

# Comparing Migrant Integration in Ireland and Northern Ireland

## DATE

March 6<sup>th</sup>, 2023

## EVENT

Launch event, Royal College  
of Physicians

## Project Team

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# Motivation

- One important transformation in Northern Ireland and Ireland in the past 30 years has been inward migration.
- Migrants can enrich both the economy and society of their destination.
- But migration can also bring challenges of economic and social integration for migrants, and feelings of anxiety in the host population.
- Brexit and new immigration rules may have brought additional challenges for migrants sharing the island of Ireland.
- This report is the first systematic quantitative comparison of the experience of and response to migrants in Ireland and Northern Ireland.

# Research Questions

1. How **many migrants live** in Ireland and Northern Ireland and where do they come from? Are adult migrants working, and what kinds of jobs do they work in?
2. Do **migrant-origin children** differ in terms of ability in school and their well-being from their native-origin peers?
3. How have migrants been received? **Comparing attitudes** to immigrants and immigration North and South
4. What is **migrants experience of the border** in Ireland?
5. What are the **policy implications** of these findings and are there opportunities for learning?

## Definitions

**Migrants**= born abroad/outside their country of residence.

In Ireland= born outside Ireland

In N Ireland= born outside UK

**Non-migrants or native-born**= born in N Ireland/Ireland

\*Surveys don't measure ethnicity (eg Asian, Black, White, Other)

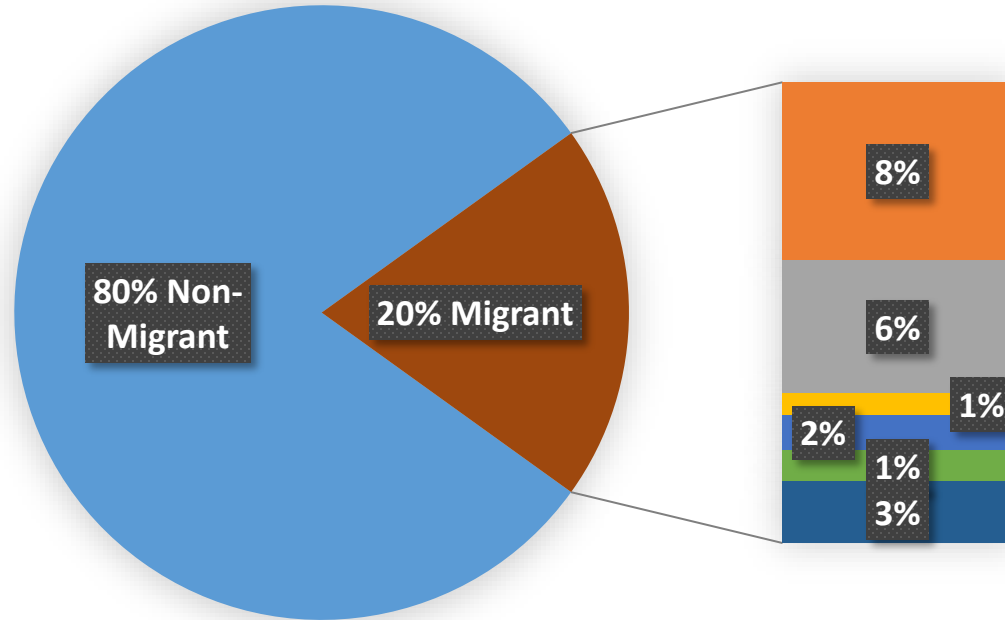
\*\*Nationality or citizenship is not the same as country of birth – some born abroad are citizens of Ireland /Northern Ireland

## Methods

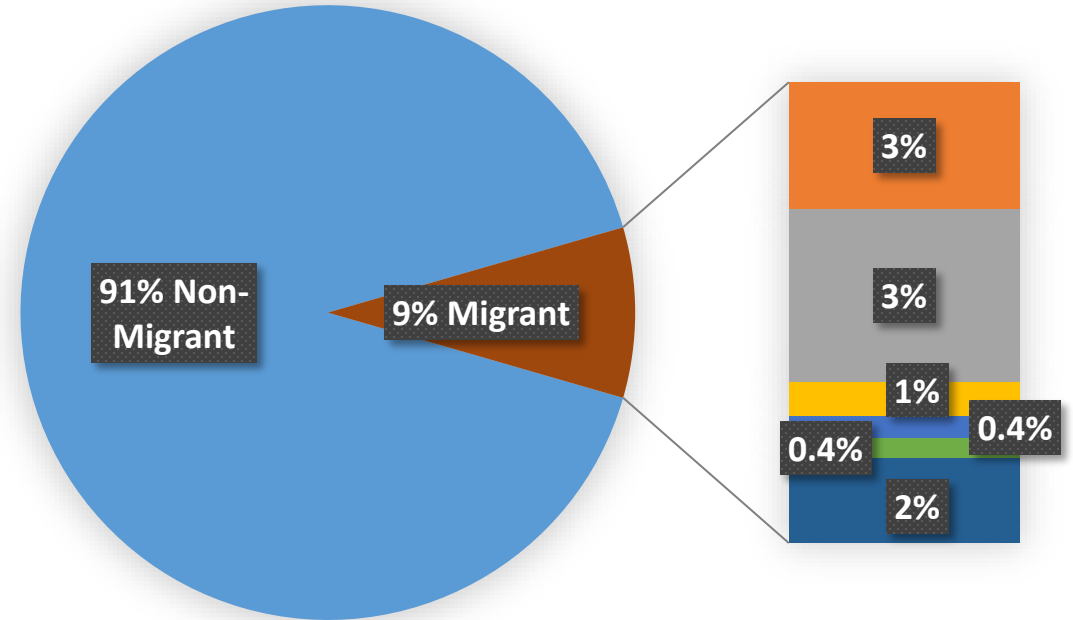
- Desk analysis of policy/admin stats
- Quantitative analysis of survey data:
  - EU-LFS for profile of migrants and their employment
  - International OECD PISA data for migrant children
  - Eurobarometer on attitudes to migrants and migration
- Consultation event on current and emerging issues re migrants' cross-border travel for work or personal reasons (October 2022)

# Migrants in Ireland and N Ireland

IRELAND



NORTHERN IRELAND



■ EU-West

■ North America, Australia and Oceania

■ Africa

■ EU-East

■ Rest of Europe/Rest of the World

■ Asia

Note: Migrant Ireland= born outside RoI. EU West includes UK.  
Migrant N Ireland=born outside UK.  
EU West includes Ireland but not UK.

# Migrants: Profile of migrants, selected characteristics

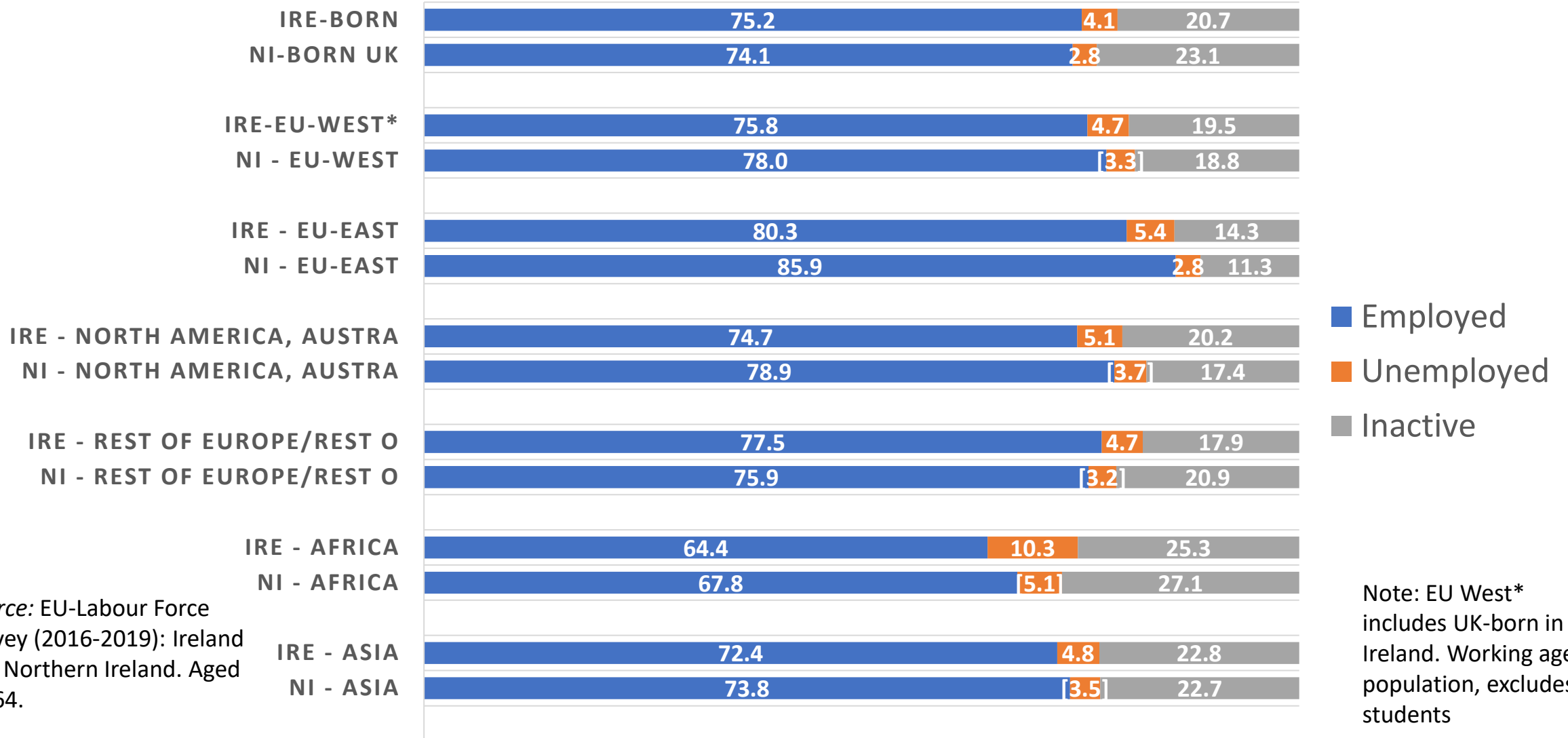
	% third-level qualifications (age 25+)		% cities & towns		% citizen	
	IRE	NI	IRE	NI	IRE	NI
<b>Native-born</b>	37.6	36.1	56.1	51.1	99.9	99.9
<b>All Migrants</b>	<b>54.7</b>	<b>41.2</b>	<b>72.2</b>	<b>56.6</b>	<b>35.3</b>	<b>16.8</b>
<b>EU West*</b>	55	52.1	55.7	50.4	47.5	17.2
<b>EU East</b>	40.6	22.3	77.8	<b>45.7</b>	13.6	2.8
<b>North America, Australia, and Oceania</b>	74.6	59	64.8	71.5	52.5	40.2
<b>Rest of Europe/Rest of the World</b>	65.2	37.9	87.4	57.4	27.3	31
<b>Africa</b>	52.9	66.3	87.5	66.5	54.3	41.7
<b>Asia</b>	73.5	49.9	88.1	78.7	41.3	25.6

Source: EU-Labour Force Survey (2016-2019): Ireland and Northern Ireland. Aged 15-64.

Note: \*EU West includes UK migrants in Ireland and Irish migrants in Northern Ireland.

## 2. Working age migrants in the labour market, North & South

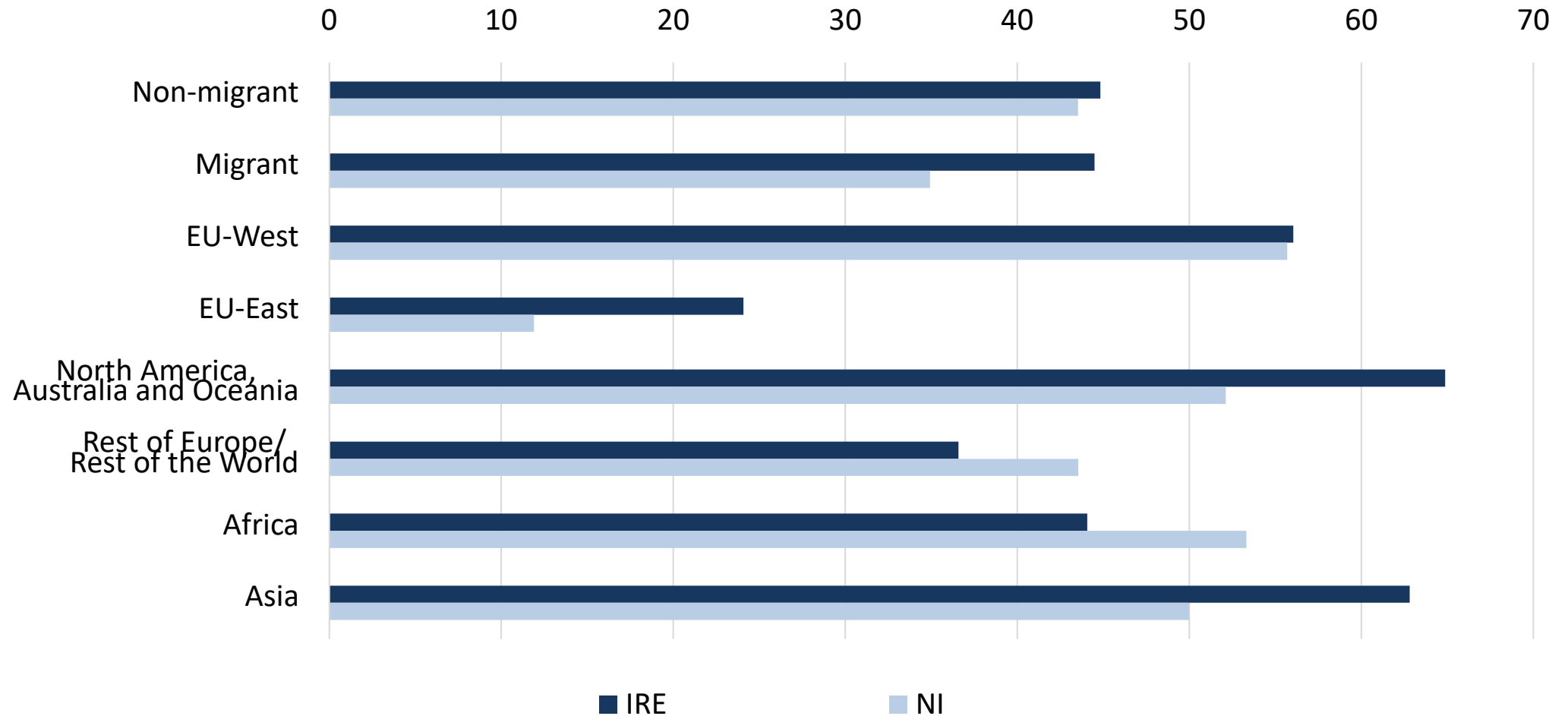
# Migrants in (and out of) the Labour Market



Source: EU-Labour Force Survey (2016-2019): Ireland and Northern Ireland. Aged 15-64.



# “Good jobs” migrants in professional/managerial occupations



Source: EU-Labour Force Survey (2016-2019): Ireland and Northern Ireland. Aged 15-64, in employment.

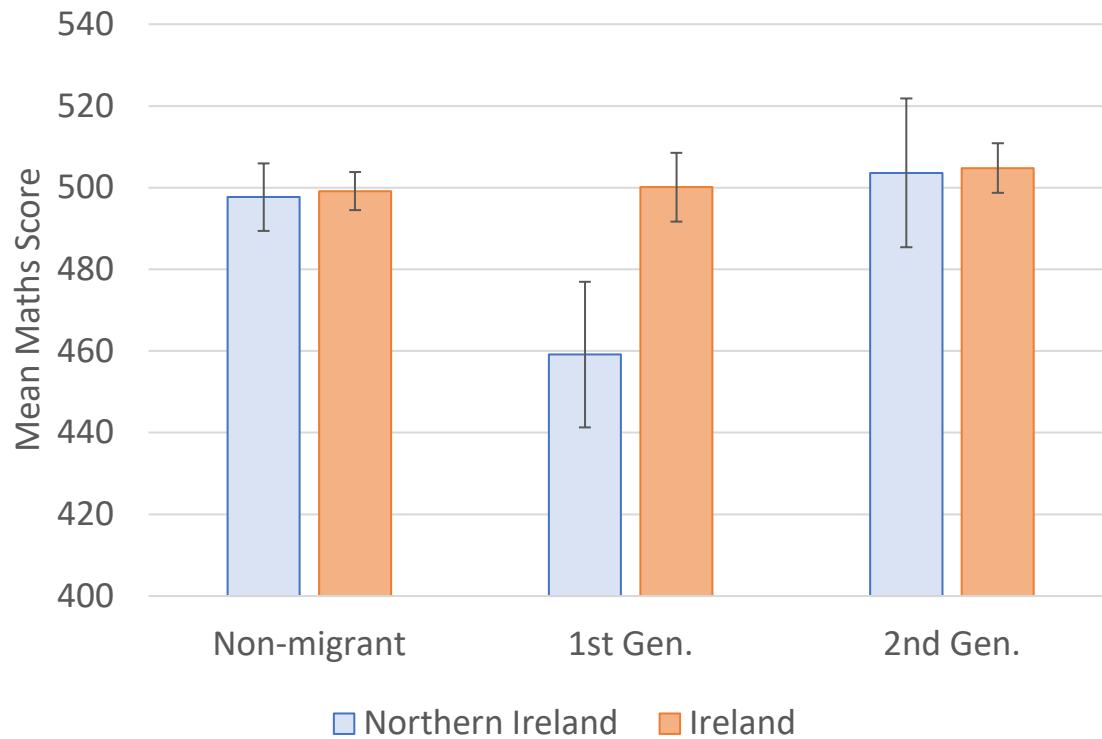
### 3. Children of Migrants - education and wellbeing, North & South

# Measuring young people's migration status

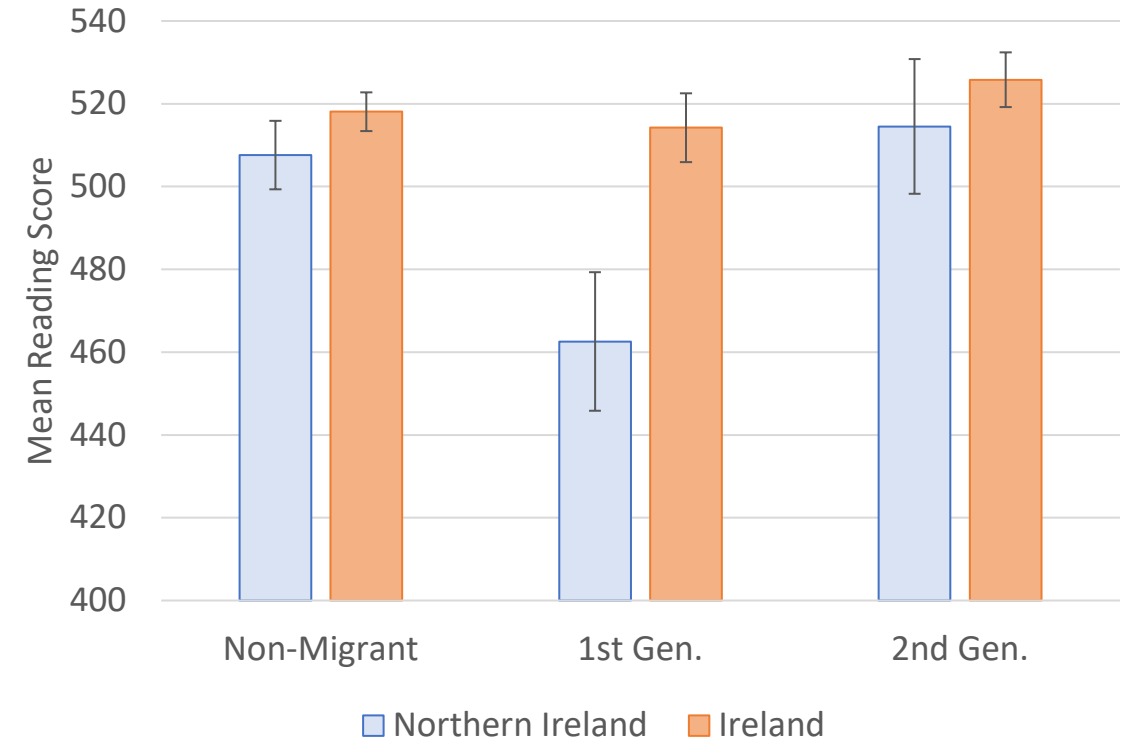
- Migrant status of child
  - At least one parent born outside Ireland (for Ireland analysis) and outside United Kingdom (for Northern Ireland analysis)
- Other dimensions of status that may matter for migrant youth cognitive and wellbeing outcomes
  - **Generation**
    - Whether child was born in Ireland/UK or born abroad
  - **Language at home**
    - Whether child speaks English/Irish at home

# Migrant children's reading *and* maths ability scores, North & South – by generation

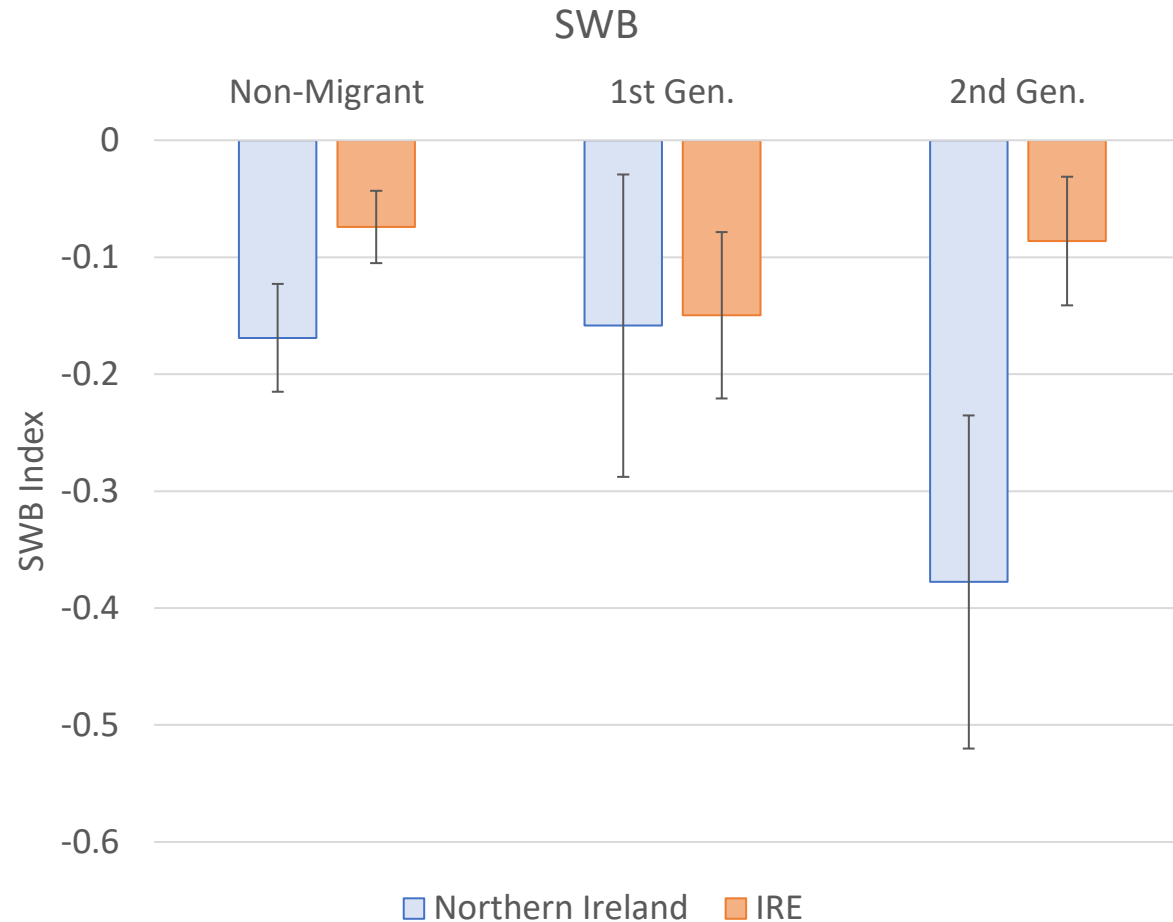
MATHS



READING



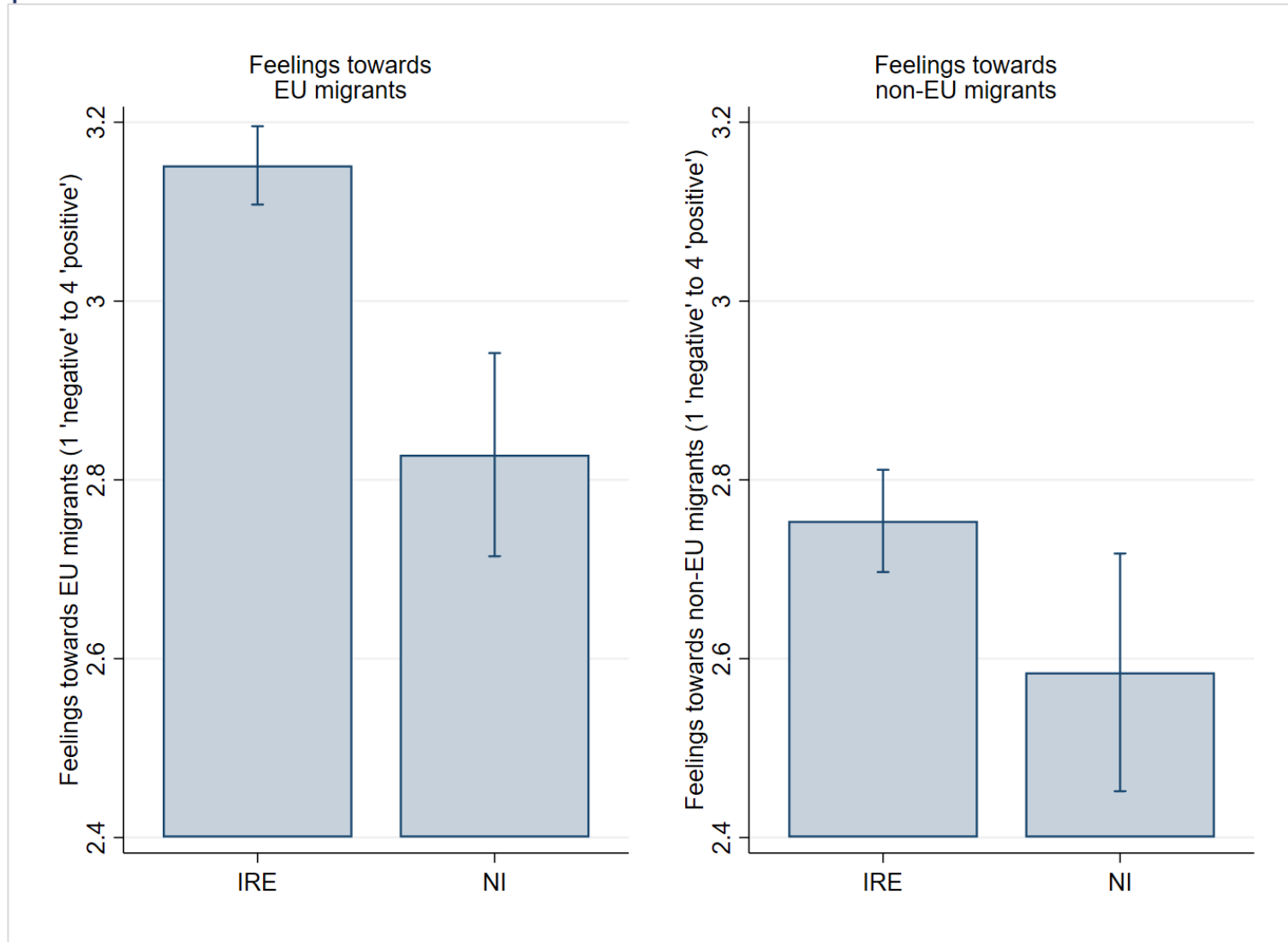
# Migrant Children's Mental Wellbeing, North & South – By Generation



INDEX OF WELLBEING: '[t]hinking about yourself and how you normally feel: how often do you feel as described below?' Feelings included 'joyful', 'cheerful' and 'happy', and responses ranged from (1) 'Never' to (4) 'Always'.

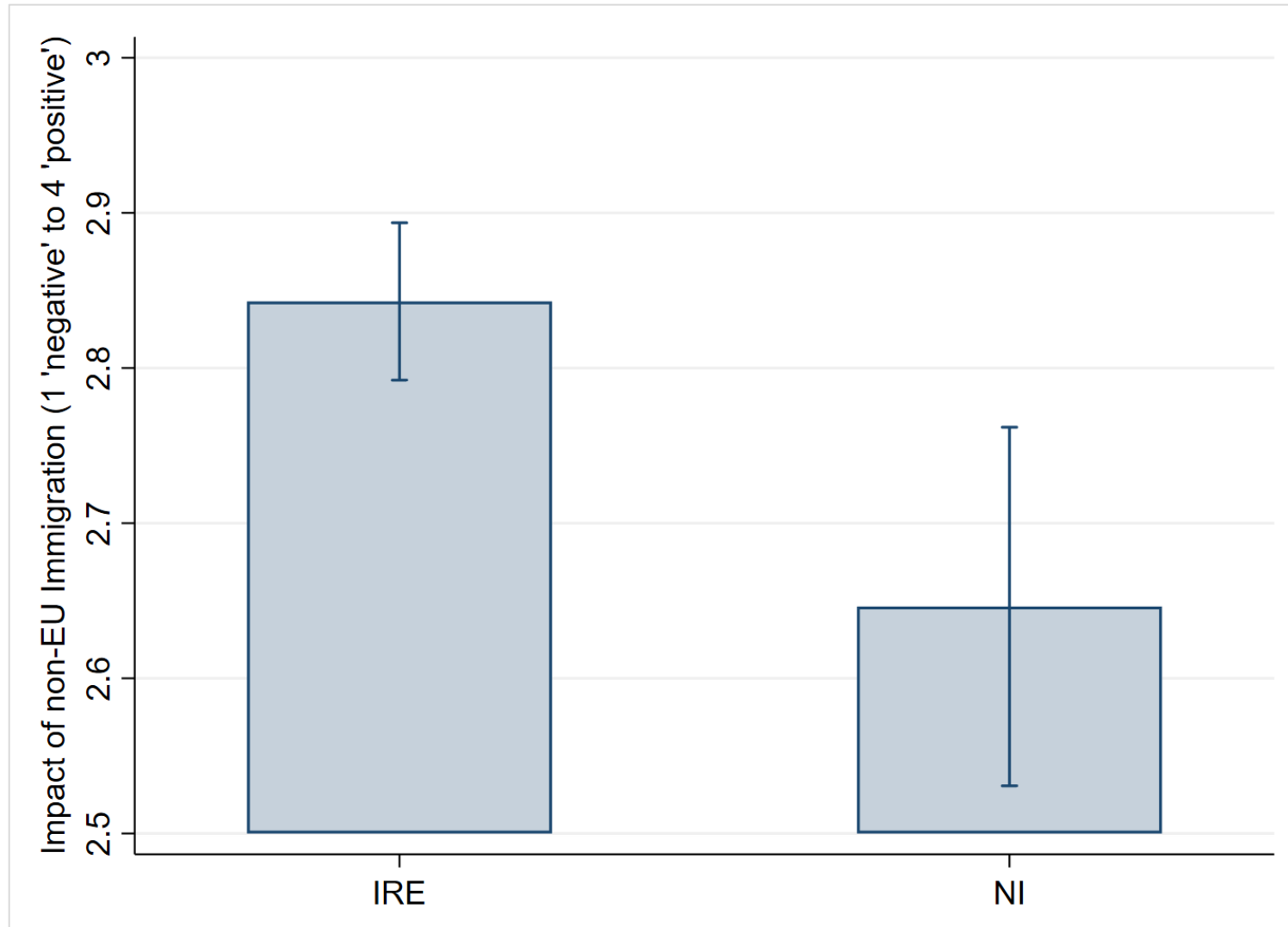
## 4. Comparing attitudes towards immigration

# DO PEOPLE FEEL POSITIVE ABOUT EU and NON-EU MIGRANTS?



Data: Eurobarometer 89.1 - March, 2018

# WHAT IMPACT DO PEOPLE THINK NON-EU IMMIGRANTS HAVE ON THEIR SOCIETY?

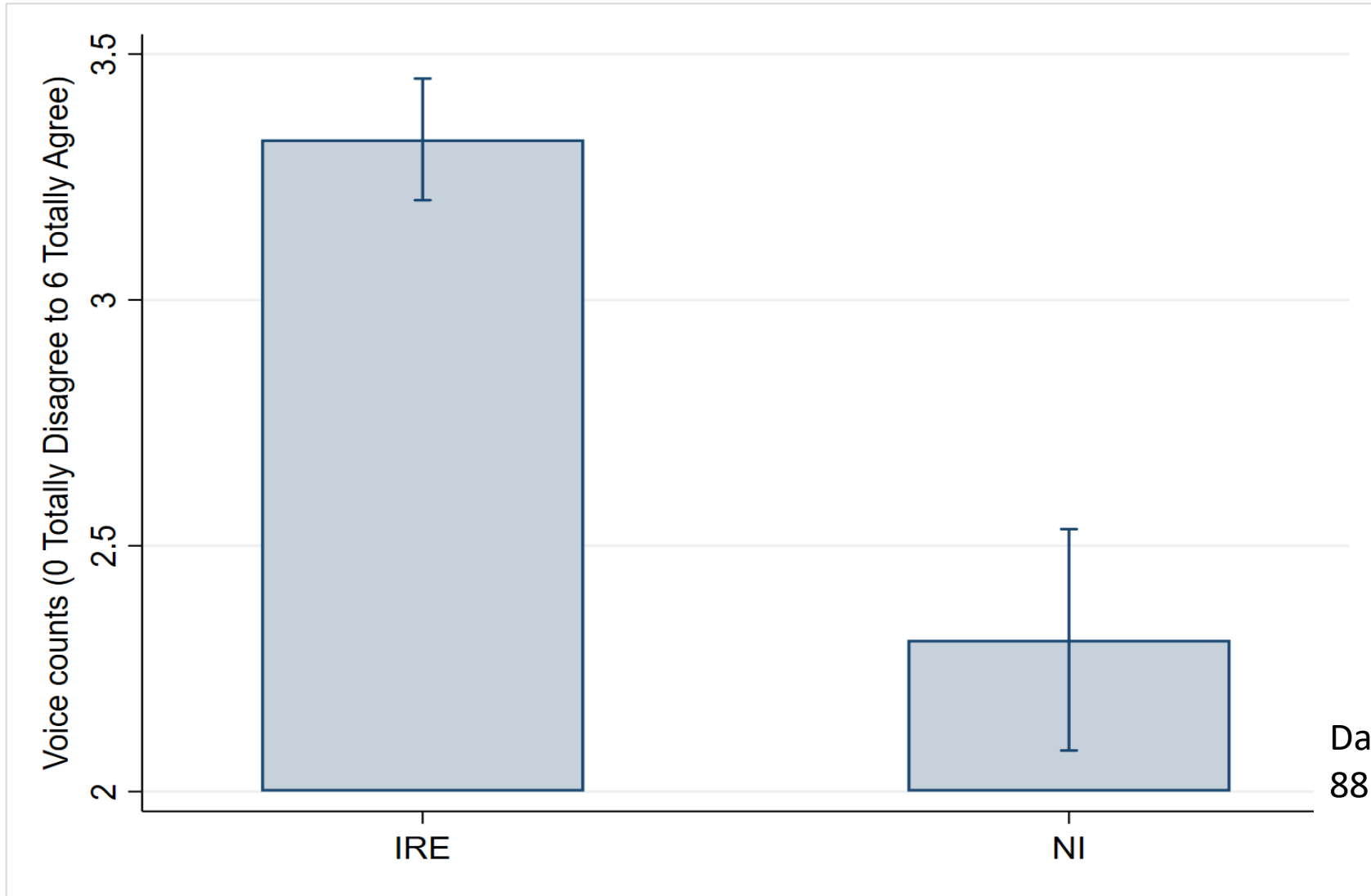


Data: Eurobarometer 88.2 - **October, 2017**

Index of impact on: (1) economy; (2) welfare system; (3) taking jobs away; (4) filling hard to fill jobs; (5) ideas and innovation; (6) cultural life; and (7) crime

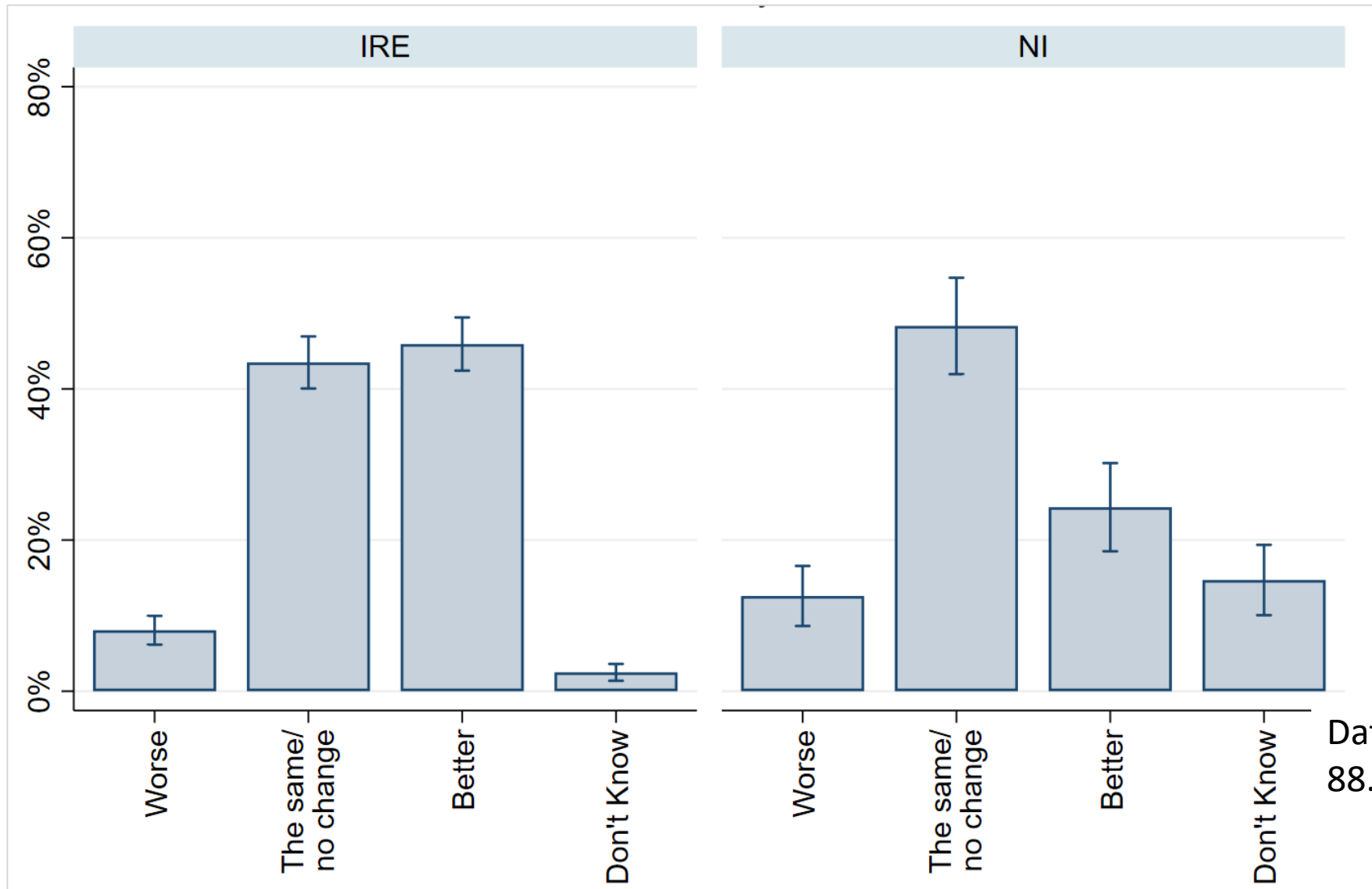


# WHAT EXPLAINS THE DIFFERENCES IN ATTITUDES? 'MY VOICE COUNTS' (POLITICAL EFFICACY)



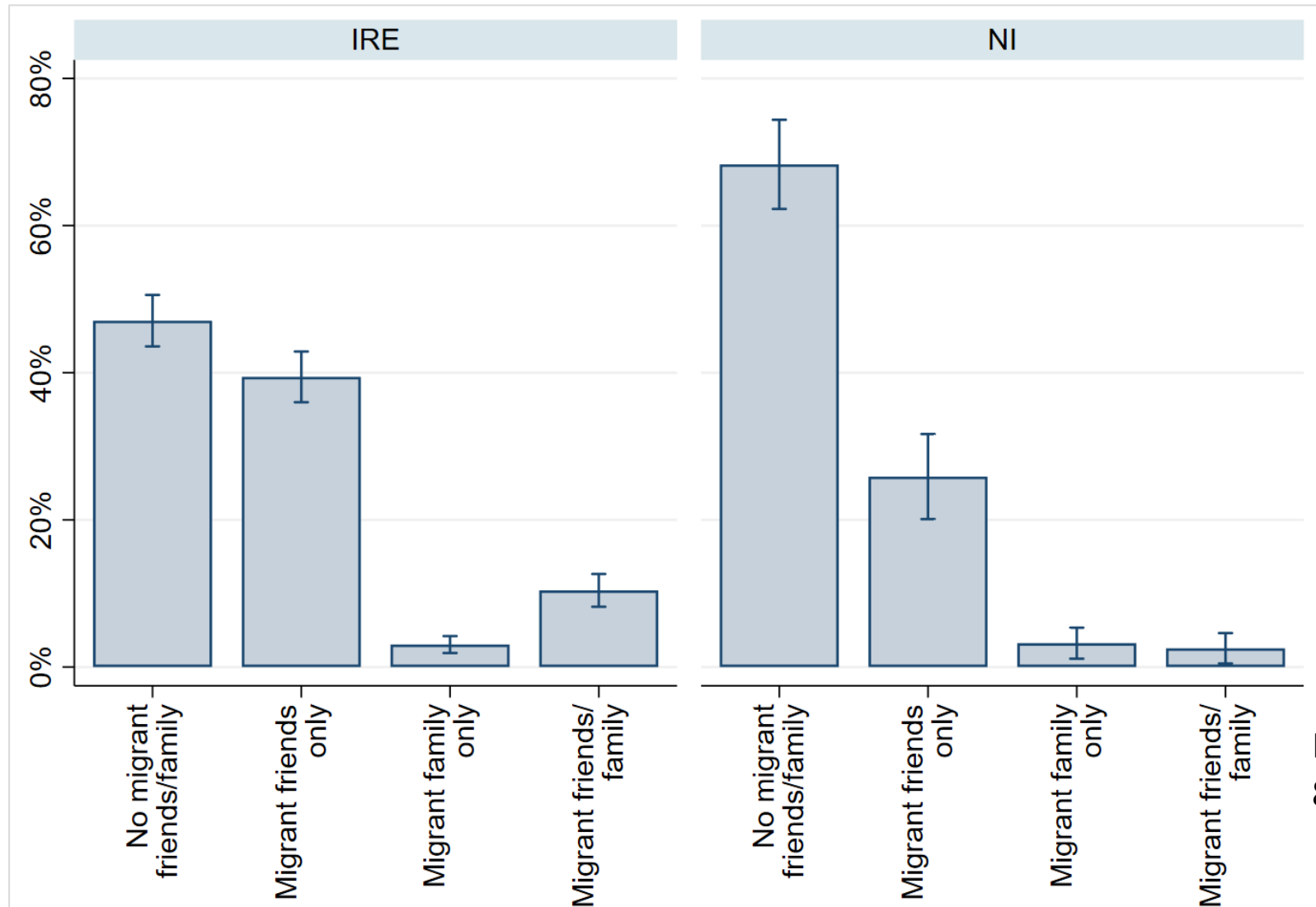
Data: Eurobarometer 88.2 - **October, 2017**

# WHAT EXPLAINS THE DIFFERENCES IN ATTITUDES? *OPTIMISM FOR THE FUTURE*



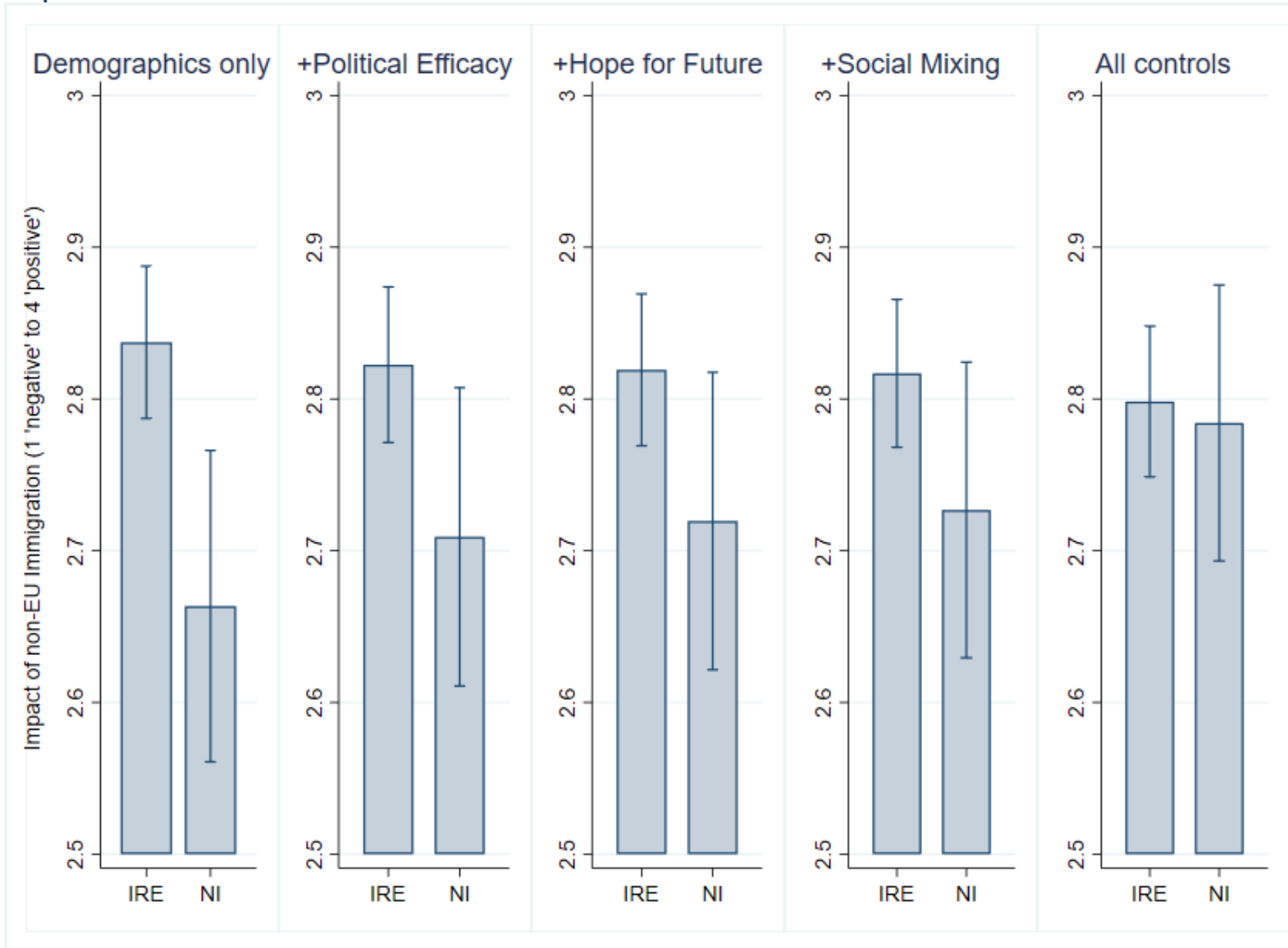
Data: Eurobarometer 88.2 - **October, 2017**

# WHAT EXPLAINS THE DIFFERENCES IN ATTITUDES? *NON-EU MIGRANT FRIENDS AND FAMILY*



Data: Eurobarometer 88.2 - **October, 2017**

# EXPLAINING WHY ATTITUDES TOWARDS NON-EU IMMIGRATION ARE MORE POSITIVE IN IRELAND



Data: Eurobarometer 88.2 - October, 2017

## 5. Migrants' experience of the border in Ireland

# Migrants' experience of the border in Ireland

**Event Objectives:** explore experiences of impact post-Brexit immigration changes at the UK level may have/will have on cross-border travel, and the ability to work and access services for non-Irish and non-British citizens.

**Participants** included: organisations working with migrants in Northern Ireland and Ireland, advocacy groups, policymakers, and others.



Online Consultation  
Event



32 Participants



October 2022

# What is migrants' experience of cross border travel?

- Border checks, racial profiling - ethnic minority migrants are much more likely to be checked while travelling across the border than migrants who look the same as most people living on the island.

“there was discrimination and it’s ongoing, it’s not new. It was always there but that Brexit has made it worse in some cases. So, it’s important to acknowledge that.”

- Consultation participants described a sense of fear among migrants about cross-border travel

“People want to live their lives legally, they want to live in the open, and the fear that any small incident or connection with authorities by accident or by necessity would unravel their lives is a significant challenge and fear underpinning much of this.”

- Participants reported more checks going from NI to Ireland (by Gardai), esp on the Belfast-Dublin route

# Challenges accessing work and services across the border

- Access to healthcare, schools and further/higher education

“there was an example of a child who needed cardiac surgery, the paediatrics hospital is in Dublin, the child’s mother and father had to all get visas. [This was] an extremely long, drawn-out process.”

- Cross-border work and workers - confusion around Frontier workers scheme

“There is a chill factor on employers within those agencies, farms, agrifood businesses, on employing migrants who don’t have access to both sides of the border.”

- Cultural and cross-border initiatives – some migrants excluded



# Which migrant groups are most affected?

- The key issue determining those most affected in travelling across the border was skin colour.

“Black and Asian people are more likely to be stopped, more likely to be checked, they have difficulties going through checks, and hospitals when it comes to accessing services. And even difficulties when they have an ethnic surname.”

- Particular challenges for asylum seekers and refugees (including Ukrainians).
- Participants also raised the issue of multiple exclusion - ‘layers of otherness’.

“So if you are an excluded person by status and you’re also a person of colour, you’re in a worse position.... If you’re a person of colour, with poor English, and a member of the LGBT community. So basically the more layers of otherness that you are tagged with, the more difficult it is to overcome those obstacles and the more obstacles you will face.”

Among the solutions discussed by participants:

- UK/Ireland co-operation on visas for non-EU nationals
- Permission for resident non-EU nationals to cross the border
- Train people who work on the frontline, eg conducting border checks, so clear on rules/best practice to reduce potential for racial profiling.
- Concerns were also raised about the introduction of the Electronic Travel Authorisation (ETA) to enter the UK

## Key take-aways

- Inward migration has really changed Ireland and Northern Ireland
- Migrant employment is generally high, and often highly skilled (with exceptions)
- Migrant-origin children may face challenges, esp in Northern Ireland
- Attitudes to migrants more favourable in Ireland than Northern Ireland (in 2018/2018); attitudes to migrants in NI more positive since Brexit vote
- Migrants face challenges in cross-border travel, work and accessing services. Particular challenges around immigration checks and lack of clarity of rights

## Some Policy Implications

- Scope for policy learning
  - Migrant integration greater policy focus in Ireland than Northern Ireland.
  - In Northern Ireland, more focus on ethnicity/racial equality (at least in principle).
- Underscores importance of *National Action Plan Against Racism* (in Ireland, due out later this month, March 2023).
- In Ireland - extra efforts/targeted supports may be needed for asylum seekers and refugees.
- Greater clarity on migrants' entitlements needed, both in N Ireland and for crossing the border, to avoid confusion, uncertainty and allow migrants, like others, to integrate, and to share the island.

## Where to read more

Read the full report here:

[www.esri.ie/publications/comparing-migrant-integration-in-ireland-and-northern-ireland](http://www.esri.ie/publications/comparing-migrant-integration-in-ireland-and-northern-ireland).

Info on the ESRI/Shared Island research programme:

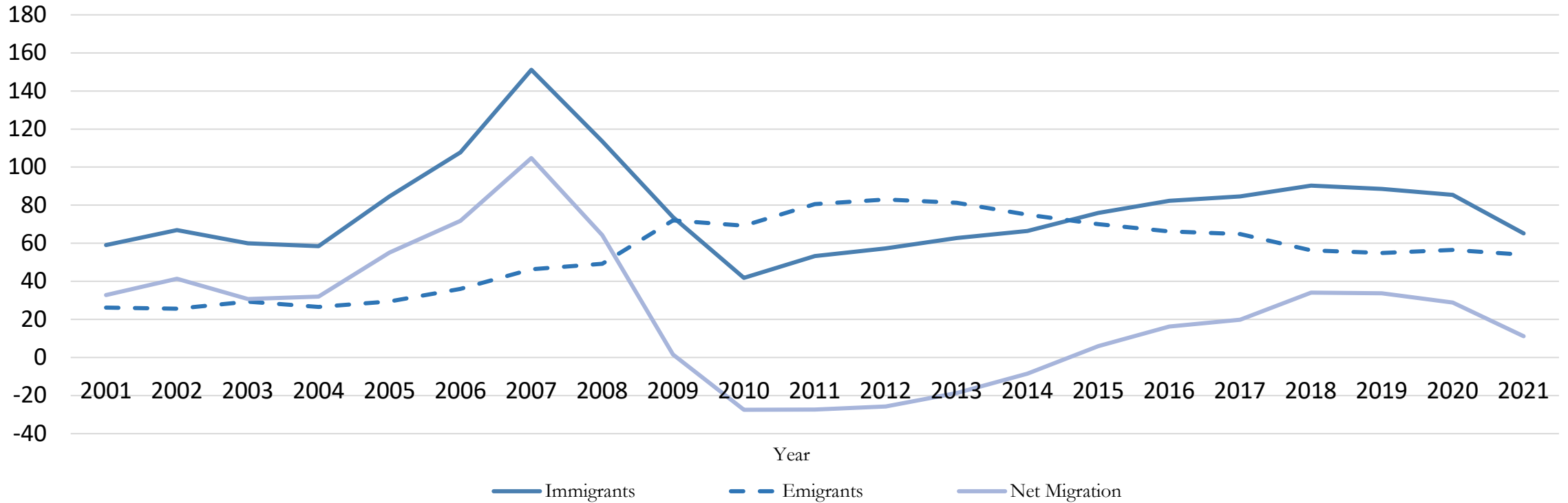
[www.esri.ie/current-research/the-economic-and-social-opportunities-from-increased-cooperation-on-the-shared](http://www.esri.ie/current-research/the-economic-and-social-opportunities-from-increased-cooperation-on-the-shared)

Coming soon: **New insights on Migrant Integration in Ireland** at the Clayton Hotel, Dublin March 30<sup>th</sup> ([see www.emn.ie/network-and-events/](http://www.emn.ie/network-and-events/)) includes *Monitoring report on Integration 2022*

**Later in 2023:** *Changing social attitudes? An analysis of Ireland, North and South*

Thanks for listening.  
Any Questions?

# Immigration, Emigration and Net Migration to Ireland 2001-2021

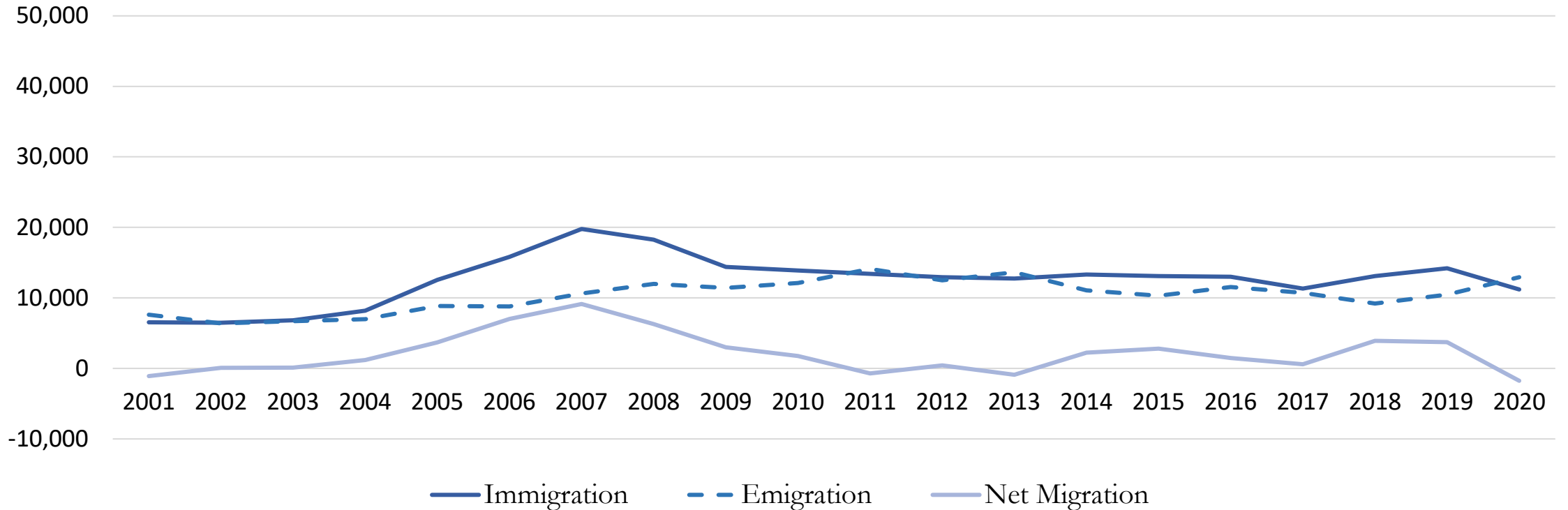


**Source:** CSO Migration Estimates for Ireland.

**Notes:** the Migration data is estimated using the Labour Force Survey (formerly the QNHS) and census data. Estimates are compiled against the backdrop of movements in other migration indicators such as PPS numbers and work permits issued. The number, age and sex, and nationality of people who joined, re-joined, deregistered, or transferred from the labour force survey and PPSN registrations is determined.

Year to end of April in reference year.

# Immigration, Emigration and Net Migration to Northern Ireland 2001-2021



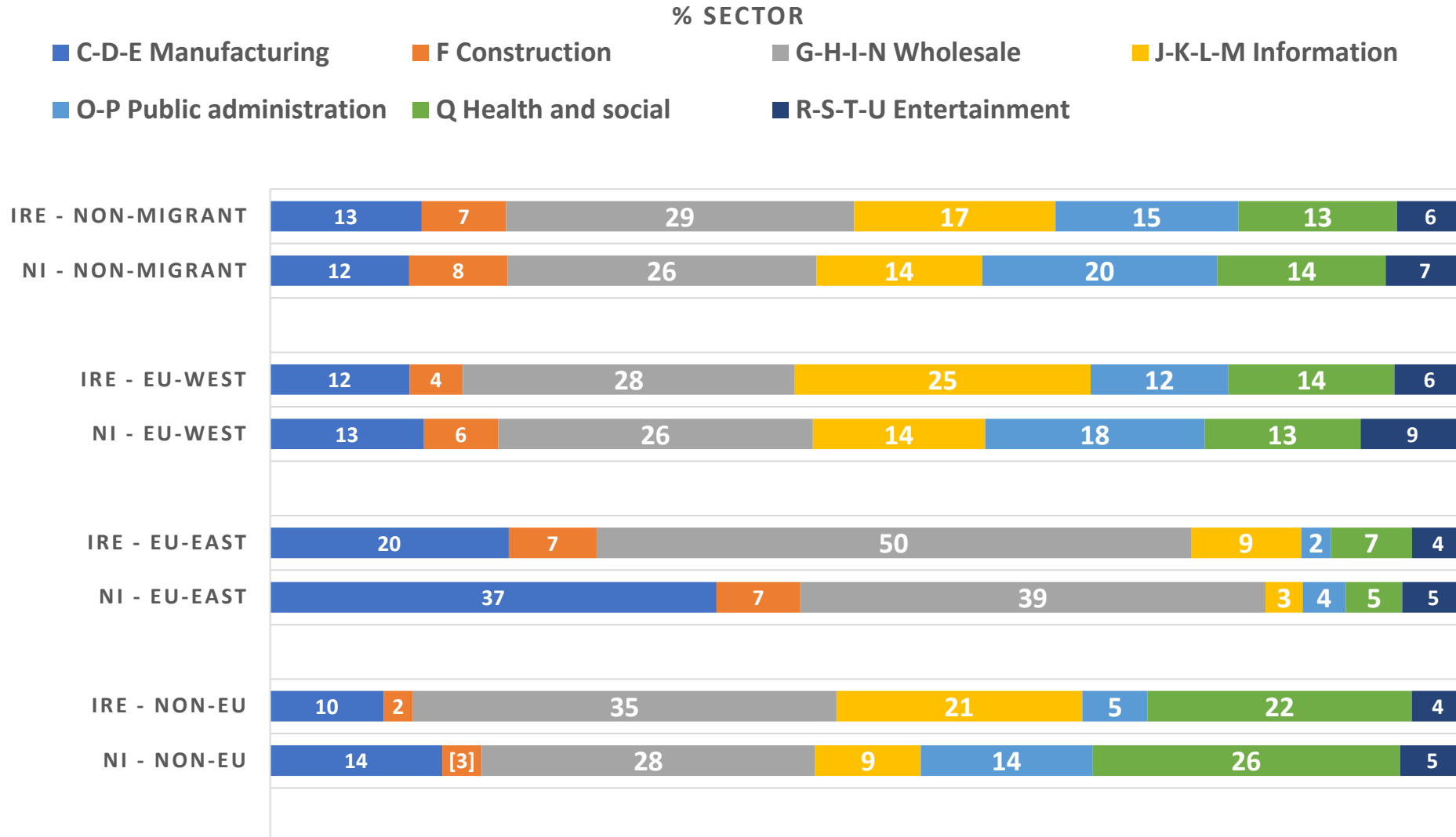
**Source:** NIRSA mid-year population estimates.

**Notes:** Migration flows are estimated from the Medical Card Register. The number, age and sex of people who joined, re-joined, deregistered, or transferred medical centers within a one-year period is determined.

de-registrations are scaled up by an additional 67 per cent. This scaling factor was determined through analysis of historic population change using results from Censuses of population.



# WHAT KIND OF JOBS TO MIGRANTS HAVE? EMPLOYMENT SECTOR



# Migrants Seeking Help

Participants described how, migrants may turn to someone they know

*There is a very severe lack of resources in the community and advice sector. That is showing in people choosing illegal advice and informal advice because they can't get access to it [formal advice] or they're being signposted elsewhere. But I think also knowledge of where to go to is probably an issue too.*

Others concerned that the most vulnerable were not accessing help

*People will seek the most readily available help and the more vulnerable you are the greater the necessity to seek safe help. So the further out you are, the more difficult it is to access safe and reliable information.*

attendees who were involved in information provision highlighted the complexity of the rules/ how difficult they can be to convey effectively