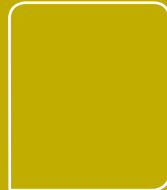


# tackling worklessness

a series of 'how to' guides  
for councils and their partners

improving employment  
outcomes for ethnic minorities



## 1. why do you need to act?

Ethnic minority groups are disadvantaged in the UK labour market. For example, ethnic minorities have an employment rate of 61 per cent, around 13 per cent lower than that of the population as a whole. Also, when in employment, ethnic minorities do less well in terms of pay and progression.

The overall employment rates for ethnic minorities differ significantly between groups. For example Indians and Chinese have relatively high earnings and employment rates while Pakistanis and Bangladeshis have some of the worst outcomes, with most black and mixed groups appearing in the middle, although Caribbean women have a relatively high employment rate. Low activity rates amongst Pakistani and Bangladeshi women is a major factor in these low employment rates. Some of the differences in employment rates and earnings between ethnic minority groups and the population as a whole can be explained by differences such as educational attainment, but a

proportion is due to discrimination on the part of employers ([www.dwp.gov.uk/ndpb/nep-pdfs/BusCommissionReport.pdf](http://www.dwp.gov.uk/ndpb/nep-pdfs/BusCommissionReport.pdf)).

**three further points are worth noting.**

**an understanding of the local situation is essential**

The figures presented above represent the national picture, but the geographical concentration of ethnic minority groups in some of the toughest labour markets emphasises the need for good local data.

**focusing on increasing ethnic minority employment will help you reach child poverty targets**

Over half of Pakistani, Bangladeshi and black African children are growing up in poverty. Helping parents into jobs will effectively influence poverty rates.

**the recession is likely to disproportionately impact on ethnic minorities**

The labour market disadvantages experienced by ethnic minority groups increased during previous recessions. This implies that the

position of some groups might also deteriorate considerably in the current downturn (see further information for more details).

## 2. what can councils do?

The government's approach to ethnic minority employment is co-ordinated by the Ethnic Minority Employment Task Force which drives forward policy under three headings: building employability; connecting people to work; and promoting equal opportunities in the workplace. These are used below to look at what councils can do.

### **(i) building employability – increasing education and skills**

Councils need to ensure that there are high expectations of ethnic minority pupils and that pupils, parents, schools, the community sector and other partner organisations are fully engaged in improving educational attainment. A range of case studies is available from the DCSF website: ([nationalstrategies.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/search/inclusion/results/nav:46322](http://nationalstrategies.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/search/inclusion/results/nav:46322)).

Specific policy actions include:

- peer mentoring for ethnic minority pupils and students
- support for ESOL/EAL courses.

### **case study**

#### **Language 2 Work – boosting english skills in London**

The Language 2 Work programme is funded by the London Development Agency and runs in Brent, Fulham, Hammersmith and Ealing. An eight week programme of classroom-based language training is supported by employment consultants who devise individual support packages to help participants into work.

For more information contact ([angela.horan@brent.gov.uk](mailto:angela.horan@brent.gov.uk)).

[www.idea.gov.uk/idk/core/page.do?pagelId=9419107&aspect=full](http://www.idea.gov.uk/idk/core/page.do?pagelId=9419107&aspect=full)

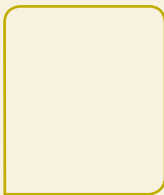
- promoting awareness of higher and further education among ethnic minority communities

### case study

#### Bradford Trident – widening participation in HE

Working in three deprived areas of Bradford, this project introduced the concept of higher education to primary school pupils through visits from students and trips to universities. Mentors, who have experience of higher education, were recruited from the local community and parents were involved in a range of activities.

Further details: [www.idea.gov.uk/idk/core/page.do?pageId=8038765&aspect=full](http://www.idea.gov.uk/idk/core/page.do?pageId=8038765&aspect=full)



- targeting and monitoring achievement and progress by ethnicity
- increasing the numbers of ethnic minority teachers and governors in schools
- increasing the awareness and training of teachers in race equality and racism issues (see the case studies at [www.ttrb.ac.uk/attachments/791bcf62-aece-427b-8036-a95f6193cf84.pdf](http://www.ttrb.ac.uk/attachments/791bcf62-aece-427b-8036-a95f6193cf84.pdf)).
- ensuring that schools are meeting their obligations under race equality legislation.

#### (ii) connecting people to work

Councils need to be proactive in promoting the employment of disadvantaged groups, particularly in a worsening economic climate.

Frequently, for disadvantaged groups, the process of successfully matching jobseeker to employer breaks down due to:

- a lack of information about suitable vacancies
- discouragement in the face of an unsuccessful search

- a lack of appropriate childcare – or not knowing how to access it
- employers being unwilling to hire people from particular postcodes, or the long-term unemployed.

Councils can help to encourage workless people back into the labour market through their own recruitment of employees (see guide 12 on public sector employment), and by making employers aware of the potential pool of available talent.

Specific policies for local authorities include:

- adopting a personalised approach to engaging with groups who are not usually heard

## case study

### Brent in 2 Work

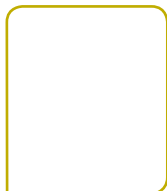
Brent in 2 Work is a multi-strand approach to bringing disadvantaged groups in Brent into the labour market. Two particular strengths are the success with which multiple agencies are involved in a partnership focused on delivering policy outcomes and the way in which a personalised and holistic service is offered to jobseekers from hard to reach groups. Of 1,000 jobs created by the scheme, 75 per cent went to individuals from an ethnic minority background. Further details: [www.brentin2work.co.uk/](http://www.brentin2work.co.uk/)

[www.idea.gov.uk/idk/core/page.do?pageId=9432692&aspect=full](http://www.idea.gov.uk/idk/core/page.do?pageId=9432692&aspect=full)



- promoting and organising job fairs for ethnic minority groups (eg [www.manchester.gov.uk/site/scripts/news\\_article.php?newsID=4354](http://www.manchester.gov.uk/site/scripts/news_article.php?newsID=4354))
- ensuring that local transport networks do not exclude certain groups from access to jobs
- providing information about jobs - and how to get help to get them - at more accessible places, to reach those not closely linked to the traditional labour market (for example, at children's centres, local housing offices and community centres).

We know that outreach-based provision works best at getting those furthest from the labour market engaged.



## case study

### POEM

The Partners' Outreach for Ethnic Minorities (POEM) began in March 2007 and was designed to support people of working age who were neither working nor claiming benefits. It was particularly targeted at non-working partners in low income families from ethnic groups, especially the Pakistani, Bangladeshi and Somali communities.

POEM is currently being delivered in six cities: Birmingham, Manchester, London, Leeds, Bradford and Leicester. An evaluation of the pilots was carried out by The Institute for Employment Studies on behalf of DWP and the interim report was published in February 2009. The report (see link) shows that the approach POEM adopted, focusing on outreach, has been beneficial for many of those involved.

[www.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd5/report\\_abstracts/rr\\_abstracts/rra\\_561.asp](http://www.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd5/report_abstracts/rr_abstracts/rra_561.asp)

Councils can extend outreach-based provision in ethnic minority communities in their areas by:

- providing ‘work tasters’ or placements to the long-term unemployed or inactive (see **Guide 12**)
- providing post-employment support to new employees (see **Guide 10**)
- taking a preventive approach to worklessness, particularly in a recession (see [www.idea.gov.uk/idk/core/page.o?pagelId=8443985&aspect=full](http://www.idea.gov.uk/idk/core/page.o?pagelId=8443985&aspect=full))
- providing affordable childcare which is appropriate for the local community
- promoting ethnic minority self-employment, especially in a recession ([www.berr.gov.uk/whatwedo/enterprise/enterprisesmes/building-enterprise/enterprising-people/Ethnic per cent20Minorities/page38527.html](http://www.berr.gov.uk/whatwedo/enterprise/enterprisesmes/building-enterprise/enterprising-people/Ethnic%20per%20cent20Minorities/page38527.html)).

### case study

#### the Croydon Enterprise programme

Enterprise is a complete package of support for local people in the London Borough of Croydon who want to start or grow their own business, develop their skills or find a new career. It provides practical one-to-one support for the complete novice through to funding, skills programmes and premises advice. The programme aims to tackle inequalities and is particularly targeted at communities which have experienced higher levels of economic and social exclusion, such as lone parents, people with disabilities and people from ethnic minorities.

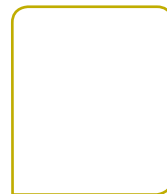
See: [www.croydonenterprise.com](http://www.croydonenterprise.com)

- ‘selling the benefits’ of employing a diverse workforce that represents the local community to employers.

### (iii) equal opportunities in the workplace

There is clear evidence that discrimination is a factor that contributes to the employment rate gap. An Equal Opportunities Commission report, for example, found that compared with their white counterparts, working black Caribbean, Pakistani and Bangladeshi women under 35 are three times more likely to be asked about plans for marriage and children at job interviews; much more likely to experience negative attitudes because of their religious dress and 50 per cent more likely to have difficulty finding a job. It is therefore critical that public sector employers lead by example through their recruitment policy and influence through their procurement strategies the employment and progression of ethnic minority groups.

In a recession, dismissals and redundancies will increase and ethnic minority workers should be aware of their rights (see [www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/yourrights/rightsindifferentsettings/workingandearning/Pages/Dismissalredundancyandretirement.aspx](http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/yourrights/rightsindifferentsettings/workingandearning/Pages/Dismissalredundancyandretirement.aspx)).



The legal framework concerning race discrimination was enhanced in 2000 with the Race Relations Amendment Act. This imposes a positive duty on public sector employers, including councils, to promote equal opportunities and eliminate unlawful discrimination. ([www.idea.gov.uk/idk/core/page.do?pagelId=5145184](http://www.idea.gov.uk/idk/core/page.do?pagelId=5145184)). The equality bill ([www.equalities.gov.uk/pdf/Equality%20Bill%20fact%20sheet.pdf](http://www.equalities.gov.uk/pdf/Equality%20Bill%20fact%20sheet.pdf)) will increase the opportunity to undertake positive action to reduce discrimination, streamline previous legislation and strengthen the requirements on public bodies to report on race equality.

The Equality Standard for Local Government ([www.idea.gov.uk/idk/aio/6531086](http://www.idea.gov.uk/idk/aio/6531086)) provides a way of working which, as well as helping councils meet their obligations under the law, puts equality at the heart of policymaking, service delivery and employment. Involving and engaging employees in this process is essential ([www.idea.gov.uk/idk/core/page.do?pagelId=7208637](http://www.idea.gov.uk/idk/core/page.do?pagelId=7208637)).

Leadership training for selected members of staff can have a big impact on self-confidence and managerial skills. ([www.idea.gov.uk/idk/core/page.do?pagelId=8226374](http://www.idea.gov.uk/idk/core/page.do?pagelId=8226374)). Providing flexible working, for example, for religious observance, as well as prayer rooms and separate facilities where possible, can make the workplace more welcoming for hard-to-reach groups. Recruitment procedures should be fair to all groups – it is easy to inadvertently discriminate ([www.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd5/rports2005-2006/rrep344.pdf](http://www.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd5/rports2005-2006/rrep344.pdf)) and attempts to advertise vacancies in the community (eg in libraries, medical centres, community media) and in ethnic minority media can broaden the diversity of applicants.

An important way in which councils can advance race equality is by using their purchasing power. Procurement policies can ensure that contractors are representative of the local area which they serve. The Office of Government Commerce has produced a guide for public bodies on how to use procurement to enhance equality ([www.ogc.gov.uk/documents/Equality\\_Brochure.pdf](http://www.ogc.gov.uk/documents/Equality_Brochure.pdf)). The case studies below illustrate two ways in which this can be done.

### case study

#### Diversity Works for London

This offers a diagnostic tool for employers to see how accurately their workforces reflect the communities in which they are based. A kitemark, in the form of a gold standard, is available for companies demonstrating proper diversity programmes and assistance is offered to companies to help them achieve the standard.

[www.diversityworksforlondon.com](http://www.diversityworksforlondon.com)



## case study

### Transport for London's supplier diversity programme

TfL aims to use procurement in a way which supports wider social objectives including the promotion of fairer employment practices and the use of a diverse supplier base. Suppliers are required to produce an equality plan and to demonstrate their compliance with appropriate equality legislation and codes of practice. Some of TfL's suppliers have championed the approach and have found that adoption has helped them win other contracts.

## four principles for successful delivery

### A. establishing an appropriate evidence base

Successful interventions to improve the employment prospects of ethnic minority groups require reliable and robust data: on the characteristics of your local population, their educational outcomes and your local labour market. The different experiences of ethnic minority groups in the labour market means that this data is disaggregated by ethnic group. The IDeA has produced a guide to measuring equality at local levels ([www.idea.gov.uk/idk/core/page.do?pagelid=8579514](http://www.idea.gov.uk/idk/core/page.do?pagelid=8579514)).

### B. working effectively in partnership with other organisations

Promoting employment amongst ethnic minority groups cuts across the remits of numerous government departments and public bodies as well as community and voluntary organisations, trade unions, employer organisations and private sector businesses. Successful delivery of policies requires a joined-up approach.

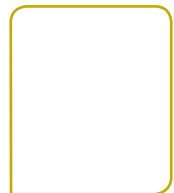
### C. engaging ethnic minority groups in the policymaking and delivery processes

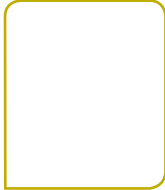
Policy works best if the groups who are expected to benefit from that policy are involved in the process. Effective two-way communication can improve trust in local authorities, increase residents' satisfaction levels and enhance community cohesion. Approaches to improving ethnic minority employment opportunities will benefit from input from the communities themselves and consultation is an important requirement of race relations legislation.

See IDeA's pages on community engagement ([www.idea.gov.uk/idk/core/page.do?pagelD=7816307#contents-3](http://www.idea.gov.uk/idk/core/page.do?pagelD=7816307#contents-3)). Faith Regen ([www.faithregenuk.org/home.html](http://www.faithregenuk.org/home.html)) and QED-UK ([www.qed-uk.org/](http://www.qed-uk.org/)) are examples of ethnic minority-led organisations with experience of implementing employment policies targeted at specific groups and helping employers to diversify their workforces.

### D. assessing the impact of policy

It is vital to monitor and evaluate the short and long-term impact of policy interventions. The CLG provides useful resources for project evaluation and appraisal ([www.communities.gov.uk/corporate/researchandstatistics/appraisalevaluation/](http://www.communities.gov.uk/corporate/researchandstatistics/appraisalevaluation/)).





## top tips

develop the capability for adding ethnicity to local economic, education and labour market statistics

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develop an evidence and monitoring base

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connect employers with ethnic minority communities to showcase vacancies and skills

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engage ethnic minority community organisations in the formulation and delivery of policy

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monitor and boost the skills and education of ethnic minority groups

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ensure compliance with the law relating to racial equality and work towards the equality standard for local government

.....

use procurement as a tool for increasing the diversity of the workforce.

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### 3. further information

- Ethnic minorities in the labour market: dynamics and diversity by Ken Clark and Stephen Drinkwater, published by Policy Press for the Joseph Rowntree Foundation, contains a detailed analysis of the labour market disadvantage faced by ethnic minority groups. The full text is available at:  
[www.jrf.org.uk/knowledge/findings/socialpolicy/2010.asp](http://www.jrf.org.uk/knowledge/findings/socialpolicy/2010.asp)
- Further information on the impact of recessions on the employment of ethnic minority groups is available at  
[www.iza.org/en/papers/summerschool/3\\_lindley.pdf](http://www.iza.org/en/papers/summerschool/3_lindley.pdf)  
This research was subsequently published in Applied Economics.
- Ethnic Minority Employment Task Force ([www.emetaskforce.gov.uk/](http://www.emetaskforce.gov.uk/))
- IDeA equality and diversity web pages  
[www.idea.gov.uk/idk/core/page.do?pagelid=5145172](http://www.idea.gov.uk/idk/core/page.do?pagelid=5145172)
- Relevant case studies from IDeA  
[www.idea.gov.uk/idk/search/system-search.do?k=Black+and+ethnic+MINORITY&x=17&y=9](http://www.idea.gov.uk/idk/search/system-search.do?k=Black+and+ethnic+MINORITY&x=17&y=9)
- The Equalities and Human Rights Commission  
[www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/Pages/default.aspx](http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/Pages/default.aspx)
- Make Equality Count pamphlet from the Office of Government Commerce  
[www.ogc.gov.uk/documents/Equality\\_Brochure.pdf](http://www.ogc.gov.uk/documents/Equality_Brochure.pdf)
- Diversity into Action: A How-To Guide for Employers. West Yorkshire Employer Coalition  
[www.wvuk.co.uk/uploads/Coalitions/9/wyec-diversity\\_toolkit.pdf](http://www.wvuk.co.uk/uploads/Coalitions/9/wyec-diversity_toolkit.pdf)
- Information about government help for businesses, including real help for businesses now, is available at  
[www.businesslink.gov.uk](http://www.businesslink.gov.uk) or by telephoning 0845 600 9 006

## 4. glossary

- **ethnic minority**

This term is used here to refer to all those from ethnic minority groups, including mixed groups, not included in the white, white Irish and white other 2001 Census classification.

- **positive action**

Not to be confused with 'positive discrimination', positive action refers to things that organisations can do to help people from disadvantaged groups compete for jobs on an equal basis with other applicants.



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INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

©IDeA – March 2009

ISBN 978-0-7488-9263-1

written by Ken Clark and Stephen Drinkwater

Text printed on 100 per cent recycled paper.  
Printed using vegetable based inks.

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L09-183

Produced by Liberata Design and Print Studio



*Local Government Association*

The Local Government Association is the national voice for more than 450 local authorities in England and Wales. The LGA group comprises the LGA and five partner organisations which work together to support, promote and improve local government.

