ireland and international fora during 2007 on the Tribunal's caselaw and functions.

Consultative Forum

The Consultative Forum comprises representatives from the Tribunal's prime customer groups. Its primary focus is to give interested parties a mechanism whereby their views can make a real contribution to the procedures for examining claims of unlawful discrimination. It provides a forum for discussion and resolution of issues relating to accessibility and customer service. It also provides valuable feedback on the operations of the Tribunal and the effectiveness of our customer service. The quasi-judicial functions of the office are excluded from discussion, due to the statutorily independent role of the Director and the Equality Officers. The Forum met on 1 occasion during 2007 and discussed a wide variety of topics including the revision of Strategy Statement, the impact of decentralisation and the workload at the Tribunal. The organisations represented at end 2007 on the Consultative Forum are listed in Appendix 3.

Towards 2016

In 2007 the Tribunal continued to have regard to the national social partnership agreement Towards 2016 and to implement action planned under this agreement.

Performance Management and Development System (PMDS)

In 2007 staff underwent training on the new Performance Management and Development System (PMDS) and its integration with other human resource processes. Role profile forms and reviews of performance were completed for all staff as part of PMDS during the year. The system provides clarity of staff roles and responsibilities and the management of performance in a structured way. It also provides a valuable forum for identifying training requirements.

APPENDIX 1: PUBLICATIONS AVAILABLE FROM THE TRIBUNAL

Reports

- Annual Reports for 1999 to 2007
- Legal Reviews for 2001 to 2007
- Mediation Reviews for 2002 to 2007
- Strategy Statements for 2001-2003, 2004-2006, 2008-2010

Leaflets

General

- GEN1 - Role of The Equality Tribunal
- GEN2 - Customer Service Charter
- GEN3 - Mediation Services

Employment Equality

- EE1 - Employment Equality Acts 1998 and 2007 – Making a Complaint
- EE2 - Employment Equality Acts 1998 and 2007 - Responding to a Complaint

Equal Status

- ES1 - Equal Status Acts 2000 to 2004 - Making a Complaint
- ES2 - Equal Status Acts 2000 to 2004 - Responding to a Complaint

(Leaflets are also available in large print, Braille or audio tape on request and in Irish, French, Russian, Polish and Chinese at reception and on the website).

Guides

- The Employment Equality Acts 1998 and 2007 – Guide to Procedures for Investigating and Mediating Claims
- The Equal Status Acts 2000 to 2004 – Guide to Procedures for Investigating and Mediating Claims
- Mediation Services – Guide to Procedures

Forms

Employment Equality

- EE.1 - Referral of Complaint of Discrimination in Relation to Employment
- EE.2 - Statutory Form of Request to Employer for Information about a Possible Incident of Discrimination
- EE.3 - Statutory Form of Reply from Employer to Request for Information

Equal Status

- ES.1 - Notification to a Service Provider about a Possible Incident of Discrimination
- ES.2 - Reply to Notification
- ES.3 - Complaint to the Equality Tribunal of discrimination in provision of goods, services or facilities

Mediation

- ET 6 - Agreement to Mediation

Pensions

- PA.1 - Referral of Complaint under the Pensions Acts

(Forms are also available in Irish)

APPENDIX 2: FINANCIAL REPORT FOR 2007

	€
Pay:	1.88m
Non-pay:	0.52m
Total	2.40m

The main areas of non-pay expenditure were as follows:

	€
Accommodation	121,000
Communications & Promotion	13,000
Design & Printing	23,000
Information Technology	108,000
Legal	22,000
Library	20,000
Office Equipment	6,000
Telephone & Postage	31,000
Training	77,000

Expenditure on casework which required hearings to be conducted in locations outside the Equality Tribunal's headquarters gave rise to expenditure of €56,000.

Energy usage and Recycling

In accordance with Government Decision S180/20/10/0269 on Energy Efficiency in Public Sector Buildings, the Equality Tribunal takes steps to reduce energy usage, including participating in the ESB's Winter Demand Reduction Incentive and recycling arrangements for paper and glass, printer and copier toner cartridges.

Prompt payments

The Equality Tribunal continued to comply with the Prompt Payment of Accounts Act 1997 as amended by the European Communities (Late Payment in Commercial Transactions) Regulations 2002. Interest charges were incurred in respect of payments totalling €92.90.

APPENDIX 3: CONSULTATIVE FORUM AS AT END 2007

Bar Council

Health Service Employers' Agency

Incorporated Law Society

Irish Business and Employers' Confederation

Irish Congress of Trade Unions

Irish Insurance Federation

Irish Traveller Movement

National Consultative Committee on Racism and Interculturalism

National Gay and Lesbian Federation

National Women's Council of Ireland

People with Disabilities in Ireland Ltd

APPENDIX 4: ORGANISATION CHART OF THE EQUALITY TRIBUNAL

(As at 31 December 2007)

Director		
Melanie Pine		
Employment Equality	Equal Status	Mediation
Deirdre Sweeney <i>Head of Employment Equality</i>	John Hurley <i>Head of Equal Status</i>	
Stephen Bonnlander Gerardine Coyle Vivian Jackson Hugh Lonsdale Gary O'Doherty Mary Rogerson Conor Stokes Raymund Walsh <i>Equality Officers</i>	Tara Coogan Marian Duffy Dolores Kavanagh Orlaith Mannion Enda Murphy Brian O'Byrne Mary O'Callaghan Bernadette Treanor <i>Equality Officers</i>	Brian O'Byrne * <i>Acting Head of Mediation</i> Gerardine Coyle* Marian Duffy* Vivian Jackson* Dolores Kavanagh* Mary O'Callaghan * Mary Rogerson* Bernadette Treanor* Raymund Walsh * <i>* Mediation Officers</i>
Resource Management		
Legal Management	Corporate Resources	Secretariat
Sile Larkin <i>Legal Advisor</i>	Fiona Lafferty <i>Head of Corporate Resources</i>	Sile Larkin* <i>Head of Secretariat</i>
	Brenda Ward <i>Corporate Resources Manager</i>	
	Vacancy <i>Office Manager</i>	Alan McDonnell <i>Deputy Registrar/ Secretariat Unit Manager</i>
Deirdre Gallagher <i>Legal Research Assistant</i>	Frank Bergin <i>Acting Office Manager</i>	Brian Farrell <i>Executive Officer</i>

Deirdre McCormack <i>Legal Unit Support Officer</i>	Noel Kelly Avril Graham <i>Corporate Resources Support Officers</i>	Roisin Cahill Amanda Cullen Noelle Doody Susan Fetton Siobhan Lynch Finbar O'Mahoney <i>Secretariat Support Officers</i>
	John Fitzgerald Joe Pettigrew <i>Services Officers</i>	

* These staff members have dual roles. Eight Equality Officers also act as Equality Mediation Officers Mediators and the Legal Advisor also acts as Head of Secretariat.

APPENDIX 5: BREAKDOWN OF CASES REFERRED TO EQUALITY TRIBUNAL BY GROUND 2006-2007

Cases Referred to the Equality Tribunal						
Grounds	Equal Status Acts 2000-2004		Employment Acts 1998-2007		Pensions Acts 1990-2004	
	2006	2007	2006	2007	2006	2007
Age	9	8	47	41	3	2
Age, disability		3	7	3		
Age, disability, marital status		1				
Age, disability, family status, gender, marital status			1			
Age, disability, family status, gender, marital status, membership of traveller community				1		
Age, disability, race				1		
Age, family status	1					
Age, family status, gender				2		
Age, family status, gender, marital status			1	1		
Age, family status, gender, race				1		
Age, family status, race			1			
Age, gender			5	7	1	
Age, gender, marital status			2			
Age, gender, marital status, race			1			
Age, gender, marital status, sexual orientation				1		
Age, gender, race	1					
Age, marital status, race				1		
Age, race			1	2		
Age, race, religion			2	1		

Cases Referred to the Equality Tribunal						
Grounds	Equal Status Acts 2000- 2004		Employment Acts 1998-2007		Pensions Acts 1990-2004	
	2006	2007	2006	2007	2006	2007
Disability	52	86	54	89	2	
Disability, family status	2	3	3			
Disability, family status, gender			1			
Disability, family status, gender, marital status		1		3		
Disability, family status, marital status			1	2		
disability, gender	2		1	4		
Disability, gender, marital status	3	3		1		
Disability, gender, religion						
Disability, gender, marital status, race		3				
Disability, gender, marital status, religion			1			
Disability, gender, race				3		
Disability, membership of the Traveller community	4	12				
Disability, race	4		4	10		
Disability, religion		2		1		
Disability, sexual orientation				2		
Family Status		4	4	10		
Family status, gender	2		13	11		
Family status, gender, marital status		5	5	8		
Family status, gender, marital status, race				7		
Family status, gender, marital status, membership of the Traveller community	1					

Cases Referred to the Equality Tribunal						
Grounds	Equal Status Acts 2000- 2004		Employment Acts 1998-2007		Pensions Acts 1990-2004	
	2006	2007	2006	2007	2006	2007
Family status, gender, marital status, sexual orientation				2		
Family status, gender, race			1			
Family status, marital status		2		1		
Family status, marital status, race				1		
Family status, marital status, religion			1		1	
Family status, race		7	2			
Family status, religion				1		
Gender	7	6	74	78	1	1
Gender, marital status	2	1	4	5		
Gender, marital status, race			1	3		
Gender, marital status, sexual orientation			1			
Gender, race			19	23		
Gender, race, religion			1			
Gender, sexual orientation			5	1		
Grounds not stated	6	5	16	11	1	2
Marital status	7	1			1	1
Marital status, membership of the Traveller community	1					
Marital status, race		1				
Membership of the Traveller community	18	17		1		
Membership of the Traveller community, race	25	3		1		
Race	15	10	146	306	3	1
Race, religion	1		5	2		
Race, sexual orientation			1			
Religion	1	1	2	5	1	
Sexual orientation	2		7	4		
Totals	166	185	448	660	14	7



THE EQUALITY TRIBUNAL
AN BINSE COMHIONANNAIS

TUARASCÁIL BHLIANTÚIL 2007

CONTRIBUTING TO A FAIRER SOCIETY

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ÁR MISEAN

Cur le sochaí níos cothroime trí fhóram cothrom, inrochtaine agus neamhchlaonta a chur ar fáil chun idirdhealú neamhdhleathach a leigheas

ÁR SAINORDÚ

Cuirtear creat reachtúil ar fáil leis an Acht um Chomhionannas Fostaíochta 1998, lenar bunaíodh an Binse Comhionannais, trína ndéanaimid idirghabháil ar éilimh maidir le hidirdhealú neamhdhleathach agus /nó trína ndéanaimid iad a imscrúdú de réir fhorálacha an Achta. Is iomaí athrú reachtaíochta éagsúil atá tarlaithe ó bunaíodh an Binse agus tá freagracht uathúil orainn anois i ndáil le hidirghabháil ar ghearáin maidir le hidirdhealú neamhdhleathach agus iad a imscrúdú faoin reachtaíocht seo a leanas:

- Na hAchtanna um Chomhionannas Fostaíochta 1998 – 2007
- Na hAchtanna um Stádas Comhionann 2000 – 2004
- Achtanna na bPinsean 1990 – 2004.

ÁR LUACHANNA

Tá an Binse ag iarraidh sraith de chroíluchanna a léiriú ó bunaíodh é a thacaíonn lena Ráiteas Misin a chur i bhfeidhm agus atá mar bhonn taca ag an tslí inar mhaith leis an mBinse go bhfeicfí a sheirbhísí ag oibriú. Leanfaimid ar aghaidh agus sinn á dtreorú ag na bunphrionsabail seirbhíse a leagadh amach inár gcéad dhá Ráiteas. Áirítear orthu sin:

Maidir le Seirbhís

- Gairmiúlacht
- Neamhchlaontacht
- Inrochtaineacht
- Tráthúlacht

Maidir leis an bhFoireann

- An oiliúint agus forbairt is fearr is féidir
- Obair i gcomhar

Maidir leis an Rialtas

- Cost-éifeachtacht agus luach ar airgead
- Díospóidí maidir le hidirdhealú a réiteach go neamhchlaonta

RÉAMHRÁITEAS ÓN STIÚRTHÓIR

Is mór agam an naoú Tuarascáil Bhliantúil de chuid an Bhinse Comhionannais a chur i láthair. Léirítear líon éileamh nua chuig an mBinse nár baineadh amach riamh cheana agus ráta aschuir atá ag dul i méid in ainneoin athruithe móra foirne.

Leis an mBinse, cuirtear fóram ríthábhachtach agus neamhchlaonta ar fáil do dhaoine a bhraitheann go ndearnadh idirdhealú ina gcoinne agus do dhaoine a líomhnaítear go ndearna siad idirdhealú. Cuidíonn ár n-idirghabháil leis an dá thaobh teacht ar réiteach a oireann iad araon agus a fhéadfaidh cásanna a bhíonn an-deacair a réiteach ar shlí lena bhféadfaidh an dá thaobh tacú. Bíonn ár gcinntí bunaithe ar éisteacht chothrom a thabhairt don dá pháirtí, déantar an dlí a shoiléiriú agus tugaimid toradh neamhchlaonta. Bíonn cinntí an Bhinse mar aon le comhaontaithe idirghabhála ceangailteach de réir dlí. Baineann tábhacht lenár gcinntí ní leis an duine aonair amháin; is féidir leo an tslí ina n-oibríonn córais a athrú le go mbeidh siad níos cothroime amach anseo.



Melanie Pine, Stiúrthóir

Tá ardú 36 faoin gcéad ar éilimh nua. Baineann formhór na n-éileamh le fostaíocht agus iad ag déanamh suas ceithre chuigiú de ghnó nua an Bhinse. Léiríodh ardú 47% sna cásanna sin sa bhliain aonair 2007, anuas ar ardú 12 faoin gcéad an bhliain roimhe sin. Baineann go leor de na héilimh sin le pointí dlí nua agus tábhachtach nó le líon mór daoine, agus bíonn tionchair i gceist leo d'fhostaithe agus d'fhostóirí i ngach réimse den gheilleagar.

Maidir le stádas comhionann, d'ardaigh líon na n-éileamh nua 10%, agus baineann siad níos mó agus níos mó le saincheistanna casta i ndáil le reimsí reachtaíochta agus cásdlí a bhíonn ag idirghníomhú. Baineann formhór na n-éileamh go háirithe le rochtain ar sheirbhísí poiblí, ach baineann siad arís beagnach le gach réimse den gheilleagar.

Tá aschur an Bhinse, maidir le cinntí, comhaontuithe idirghafa agus réitigh eile (a ndéanann foireann an Bhinse go leor oibre ar a bhformhór) ag méadú bliain i ndiaidh bliana. Leis sin, bhíothas in ann dul chun cinn mór a dhéanamh maidir leis an liosta feithimh do chásanna a bhaineann le stádas comhionann agus bhíothas in ann roinnt cásbhainistíochta a dhéanamh ar éilimh fostaíochta.

Tríd is tríd, chuir an Binse lena éifeachtúlacht i rith na bliana 2007 agus cuireadh tús le próiseas fadréimseach athbhreithnithe ar a chuid oibríochtaí go léir, próiseas a chuirfidh ar chuma an Bhinse, sna cúpla bliain atá amach romhainn, é féin a athchruthú i suíomh nua mar eagraíocht lúfar atá ag foghlaim. Thosaigh pleanáil bhreise maidir le dílarú eatramhach suas le haon trian

d'fhoireann an Bhinse go dtí suíomh nua i bPort Laoise, sula mbogfar ar deireadh go Cúil an tSúdaire sa bhliain 2010. Idir an dá linn, thuig an fhoireann na bacainní a bhaineann leis an gcóiríocht a theastaíonn mar gheall ar mheádú na foirne a fháil i mBaile Átha Cliath.

Táim fíorshásta leis an dul chun cinn seo, agus é déanta ag am a bhfuil láimhdeachas mór foirne ann agus baill foirne bhreise ag teacht isteach. Faoin tráth a mbeidh an foirgneamh ullamh don Bhinse i gCúil an tSúdaire, beidh breis agus 90% den fhoireann athraithe. Rinneadh infheistíocht an-láidir in oiliúint don fhoireann go léir i rith 2007 agus táthar ag leanúint leis sin sa bhliain 2008. Nuair a bheidh an fhoireann go léir ann, ciallóidh sé ardú 40% i líon na n-oifigeach comhionannais agus ardú 100% san fhoireann riaracháin.

Tá réimse freagrachta fíor speisialaithe ag an mBinse Comhionannais, a éilíonn go mbeadh leibhéal ard eolais ag an bhfoireann go léir ar an reachtaíocht a bhíonn i réim. Déileálann foireann tacaíochta ghinearálta le ceisteanna casta ón bpobal maidir le dlínse agus nósanna imeachta. Éascaíonn idirghabhálaithe comhionannais go leor comhaontuithe a athraíonn saol daoine ó bhonn agus ar ndóigh tá obair na nOifigeach Comhionannais go mór i mbéal an phobail le blianta fada. Ba mhaith liom buíochas a ghlacadh leo go léir as a gcuid oibre seirbhísí an bhinse a dhéanamh chomh inrochtaine agus is féidir agus as a chinntiú go ndéanann cinní an Bhinse an dlí a shoiléiriú agus go gcuidíonn siad le creat cásdlí comhionannais láidir agus buan a bhunú. Is mór an difear atá déanta ag a n-ardleibhéal spreagthachta agus ag a ndíograis le hobair agus le saol an Bhinse.

Melanie Pine
An Stiúrthóir

FORBAIRTÍ IN 2007

Leathnú

Tá an Binse á leathnú go mór. Tá gealltanús tugtha ag an Roinn Dlí agus Cirt, Comhionannais agus Athchóirithe Dlí 10 bpost eile a leithdháileadh ar an mBinse ag an leibhéal riaracháin agus 4 phost mar oifigeach comhionannais, faoi réir ag athbhreithniú tar éis dhá bhliain. Leis sin, beidh ardú 40% ag leibhéal na n-oifigeach comhionannais i gceist don Bhinse agus ardú beagnach 100% san acmhainn riaracháin agus cuirfidh sé sin ar chumas an Bhinse déileáil lena chásualach ar shlí i bhfad níos éifeachtúla agus i bhfad níos éifeachtaí. Déanfar nósanna imeachta a athbhreithniú i bhfianaise na hacmhainne nua. Bhí roinnt de na poist sin bunaithe faoi dheireadh na bliana 2007.

Dílárú

Beidh láimhdeachas suas le 80% i bhfoireann an Bhinse i gceist le dílárú freisin. Tá tús curtha cheana féin leis an bpróiseas earcaíochta chun foireann a athsholáthar. Faoi dheireadh na bliana 2007, bhí an fhoireann bhainistíochta do Chúil an tSúdaire beagnach iomlán agus bhí líon mór Oifigeach Comhionannais nua ann. Sa bhliain 2006, fuair an Binse ceadú ón Roinn Dlí agus Cirt, Comhionannais agus Athchóirithe Dlí d'fhorluí 6 mhí chun cothromaíocht a bhaint amach idir na hOifigigh Chomhionannais le taithí a d'fhág an Binse agus daoine nua a ceapadh ina nOifigigh Chomhionannais, chun oiliúint speisialaithe ríthábhachtach a éascú. Ag deireadh na bliana 2007, bhí 4 Oifigeach Comhionannais breise sannta don Bhinse faoin socrú sin. Beidh sé mar phríomhthosaíocht againn, lenár n-acmhainn leathnaithe chomh maith le hathlonnú, ár saineolas agus taithí speisialaithe a choinneáil, a fhorbairt agus cur leis.

Fuarthas ceadú i bprionsabal in 2006 do scéim phíolótach cuid dár seirbhís idirghabhála a chur amach ar conradh, chun déileáil, i bpáirt, le bearnaí i scileanna bheadh ann ar ndóigh le linn an díláraithe agus chun cuidiú le buaicphointí éilimh ar idirghabháil a dhéanamh rianúil. Táthar fós ag fanacht ar an gceadú deiridh. Á chur i gcás go dtabharfar ceadú, beidh sé mar phríomhthasc amach anseo a chinntiú go ndéanfar é seo ar shlí a fhreastalaíonn do riachtanais na bpáirtithe agus a thabharfaidh luach ar airgead.

Forbairtí Dlí

Tá forálacha do leasuithe ar na hAchtanna um Stádas Comhionann 2000 go 2004 sa Bhille um an Dlí Sibhialta (Forálacha Ilghnéitheacha) 2006 chun éifeacht a thabhairt d'éilimintí faoi leith den Treoir maidir le hEarraí agus Seirbhísí Inscne (2004/113/CE). Bhí an Bille sin os comhair an Oireachtais in 2007.

An Fhoireann

Bhí 37 ball foirne ag obair sa Bhinse comhionannais faoin 31 Nollaig 2007 (féach Aguisín 4 le haghaidh mionsonraí). D'fhág 5 bhall foirne an oifig i rith na bliana: Anne-Marie Lynch, (Oifigeach Comhionannais), Aileen O'Gorman (Bainisteoir Oifigeach), Frances Flynn (Cúntóir Taighde Dlí), Paul Johnson agus Kristian Reiman (Oifigigh Tacaíochtaí Rúnaíochta). Gabhaimid buíochas go léir as a ndianobair agus guímid gach rath orthu lena ngairmeacha beatha amach anseo.

D'fháiltíomar roimh Fiona Lafferty (Ceann an Aonaid Acmhainní Corparáide), Stephen Bonnländer, Tara Coogan, Hugh Lonsdale, Orlaith Mannion, Enda Murphy, Gary O'Doherty and Conor Stokes (Oifigigh Chomhionannais), Frank Bergin (Bainisteoir Oifige), Deirdre Gallagher (Cúntóir Taighde Dlí), Roisin Cahill, Amanda Cullen, Noelle Doody, Siobhan Lynch agus Finbarr O'Mahoney (Oifigigh Tacaíochta Rúnaíochta) agus Avril Graham (Oifigeach Tacaíochta Acmhainní Corparáide) in 2007.

SEIRBHÍSÍ AN BHINSE IN 2007

Tabhair ar aird: *Tabhair ar aird: Tá an t-eolas staitistiúil go léir atá i dtáblaí agus i gcairteanna sa chaibidil seo tugtha mar chásanna grúpáilte seachas éilimh aonair. Dá bhrí sin, d'fhéadfadh níos mó ná gearánaí amháin a bheith i gceist le gach cás.*

Forléargas

Tacaíonn ról príomha an Bhinse Comhionannais agus é ina chomlacht reachtúil, neamhspleách agus gar-bhreithiúnach chun idirdhealú a leigheas le tiomantas an Rialtais seasamh leis an teidlíocht atá ag gach duine go gcaithfí leo go comhionann. Déanann an Binse cinntí nó idirghabháil maidir le héilimh i ndáil le hidirdhealú neamhdhleathach. I gcásanna ar léir gur tharla idirdhealú, tugtar sásamh a bhíonn mar chúiteamh don idirdhealú agus lena mbaineann tionchar bactha. Tá an Binse ag leanúint lena fheidhm a chomhlíonadh ar dhá bhealach trí sheirbhísí imscrúdaithe agus idirghabhála éifeachtacha a chur ar fáil.

Cásanna a Tarchuireadh agus Torthaí

Bhí an líon cásanna tarchurtha is airde riamh ag an mBinse sa bhliain 2007. Bhí an uimhir 25 níos airde ná an buaicphointe roimhe sin sa bhliain 2002. Tríd is tríd, rinne breis agus 1,000 duine gearán leis an mBinse in 2007. D'ardaigh líon na n-éileamh a tarchuireadh chuig an mBinse in 2007 36% i gcomparáid le 2006. Bhí an t-ardú sách suntasach maidir le Comhionannas Fostaíochta.

Cásanna a tarchuireadh chuig an mBinse in 2006 agus 2007

Cásanna a Tarchuireadh	2006	2007	
Na hAchtanna um Chomhionannas Fostaíochta	448	659	+47%
- Comhaontuithe Comhchoiteanna	0	1	+100%
Achtanna na bPinsean	14	7	-50%
Na hAchtanna um Stádas Comhionann	166	185	+11%
Líon foriomlán na gcásanna a tarchuireadh	628	852	+36%

Torthaí

D'éisigh an binse 171 Cinneadh in 2007 (ardú 9% ar 2006) agus reitíodh 65 cás le linn Idirghabhála. Rinne an Binse líon iomlán de 607 cás a imscrúdú, a idirghabháil nó a thabhairt chun críche ar shlí eile in 2007 (539 in 2006), arb ionann é agus ardú 13% i gcomparáid le 2006. Foilsíodh na Cinntí go léir agus bhí na cúiseanna ar thángthas ar na cinntí sin san áireamh.

Torthaí 2006 agus 2007

Torthaí	2006	2007	
Na hAchtanna um Chomhionannas Fostaíochta	336	351	+5%
- Cinntí	63	77	+22%
- Comhaontuithe Idirghafa	65	45	+31%
- Cásanna a tugadh chun críche ar shlí eile	208	229	+10%
Achtanna na bPinsean	3	8	+167%
- Cinntí	0	0	0%
- Comhaontuithe Idirghafa	0	0	0%
- Cásanna a tugadh chun críche ar shlí eile	3	8	+167%
Na hAchtanna um Stádas Comhionann	200	248	+24%
- Cinntí	94	94	0%
- Comhaontuithe Idirghafa	19	20	+5%
- Cásanna a tugadh chun críche ar shlí eile	87	134	+54%
Torthaí foriomlána	539	607	+13%

AN tAONAD COMHIONANNAIS FOSTAÍOCHTA

Ról

Lean Oifigigh Chomhionannais san Aonad Comhionannais Fostaíochta ar aghaidh le próiseas imscrúdaithe saineolach agus éifeachtach a sheachadadh ar aon dul le croíluachanna an Bhinse – neamhchlaontacht, gairmiúlacht, inrochtaineacht agus tráthúlacht.

Ba é an dúshlán leanúnach a bhí ag an Aonad in 2007 cinntiú go ndéanfaí croíluachanna an Bhinse a chothabháil i gcoinne ualach oibre a bhí ag dul i méid.

An fhoireann mar a bhí an 31 Nollaig 2007

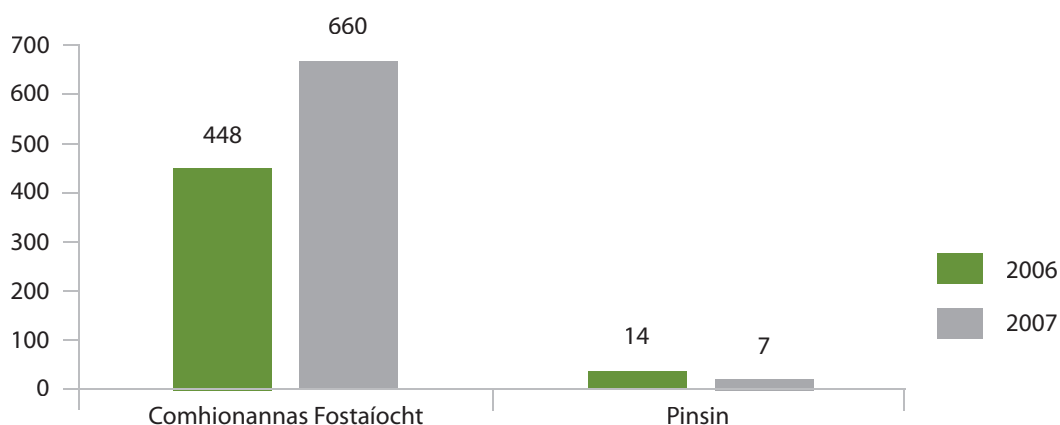
Ceann an Aonaid	Deirdre Sweeney
Oifigigh Chomhionannais	Stephen Bonnländer, Gerardine Coyle, Vivian Jackson, Hugh Lonsdale, Orlaith Mannion, Mary Rogerson, Conor Stokes, Raymund Walsh

Forléargas ar Ghníomhaíochtaí an Aonaid in 2007

Cásanna a Tarchuireadh

Bhí ardú 44% i gcásanna fostaíochta a tarchuireadh chuig an mBinse ar 2006. Rinneadh líon iomlán de 667 eileamh (a chlúdaigh 814 gearánaí) a tharchur in 2007. Rinneadh seacht gcinn (7) díobh sin a tharchur faoi Achtanna na bPinsean.

Cásanna a Tarchuireadh chuig an mBinse (Comhionannas Fostaíochta agus Pinsin) 2006 agus 2007



Forais

In 2007, ba é Cine fós an foras is minice a luadh in éilimh i ndáil le Comhionannas Fostaíochta. Ba é an t-ardú 106% i líon na n-éileamh a bhain le cine agus an t-ardú 59% i líon na n-éileamh a bhain le míchumas ba suntasaí. Ní bhaineann inscne anois ach le 12% d'éilimh.

Na Forais ar Tarchuireadh cásanna chuig an mBinse fúthu (Comhionannas Fostaíochta agus Pinsin) 2006 agus 2007

Briseadh Síos de Réir Fhorais	2006	2007	
Aois	50	43	-14%
Míchumas	56	89	+59%
Stádas Teaghlaigh	4	10	+150%
Inscne	75	79	+5%
Stádas Pósta	2	1	-100%
Cine	149	307	+106%
Creideamh	3	5	+67%
Gnéaschlaonadh	7	4	-43%
A bheith ar dhuine den Lucht Síúil	1	3	+200%
Ilfhorais*	98	113	+15%
Níor Liostaíodh Aon Fhorais	17	13	-24%
Iomlán	462	667	+44%

*I gcás go ndéantar éileamh faoi níos mó ná foras amháin, ní chuirtear san áireamh é i ngach ceann de na forais ar a bhfuil an t-éileamh bunaithe ach sa chatagóir "Ilfhorais" amháin. Tá briseadh síos iomlán de na cásanna a tarchuireadh lena n-áirítear cinn a tarchuireadh ar Ilfhorais in Aguisín 5.

Torthaí

D'ainneoin an éilimh a bhí níos mó, bhí tiomantas na nOifigeach Comhionannais imscrúduithe saineolacha agus éifeachtacha a chur ar fáil fós láidir. Tá fianaise maidir le dianobair agus tiomantas na nOifigeach Comhionannais san Aonad chomh maith le forluí 4 nua a ceapadh ina nOifigigh Chomhionannais le sonrú san ardú 21% ar chásanna a tugadh chun críche sa bhliain 2007. Bhí ardú 22% ar chinntí maidir le héilimh go ndearnadh idirdhealú i bhfostaíocht in 2007. Eisíodh 77 cinneadh (lenar clúdaíodh 131 gearán aonair) i gcomparáid le 63 cinneadh a eisíodh in 2006. Chinn Oifigigh Chomhionannais i bhfabhar an ghearánaí i dtuairim is 42% de chinntí.

I dteannta na dtorthaí sin, tugadh 229 cás eile chun críche in 2007 (208 in 2006). Cinneadh iad a bheith neamhinghlactha, réitíodh iad nó rinneadh iad a tharraingt siar le linn an imscrúdaithe nó rinneadh a dhíbheadh mar nár leanadh leo. Bhí obair mhór i gceist le go leor de na cásanna sin d'fhoireann an Bhinse ag gach leibhéal sular tugadh chun críche iad.

Tugadh ocht gcás pinsean chun críche in 2007 mar gur cinneadh go raibh siad neamhinghlactha nó mar gur tarraingíodh siar iad le linn an imscrúdaithe. Níor eisíodh aon chinntí in 2007 faoi Achtanna na bPinsean.

Réitíodh 45 cás Comhionannais Fostaíochta tríd an tSeirbhís Idirghabhála in 2007.

Torthaí (Comhionannas Fostaíochta agus Pinsin) do 2006 agus 2007

Cásanna Comhionannais Fostaíochta agus Pinsean	2006	2007	
Na Cinntí a Eisíodh	63	77	+22%
- I bhfabhar an Ghearánaí	28	32	+14%
- I bhfabhar an fhreagróra	31	43	+39%
- Réamhchinntí	2	1	-100%
- Breith Mhóraitmh	1	0	-100%
- Gan Dlíinse	0	1	+100%
Comhaontuithe idirghabhála	65	45	-31%
Torthaí eile	208	229	+10%
- Neamhinghlactha	16	20	+25%
- Amuigh as am	6	6	0%
- Dífe	23	12	-48%
- Tarraingthe siar	117	171	+46%
- Níor leanadh leo	14	3	-79%
- Tugtha chun críche in idirghabháil	29	17	-41%
- Tugtha chun críche ar shlí eile	3	0	-300%
lomlán	336	351	+5%

Deonuithe agus Treoracha

Deonaíodh méideanna arb é €461,816 a n-iomlán (gan pá comhionann agus riaráistí pá srl. san áireamh) mar chúiteamh i gcásanna ar cinneadh gur tharla idirdhealú. B'ionann an méid a deonaíodh ar an meán agus €14,431 i gcomparáid le €10,113 in 2006. Ba é €125,000 an méid ba mhó a deonaíodh. Rinneadh deonuithe i ndáil le pá comhionann i 4 chás.

Is féidir suas le pá dhá bhliain, nó pá comhionann agus riaráistí a dheonú ar dhuine atá fostaithe ag an bhfreagróir, nuair is cuí. Is €12,697 é an méid is mó is féidir a dheonú ar dhuine nach fostaí de chuid freagróra é.

I roinnt cásanna d'úsáid Oifigigh Chomhionannais a gcuid cumhachtaí chun gníomh a threorú a chuideodh le hidirdhealú amach anseo a chosc. Áiríodh iad seo a leanas i measc na n-orduithe:

- gur chóir don fhreagróir Cód Cleachtas maidir le Ciapadh a fhorbairt (arna mhúnlú ar an Ordú fán Acht um Chomhionannas Fostaíochta, 1998 (Cód Cleachtas) (Ciapadh) 2002 (I.R. Uimh. 78 de 2002) i ndáil leis na naoi bhforas idirdhealaithe go léir a chlúdaítear sna hAchtanna um Chomhionannas Fostaíochta, 1998-2004. Ba chóir an Cód a chur i bhfeidhm laistigh de 3 mhí ó dháta an chinnidh agus ba chóir cóip den Chód a thabhairt don fhoireann reatha agus do bhaill foirne nua nuair a thosaíonn siad agus ba chóir cóip den Chód a bheith ar taispeáint in áiteanna suntasacha in áitreabh an fhreagróra. Ba chóir go gcuirfí oiliúint chuí ar an bhfoireann go léir a bhfuil feidhmeanna bainistíochta acu maidir leis an bpolasaí agus ba chóir an oiliúint sin a choinneáil faoi athbhreithniú ag féachaint d'fhorbairtí /do dhea-chleachtas sa réimse.
- go gcloíonn na freagróirí le nósanna imeachta roghnúcháin ar bhonn dea-chleachtas maidir le gach ardú céime sa todhchaí, lena n-áirítear córas marcála foirmiúil a chur i bhfeidhm a chomhaontófar sula mbreithneofar CVanna, lena ndéanfar iarrthóirí a rangú trí thagairt don chóras marcála sin agus na nótaí go léir a choinneáil
- go mbeidh an gearánaí i dteideal sásamh a lorg faoi na hAchtanna um Dhífhostú Éagórach 1977 go 1993, de réir fhorálacha Alt 101 (2) (b) agus Alt 101 (5) de na hAchtanna um Chomhionannas Fostaíochta 1998-2007
- go gcinnteoidh an freagróir go bhfaighidh gach ball foirne oiliúint i gcúrsaí míchumais agus béim á cur ar cheanglais na hAchtanna um Chomhionannas Fostaíochta, 1998-2007
- go gcuirfidh an freagróir nósanna imeachta cearta i bhfeidhm maidir le fógra/rabhadh a thabhairt d'fhostaithe i ndáil le cionta a bhféadfaí duine a dhífhostú dá mbarr, nósanna imeachta chun líomhaintí a imscrúdú agus chun ceart freagartha a thabhairt d'fhostaithe sa chás go ndéanfaí fostaí a dhífhostú

AN tAONAD UM STÁDAS COMHIONANN

Ról

Lean na hOifigigh Chomhionannais san Aonad um Stádas Comhionann ar aghaidh ag oibriú ar bhonn croíluchanna na neamhchlaontachta, na gairmiúlachta, na hinrochtaineachta agus na tráthúlachta an Bhinse Comhionannais. Is é aidhm an Aonaid um stádas Comhionann fós cinntí éifeachtacha, soiléire agus iontaofa ó thaobh an dlí a eisiúint ar shlí chomh tráthúil agus is féidir agus i gcomhréir le prionsabail an cheartais aiceanta.

An fhoireann mar a bhí an 31 Nollaig 2007

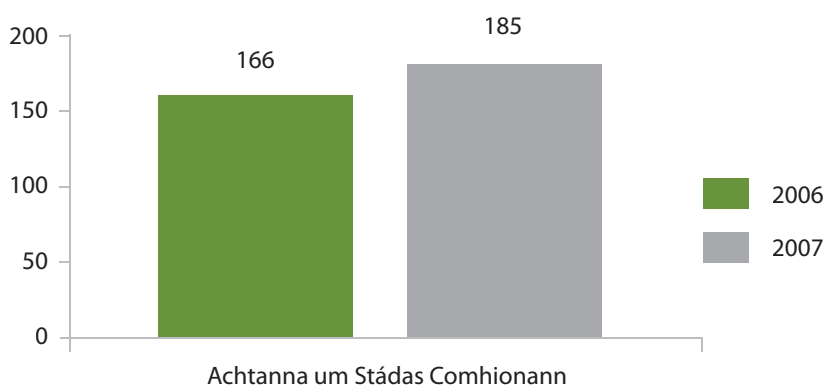
Ceann an Aonaid	John Hurley
Oifigigh Chomhionannais	Tara Coogan, Marian Duffy*, Dolores Kavanagh, Enda Murphy, Brian O'Byrne, Mary O'Callaghan*, Gary O'Doherty, Bernadette Treanor. *tá na hoifigigh seo ar saoire speisialta chun staidéir in Ostaí an Rí a chur i gcrích

Forléargas ar Ghníomhaíochtaí an Aonaid in 2007

Cásanna a Tarchuireadh

D'ardaigh líon na gcásanna um stádas comhionann a tarchuireadh chuig an mBinse 11% ar 2006. Tarchuireadh líon iomlán de 185 éileamh (a chlúdaigh 260 gearánaí) in 2007.

Cásanna a tarchuireadh chuig an mBinse (Stádas Comhionann) in 2006 agus 2007



Forais

Mar a tharla 2006, lean míchumas de bheith mar an foras is minice a luadh le héileamh i ndail le Stádas Comhionann in 2007 agus líon na n-éileamh míchumais ardaithe 65%.

Forais chun cás a tharchur (Stádas Comhionann) 2006 agus 2007

Briseadh Síos de Réir Fhorais	2006	2007	
Aois	9	8	-11%
Míchumas	52	86	+65%
Stádas Teaghlaigh	0	4	+400%
Inscne	7	6	-14%
Stádas Pósta	7	1	-86%
Cine	15	10	-33%
Creideamh	1	1	0%
Gnéaschlaonadh	2	0	-200%
A bheith ar dhuine den Lucht Siúil	18	17	-6%
Ilfhorais	49	47	-4%
Níor Liostaíodh Aon Fhorais	6	5	-16%
Iomlán	166	185	+11%

*I gcás go ndéantar éileamh faoi níos mó ná foras amháin, ní chuirtear san áireamh é i ngach ceann de na forais ar a bhfuil an t-éileamh bunaithe ach sa chatagóir "Ilfhorais" amháin. Tá briseadh síos iomlán de na cásanna a tarchuireadh lena n-áirítear cinn a tarchuireadh ar Ilfhorais in Aguisín 5.

Torthaí

Eisíodh líon iomlán de 94 cinneadh sa bhliain 2007 (a chlúdaigh 244 gearán aonair). Chinn Oifigigh Chomhionannais i bhfabhar gearánaí amháin i dtuairim is 30% de chinntí. I dteannta na dtorthaí sin, tugadh 134 cás eile chun críche in 2007 nuair a cinneadh go raibh siad neamhinghlactha, nuair a réitíodh iad nó nuair a tarraingíodh siar iad nó gur díbheadh iad mar nár leanadh leo nó ar chúiseanna eile. Bhí obair mhór i gceist le go leor de na cásanna sin d'fhoireann an Bhinse ag gach leibhéal sular tugadh chun críche iad.

Réitíodh 20 cás um Stádas Comhionann tríd an tSeirbhís Idirghabhála in 2007.

Torthaí (Stádas Comhionann) do 2006 agus 2007

Cásanna um Stádas Comhionann	2006	2007	
Na Cinntí a Eisíodh	94	94	0%
- I bhfabhar an Ghearánaí	31	27	-13%
- I bhfabhar an fhreagróra	59	64	+8%
- Réamhchinntí	2	3	+50%
- Breith Mhóraithe	2	0	-100%
- Gan Dlí	0	0	0%
Comhaontuithe idirghabhála	19	20	+5%
Torthaí eile	87	134	+54%
- Neamhinghlactha	17	16	-6%
- Amuigh as am	13	6	-54%
- Dífe	1	0	-100%
- Tarraingthe siar	28	61	+118%
- Níor leanadh leo	21	38	+81%
- Tugtha chun críche ar shlí eile	1	3	+200%
- Tugtha chun críche in idirghabháil	6	10	+67%
Iomlán	200	248	+24%

Deonuithe agus Treoracha

Is é €6,348 an méid is mó is féidir a dheonú faoi na hAchtanna um Stádas Comhionann. In 2007, deonaíodh €74,300 ina iomlán mar chúiteamh i gcásanna ar cinneadh gur tharla idirdhealú (i gcomparáid le €60,550 in 2006). Ba é €2,751 an méid a deonaíodh ar an meán, a bhí níos airde ná 2006 (€1,1887). Ba €12,750 an méid ba mhó a deonaíodh i gcomparáid le €6,000 in 2006.

I roinnt cásanna d'úsáid Oifigigh Chomhionannais a gcuid cumhachtaí chun gníomh a threorú a chuideodh le hidirdhealú amach anseo a chosc. Áirítear na nithe seo a leanas ar na sainghníomhartha a d'ordaigh Oifigigh Chomhionannais i ndáil le freagróir(i):

- na critéir chun glacadh le leanaí ar a chláir scoile sacair a scrúdú agus é mar aidhm freastal do leanaí gan aird ar a gcumas ná a míchumas ar raon iomlán na gclár ar féidir sin a dhéanamh ar chostas ainmniúil
- córas a chur i bhfeidhm lenar féidir cóiríocht réasúnta a thabhairt do chliaint atá faoi mhíchumas i dtéarmaí Alt 4 den Acht um Stádas Comhionann 2000
- litir phearsanta a sheoladh chuig an ngearánaí ag admháil go bhféadfadh gur diúltaíodh é a ligean isteach sa stór go mícheart an dáta atá i gceist agus leithscéal a ghabháil leis as aon dochar a bhrath sé ar an lá
- leanúint láithreach, ar choinníollacha áirithe, le síneadh oiriúnach a thógáil ar áit chónaithe an ghearánaí nó athchóiríocht a thabhairt don ghearánaí agus a theaghlach, tá an tógáil nó an athchóiríocht le bheith críochnaithe laistigh de dhá mhí dhéag den chinneadh
- socruithe a dhéanamh íocaíochtaí Leasa Forlíontacha a íoc leis an ngearánaí, le héifeacht láithreach, ag a Ionad Sláinte áitiúil agus ag aon ionad eile ar féidir an liúntas a íoc le daoine nach daoine den Lucht Siúil iad agus, le héifeacht láithreach, socrú a dhéanamh Liúntas Leasa Forlíontach a íoc le daoine den Lucht Siúil ag gach ionad ar féidir íocaíocht a dhéanamh le daoine nach daoine den Lucht Siúil iad
- córais a bhunú laistigh de ghnó lena chinntiú go bhfaighidh custaiméirí faoi mhíchumas aird agus seirbhís go pras nuair a fhreastalóidh siad ar a áitreabh
- socrú a dhéanamh oiliúint chuimsitheach a chur ar gach ball foirne i dtéarmaí na nAchtanna um Stádas Comhionann, 2000-2004 agus a gcur i bhfeidhm, agus tús le cur leis an oiliúint sin laistigh de thrí mhí ó dáta an chinnidh

AN tSEIRBHÍS IDIRGHABHÁLA

Ról

Foráiltear san Acht um Chomhionannas Fostaíochta 1998 (Alt 78) do sheirbhís idirghabhála a bhunú le foireann Oifigeach Idirghabhála Comhionannais. Tá cur chuige idirghabhála comhchosúil le fáil san Acht um Stádas Comhionann 200 (Alt 24) agus in Acht na bPinsean 2004. Earcaítear Oifigigh Idirghabhála Comhionannais ó chéim na nOifigeach Comhionannais agus cuirtear oiliúint speisialaithe orthu i gcomhair idirghabhála as a bhfaightear creidiúnú gairmiúil.

Tá an tSeirbhís Idirghabhála fós ag oibriú faoina Cód Eitice arna leagan amach ina Prionsabail Idirghabhála.

An fhoireann mar a bhí an 31 Nollaig 2007

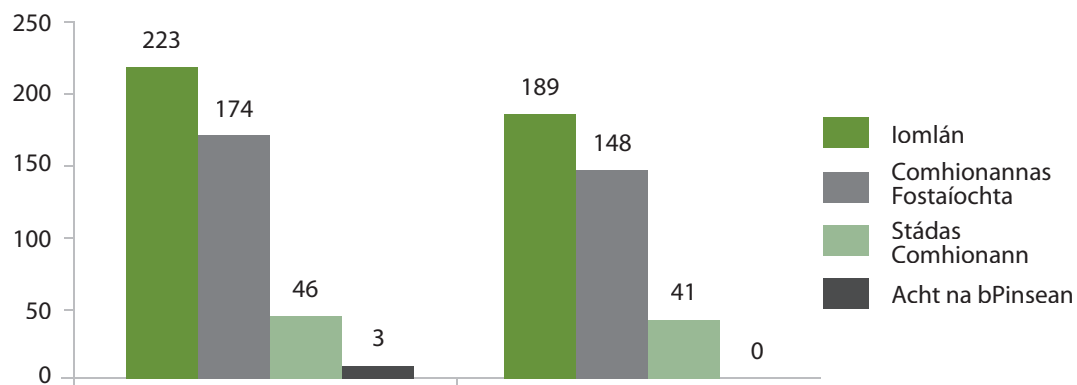
Ceann Gníomhach na Seirbhíse	Brian O'Byrne
Oifigigh Idirghabhála (bíonn na hoifigigh seo ag feidhmiú mar Oifigigh Chomhionannais chomh maith)	Gerardine Coyle, Marian Duffy*, Vivian Jackson, Dolores Kavanagh, Mary O'Callaghan*, Mary Rogerson, Bernadette Treanor, Raymund Walsh. *tá na hoifigigh seo ar saoire speisialta chun staidéir in Ostaí an Rí a chur i gcrích

Earcaíodh seachtar Oifigeach/Idirghabhálaithe Comhionannais le linn 2007 chun leanúnachas na Seirbhíse Idirghabhála a choinneáil thar thréimhse dhílárú beartaithe an Bhinse go Cúil an tSúdaire atá le tarlú. Earcaíodh oiliúnaithe ag deireadh na bliana 2007 de bhun próisis tairisceana chun tús a chur le hOiliúint Chreidiúnaithe MII Cuid 1 a chur ar na baill nua sin go luath in 2008. Chomh maith leis sin, lorg agus fuair an Binse ceadú i bprionsabal do chlár pólótach cuid den tseirbhís idirghabhála a chur amach ar conradh, chun déileáil le bearnaí scileanna a tharlódh ar ndóigh le linn an dláráithe agus chun cuidiú le buaicphointí éilimh ar idirghabháil a dhéanamh rianúil. Táthar fós ag fanacht ar an gceadú deiridh.

FORLÉARGAS AR GHNÍOMHAÍOCHTAÍ NA SEIRBHÍSE IN 2007

Cásanna a Tarchuireadh

Mar thoradh ar chinneadh an Bhinse cásanna a “scagadh” lena chinneadh an bhféadfaí iad a réiteach trí idirghabháil sula sannfaí d’idirghabhálaí iad, tháinig laghdú 15% ar líon na gcásanna a tarchuireadh i gcomhair idirghabhála in 2007. Tarchuireadh 189 cás (27% de na cásanna go léir a tarchuireadh chuig an mBhinse) i gcomparáid le 223 cás sa bhliain 2006 (36% de na cásanna a tarchuireadh chuig an mBhinse). Cuidíonn an nós imeachta scagtha le cur le feabhas i rátaí réitigh.



Forais chun cás a tharchur (Idirghabháil) 2006 agus 2007

Briseadh Síos de Reir Fhorais	2006	2007	
Aois	27	13	-52%
Míchumas	37	55	+49%
Stádas Teaghlaigh	1	4	-300%
Inscne	48	34	-29%
Stádas Pósta	1	0	-100%
Cine	57	36	-37%
Creideamh	1	2	+100%
Gnéaschlaonadh	5	4	-20%
A bheith ar dhuine den Lucht Siúil	15	11	-27%
Ilfhorais	31	30	-3%
Iomlán	223	189	-15%

Torthaí

Reáchtáil an tSeirbhís Idirghabhála 109 seisiún idirghabhála in 2007 agus réitíodh 60% díobh i gcomparáid le 56% sa bhliain 2006. Tríd is tríd, ní dhearnadh 74% de na 136 cás a tarchuireadh chuig an tSeirbhís Idirghabhála in 2007 a imscrúdú mar gur thángthas ar chomhaontú, réitigh na páirtithe an cás eatarthu féin nó chinn an gearánaí gan leanúint leis an ngearán a thuilleadh tar éis idirghabhála.

Torthaí (Idirghabháil) do 2006 agus 2007

Cásanna Idirghabhála	2006	2007	
Cásanna a Réitíodh			
- Na hAchtanna um Chomhionannas Fostaíochta	65	45	-31%
- Achtanna na bPinsean	0	0	0%
- Na hAchtanna um Stádas Comhionann	19	20	+5%
Cásanna nár réitíodh			
- Na hAchtanna um Chomhionannas Fostaíochta	56	38	-32%
- Achtanna na bPinsean	0	1	+100%
- Na hAchtanna um Stádas Comhionann	10	5	-50%
Cásanna a tugadh chun críche			
- Na hAchtanna um Chomhionannas Fostaíochta	29	17	-41%
- Achtanna na bPinsean	0	0	0%
- Na hAchtanna um Stádas Comhionann	6	10	+67%
Iomlán	185	136	-26%

Tá anailís mhionsonraithe ar oibríochtaí na Seirbhíse Idirghabhála ar fáil in Athbhreithniú Idirghabhála an Bhinse 2007, ina léirítear torthaí samplacha chomh maith.

SEIRBHÍSÍ TACAÍOCHTA IN 2007

Tá Seirbhísí Tacaíochta an Bhinse comhdhéanta de thrí aonad:

- An tAonad Rúnaíochta
- An tAonad Dí
- An tAonad Acmhainní Corparáide

AN TAONAD RÚNAÍOCHTA

Ról

Cuireann Rúnaíocht an Bhinse Comhionannais cur chuige aontaithe ar fáil chun aghaidh a thabhairt ar réamhcheisteanna a bhaineann le héilimh faoin reachtaíocht chomhionannais. San áireamh leis sin, tá réamhsheiceálacha inghlacthachta a dhéanamh agus idirghabháil a thairiscint i dtús báire do na páirtithe a bhfuil baint acu le héileamh. Cuireann an Rúnaíocht seirbhísí tacaíochta leictreonacha ar fáil freisin atá riachtanach chun obair na hoifige a éascú agus déantar cothabháil agus forbairt intí ar an láithreán gréasáin. Freagraíonn siad ceisteanna ginearálta ó pháirtithe a mbíonn baint acu le héilimh a bhíonn os comhair an Bhinse agus tugann siad tacaíocht riaracháin don Stiúrthóir, do Cheannasaithe an Aonaid Comhionannais Fostaíochta, an Aonaid um Stádas Comhionann agus Aonad Idirghabhála an Bhinse agus d'Oifigigh Chomhionannais.

An fhoireann mar a bhí an 31 Nollaig 2007

Ceann an Aonaid	Sile Larkin
Bainisteoir an Aonaid Rúnaíochta	Alan McDonnell
Oifigeach Feidhmiúcháin	Brian Farrell
Oifigigh Tacaíochta Rúnaíochta	Roisin Cahill, Amanda Cullen, Noelle Doody, Susan Fetton, Siobhan Lynch, Finbarr O'Mahoney

FORLÉARGAS AR GHNÍOMHAÍOCHTAÍ AN AONAID IN 2007

An Láithreán Gréasáin

Táthar fós ag úsáid láithreán gréasáin an Bhinse www.equalitytribunal.ie mar acmhainn thábhachtach d'fhoireann an Bhinse mar aon le custaiméirí an Bhinse. Tá eolas maidir le comhionannas fostaíochta, stádas comhionann agus nósanna imeachta idirghabhála le fáil ar an láithreán gréasáin. Tá bileoga eolais an Bhinse ar fáil i mBéarla, i nGaeilge, i bPolainnis, i Rúisis agus i bhFraincis. Tá cinntí uile an Bhinse sa bhunachar sonraí cinntí agus leis an bhfeidhm chuardaigh is féidir le húsáideoirí cinntí sonracha a aithint faoi raon critéar cuardaigh. Tá reachtaíocht Chomhionannais agus Plean an Bhinse do Dhílárú a Chur i bhFeidhm ar fáil ar an láithreán gréasáin chomh maith.

Déanann an Binse cinntí a uaslódáil ar an láithreán gréasáin an tríú Luan de gach mí tar éis an chinneadh a éisiúint chuig na páirtithe.

Táthar fós ag úsáid láithreán gréasáin an Bhinse mar uirlis seachadta seirbhísí thábhachtach agus tá níos mó airde tugtha d'iniúchadh inrochtaineachta faoi threoir líne an Údaráis Náisiúnta Míchumais d'fhonn iniúchtaí inrochtaineachta forleathana a dhéanamh sa bhliain 2008.

Tugadh cuairt ar an láithreán gréasáin 92,866 uair ar an meán in aghaidh na míosa in 2007.

Ríomhsheirbhísí an Rialtais

Tá an Binse i mbun cainte leis an gcuideachta forbartha Gréasáin d'fhonn córas a fhorbairt lena bhféadfar gearáin a tharchur ar líne faoi na hAchtanna um Chomhionannas Fostaíochta, na hAchtanna um Stádas Comhionann 2000 go 2007 agus faoi Achtanna na bPinsean 1990-2007.

ICT

In 2007, rinne an Binse obair tosaigh maidir le cur i bhfeidhm chun a struchtúr Teicneolaíochta Faisnéise a ascnamh chuig an Timpeallacht Citrix. Tacaíonn Rannán IT na Roinne Dlí agus Cirt, Comhionannais agus Athchóirithe Dlí leis an mBinse san obair sin.

Is córas frontar comhtháite é Citrix lena ndéanfar feidhmeanna agus feidhmchláir IT uile an Bhinse a lárú. Leis sin, cuirfear ar chumas seirbhísí líonra a sheachadadh go réidh chuig ár n-oifigí díláraithe. Beidh sé mar éascaíocht chomh maith ag na baill foirne a dteastóidh saoráidí ríomhoibre uathu nó a dteastóidh uathu rochtain a fháil ar shonraí an Bhinse le linn Éisteachtaí timpeall na tíre.

Tá an obair fhorbartha tosaigh déanta ag an mBinse freisin maidir lena chóras teileachumarsáide a uasghrádú.

AN tAONAD DLÍ

Ról

Is é ról an Aonaid Dlí acmhainní agus tacaíocht a thabhairt do cháilíocht dlí obair an Bhinse Chomhionannais, ag cur le cuspóirí an Bhinse maidir le himscrúdú saineolach, éifeachtach na gcásanna arna gcur ar aghaidh chuig an mBhinse agus corpus cásdlí comhionannais cothrom, cóir agus inbhuanaithe a fhorbairt. Tá an tAonad freagrach as comhairle dlí a chur ar an Stiúrthóir agus ar Oifigigh Chomhionannais maidir lena bhfeidhmeanna a chur i gcrích agus as anailís a dhéanamh ar shaincheisteanna dlí tríd is tríd ag eascairt as obair an Bhinse. Cuireann an tAonad oiliúint dlí leanúnach ar fáil agus éascaíonn sé í, agus tá sé freagrach as cur le leabharlann thagartha an Bhinse atá ag fás agus í a chothabháil.

An fhoireann mar a bhí an 31 Nollaig 2007

Comhairleoir Dlí	Sile Larkin
Cúntóir Taighde Dlí	Deirdre Gallagher
Oifigeach Tacaíochta an Aonaid Dlí	Deirdre McCormack

FORLÉARGAS AR GHNÍOMHAÍOCHTAÍ AN AONAIID IN 2007

Oiliúint

Lean an tAonad ar aghaidh lena chlár oiliúna dúshlánach, atá leagtha amach chun roinnt saineolais a éascú agus chun cur le scileanna gar-bhreithiúnacha, anailíseacha agus dlíthiúla na nOifigeach Comhionannais chomh maith le dianchlár oiliúna d'Oifigigh Chomhionannais nuacheaptha a chur i bhfeidhm. I rith 2007 thionóil an tAonad ceardlanna inmheánacha agus réachtáil sé clár cainteoirí seachtracha ar ghnéithe éagsúla den dlí comhionannais agus ar réimsí gaolmhara de dhlí na hÉireann agus de dhlí an Chomhphobail Eorpaigh.

Leabharlann

Cuireann leabharlann an Bhinse ionad cuimsitheach tagartha agus acmhainní ar fáil d'oifigigh chomhionannais, maidir le dlí comhionannais na hÉireann agus le dlí comhionannais an Chomhphobail Eorpaigh araon, agus maidir le forbairtí i ndlí an chomhionannais feadh réimse níos leithne. Cuireadh tuilleadh leis an leabharlann in 2007. Bíonn teacht ar an toirt anois ag Oifigigh Chomhionannais ar chásdlí comhionannais nua, de réir mar a fhorbraíonn sé, trí bhunachar sonraí dlí ar-líne lena gcuirtear saoráidí lántéacs agus cuardaigh ar fáil feadh chásdlí na hÉireann, an Chomhphobail Eorpaigh, na Ríochta Aontaithe, na Stát Aontaithe agus an Chomhlathais.

AN tAONAD ACMHAINNÍ CORPARÁIDE

Ról

Is é ról an Aonaid Acmhainní Corparáide seirbhísí tacaíochta líne tosaigh a sholáthar don Stiúrthóir agus do na haonaid eile san oifig lena chur ar a gcumas a gcuid feidhmeanna a chur i crích go héifeachtúlach agus go héifeachtach. Tugann an tAonad aire d'oibríochtaí na hoifige ó lá go lá i ndáil le cóiríocht, airgeadas, seirbhísí do chustaiméirí agus soláthar earraí agus seirbhísí. Tá sé freagrach as an timpeallacht fhisiciúil laistigh den Bhinse agus as sláinte agus sábháilteacht agus as cúrsaí rochtana. Tá sé freagrach freisin as oiliúint neamh-dhlíthiúil a eagrú agus as bileoga, foirmeacha agus cáipéisí corparáide eile a ullmhú agus a fhoilsiú.

An fhoireann mar a bhí an 31 Nollaig 2007

Ceann an Aonaid	Fiona Lafferty
Bainisteoir Acmhainní Corparáideacha	Brenda Ward
Bainisteoir Oifige	Folúntas
Bainisteoir Oifige Gníomhach	Frank Bergin
Oifigigh Tacaíochta Acmhainní Corparáide	Avril Greham, Noel Kelly
Oifigigh Seirbhísí	John Fitzgerald, Joe Pettigrew

FORLÉARGAS AR GHNÍOMHAÍOCHTAÍ AN AONAIID IN 2007

Airgeadas

Is é an Stáitchiste tríd an Roinn Dlí agus Cirt, Comhionannais agus Athchóirithe Dlí a mhaoiníonn an Binse Comhionannais. Thabhaigh an Binse caiteachas iomlán de €2.4m i rith na bliana 2007. Bhí sin comhdhéanta de €1.9m i ndáil le pá agus €0.52m i ndáil le neamhphá. Déantar monatóireacht mhíosúil go leanúnach ar an gcaiteachas agus athbhreithniú gach mí ag Coiste Buiséid inmheánach, faoi chathaoirleacht an Stiúrthóra. *Chun mionsonraí a fháil, féach Aquisín 2: Tuarascáil Airgeadais do 2007.*

Seirbhís do Chustaiméirí

Leagann Cairt Seirbhísí do Chustaiméirí de chuid an Bhinse ár dtiomantas maidir le seirbhís ardcháilíochta do chustaiméirí a sholáthar, bunaithe ar phrionsabail seirbhíse ardcháilíochta do chustaiméirí don tSeirbhís Phoiblí agus ar Chód Caighdeán agus lompair na Státseirbhíse arna fhorhnuiniú ag an Rialtas. Measann an Binse gur chomhlánaigh sé na tiomantais a tugadh fúthu sa Chairt Seirbhísí do Chustaiméirí. Déanfar an Chairt a athbhreithniú agus a thabhairt cothrom le dáta in 2008 agus ceapfar Plean Gnímh Seirbhíse do Chustaiméirí.

Lean an Binse ar aghaidh lena nósanna imeachta gearán a fheidhmiú. Fuair Bainisteoir Seirbhísí do Chustaiméirí de chuid an Bhinse gearán amháin, faoin nós imeachta gearán foirmiúil, in 2007.

Dílárú

Ó d'fhógair an Rialtas an clár díláraithe tá dul chun cinn as cuimse déanta ag an mBinse Chomhionannais maidir leis an aistriú go dtí Cúil an tSúdaire a bhaint amach.

Is suíomh den scoth in aice stáisiún traenach Chúil an tSúdaire é an láthair atá aimsithe ag Oifig na nOibreacha Poiblí (OPW) don Bhinse agus don trí ghníomhaireacht eile a bheidh ag aistriú go dtí Cúil an tSúdaire. Ag deireadh 2007, tá 12 ball foirne a bheidh ag aistriú go dtí Cúil an tSúdaire lonnaithe laistigh den Bhinse agus tá 30 ball foirne breise a bheidh ag aistriú go dtí Cúil an tSúdaire fós le sannadh ar an mBinse. D'fhonn éascaíocht a dhéanamh do chomhaltaí foirne gur mian leo aistriú níos luaithe ná mar a cheadaíonn an dáta críochnaithe tógála buan atá teilgte, tá an Binse ag cur an rogha maidir le haistriú chuig oifig eatramhach lonnaithe i bPort Laoise chun cinn. Tá sé tugtha le fios ag an OPW go bhfuiltear ag déanamh dul chun cinn ar obair i ndáil leis an rogha sin agus faoi réir cóiríocht oiriúnach a bheith ar fáil, go bhféadfadh thart ar 14 baill foirne a dhílárú go dtí Port Laoise i rith 2008.

Tugadh Plean Feidhmithe Díláraithe an Bhinse cothrom le dáta in 2007 agus rinneadh athchóiriú breise air chun athbhreithnithe ar phróisis ghnó agus deiseanna maidir le hathrú gnó a aithníodh ag ceantair díláraithe i rith 2008, a chur san áireamh.

Oiliúint agus Forbairt

Is é atá mar aidhm ag an Aonad tacú le hobair an Bhinse Chomhionannais trí thimpeallacht oibre ardcháilíochta a chur ar fáil don fhoireann agus tríd an bhfeidhmíocht agus forbairt foirne is fearr a bhaint amach. Tacaíonn an Binse le daoine aonair ar mian leo cáilíochtaí acadúla breise cuí a bhaint amach. I rith 2007,

- tugadh saoire speisialta do bheirt chomhaltaí foirne chun staidéir a chríochnú sna Kings Inns, as a lean cáilíocht mar abhcóide
- bhain ball foirne amháin MA i dTeicneolaíochtaí na Meán Digiteacha amach in Institiúid Teicneolaíochta Bhaile Átha Cliath
- bhain ball foirne amháin BA (le Gradam) i nDaonnachtaí amach in Ollscoil Chathair Bhaile Átha Cliath

I dteannta a bheith ag gabháil do cháilíochtaí foirmiúla nó iad a bhaint amach, ghabh Oifigigh Chomhionannais an Bhinse do chlár leanúnach oiliúna in-tí chomh maith. Cuireadh oiliúint in-tí, choimisiúnaithe nó speisialaithe ar an bhfoireann le linn 2007 in Oiliúint Gar-Bhreithiúnach, in Oiliúint Idirghabhála, i Scileanna Bainistithe agus i bhForbairt Phearsanta.

Chuaigh an fhoireann tacaíochta faoi oiliúint fad-réimseach lena chur ar a gcumas seirbhís riaracháin ghairmiúil a sheachadadh do chustaiméirí inmheánacha agus seachtracha. Maidir leis an réimse fiosrúchán a ndéileálann an Binse leo gach lá tá sé riachtanach go mbíonn eolas ginearálta maith ag an bhfoireann tacaíochta ar oibriú na nAchtanna agus go mbíonn siad feasach faoi na saincheistanna agus na hábhair imní a chumhdaíonn an réimse comhionannais, chomh maith le cur chuige gairmiúil a bheith acu ar riarachán, cumarsáid agus cúrsaí seirbhíse custaiméirí. Mar sin, tá réamhchúrsa ar an reachtaíocht, Scileanna Seirbhíse do Chustaiméirí, Scileanna Cumarsáide chomh maith leis na Scileanna TF riachtanacha agus Oiliúint i Sláinte, Sábháilteacht agus Feasacht san áireamh san oiliúint don fhoireann tacaíochta.

Lean an tAonad Foghlama Corparáide de chuid na Roinne Dlí agus Cirt, Comhionannais agus Athchóirithe Dlí ar aghaidh ag soláthar tacaíochta d'fhoireann an Bhinse in oiliúint agus forbairt cineálach Státseirbhíse a aithníodh trí PMDS a fheidhmiú.

€77,000 ar an iomlán a caitheadh ar an oiliúint dhíreach amháin in 2007, méid is ionann agus 4% de chostais phárolla dhírigh. Níl caiteachas ár máthairRoinne nó oiliúint cineálacha Státseirbhíse san áireamh ansin.

Sláinte agus Sábháilteacht

Tá freagrachtaí ar an Oifig ina cáil mar phríomhthionónta na nOifigí i Sráid Chluain Meala. Áirítear orthu sin sábháilteacht struchtúrtha an fhoirgnimh ar fad. Rinneadh athbhreithniú ar Ráiteas Sábháilteachta an Bhinse in 2007 agus tugadh cothrom le dáta go cuimsitheach é chun críocha sláinte, sábháilteacht agus leas fhoireann an Bhinse a chosaint fad a bhíonn siad ag an obair. Leagadh an Ráiteas amach lena chinntiú go gcomhlíontar an tAcht um Shábháilteacht, Sláinte agus Leas ag an Obair, 2005.

D'fhonn feidhmiú éifeachtach na dtiomantas atá leagtha amach sa ráiteas sábháilteachta a chinntiú agus d'fhonn leas na foirne agus na gcustaiméirí a chosaint, ullmhaíodh Lámhleabhar Nósanna Imeachta Dóiteáin in 2007 chomh maith agus ceapadh maoirseoirí dóiteáin agus garchabhrach ó chomhaltáí foirne an Bhinse. Is é cuspóir an lámhleabhair sin modh simplí a chur ar fáil chun gnéithe agus bealaí éalaithe na hoifige a liostú agus a mhíniú. Cuireadh tús le hoiliúint do mhaoirseoirí dóiteáin agus le hoiliúint garchabhrach in 2007 chomh maith.

Inrochtaineacht

Lean an Binse ar aghaidh ag cinntiú an inrochtaineacht is fearr a bheith ar fáil in áitreabh na hoifige ag Sráid Chluain Meala, Baile Átha Cliath 2. Tá seirbhísí an Bhinse saor in aisce. Ní gá go mbeadh uiríoll dlí ag páirtithe i ndíospóid chun leas a bhaint as na seirbhísí.

Cuireann an Binse oifigí nua-aimseartha agus inrochtana agus seomraí cruinnithe ar fáil a chomhlíonann caighdeáin ghairme sláinte, agus sábháilteachta. Tá raon teicneolaíochta ag an mBinse Comhionannais a chuireann le inrochtaineacht agus a chabhraíonn le seirbhís agus saoráidí ardcháilíochta a chur ar fáil dár bhfoireann agus dár gcustaiméirí, lena n-áirítear cáipéisí i mBraille agus i bhormáid fuaime, rochtain iomlán do chathaoireacha rotha agus ateangaireacht sa teanga chomharthaíochta agus i dteangacha eile nuair a lorgáitear iad, agus seomraí éisteachta ina bhfuil aerchóiriúchán agus trealamh “deaftech” do chliaint a bhfuil lagú éisteachta ag gabháil dóibh. Maidir le custaiméirí lasmuigh de Bhaile Átha Cliath, chuaigh Oifigigh Chomhionannais agus Idirghabhálaithe go dtí éisteachtaí i roinnt mhaith láithreacha éagsúla i rith 2007 chun freastal ar ghearánaithe agus ar fhreagróirí.

Cothabhálann an Binse láithreán gréasáin inrochtaine, eolasach agus nuashonraithe ag www.equalitytribunal.ie.

Foilseacháin

D’fhoilsigh an Binse na cáipéisí seo a leanas i rith 2007 –

- Tuarascáil Bhliantúil 2006
- Athbhreithniú Dlí 2006 (i bhformáid CD)
- Athbhreithniú Idirghabhála 2006
- Bileoga faisnéise athbhreithnithe

Oibríonn an Binse go dlúth leis an nGníomhaireacht Náisiúnta Litearthachta do Dhaoine Fásta (NALA) maidir lena cuid bileog a athchóiriú agus le cúnamh uathu tá an Marc Cáilíochta NALA Plain English bainte amach ag na bileoga. Tá cóipeanna de na bileoga eolais ar fáil i gcló mór, i mBraille nó ar téip fuaime ach iad a iarraidh, agus tá siad ar fáil i nGaeilge, i bhFraincís, i Rúisis, i bPolainnis agus i Sínis ag an ionad fáiltithe, tríd an bpost agus ar an láithreán gréasáin.

Tá liosta iomlán de na foilseacháin atá ar fáil in Aguisín 1 agus is féidir gach foilseachán a íoslódáil ó láithreán gréasáin an Bhinse ag www.equalitytribunal.ie.

Cumarsáid

De réir mar a éilíonn an reachtaíocht, d'fhoilsigh an Binse gach Cinneadh a eisíodh i rith na bliana, sna meáin agus ar an láithreán gréasáin araon. I mí an Mheithimh 2007 d'fhoilsigh an Binse a Thuarascáil Bhliantúil do 2006, chomh maith lena Athbhreithniú Dlí ar chinntí a eisíodh in 2006 agus a Athbhreithniú Idirghabhála ar chomhaontuithe a síníodh in 2006, gach ceann acu atá le feiceáil agus le híoslódáil ón láithreán gréasáin.

Rinne an Stiúrthóir, an Comhairleoir Dlí agus Ceannasaithe an Aonaid cur i láthair ar fheidhmeanna agus cásdlí an Bhinse do roinnt eagraíochtaí laistigh d'Éirinn agus d'fhóiraim idirnáisiúnta i rith 2007 ar chásdlí agus feidhmeanna an Bhinse. Áiríodh orthu sin:

Fóram Comhchomhairleach

Tá an Fóram Comhchomhairleach comhdhéanta d'ionadaithe ó phríomhghrúpaí custaiméirí an Bhinse. Is é an príomhfhócas atá aige meicníocht a thabhairt do pháirtithe leasmhara inar féidir lena dtuairimí cur go réalaíoch leis na nósanna imeachta chun scrúdú a dhéanamh ar éilimh maidir le hidirdhealú neamhdhleathach. Soláthraíonn sé fóram chun saincheistanna maidir le inrochtaineacht agus seirbhís do chustaiméirí a phlé agus a réiteach. Tugann sé aiseolas luachmhar chomh maith ar oibríochtaí an Bhinse agus ar éifeachteacht ár seirbhís do chustaiméirí. Coimeádtar feidhmeanna gar-bhreithiúnacha na hoifige amach as an bplé, de bharr ról an Stiúrthóra agus na nOifigeach Comhionannais atá neamhspleách go reachtúil. Chas an Fóram le chéile ar ócáid amháin i rith 2007 agus phléigh siad raon leathan ábhar lenar áiríodh athchóiriú ar an Ráiteas Straitéise, tionchar an díláraithe agus an t-ualach oibre ag an mBinse. Tá liosta de na heagraíochtaí a ndearnadh ionadaíocht orthu ag deireadh 2007 ar an bhFóram Comhchomhairleach tugtha in Aguisín 3.

I dTreo 2016

Lean an Binse ar aghaidh in 2007 de bheith ag féachaint don chomhaontú comhpháirtíochta sóisialta náisiúnta I dTreo 2016 agus de ghníomh beartaithe faoin gcomhaontú sin a chur i bhfeidhm.

Córas Bainistíochta agus Forbartha Feidhmíochta (PMDS)

Cuireadh oiliúint ar an bhfoireann faoin gCóras Bainistíochta agus Forbartha Feidhmíochta (PMDS) nua agus faoina chomhtháthú le próisis acmhainní daonna eile, in 2007. Comhlánadh foirmeacha maidir le próifíl rólanna agus rinneadh athbhreithnithe ar fheidhmíocht don fhoireann go léir mar chuid de PMDS i rith na bliana. Cuireann an córas soiléireacht maidir le rólanna agus freagrachtaí na foirne agus maidir le bainistiú feidhmíochta ar fáil ar shlí struchtúrtha. Cuireann sé fóram luachmhar ar fáil chomh maith chun riachtanais oiliúna a aithint.

AGUISÍN 1: FOILSEACHÁIN AR FÁIL ÓN mBINSE

Tuarascálacha

- Tuarascálacha Bliantúla do 1999 go dtí 2007
- Athbhreithnithe Dlíthiúla do 2001 go dtí 2007
- Athbhreithnithe Idirghabhála do 2002 go dtí 2006
- Ráitis Straitéise do 2001-2003, 2004-2006, 2008-2010

Bileoga

Ginearálta

- GEN1 – Ról an Bhinse Chomhionannais
- GEN2 - Cairt Seirbhíse do Chustaiméirí
- GEN3 – Seirbhísí Idirghabhála

Comhionannas Fostaíochta

- EE1 – Na hAchtanna um Chomhionannas Fostaíochta 1998 agus 2004 – Gearán a Dhéanamh
- EE2 – Na hAchtanna um Chomhionannas Fostaíochta 1998 agus 2004 – Gearán a Fhreagairt

Stádas Comhionann

- ES1 – Na hAchtanna um Stádas Comhionann 2000 go dtí 2004 – Gearán a Dhéanamh
- ES2 – Na hAchtanna um Stádas Comhionann 2000 go dtí 2004 – Gearán a Fhreagairt (*Tá na bileoga ar fáil i gcló mór, i mBraille nó ar téip fuaimne ach iad a iarraidh, agus tá siad ar fáil i nGaeilge, i bhFraincís, i Rúisis, i bPolainnis agus i Sínis ag an ionad fáiltithe agus ar an láithreán gréasáin*).

Treoracha

- Na hAchtanna um Chomhionannas Fostaíochta 1998 agus 2004 – Treoir do Nósanna Imeachta maidir le hImscrúdú agus Idirghabháil Éileamh
- Na hAchtanna um Stádas Comhionann 2000 go dtí 2004 – Treoir do Nósanna Imeachta maidir le hImscrúdú agus Idirghabháil Éileamh
- Seirbhísí Idirghabhála – Treoir do Nósanna Imeachta

Foirmeacha

Comhionannas Fostaíochta

- EE.1 – Gearán Idirhealaithe i ndáil le Fostaíocht a chur ar aghaidh
- EE.2 – Foirm Reachtúil Iarrata chuig Fostóir le haghaidh Faisnéise faoi Idirhealú a d'fhéadfadh a bheith ag tarlú
- EE.3 – Foirm Reachtúil Freagartha ó Fhostóir ar Iarraidh Faisnéise

Stádas Comhionann

- ES.1 – Fógra chuig Soláthróir Seirbhíse faoi Idirhealú a d'fhéadfadh a bheith ag tarlú
- ES.2 – Freagra ar Fhógra
- ES.3 - Gearán chuig an mBinse Comhionannais faoi idirdhealú ó thaobh earraí, seirbhísí nó saoráidí a sholáthar

Idirghabháil

- ET 6 – Comhaontú Idirghabhála

Pinsin

- PA.1 – Gearán a chur ar aghaidh faoi Achtanna na bPinsean

(Tá foirmeacha ar fáil i nGaeilge chomh maith)

AGUISÍN 2: TUARASCÁIL AIRGEADAIS DO 2007

	€
Pá:	1.88m
Neamhphá:	0.52m
IOMLÁN	2.40m

Ba iad seo a leanas na príomhréimsí caiteachais neamhphá:

	€
Cóiríocht	121,000
Cumarsáid & Bolscaireacht	13,000
Dearadh & Priontáil	23,000
Teicneolaíocht Faisnéise	108,000
Dlíthiúil	22,000
Leabharlann	20,000
Trealamh Oifige	6,000
Teileafón/Postas	31,000
Oiliúint	77,000

D'éascair caiteachas €56,000 as caiteachas ar chásobair lenar ghá éisteachtaí a réachtáil in áiteanna lasmuigh de Cheanncheathrú an Bhinse Comhionannais.

Úsáid Fuinnimh agus Athchúrsáil

Déanann an Binse Comhionannais bearta le laghdú ar úsáid fuinnimh de réir an Chinneadh Rialtais S180/20/10/0269 maidir le hÚsáid Stuama Fuinnimh i bhFoirgnimh na hEarnála Poiblí, lena n-áirítear glacadh le Dreasacht Laghdaithe Éilimh Geimhridh BSL agus socruithe athchúrsála i leith páipéir agus gloine agus dúch-chaiséidí phrintéara agus innill chóipeála.

Íoc Pras

Lean an Binse Comhionannais de chloí leis an Acht um Íoc Pras Cuntas, 1997 arna leasú ag Rialacháin na gComhphobal Eorpach (Íoc Mall i gcás Bearta Tráchtála) 2002. Tharraing íocaíochtaí táillí úis de €92.90 ina n-iomláine.

AGUISÍN 3: FÓRAM COMHAIRLEACH AG DEIREADH 2007

Comhairle Bharra na hÉireann

An Ghníomhaireacht um Fhostóirí Seirbhíse Sláinte

Dhlí-Chumann Corpraithe na hÉireann

Cónaidhm Ghnó agus Fostóirí na hÉireann

Comhar Ceardchumann na hÉireann

Cónaidhm Árachais na hÉireann

Gluaiseacht Lucht Siúil na hÉireann

An Coiste Comhairleach Náisiúnta ar Chiníochas agus Idirchultúrachas

An Chónaidhm Náisiúnta Leispiach agus Gay

Comhairle Náisiúnta na mBan in Éirinn

People with Disabilities in Ireland Ltd

AGUISÍN 4: CAIRT EAGRAÍOCHTA AN BHINSE CHOMHIONANNAIS

(amhail an 31 Nollaig 2007)

An Stiúrthóir		
Melanie Pine		
Comhionannas Fostaíochta	Stádas Comhionann	Idirghabháil
Deirdre Sweeney <i>Ceannasaí Chomhionannas Fostaíochta</i>	John Hurley <i>Ceannasaí Stádas Comhionann</i>	
Stephen Bonnländer Gerardine Coyle Vivian Jackson Hugh Lonsdale Gary O'Doherty Mary Rogerson Conor Stokes Raymund Walsh <i>Oifigigh Chomhionannais</i>	Tara Coogan Marian Duffy Dolores Kavanagh Orlaith Mannion Enda Murphy Brian O'Byrne Mary O'Callaghan Bernadette Treanor <i>Oifigigh Chomhionannais</i>	Brian O'Byrne * Acting Head of Mediation Gerardine Coyle* Marian Duffy* Vivian Jackson* Dolores Kavanagh* Mary O'Callaghan * Mary Rogerson* Bernadette Treanor* Raymund Walsh * <i>*Oifigigh Idirghabhála</i>
Bainistiú Acmhainní		
Bainistiú Dlíthiúil	Acmhainní Corparáideacha	Rúnaíocht
Sile Larkin <i>Comhairleoir Dlí</i>	Fiona Lafferty <i>Ceann Acmhainní Corparáideacha</i>	Sile Larkin* <i>Ceannasaí Rúnaíochta</i>
	Brenda Ward <i>Bainisteoir Acmhainní Corparáideacha</i>	
	Folúntas <i>Bainisteoir Oifige</i>	Alan McDonnell <i>Leas-Chláráitheoir/Bainisteoir an Aonaid Rúnaíochta</i>
Deirdre Gallagher <i>Cúntóir Taighde Dlí</i>	Frank Bergin <i>Bainisteoir Oifige Gníomhach</i>	Brian Farrell <i>Oifigeach Feidhmiúcháin</i>

<p>Deirdre McCormack <i>Oifigeach Tacaíochta</i> <i>An tAonad Dlí</i></p>	<p>Noel Kelly Avril Graham <i>Oifigigh Tacaíochta Acmhainní</i> <i>Corparáide</i></p>	<p>Roisin Cahill Amanda Cullen Noelle Doody Susan Fetton Siobhan Lynch Finbar O'Mahoney <i>Oifigigh Tacaíochta Rúnaíochta</i></p>
	<p>John Fitzgerald Joe Pettigrew <i>Oifigigh Seirbhísí</i></p>	

* Tá an dara ról ag na baill foirne seo. Tá ochtar Oifigeach Comhionannais ag feidhmiú mar Oifigigh Idirghabhála Comhionannais (idirghabhálaithe) chomh maith agus tá an Comhairleoir Dlí ag feidhmiú chomh maith mar Cheannasaí Rúnaíochta.

AGUISÍN 5: BRISEADH SÍOS AR NA CÁSANNA A CUIREADH AR AGHAIDH CHUIG AN mBINSE COMHIONANNAIS DE RÉIR FORAIS 2006-2007

Cásanna a Cuireadh Ar Aghaidh chuig an mBinse Comhionannais						
Forais	Achtanna um Stádas Comhionann 2000- 2004		Achtanna Fostaíochta 1998-2007		Achtanna na bPinsean 1990-2004	
	2006	2007	2006	2007	2006	2007
Aois	9	8	47	41	3	2
Aois, míchumas		3	7	3		
Aois, míchumas, stádas pósta		1				
Aois, míchumas, stádas teaghlaigh, inscne, stádas pósta			1			
Aois, míchumas, stádas teaghlaigh, stádas pósta, a bheith mar dhuine den Lucht Siúil				1		
Aois, míchumas, cine				1		
Aois, stádas teaghlaigh	1					
Aois, stádas teaghlaigh, inscne				2		
Aois, stádas teaghlaigh, inscne, stádas pósta			1	1		
Aois, stádas teaghlaigh, inscne, cine				1		
Aois, stádas teaghlaigh, cine			1			
Aois, inscne			5	7	1	
Aois, inscne, stádas pósta			2			
Aois, inscne, stádas pósta, cine			1			
Aois, inscne, stádas pósta, gnéaschlaonadh				1		
Aois, inscne, cine	1					
Aois, stádas teaghlaigh, cine				1		
Aois, cine			1	2		

Cásanna a Cuireadh Ar Aghaidh chuig an mBinse Comhionannais						
Forais	Achtanna um Stádas Comhionann 2000- 2004		Achtanna Fostaíochta 1998-2007		Achtanna na bPinsean 1990-2004	
	2006	2007	2006	2007	2006	2007
Aois, cine, creideamh			2	1		
Míchumas	52	86	54	89	2	
Míchumas, stádas teaghlaigh	2	3	3			
Míchumas, stádas teaghlaigh, inscne			1			
Míchumas, stádas teaghlaigh, inscne, stádas pósta		1		3		
Míchumas, stádas teaghlaigh, stádas pósta			1	2		
Míchumas, inscne	2		1	4		
Míchumas, inscne, stádas pósta	3	3		1		
Míchumas, inscne, creideamh						
Míchumas, inscne, stádas pósta, cine		3				
Míchumas, inscne, stádas pósta, creideamh			1			
Míchumas, inscne, cine				3		
Míchumas, a bheith mar dhuine den Lucht Siúil	4	12				
Míchumas, cine	4		4	10		
Míchumas, creideamh		2		1		
Míchumas, gnéaschlaonadh				2		
Stádas Teaghlaigh		4	4	10		
Stádas teaghlaigh, inscne	2		13	11		
Stádas teaghlaigh, inscne, stádas pósta		5	5	8		

Cásanna a Cuireadh Ar Aghaidh chuig an mBinse Comhionannais						
Forais	Achtanna um Stádas Comhionann 2000- 2004		Achtanna Fostaíochta 1998-2007		Achtanna na bPinsean 1990-2004	
	2006	2007	2006	2007	2006	2007
Stádas teaghlaigh, inscne, stádas pósta, cine				7		
Stádas teaghlaigh, inscne, stádas pósta, a bheith mar dhuine den Lucht Siúil	1					
Stádas teaghlaigh, inscne, stádas pósta, gnéaschlaonadh				2		
Stádas teaghlaigh, inscne, cine			1			
Stádas teaghlaigh, inscne, stádas pósta		2		1		
Stádas teaghlaigh, stádas pósta, cine				1		
Stádas teaghlaigh, stádas pósta, creideamh			1		1	
Stádas teaghlaigh, cine		7	2			
Stádas teaghlaigh, creideamh				1		
Inscne	7	6	74	78	1	1
Inscne, stádas pósta	2	1	4	5		
Inscne, stádas pósta, cine			1	3		
Inscne, stádas pósta, gnéaschlaonadh			1			
Inscne, cine			19	23		
Inscne, cine, creideamh			1			
Inscne, gnéaschlaonadh			5	1		
Níor luadh forais	6	5	16	11	1	2
Stádas Pósta	7	1			1	1
Stádas pósta, a bheith mar dhuine den Lucht Siúil	1					
Stádas pósta, cine		1				
A bheith mar dhuine den Lucht Siúil	18	17		1		

Cásanna a Cuireadh Ar Aghaidh chuig an mBinse Comhionannais						
Forais	Achtanna um Stádas Comhionann 2000- 2004		Achtanna Fostaíochta 1998-2007		Achtanna na bPinsean 1990-2004	
	2006	2007	2006	2007	2006	2007
A bheith mar dhuine den Lucht Siúil, cine	25	3		1		
Cine	15	10	146	306	3	1
Cine, creideamh	1		5	2		
A bheith mar dhuine den Lucht Siúil, cine			1			
Creideamh	1	1	2	5	1	
Gnéaschlaonadh	2		7	4		
Iomlán	166	185	448	660	14	7



THE EQUALITY TRIBUNAL
AN BINSE COMHIONANNAIS

3 Clonmel Street, Dublin 2

Phone: +353 1 4774100

LoCall: 1890 344424

Fax: +353 1 4774141

Email: info@equalitytribunal.ie
www.equalitytribunal.ie