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PRESS RELEASE

Commission Launches Anti-Racist Workplace Week

Today (19th October) saw the launch of Anti-Racist Workplace Week. Thousands of companies across Northern Ireland have been encouraged to take part in the campaign which runs from 19-23 October.



Evelyn Collins, Chief Executive of the Equality Commission said, "We are delighted that many of Northern Ireland's leading employers, trade unions and representative organisations have registered their participation with us and are supporting the campaign's anti-racism message. This year's campaign has added poignancy. The racially motivated attacks over the summer which saw Roma and Polish people fleeing their homes was a stark reminder that racism persists in our community. It is important that people have the opportunity to voice their opposition to racism, and although Anti-Racist Workplace Week is primarily aimed at employees and employers, we hope its message will travel beyond the workplace into the local communities in which they operate."

Anti-Racist Workplace Week was launched at Translin's Central Station, Belfast. As one of Northern Ireland's largest employers Translink was very keen to get involved in the campaign. Group Chief Executive Catherine Mason said, "We are delighted to host the launch of Anti- Racist Workplace Week. As an employer we strive to ensure all forms of harassment, including racism, are removed from the workplace through our Dignity at Work Policy. We are committed to creating a harmonious working

environment where every employee and all our passengers are treated with respect and dignity."

Anti-Racist Workplace Week is an Equality Commission campaign to combat racism in the workplace in partnership with employers, trade unions and organisations across all sectors of industry and business in NI. The campaign will raise awareness of the issue of racism and encourage employers to develop strategies to achieve equality of opportunity and inclusivity in workplaces.

Numerous events and activities have been planned for the week:

- Business in the Community will be holding a business briefing with Belfast City Council on 21 October, Craigavon Borough Council will be holding a similar event on 22 October and business breakfasts have been planned in Dungannon on 20 October and Ballymena on 22 October.

- The NASUWT will be running an anti-racism workshop for its members on 21 October, the Irish Congress of Trade Unions will be hosting a range of speakers in the Newry Canal Hotel on 19 October and a roundtable meeting has been arranged with ETUC General Secretary John Monks, local trade unionists and politicians at the Europa Hotel on 22 October.

- The PSNI will be hosting an anti-racist conference on 23 October and the Chinese and Polish communities have organised the business diversity awards on the same day. Leading retailers IKEA, Tesco and Co-op will also be distributing leaflets and informing their staff about the campaign.

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