

schaftlichen Umgang mit Vertretern anderer Länder zu schaffen. Ein wesentlicher Bestandteil sollte sein, zu lernen, das „Anders-Sein“ der anderen Nationen zu akzeptieren, die Fremden so anzunehmen, wie sie sind, wie sie denken und sich verhalten. Wer in Asien aufgewachsen ist, denkt anders als ein Europäer. Damit positiv umzuge-

hen ist auch ein Ziel von internationaler Erwachsenenbildung. Also „Umdenken“ lernen in der Erwachsenenbildung und damit ein globales Denken und Verhalten zu erwerben – das sollte eine der wichtigsten Aufgaben hinsichtlich der Globalisierung und Internationalisierung der Erwachsenenbildung in Korea sein!

Die Stadt Birmingham (England) kann auf eine lange Tradition in der Gleichstellungspolitik verweisen. Im folgenden Beitrag werden die vier Arbeitsgruppen des Amtes Equalities Division vorgestellt, die sich mit den Themenfeldern Ethnizität (Race), Geschlecht (Gender), Behinderung sowie Information und Forschung beschäftigen.

Equalities Division in Birmingham

Joyce Springer

Birmingham City Council's Equalities Division was set up in January 1997 and in its establishment it combined what were formally known as a Women's Unit, Disability Unit and Race Relations Unit. This was a major change in the City Council's history of Equal Opportunities work, but the change signified Birmingham's continuing commitment to equalities in terms of providing quality services to local people and developing a work force, which is capable of responding to the needs of socially excluded and marginalised groups in the city. In addition this new focus on Social Exclusion recognises that all sections of the community can be disadvantaged and experience Social Exclusion requiring the need for a much broader and partnership based approach to tackling social problems. So the Equalities Division is built around four main teams, Race, Gender, Disability, and Information & Research.

Disability Equality Team

The Disability Equality Team is responsible for developing strategies and co-ordinating activities, which will empower disabled people and improve access to local services. It will also ensure the City Council implements the Disability Discrimination Act effectively and equitably.

Gender Equality Team

The role of the Gender Equality Team is to enable local women to access services and opportunities within the City Council. It will enable the City Council to respond positively to new legislation designed to promote cohesive families as a way of strengthening local communities.

Race Equality Team

The role of the Race Equality Team is to enable Black and Minority Ethnic communities to have better access to services and opportunities within the City Council by working strategically with the City Council departments on Race Equality issues. The Race Equality Team also works strategically with external agencies and partners. The Equalities Division has a corporate City Council brief, which means it is a central Division servicing all 13 City Council departments (upwards of £40,000 employees) as well as being responsible to issues, concerns and legislation, which impact on Birmingham as a city and which in turn may effect service delivery issues. For example the City Council is the largest provider of Housing Services for Birmingham and indeed for any Local Authority outside of London. It is also the largest provider of social welfare services, controls transportation, planning and architecture and is the largest employer in the city – this gives some idea of the huge challenges for a small centralised Equalities Division, with only 30 members of staff.

Since it began operating, obviously the Equalities Division has acted as both a leader and a responder to key areas of research and leg-

islation on the issues particularly of Race, Gender and Disability and Social Exclusion.

Most significantly the key focus for Race Equality has been in the areas of Racial Harassment and Violence, Community Consultation and Asylum and Immigration and the career progression of Black and Minority Ethnic staff.

During 1997 we commissioned Research to address the Career Development issues which effect Black and Minority Ethnic staff within the Council. Our research found that despite some positive movement, Black and Minority Ethnic staff still, to a large extent, occupy the less well paid positions within the council and are very poorly represented at managerial level. As a result a high-level action-planning group has been established to consider how to address the key barriers here.

Much of the lead for our work on Race Equality has stemmed from the fourth report of the Policy Studies Institute. The study covered the key areas of People families and households, Qualifications and language, Employment and Income and standards of living, Neighbourhoods and Housing, Health and Health Services, Racial Harassment, Culture and identity.

Obviously there were a whole range of key findings from this research, however those of most significance highlight two important macro trends in respect of race equality work. Firstly the persistence of racial discrimination and disadvantage in socio economic spheres and secondly the growing disparity and divergence of experience between and within Black and other minority ethnic groups. The impact of this research has been most noticeable in our continued focus on and research into Racial Harassment in Birmingham.

Research about how to effectively harness the views and concerns of Black and Minority Ethnic groups continues to be a focus. Our own work and research clearly demonstrated that the old style community representation model does not adequately meet the needs of Birmingham's diverse population groups and to this end we are now looking at the establishment of Issue Based Community Race Action Forums using Community Auditors to more effectively reflect the important issues and concerns. In addition a multi agency strategic Race Equality Partnership for the city has been set up so that the key strategic agencies can more effectively research and address the concerns of Black and Minority Ethnic groups. Recent changes in the Asylum and Immigration legislation has led us to further consider how Birmingham can respond to the growing needs of Asylum Seekers including issues of settlement.

Our work in the Disability field has been strengthened and sharpened by government legislation. As a result during the last 2 years there has been extensive research and action about how to ensure that council services can better address the needs of disabled people. In particular a communication unit has been established to look respond to the range of communication needs which disabled people have.

Finally our Gender Team is researching how best to get local women's voices heard. In addition through a Gender policy network, we are continuing to consider policy issues in respect of gender issues, including education and career development. Finally we have just begun to research work on Domestic Violence including issues of more effectively addressing the needs of Black and Minority Ethnic women.

Joyce Springer ist Race Equality Manager in der Equalities Division der Stadt Birmingham (England).

Joyce Springer

Equalities Division in Birmingham

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Abstract

Joyce Springer: Equalities Division in Birmingham

Die Stadt Birmingham (England) kann auf eine lange Tradition in der Gleichstellungspolitik verweisen. Im folgenden Beitrag werden die vier Arbeitsgruppen des Amtes Equalities Division vorgestellt, die sich mit den Themenfeldern Ethnizität (Race), Geschlecht (Gender), Behinderung sowie Information und Forschung beschäftigen.