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**PRESS RELEASE**

**New Guidance for Monitoring Racial Equality**

The Equality Commission has welcomed new guidance for monitoring racial equality which has been produced by the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister. The guidance provides advice to public bodies on how and what to monitor and the Commission hopes it will lead to improved service delivery and equality for minority ethnic and migrant populations living in Northern Ireland.

The Commission was represented on a cross-departmental group which developed the guidance. It provides a standardised framework to help public bodies collect information on minorities in a consistent but flexible manner. Accurate and up to date information is vital to enable public bodies to monitor inequalities, develop evidence based policy and to plan service delivery.

The Commission already provides detailed guidance for public bodies on monitoring the groups covered by Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act. It also gives advice on monitoring in relation to employment in the 'Unified guide to promoting equal opportunities in employment'. The OFMdFM guidance will complement the Commission's advice and guides and has also been warmly welcomed by support groups for minority ethnic people and migrants.

For more information on the OFMdFM Guidance for Monitoring Racial Equality, please contact the Equality Directorate Research Branch – tel: 028 9052 8352 or email:

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