

# MONITORING REPORT ON INTEGRATION 2020

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Economic and Social Research Institute  
Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth

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*Disclaimer: This report has been peer reviewed prior to publication. The authors are solely responsible for the content and the views expressed.*

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<sup>1</sup> Since writing the report, the Department of Justice and Equality’s name was altered to the Department of Justice, with effect from 1 November 2020. This report uses the former title as it was in use at the time of writing.



## FOREWORD

We are a diverse nation and have always been so. In recent decades our national, ethnic, and religious diversity have increased with the growing numbers of people who have come from abroad to make Ireland their home – either temporary or permanent. People migrate to Ireland for many different reasons – to study in our world-renowned higher education sector; to work in the many sectors of our growing economy; to join family members who already live here; or to seek refuge from war or persecution. Whatever their reasons for coming, their presence brings a welcome diversity to our shores, enriching our culture, society and economy and creating new bonds of friendship and kinship.

For newcomers, integrating into Irish society means nothing more, and nothing less, than being able to participate in life here in Ireland in the ways that they need to and want to. For many people, this process of integration may occur without undue stress or difficulty. Others, especially perhaps those with poor English language skills, may find it harder to navigate life in Ireland and may need additional supports.

Measuring integration outcomes on a regular basis is essential for us to know how different groups are faring, and where extra supports may be needed to help people to integrate successfully. Our overall approach to integration policy – as set out in our national *Migrant Integration Strategy 2017-2020* – is built on mainstreaming. That is, migrants access public services on the same basis as citizens, with additional supports being provided for specific groups based on identified need. This approach is aligned with key principles of equality and non-discrimination. However, it does rely on regular monitoring to identify any differential outcomes among migrants as compared to the native population. This can allow us to see where services may need to adapt, or additional supports be provided to enable migrants to participate fully in our economy and society.

This Monitoring report finds that, overall, migrants to Ireland are integrating well across the range of indicators examined, which covers education, employment, social inclusion and active citizenship. This is encouraging and we must ensure to maintain our success here and expand our good practice. However, the report also identifies specific challenges faced by some groups, some of which have persisted over many Monitoring reports. We clearly need to consider new approaches to tackle these persistent challenges.

In line with our Programme for Government commitment, I will initiate a process to develop a successor to the Migrant Integration Strategy in the months ahead. Implementation of the current Strategy will continue pending the adoption by

Government of its successor. This Integration Monitor provides a key part of the evidence base we require to ensure the successor strategy is well targeted and effective.

We may also have new challenges to address. The data analysed for this report precedes the COVID-19 pandemic, which is known to have exacerbated existing inequalities here as in other countries. I welcome the simultaneous publication of a short report analysing the impact of the pandemic on migrants to accompany this Monitor.

As Minister with responsibility for integration, I am currently leading two major policy initiatives that are interlinked with migrant integration. Firstly, I am preparing a new policy on accommodation and support services for international protection applicants. The new policy will mark an end to Direct Provision and replace it with a new human rights centred, not-for-profit approach. Secondly, the independent Anti-Racism Committee that was established in June 2020 under the previous Government will now report to me. This Committee is tasked with developing a new National Action Plan Against Racism for recommendation to Government in 2021.

I welcome this Monitoring Report on Integration, which has been produced under the ESRI's Equality and Integration Research Programme, which is funded by my Department. I am pleased to support this research, which provides essential evidence for integration policy.

Roderic O'Gorman

Minister for Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth

December 2020



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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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### INTRODUCTION

Integration not only allows immigrants to contribute to the economic, social, cultural and political life of their host country, but is also important for social cohesion and inclusive growth. This report considers how non-Irish nationals are integrating into Irish society. Specifically, it considers how non-Irish nationals compare to the Irish population in terms of employment rates, educational qualifications, income and poverty rates, health outcomes, housing and participation in Irish political life.

The *2020 Monitoring Report on Integration* is the seventh in a series of Integration Monitors published since 2011, the most recent of which was published in 2018.<sup>2</sup> The Monitor aims to measure the integration of immigrants into Irish society in four key domains or policy areas: employment, education, social inclusion and active citizenship. It is based on indicators proposed at the European Ministerial Conference on Integration held in Zaragoza in 2010. These indicators are comparable across European Union (EU) Member States and focused on integration outcomes. The indicators were selected partly due to the availability of data on these indicators across European Union (EU) Member States which allows for comparison both across states and over time. Monitoring provides both policymakers and the general public with facts to assess integration outcomes and respond to policy challenges.

The context in Ireland is rather different from that in which the 2018 Monitor was published, set against a backdrop of the COVID-19 pandemic, Black Lives Matter protests in the United States and elsewhere, and Brexit. The COVID-19 pandemic and associated restrictions in Ireland will cause serious challenges for migrants, as for many other groups. The analysis in this publication predates COVID-19 but will reflect on some of those likely challenges where relevant. This report documents the situation pre-pandemic: an accompanying report provides an initial analysis of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on non-Irish nationals in Ireland (Enright et al., 2020). Of course, any understanding of the impact of the pandemic and associated labour market shock will be informed by the situation of non-Irish nationals prior to the pandemic.

Migrants to Ireland are diverse in terms of country of origin, and outcomes vary across groups. This summary focuses on overall differences between Irish and

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.esri.ie/publications/monitoring-report-on-integration-2018>.

non-Irish nationals: individual chapters give more information on differences between national groups – UK, EU-West, EU-East and non-EU nationals.<sup>3</sup> Key indicators at a glance are presented in Table A.

## INTEGRATION MONITOR: KEY FINDINGS

In 2019, prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Irish labour market was showing signs of continued recovery from the economic shock of the Great Recession (2008-2012) (Bergin et al., 2020). Overall, employment rates have increased, and unemployment decreased significantly in the period 2013-2019. Chapter 2 shows that both employment and labour market activity rates were slightly higher among non-Irish nationals than Irish nationals (see Table A). The unemployment rate had continued to fall for both Irish and non-Irish nationals since 2017; and in the first quarter of 2019, at just over 5 per cent, the unemployment rate was very similar for both groups. In other European countries, unemployment is typically higher among immigrants than natives, but this was not the case in Ireland in 2019.

There are important differences in the labour market outcomes for different groups of non-Irish nationals. The African unemployment rate is 12 per cent compared to an average of around 5-6 per cent for Irish nationals and other non-Irish groups. This pattern has persisted throughout the recession and recovery.

Chapter 3 compares educational qualifications among Irish and non-Irish adults in 2018-2019 and presents academic achievement scores at age 15 (see Table A). A higher proportion of non-Irish than Irish nationals aged 25 to 34 had third-level educational qualifications (60 per cent non-Irish versus 53 per cent Irish). The proportion of young adults (aged 20-24) who had left school before finishing upper secondary education was similar between the two groups. At around 4 per cent of the age cohort, the share of early leavers is very low (see Table A). When we compare educational qualifications for non-Irish adults who received their qualifications in Ireland (22 per cent) with those educated abroad (78 per cent), for the most part the pattern of qualifications is similar, regardless of where education was completed. The exception is the diverse 'Rest of the World' group (non-EU countries excluding Asia), where those educated in Ireland have lower rates of third-level education than nationals from this group educated abroad.

Around 18 per cent of students taking the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) test in 2018 in Ireland were from an immigrant background, 10 per cent first-generation immigrants (born abroad) and 8 per cent classified as

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<sup>3</sup> EU-West refers to the 'old' Member States, prior to enlargement in 2004, excluding the United Kingdom (UK) and Ireland. EU-East refers to the 'new' Member States that joined the EU in 2004, 2007 and 2013. Where numbers permit, non-EU nationals are further divided based on broad region of origin.

second-generation immigrants (born in Ireland of immigrant parents). As in previous Monitors, home language is salient for achievement scores, for both first- and second-generation immigrants. Comparing English reading, we find immigrant students from English-speaking backgrounds do not differ from their Irish peers, but immigrants from non-English speaking backgrounds have lower mean scores at age 15 (see Table A). Mathematics and Science scores between the groups are much smaller and not statistically significant (see Chapter 3).

Income, poverty, health and homeownership are used as core indicators of social inclusion in Chapter 4. The median annual net income for non-Irish nationals in 2017/2018 was lower than that of Irish nationals, and the 'at risk of poverty' rate, at 18 per cent, was higher for non-Irish nationals than Irish nationals (just under 15 per cent) (see Table A).

The consistent poverty rate, which takes into account the experience of deprivation as well as income poverty, was similar for Irish nationals and all non-Irish nationals in this period (just over 6 per cent for both groups), and had fallen since 2016.<sup>4</sup> The consistent poverty rate for non-EU nationals, was higher than for Irish nationals, at 12 per cent, but much lower than in 2016 (see Chapter 4).

As before, non-Irish nationals tend to report better health than Irish nationals, though Chapter 4 discusses how this difference is primarily linked to age and education. Rates of homeownership were much, much lower among non-Irish than Irish nationals in 2017/2018 (Table A). Chapter 4 shows how over half of non-Irish nationals in 2017/2018 lived in private rented accommodation, compared to 11 per cent of Irish people.

Very significant changes have been seen in the active citizenship domain in the last decade. Three indicators are used to assess active citizenship: the share of immigrants who have acquired citizenship; the share of immigrants holding permanent or long-term residence permits; and the share of immigrants among elected representatives (see Table A).

Between 2005 and end-2019, just under 110,000 non-EEA nationals aged 16 and over naturalised. With a new adjustment using the 2016 Census microdata and based on a 10 per cent outflow of naturalised migrants, we estimate that the number naturalised who stayed in Ireland represents up to 37 per cent of the

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<sup>4</sup> The at risk of poverty rate, which refers to the percentage of a group falling below 60 per cent of the median equivalised disposable income, is the official poverty threshold used by the Central Statistics Office (CSO) and agreed at EU level. 'Consistent poverty' combines at risk of poverty with enforced deprivation of two or more of a range of items.

population of non-EEA origin resident at end 2019. While the numbers of non-EEA nationals acquiring citizenship has fallen sharply since the 2012 peak, naturalisation is rising rapidly among EEA nationals. In 2019, around half of naturalisations were to residents of EEA origin, and the top nationalities acquiring Irish citizenship were Polish, followed by UK nationals (see Chapter 5). While rising rapidly, those naturalising represent a very small proportion of the total EEA population living in Ireland.

**TABLE A KEY INTEGRATION INDICATORS AT A GLANCE**

|  | Irish   | Non-Irish  |
|--|---------|--|
| <b>Employment (working age) 2019</b>   |         |  |
| Employment Rate  | 69%     | 73%  |
| Unemployment Rate  | 5%      | 6%   |
| Activity Rate  | 72%     | 77%  |
| <b>Education</b>   |         |  |
| Share of 25-34 age group with third-level education (2018-2019 pooled)   | 53.0%   | 60.0%  |
| Share of early leavers from education (20-24 age group) (2018-2019 pooled)   | 4.3%    | 3.7%   |
| Mean English reading scores at age 15 (2018)   | 522     | 1 <sup>st</sup> gen, English Speakers: 526;<br>1 <sup>st</sup> gen non-English Speakers: 500<br>2 <sup>nd</sup> gen, English Speakers: 514;<br>2 <sup>nd</sup> gen non-English Speakers: 494 |
| Mean Mathematics score at age 15 (2018)  | 502     | 1 <sup>st</sup> gen, English Speakers: 498;<br>1 <sup>st</sup> gen non-English Speakers: 501<br>2 <sup>nd</sup> gen, English Speakers: 492;<br>2 <sup>nd</sup> gen non-English Speakers: 491 |
| <b>Social Inclusion (2017 and 2018 pooled)</b>   |         |  |
| Median annual net income (needs adjusted)  | €22,125 | €19,869  |
| At risk of poverty rate  | 14.5%   | 18.3%  |
| Consistent poverty rate  | 6.2%    | 6.5%   |
| Share of population (aged 16+) perceiving their health as good or very good  | 83.1%   | 87.7%  |
| Proportion of households that are property owners  | 78.4%   | 28.3%  |
| <b>Active Citizenship (end-2019)</b>   |         |  |
| Annual citizenship acquisition rate (non-EEA adults who acquired citizenship in 2019 as share of non-EEA nationals holding 'live' immigration permissions) |         | 1.5%   |
| Ratio of non-EEA nationals who acquired citizenship since 2005 to the estimated immigrant population of non-EEA origin at end-2019 (adjusted*)             |         | 37.0%  |
| Share of non-EEA adults with live residence permissions holding long-term residence  |         | 0.7%   |
| <b>Share of immigrants among elected local representatives (2019)</b>  |         | 0.7%   |

Sources: LFS Q1 2019 for employment indicators; LFS Q1 2018 and Q1 2019 (pooled) for education indicators (except achievement scores, which are based on PISA 2018 data); EU-SILC 2017-2018 (pooled) for social inclusion indicators. Citizenship and long-term residence indicators: Irish Naturalisation and Citizenship Service, Eurostat. The ratio of non-EEA nationals who acquired citizenship since 2005 to the estimated immigrant population of non-EEA origin at end-2019 is adjusted for naturalised persons leaving the State (see Chapter 5 for details).



Ireland lacks a statutory long-term residence status with clear rights and entitlements. The share of non-EEA nationals holding long-term residence permits under the current administrative scheme was estimated to be 0.7 per cent at year-end 2019. The share of immigrants among elected (local) representatives was 0.7 per cent. Chapter 5 notes that the lack of political engagement among migrants remains a concern, in spite of campaigns to increase political engagement among the group.

## **FUTURE DATA COLLECTION**

The value of monitoring the integration of migrants will only be as good as the evidence on which it is based. One issue in Ireland is how well represented non-Irish nationals are in social surveys, and who is excluded. Another issue is small sample sizes. Immigrant or ethnic minority boost samples would be useful to address this problem, particularly for measuring poverty and deprivation. Ireland needs a household survey that allows us to track income poverty and material deprivation between different non-EU migrant groups. Exploiting administrative data sources in areas such as education, health and social welfare would enhance our understanding of migrant integration from survey data. Recent initiatives to map existing data are promising in this regard (e.g. Fahey et al., 2019a) including the equality data audit recently conducted by the Central Statistics Office (Equality Data Audit 2020 – CSO, 2020a).

The sizeable group of immigrants who now possess Irish citizenship may be positive for their integration into Irish society but means that measuring integration on the basis of nationality may exclude an increasing number of naturalised citizens. The planned introduction of parents' country of birth and motives for migration into the LFS and the SILC data in Ireland represents an important change that will allow us to monitor the outcomes of second-generation adults. Ethnicity remains rarely measured in Ireland, in either surveys or administrative data. Yet with evidence of discrimination against some minority ethnic groups, particularly the Black ethnic group, in various areas of life, and renewed focus in public and policy debate on racism and discrimination, collecting data on ethnicity becomes more urgent than ever.

## **POLICY ISSUES**

The Migrant Integration Strategy, published in early 2017, represents a significant statement of policy intent and brought new energy and focus into efforts to integrate migrants in Ireland. The 2019 review of this strategy highlighted particular areas where efforts need to be intensified, and additional policy issues emerge from findings in this report. As noted by the interim review, given the mainstreamed approach to integration in Ireland, implementing the strategy is not just the task of the Department responsible for Integration and Equality but of all

relevant government departments and agencies who interact with migrants, including Local Authorities.

While there is no difference between the unemployment rate of Irish and non-Irish nationals in 2019, the persisting high unemployment and low employment rate among African nationals is of concern. Chapter 2, supplemented with other research, argues that poorer labour market outcomes among this group are likely to be a combination of time spent in the asylum system and not in the labour market for those who were seeking protection, and potentially also the experience of racism and discrimination in the Irish labour market. In terms of ethnic discrimination, the recent establishment of a new anti-racism committee with the task of developing an anti-racism strategy is a positive development, though specific measures to combat racism and discrimination may be required. The recently published report from the Expert Group *Report Of The Advisory Group On The Provision Of Support Including Accommodation To Persons In The International Protection Process* recommends promoting the integration of those seeking international protection from the earliest stage of the process (Government of Ireland, 2020b). It follows that consideration should be given to including this group within the remit of the successor to the Migrant Integration Strategy 2017-2020, as those seeking international protection awaiting a decision are not included in the current strategy. Initiatives to track integration outcomes of refugees and others who came through the protection process would enhance integration monitoring for this potentially vulnerable group of migrants. This is not currently possible in Ireland.

Chapter 3 notes that a gap remains in English reading outcomes between Irish 15-year-olds and those from a non-English speaking migrant background, consistent with previous Integration Monitors. This underlines the importance of monitoring needs, spending and effectiveness of English language tuition in Irish schools.

Housing and homelessness are not identified as issues in the Migrant Integration Strategy. Yet findings from this Integration Monitor (Chapter 4) suggest that migrants are much more likely to be in private rented accommodation than Irish nationals, which is a potential problem in the current housing market, where private renting is often linked to high and fluctuating rents and insecurity of housing tenure. Combined with other research findings on homelessness among some non-Irish groups and discrimination against African applicants in the private rented market, these findings suggest any future Migrant Integration Strategy could and should usefully include a number of actions specifically on housing.

Political participation of migrants in Ireland is in principle favourable given relatively generous voting rights compared to other EU countries (Huddleston et al., 2015). In practice, however, Chapter 5 documents a serious under-representation of migrant candidates in politics and on the voting register. Continued efforts to encourage migrant voter registration and voting, as well as participation in clubs and initiatives would potentially both increase migrant participation in Irish political life and promote local integration. At both national and local level, it is important to keep in mind that integrating migrants is not simply a task for government, either at national or local level, but of employers, schools, communities, sports and social clubs. As OECD (2020) argues, integration requires a ‘whole of society approach’.

The policy gaps and areas of concern highlighted here underscore the importance of renewing the Migrant Integration Strategy to keep up the momentum built by the current one. The COVID-19 pandemic and associated job losses may prove even more challenging for migrants than others, and it is particularly important then that their needs are kept in focus by the new government which took office on 27 June 2020.



## CHAPTER 1

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### Introduction, policy and context

By Frances McGinnity and Shannen Enright

Integration not only allows immigrants to contribute to the economic, social, cultural and political life of their host country, but is important for social cohesion and inclusive growth. Integration also plays a role in encouraging acceptance of immigrants by the host country population. While facilitating migrant integration may be challenging for host countries, international evidence shows that the consequences of failed integration may be even more challenging, from persistent disadvantage through recurring social tension, ghettos and race riots.

The *2020 Monitoring Report on Integration* is the seventh in a series of Integration Monitors published since 2011, the most recent of which was published in 2018. This monitoring exercise is currently funded by the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth in line with the Migrant Integration Strategy 2017-2020. The Monitor is part of a broader integration research programme funded by the Department of Justice and Equality, which has now transferred, with the Integration function, to the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth. The current research programme has funded a number of publications to date including an earlier Integration Monitor (McGinnity et al., 2018); a report on data for monitoring integration (Fahey et al., 2019a); a study of residential distribution of immigrants in Ireland (Fahey et al., 2019b); an examination of outcomes by detailed country of birth using Census microdata (McGinnity et al., 2020) and mostly recently a review of international practices on civics and language courses and tests with policy implications for Ireland (Groarke et al., 2020).

The Monitor aims to measure the integration of immigrants into Irish society in four key domains or policy areas: employment, education, social inclusion and active citizenship. Monitoring provides both policymakers and the general public with facts to assess integration outcomes and respond to policy challenges. Integration indicators are not necessarily assessments of integration policy but do point to successes and failures which may inform policy (OECD, 2018a). The aim is to provide a broad overview, to complement, and in some cases update, more detailed studies in particular areas of integration (such as McGinnity et al., 2020; Fahey et al., 2019b; Lima, 2020).

The context in Ireland is rather different from that in which the 2018 Monitor was published, set against a backdrop of the COVID-19 pandemic, Black Lives Matter protests in the United States and elsewhere, and Brexit. The COVID-19 pandemic and associated restrictions in Ireland will cause serious challenges for migrants, as for many other groups. This report documents the situation pre-pandemic: an accompanying report provides an initial analysis of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on non-Irish nationals in Ireland. Of course, any understanding of the impact of the pandemic and associated labour market shock will be informed by the situation of non-Irish nationals prior to the pandemic. Brexit will also undoubtedly prove challenging for Ireland, but analysis of the impact on migrants and migration in Ireland will need to await future Monitors, though already we see increasing naturalisation of UK migrants. The change of government in June 2020 and associated restructuring of government departments may also impact the nature of integration policy and the priority given to it. Due to this restructuring of departments the overall integration policy brief is being transferred to the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth.

This chapter provides an introduction to and context for the indicators. Section 1.1 considers the challenges of measuring integration and monitoring outcomes, the indicators used and the strengths and limitations of the process. Section 1.2 presents an overview of the main trends in migration in Ireland. Migration is a dynamic phenomenon, so these trends will help inform our understanding of both the composition of the migrant population and how it is changing over time. The Appendix provides some information about the composition of migrants in terms of region of origin, duration of residence, age and gender, to set subsequent chapters in context.

The structure of this Monitor is designed to replicate that of previous Monitors, in order to assess change over time. Unlike previous Monitors, there is no ‘special theme’<sup>5</sup> chapter, though an accompanying report considers non-Irish nationals and the COVID-19 pandemic in Ireland. There are some innovations to individual chapters this year. Highlights include: occupation and sector measures in Chapter 2, to profile where in the Irish labour market non-Irish nationals are working, and give insight into the potential impact of COVID-19; a breakdown of whether educational qualifications were acquired in Ireland or acquired abroad, to give a better indication of whether and how well the Irish education system is integrating non-Irish nationals, and finally in Chapter 5, more discussion of the political participation of migrants in Ireland to supplement the core indicators of active citizenship.

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<sup>5</sup> Special theme chapters use available data to explore a particular issue in depth.

## 1.1 THE BENEFITS AND CHALLENGES OF MONITORING INTEGRATION

### 1.1.1 Defining and measuring integration

What does it mean to be ‘integrated’ into a society? Being integrated into a country can mean different things to different people, and what it means can depend on their perspective, what they value and where they are living. Migrants need to ‘find a place for themselves’ – find a home, a job, income, schools, access to healthcare in their host country – and also where they fit into the social and cultural fabric of their destination. Penninx and Garcés-Mascreñas (2016, p.14) suggest integration may be defined simply as ‘the process of becoming an accepted part of society’, both as an individual and as a group. ‘Becoming’ is important here; Integration may actually be best understood as a process that develops over time.

According to the European Union’s 2004 *Common Basic Principles of Integration*,<sup>6</sup> integration is ‘a dynamic, two-way process of mutual accommodation by all immigrants and residents of Member States’ (see Appendix 1). In Ireland, integration is defined as the ‘ability to participate to the extent that a person needs and wishes in all major components of society without having to relinquish his or her own cultural identity’ (Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform, 1999 in Department of Justice and Equality, 2017).

Some domains and outcomes of integration are easier to measure using statistical indicators than others: sense of belonging, feelings, identity and involvement in communities can be more difficult to capture. Someone may have a high income and a great job but still do not feel they ‘belong’ in Ireland. Of course, migrants may also differ in the degree to which they feel they should or expect to experience a sense of belonging, identity or involvement in the country they migrated to, for some this may be more important than others. Migrants can also be performing well in one outcome and struggle in another. For this reason, the indicators are not combined into one composite ‘integration indicator’ but rather considered separately to provide information on different aspects of life. This Monitor generates a profile of certain migrant groups as being more or less integrated on a number of dimensions, rather than ‘integrated’ or ‘not integrated’.

The outcomes of non-Irish nationals are compared to Irish nationals in this report. The social and economic outcomes of Irish nationals are thus used as a benchmark for assessing how non-Irish nationals are performing. This is to see in which dimensions they differ from Irish nationals, rather than because of a normative belief that the outcomes ‘should’ appear the same. An unemployment rate among

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<sup>6</sup> Council of the EU (2004), adopted following agreement among EU Member States about the need for more dynamic policies to promote the integration of third-country nationals in Member States.

non-Irish nationals of 15 per cent means something rather different in one scenario – the midst of a recession – if the unemployment rate of Irish nationals is also 15 per cent, compared to a different scenario, where the unemployment rate of Irish nationals is 5 per cent.

One of the EU Common Basic Principles for Immigrant Integration Policy is the understanding that developing clear indicators is necessary to adjust policy and evaluate progress on integration (Council of the European Union, 2004). These indicators should be based on existing and comparable data for most Member States, limited in number, simple to understand and focused on outcomes. This is the approach adopted in 2010 by EU Ministers in the Zaragoza Declaration (see Section 1.1.2).

Monitoring can be particularly important when approaches to integration are mainstreamed within government departments, as opposed to a ‘standalone’ dedicated department. Mainstreaming, the policy approach pursued in Ireland (Department of Justice and Equality, 2017), can be a very effective policy approach to the integration of migrants, particularly in the longer term, but monitoring is important in a range of policy domains to ensure the needs of migrants are being met. Indeed, the importance of a monitoring exercise like this one is also acknowledged in the Migrant Integration Strategy itself (Department of Justice and Equality, 2017; 2019a). Without monitoring, the needs of immigrants and whether these are being addressed may be ignored (Collett and Petrovic, 2014).

### 1.1.2 Integration indicators

The main aim of this Integration Monitor is to provide a balanced and rigorous assessment of the situation of immigrants in Ireland using the most up-to-date and reliable data available. The framework for that assessment is based on the set of integration indicators known as the ‘Zaragoza indicators’.<sup>7</sup> A number of key principles guided the choice of these indicators. This section considers some of their strengths and limitations.

First, the indicators are largely focused on integration outcomes. For each indicator, outcomes for non-Irish nationals are compared with those for the native population, in this case the Irish population, as discussed above. The two exceptions to this principle of comparing outcomes are the indicators concerning

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<sup>7</sup> Adopted in April 2010 by EU Ministers with responsibility for integration at the European Ministerial Conference on Integration, Zaragoza, Spain (April 2010) and approved in the Swedish presidency conference conclusions on indicators and monitoring of the outcome of integration policies. See <https://ec.europa.eu/migrant-integration/librarydoc/declaration-of-the-european-ministerial-conference-on-integration-zaragoza-15-16-april-2010>.



citizenship and long-term residence (see Table 1.1), which describe the context and opportunities for integration rather than measure empirical outcomes. This Integration Monitor differs then from the Migrant Integration Policy Index (MIPEX) (Huddleston et al., 2015) as the MIPEX indicators are designed to assess, compare and improve integration policy indicators across EU countries and selected other Western countries.<sup>8</sup>

Second, there are a limited number of core indicators which are largely drawn from nationally representative data from ongoing survey exercises already collected. This strategy makes them cost-effective, reasonably up-to-date and, in principle, highly comparable, but it does have some disadvantages:

- (i) The indicators principally measure the ‘structural’ dimensions of integration – aspects such as labour market outcomes, educational attainment, income and poverty. Subjective indicators, such as sense of belonging in Ireland, identity or the experience of racism and discrimination are not regularly measured, so these are not included as core indicators.
- (ii) While representative of the population in Ireland as a whole, the existing data sources may not be designed to represent and measure outcomes for immigrants. This is discussed further in Section 1.1.3.
- (iii) All of these indicators study integration at the individual level, neglecting the role that local communities play in the integration of migrants. Living in a disadvantaged, poorly resourced community may be an additional challenge to integration. In some countries, migrant communities can be spatially segregated in or concentrated in disadvantaged areas. Recent research (Fahey et al., 2019b) finds that there is no evidence that migrants in general are concentrated in disadvantaged areas in Ireland. However, migrants with poor English language skills do tend to live in areas of higher unemployment, particularly in the urban areas of Dublin, Cork and Limerick. This report measures integration at a national level, though we acknowledge that integration often takes place at a local level and can vary across neighbourhoods and across regions of the country (see Gilmartin and Dagg, 2018; 2020). Reference is made to regional variation, where this information is available.
- (iv) The focus on nationally representative survey and administrative data means the Integration Monitor lacks a sense of the lived experience of integration, which is better captured by qualitative work using interviews and case studies (for example Lima, 2020; UNHCR, 2014).

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<sup>8</sup> For more information, see <http://www.mipex.eu/what-is-mipex>.

A third principle is that indicators should be simple to understand, accessible and transparent. Basing indicators on concepts familiar to people as unemployment and poverty means they should be meaningful for both policymakers and the general public. This transparency requirement also means they need to be defined clearly (see Appendix 2).

Of course, the non-Irish population were typically raised and educated in a different environment, speaking a different language. They tend to be younger than the Irish population. Typically, but not always, integration outcomes improve the longer migrants have lived in a country. For this reason, Chapter 1 Appendix presents a profile of the different regional groups, to help understand group differences. In Chapters 2, 3 and 4, some statistical modelling is used to check the role of background characteristics in understanding outcomes. Modelling is not a key part of this monitoring exercise though, as the focus is on a broad range of 'headline' indicators that are easy to understand.

Finally, the indicators are designed to be comparable over time, to allow for monitoring change. This emphasis on change is important for two reasons. Firstly, from a policy perspective, the direction of change is important: for example, are employment rates rising or falling? Secondly, an indicator might underestimate the proportion of an immigrant group who are renting their accommodation, but if it does so consistently over time and across groups, it will still detect changes in that proportion.

Table 1.1 presents the indicators used in this Integration Monitor, which draw on those proposed at Zaragoza (see also Appendix 2).

**TABLE 1.1 OUTLINE OF CORE INDICATORS, BROADLY EQUIVALENT TO ZARAGOZA INDICATORS**

|                              |   |
|------------------------------|---|
| <b>1. Employment</b>         | Employment rate<br>Unemployment rate<br>Activity rate   |
| <b>2. Education</b>          | Highest educational attainment<br>Share of 25- to 34-year-olds with third-level educational attainment<br>Share of early leavers from education and training<br>Mean English reading and Mathematics scores for 15-year-olds (PISA)                   |
| <b>3. Social inclusion</b>   | Median net income (household income and equivalised income)<br>At risk of poverty rate<br>Share of population perceiving their health status as good or very good<br>Share of property owners among immigrants and in the total population            |
| <b>4. Active citizenship</b> | Ratio of immigrants who have acquired citizenship to non-EEA immigrant population (best estimate)<br>Share of immigrants holding permanent or long-term residence permits (best estimate)<br>Share of immigrants among elected local representatives. |

*Note:* In some instances, the indicators are slightly different because of data constraints (see Appendix 2).

In addition, the indicators arose from the EU's Common Basic Principles and are consistent with them (i.e. Principles 3, 5, 6 and 9 respectively. See Appendix 1). Current Irish integration policy (the Migrant Integration Strategy 2017-2020) also takes into account the EU Common Basic Principles on Integration.

The *Migrant Integration Strategy – A Blueprint for the Future* was published in February 2017. Ireland pursues a policy of mainstream service provision in the area of integration, so responsibility for the delivery of integration services rests with individual government departments and agencies, including Local Authorities (Department of Justice and Equality, 2017). The primary focus of the strategy is on ensuring the equitable provision of public services within a mainstreamed system (Arnold et al., 2019a), therefore government departments and agencies are key to service delivery, but not the only actors; an important method of delivering the Migrant Integration Strategy is also working with non-governmental delivery partners.<sup>9</sup>

The Strategy is monitored by the Migrant Integration Strategy Monitoring and Coordination Committee led by the Department of Justice and Equality. This Committee is responsible for agreeing indicators for measuring progress. The interim *Migrant Integration Strategy: 2017-2020 Progress Report to Government* was published in June 2019. The key finding of the Progress Report is the importance of the whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach to successful integration, and the benefits it brings to all aspects of Irish life

<sup>9</sup> Where possible, references to measures and projects run by NGOs in this Monitor will indicate whether they are government funded.

(Department of Justice and Equality, 2019a). While the Progress Report highlights a number of successes – including up to €15 million granted in Integration Funding Programmes and the Education (Admissions to Schools) Act 2018 amongst others – the report also helps identify areas where actions need to be developed in the remaining period of the strategy (to end 2020). In noting the report, the Government agreed to develop new actions particularly to address areas where outcomes for migrants need to be improved. These areas are; combatting racism, employment, English language acquisition, and the promotion of integration at the local level.

A new Anti-Racism Committee was established in December 2019 and held its inaugural meeting in June 2020. It includes 16 members, a diverse group of representatives of the public, private and voluntary sector and expert views.<sup>10</sup> The key task of the committee is to develop a new action plan against racism within one year, focusing on concrete actions that can be taken. As Fanning and Michael (2017) note, the National Consultative Committee on Racism and Interculturalism was dismantled during the Great Recession and there has not been an anti-racism action plan in place since, so this is a significant development.

### 1.1.3 Challenges of monitoring outcomes among immigrants

Even when indicators are agreed and defined, monitoring immigrant outcomes is challenging. This is related to how immigrants are defined, how they are represented in survey data, and how the nature and composition of the group changes over time.

The general definition of immigrants in this Integration Monitor is based on nationality and is consistent with the previous publications in the series. However, the nationality definition does not count second-generation immigrants (those born in Ireland to immigrant parents) who are not typically identified using general social surveys, nor does it separately identify naturalised Irish citizens of immigrant origin. Most immigration into Ireland happened in the last decade and a half, but because a significant proportion of immigrants are now naturalised Irish citizens (see Chapter 5) this has implications for how best to define the immigrant population. This is a point we return to in Chapter 6, where we discuss that indicators of integration are only as good as the data on which they are based, and that decisions about defining the migrant population can inform what we can say about their integration.

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<sup>10</sup> Details of membership: <https://www.gov.ie/en/press-release/6bedb-action-plan-against-racism-for-ireland-to-be-drawn-up-by-new-independent-anti-racism-committee>.

A second challenge for monitoring is how effectively survey data collect information on immigrants. These large, nationally representative datasets are not designed to represent and record details of immigrants, but rather the whole population. A key concern is the tendency for certain groups to be under-represented in survey data: telephone surveys for example can be challenging for migrants with poor language skills. While some nationalities dominate the non-Irish population – UK and Polish nationals for example – there is also a very diverse range of nationalities and countries of origin among immigrants to Ireland (McGinnity et al., 2020). Small numbers in particular groups often mean they need to be combined into larger groups based on regional groupings, and, as McGinnity et al. (2020) show, these regional groupings can hide considerable variation between those from different countries. Household surveys such as the Labour Force Survey and the Survey of Income and Living Conditions are of private households, so exclude some potentially very vulnerable groups – the homeless and those living in residential homes or direct provision accommodation centres.

From a European Commission perspective, integration relates to third-country nationals (those from outside the European Union) and does not include EU nationals moving to other EU countries. However, this Integration Monitor, like previous Monitors, measures outcomes for non-EU and EU immigrants. This is particularly important in Ireland as a large number of non-Irish nationals come from within the EU. EU nationals are distinguished from non-EU nationals as they have very different rights to live and work in Ireland. As previous research (Barrett et al., 2006) has indicated, the experience in Ireland of people from the United Kingdom differs from other EU nationals and they have typically lived in Ireland much longer than others (see Table A1.4), so UK nationals are separately distinguished. EU-West nationals and EU-East nationals are also distinguished separately.<sup>11</sup> In this Integration Monitor, where data permit, we distinguish non-EU nationals into the following groups: ‘Africa’; ‘North America, Australia and Oceania’; ‘Asia’, which comprises South, South-East and East Asia; and ‘Rest of the World’ which comprises Central America and Caribbean, South America, Near and Middle East, and other countries.<sup>12</sup> However, where data from the Survey of Income and Living Conditions are used (Chapter 4), these latter groups are aggregated into a ‘non-EU’ category.

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<sup>11</sup> EU-West comprises the older EU15 Member States excluding the UK and Ireland, i.e. Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Portugal, Spain and Sweden. EU-East comprises the EU Member States that acceded in 2004 and 2007, i.e. Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia.

<sup>12</sup> In particular the ‘Rest of the World’ category is extremely diverse. It is not possible to distinguish groups further given the number of cases. The Asian category is also diverse, combining as it does Middle Eastern countries such as Syria with South Asian (India, Pakistan, Bangladesh) with Far Eastern Countries (e.g. China, Japan).

A third challenge with monitoring integration is the change in size and composition of the immigrant population over time. Recent migration flows to and from Ireland illustrate how migration patterns closely reflect economic conditions: economic growth brings strong labour demand and stimulates immigration, whereas recession and falling labour demand typically stimulates emigration.<sup>13</sup> This is why migration flows are so important for understanding changes in the characteristics of immigrants living in Ireland; this is discussed in the next section.

## 1.2 OVERVIEW OF THE MAIN TRENDS IN MIGRATION IN IRELAND

In this section we discuss the main trends in immigration in recent years with a particular focus on developments since the 2018 Integration Monitor, which reflect trends and developments in law and policy up to December 2017.

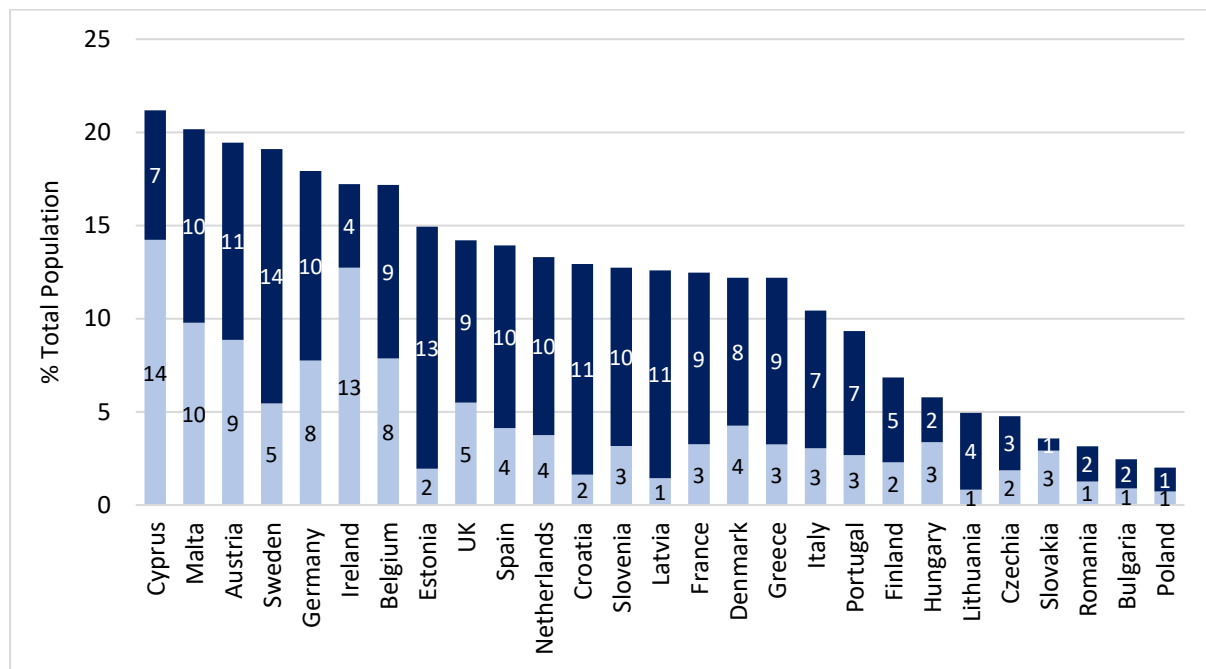
In 2019, Ireland had one of the highest percentages of foreign-born residents among EU Member States at 17 per cent (Figure 1.1).<sup>14</sup> Most migration to Ireland is from within the EU.<sup>15</sup> Excluding Luxembourg (not shown), Cyprus and Ireland have the highest proportion of residents born in other EU Member States at 13 per cent in 2019. Ireland also had the seventh lowest proportion of foreign-born residents born in non-EU Member States (see Figure 1.1). Census 2016 shows there were 535,475 non-Irish nationals living in Ireland, or 11.6 per cent of the usually resident population.

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<sup>13</sup> It is not clear if the COVID-induced recession will lead to as much of an increase in emigration as previous recessions in Ireland, given the global nature of this recession and potential longer term or reimposed travel restrictions.

<sup>14</sup> Source: Eurostat. Note that 'foreign-born' are typically first-generation immigrants and may consist of both foreign nationals and foreign-born nationals of the host country. In Ireland, estimates from Census 2016 microdata indicate that just over 62,000 recorded their place or birth as Northern Ireland. This is about 1.3 per cent of the population resident in Ireland in April 2016.

<sup>15</sup> Foreign-born also includes those born in Northern Ireland. These are counted among those born in other EU Member States (see previous footnote).

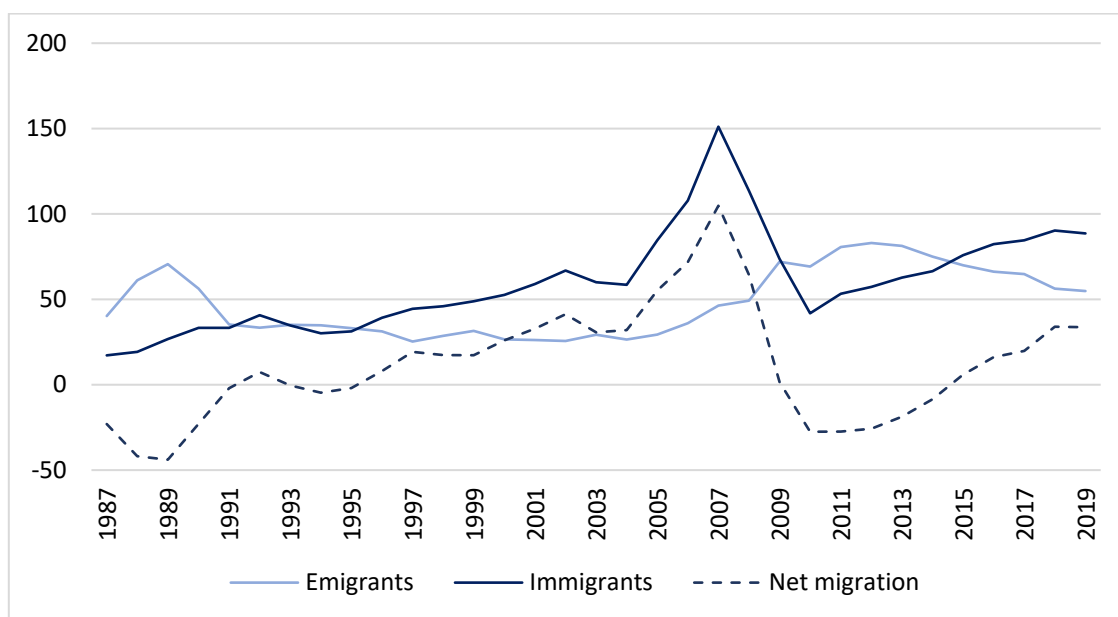
**FIGURE 1.1 FOREIGN-BORN RESIDENTS AS A PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL POPULATION 2019**

Source: Eurostat (at 1 January 2019).

Notes: Light blue is the proportion born in other EU countries: dark blue is the proportion born outside the EU. The following data for Luxembourg are excluded: 35 per cent born in other EU Member States, 12 per cent born in non-EU Member States. Stateless residents not included.

Ireland has experienced extensive migratory change over the past two decades, linked to changing economic conditions and the expansion of the EU (see Figure 1.2). Prior to the mid-1990s Ireland was a country with a long history of net emigration, but a period of economic growth from the early 1990s attracted returning Irish emigrants and other immigrants. In 2004 the enlargement of the EU led to particularly high net inward migration. Ireland, the UK and Sweden were the only three EU Member States to open their labour markets, without restrictions, to workers from new Member States. Inflows of migrants peaked during the economic boom in 2006/2007. However, due in part to a collapse in the property market, together with deteriorating international economic conditions, Ireland entered into recession in 2008. As a result, immigration plummeted. In 2010, Ireland re-entered a phase of significant net emigration, across all groups.<sup>16</sup> Revised estimates provided by the CSO presented in Figure 1.2 show that the year to April 2019 was the seventh consecutive year of decreased emigration. The 2019 net migration figure stood at an estimated 33,700, meaning that 33,700 more people came to Ireland to live than emigrated.

<sup>16</sup> All groups (Irish, UK, EU-West, EU-East and 'Rest of the World') saw an increase in emigration between 2010 and 2011 (Irish, UK, EU-West/East) and/or between 2011 and 2012 (Irish, EU-West/East and 'Rest of the World').

**FIGURE 1.2 IMMIGRATION, EMIGRATION AND NET MIGRATION 1987-2019**

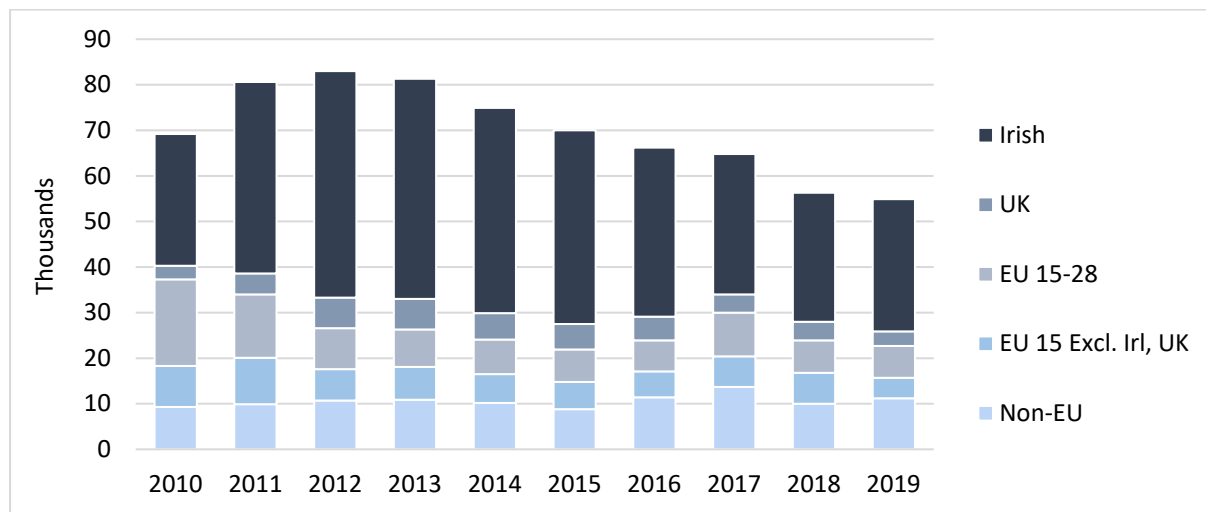
Source: CSO 'Population and Migration Estimates',<sup>17</sup> various releases.

Using estimates from the CSO Population and Migration Estimates, Figure 1.2 demonstrates that immigration inflows have risen slightly, roughly five per cent from 2017 to 2019 (from around 84,600 to 88,600). Emigration flows have also decreased by 18 per cent from 2017 to 2019 (from around 64,800 to 54,900) but are still 53 per cent higher than the flow recorded in 2006 (36,000).

Figure 1.3 shows that immigration increased for all national groups from 2017 to 2019. Immigration by (returning) Irish nationals increased by 2 per cent from 2017 (27,400) to 2019 (26,900). Among non-Irish groups, the largest change was among migrants from EU15 whose immigration rate grew by roughly 17 per cent in 2019 compared with 2017 (1,800).

<sup>17</sup> The CSO creates these Population and Migration Estimates using the Labour Force Survey (LFS) and the Census, when available. Estimates are also compiled against the backdrop of movements in other migration indicators such as the number of Personal Public Service Numbers allocated to non-Irish nationals, the number of work permits issued/renewed and the number of asylum applications.

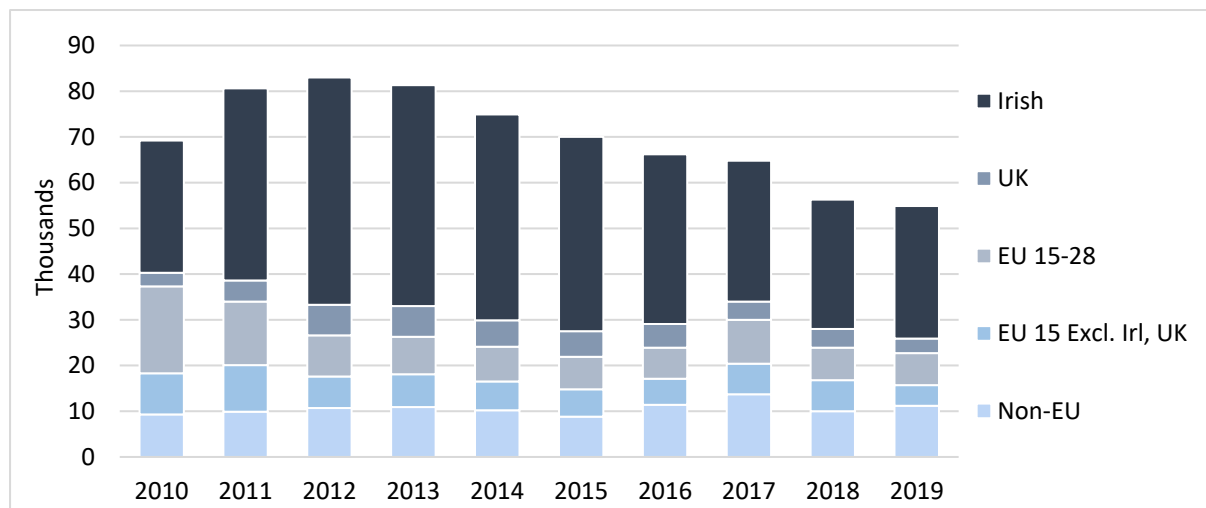


**FIGURE 1.3 NATIONALITY OF IMMIGRATION FLOWS, 2010-2019**

Source: CSO 'Population and Migration Estimates', various releases.

Notes: Year to April of reference year.

Figure 1.4 shows the nationality breakdown of emigration flows from 2010 to 2019. Overall, emigration flows (of Irish plus non-Irish nationals) have decreased for the seventh consecutive year from a peak of 83,000 in 2012 to 54,900 in 2019. Emigration of Irish nationals accounted for a larger proportion of emigrant flow in 2019 compared to 2017. In 2019, Irish nationals accounted for 53 per cent of the emigrant flow compared to 48 per cent (30,800) in 2017. From 2017 to 2019, the outward flow of the non-EU groups decreased by 18 per cent (from an estimated 13,700 to 11,200); EU-East decreased by 37 per cent (from 7,100 to 4,500); and EU-West increased by 33 per cent (6,700 to 8,900). The outward flow of UK nationals decreased between 2017 and 2019 by 20 per cent (from around 4,000 to 3,200).

**FIGURE 1.4 NATIONALITY OF EMIGRATION FLOWS, 2010-2019**

Source: CSO 'Population and Migration Estimates', various releases.

Notes: Year to April of reference year.

Figure 1.5 shows the breakdown of all registrations, or residence permissions, of non-EEA nationals<sup>18</sup> aged 16 and over from 2010 to 2019. This can give some indication about reasons for migration of non-EEA nationals living in Ireland, though this is not the primary purpose of these data.<sup>19</sup> EEA nationals and non-EEA nationals aged under 16 are not required to register and therefore are not included. In 2014, the Employment Permits (Amendment) Act 2014 removed the exemption for those under 16 to register, but this provision has not yet been implemented, meaning that we still have no reliable data on this group. The total number of residence permissions increased in 2019 for the third consecutive year.

The most recent data available to year-end are for 2019; however, it is important to highlight that the figures presented for this year are provisional. In 2019 there were 168,297 non-EEA persons aged 16 and over registered in Ireland, representing an increase of 26 per cent since 2010 (133,232). The largest proportion of residence permissions issued were for education reasons (30 per cent) followed by renumeration reasons<sup>20</sup> (24 per cent), other reasons<sup>21</sup> (23 per cent), family reasons (20 per cent) and protection reasons (2 per cent).

Figure 1.5 shows that the number of residence permissions issued for the purpose of work has increased since 2017 by 51 per cent (from around 26,133 to 39,404). The share of residence permissions issued for work has increased gradually from 19 per cent in 2016 to 23 per cent in 2019, perhaps due in part to economic recovery and reforms of employment permit legislation in Ireland (see Barrett et al., 2017 for details of these reforms).

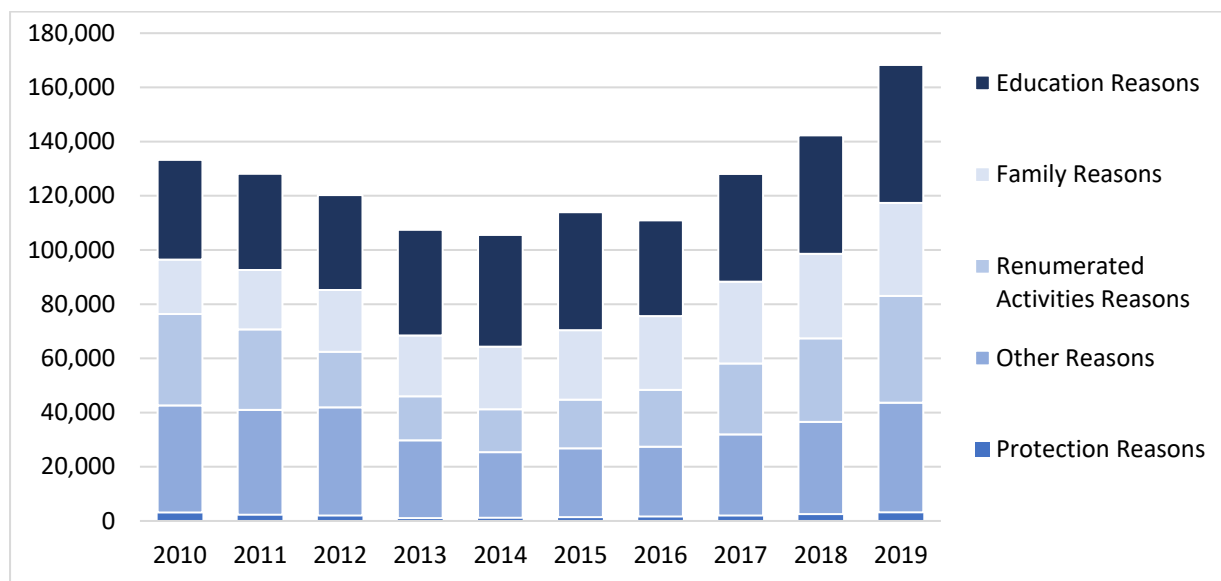
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<sup>18</sup> The European Economic Area (EEA) comprises the countries of the EU plus Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway.

<sup>19</sup> Stamp 4 is a very diverse category, for example, and some non-EEA nationals may have naturalised since coming to Ireland and thus not require a residence permission (see Chapter 5). Initial migration motives may also be mixed, and may change over time (Platt, 2019).

<sup>20</sup> Refers to residence permissions issued for employment related reasons.

<sup>21</sup> Includes residence permissions that do not include the right to work e.g. pensioners.

**FIGURE 1.5 RESIDENCE PERMISSIONS (NON-EEA NATIONALS AGED 16 AND OVER), 2010-2019**

Source: Eurostat (table: migr\_resvalid).

Notes: All valid permits by reason, length of validity and citizenship on 31 December of each year. Data for 2019 were provisionally provided by Eurostat.

The absolute number of residence permissions issued for family reasons has increased steadily since 2017, increasing by 14 per cent between 2017 and 2019 (from around 30,184 to 34,317). Yet the share of residence permissions issued to family members in total issued residence permits decreased between 2017 and 2019, from 24 per cent to 20 per cent, and in comparative perspective migration for family reasons in Ireland is low – one of the lowest in OECD countries (OECD, 2018a).

The absolute number of residence permissions issued for education reasons has increased since 2017 by 28 per cent (39,779 to 50,946). The share of residence permissions issued for education reasons in total residence permits slightly decreased from 31 per cent in 2017 to 30 per cent in 2019.

The absolute number of residence permissions issued for protection reasons has increased since 2017 by 62 per cent (from around 1,983 to 3,211), in part reflecting Ireland's participation in EU relocation and resettlement schemes (Barrett et al., 2017; Arnold et al., 2018). The share of residence permissions issued for protection reasons in total residence permits increased slightly from 1.5 per cent in 2017 to 1.9 per cent in 2019, though this was still very low.

Data released by the Department of Justice and Equality indicate that at year-end 2018 the top ten registered<sup>22</sup> nationalities, accounting for over 60 per cent of all persons registered, were: Brazil (16 per cent), India (15 per cent), US (9 per cent), China (8 per cent), Pakistan (4 per cent), Nigeria (3 per cent), Philippines (3 per cent), Malaysia (3 per cent), Canada (2 per cent) and Mexico (2 per cent) (Department of Justice and Equality, 2019b).

### BOX 1.1 RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN RELATION TO INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION IN IRELAND

The International Protection Act 2015 commenced in December 2016. The Act introduced a single application procedure for the first time. It was foreseen that asylum applicants would spend less time awaiting a decision, and thus spend less time out of work and less time in the direct provision system.<sup>23</sup> However, due to a backlog of cases and the process of transitioning to the new asylum system, waiting times for first interview actually increased from 13 weeks at the end of 2015<sup>24</sup> to 18-20 months in 2017 (Arnold, et al., 2018). In 2019 waiting times for first interview were estimated to be 8-10 months (AIDA, 2019).

By contrast, the proportion of residents living in direct provision accommodation centres for more than five years recently began to decrease.<sup>25</sup> In 2014, around 38 per cent of residents in direct provision centres were in the system for five years or more,<sup>26</sup> decreasing to around 24 per cent in 2015,<sup>27</sup> and around 13 per cent in 2016.<sup>28</sup> The latest available published figures, for November 2018, indicate that there were 5,928 residents, around 6 per cent of whom were living in direct provision for more than five years.<sup>29</sup> Much of the decline comes from people given leave to remain on foot of recommendations in the McMahon report (2015).<sup>30</sup> The McMahon Report (2015)<sup>31</sup> noted that in 2015 around 55 per cent of protection applicants resided outside direct provision accommodation centres or had left the State. However, it was reported that in 2018-2019 a higher than normal proportion of applicants taking up the offer of direct provision accommodation has led to capacity problems in the system, increasing the use of emergency accommodation such as hotels. By 1 December 2019, 6,013 persons were residing in direct provision, with a further 1,559 residing in emergency

<sup>22</sup> All non-EEA nationals living in the State for longer than 90 days must register with INIS or An Garda Síochána, depending on where they live. Those living in Dublin must register with INIS whereas those living outside Dublin must register with An Garda Síochána.

<sup>23</sup> Direct provision accommodation centres are state-run full board facilities for persons seeking protection. Residents also receive a living allowance, which was increased to €29.80 for children and €38.80 for adults from 25 March 2019, the level recommended by the McMahon Report 2015.

<sup>24</sup> Office of the Refugee Applications Commissioner, *Annual Report 2015*. [www.orac.ie](http://www.orac.ie).

<sup>25</sup> Note not all protection applicants in Ireland reside in the direct provision system: some live independently.

<sup>26</sup> Reception and Integration Agency Annual Report for 2014. [www.ria.gov.ie](http://www.ria.gov.ie).

<sup>27</sup> Reception and Integration Agency Annual Report for 2015. [www.ria.gov.ie](http://www.ria.gov.ie).

<sup>28</sup> Reception and Integration Agency Annual Report for 2016. [www.ria.gov.ie](http://www.ria.gov.ie).

<sup>29</sup> Reception and Integration Agency Monthly report for December 2017. [www.ria.gov.ie](http://www.ria.gov.ie).

<sup>30</sup> For example, 1,210 were issued leave to remain under the 1999 act in 2015. See Groarke and Brazil, 2020, Table 1.2.

<sup>31</sup> This was the report of the 2014 *Working Group Report to Government on Improvements to the Protection Process, including Direct Provision and Supports to Asylum Seekers*.

accommodation.<sup>32</sup> National Standards for accommodation centres prepared by an Advisory Group including UNHCR Ireland and NGO representatives were published in August 2019 and are due to come into force legally in 2021 (Houses of the Oireachtas, 2019). Use of emergency accommodation, combined with rising numbers of applicants and improvements in accommodation standards, has contributed to escalating costs of the direct provision system (Department of Justice and Equality, 2019c).

An Expert Group on the Provision of Support, including Accommodation, to asylum seekers was established in late 2019 and produced a report which was published in early October 2020. The report recommends measures such as exploration of various housing models, extending the right to work,<sup>33</sup> moving away from emergency accommodation and providing own door accommodation within three months of application, permitting bank accounts and driving licences for applicants (Government of Ireland, 2020). As part of the recently agreed Programme for Government there is a commitment to ending the direct provision system. It would be important that any replacement is durable and meets the needs of applicants and is not just direct provision by another name (Ombudsman for Children's Office, 2020; Houses of the Oireachtas, 2019). The report also recommends the amount of time taken to process positive decisions needs to be reduced with binding deadlines set for decisions (Government of Ireland, 2020). Supporting successful applicants to transition out of direct provision centres would also be a key element, given that around 11 per cent of residents of direct provision centres have actually been granted protection status (Houses of the Oireachtas, 2019).<sup>34</sup> These supports could include assistance to find housing, access to education and childcare and labour market access (see below discussion of supports currently offered to resettled refugees and also Arnold et al., 2019a). Assisting voluntary return of unsuccessful applicants might also form part of a comprehensive strategy to reform the system.

#### *Ireland's Response to the Refugee Crisis*

While the flow of displaced persons into Ireland has been much lower than in many EU Member States, in response to the steep increase in applications, the Irish government established the Irish Refugee Protection Programme in 2015. This programme committed to accepting persons in need of protection, mainly through EU relocation and resettlement, and established a cross-departmental task force. In general, in Ireland resettled refugees are given programme refugee status on arrival and relocated asylum seekers have an accelerated asylum procedure.

<sup>32</sup> <https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/question/2019-12-10/271>.

<sup>33</sup> In June 2018, the *European Communities (Reception Conditions) Regulations 2018*, which transposed the *EU (recast) Reception Conditions Directive (2013/33/EU)*, came into effect. Under the Regulations, co-operating asylum applicants who have not received a first instance decision within nine months may apply for permission to access the labour market or vocational training. Arrangements have recently been revised, see <https://www.gov.ie/en/press-release/59532-minister-ogorman-and-minister-mcentee-publish-the-report-by-the-advisory-group-on-direct-provision-and-announce-a-reduction-in-the-waiting-period-for-international-protection-applicants-to-access-work/>, and discussion in Box 2.1.

<sup>34</sup> Recent figures suggest that in June 2020, 900 people were residing in the direct provision system despite having been granted a legal status to remain in Ireland as at end May 2020: <http://www.justice.ie/en/JELR/Pages/PQ-16-06-2020-359>.

Convention refugees, subsidiary protection holders and programme refugees have similar rights to Irish citizens, including access to the labour market and third-level education (Arnold et al., 2018). Between 2010 and 2018, 3,272 persons were granted Convention refugee status, and a further 1,015 persons were awarded subsidiary protection in the same period (Groarke and Brazil, 2020, Table 1.2).<sup>35</sup> A further 307 people were granted permission to remain under section 49 of the International Protection Act 2015 between 2017 and 2018. In the period 2010 to 2018, 4,676 people were granted leave to remain under section 3 of the 1999 Act, following submission of an unsuccessful application for international protection.<sup>36</sup> Finally, 1,480 persons were granted programme refugee status in the period 2010-2018, and 119 granted status under the Syrian Humanitarian Admission Programme (SHAP) (Groarke and Brazil, 2020). The total number of people granted a residence status for a protection-related reason in the period 2010-2018 in Ireland was 10,869.<sup>37</sup>

Beneficiaries of international protection avail of various supports including in respect of social protection, housing, education and labour market access, though Arnold et al. (2019a) note that resettled refugees are offered substantially more integration supports than spontaneous<sup>38</sup> refugees.

While the numbers of beneficiaries of international protection, programme refugees and asylum seekers in Ireland have been increasing in recent years, information on their integration outcomes such as employment and unemployment rates, poverty and social exclusion, or any socio-cultural integration measures cannot be extracted from existing data sources and are thus not reported in this Integration Monitor (see also Chapter 6).

<sup>35</sup> All figures from Groarke and Brazil (2020, Table 1.2) in this paragraph combine grants at first instance and at appeal (or review) of first instance decision to reduce the level of detail.

<sup>36</sup> Leave to remain under section 3 of the 1999 Act may be granted for reasons that are not protection-related.

<sup>37</sup> Data on persons who came through the international protection process and were granted leave to remain under section 3 of the 1999 Act are included in this total. Leave to remain under section 3 of the 1999 Act may be granted for reasons that are not protection-related.

<sup>38</sup> Resettled refugees are generally granted the status of 'Programme Refugee' in Ireland, whereas refugees who arrive spontaneously must apply for 'Convention Refugee' protection on arrival.

## CHAPTER 1 APPENDIX

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Of all non-Irish nationals living in Ireland in 2019, 12.5 per cent of the population, the largest proportions were nationals of Eastern European countries (5.2 per cent) and the United Kingdom (2.3 per cent) (see Table A1.1). These proportions have remained relatively stable since 2015. There has been a slight increase in the proportion of Western European nationals, who made up 1.7 per cent of the population living in Ireland in 2019. Among non-EU nationals, Asian nationals make up the largest share. The proportion of Asians living in Ireland has also risen slightly in the past few years, and this group make up 1.3 per cent of the population in 2019. The proportion of nationals from the 'Rest of the World' (chiefly non-EU Eastern Europe and South America) has also risen slightly to 1.1 per cent in 2019. This compares to a more stable 0.5 per cent African nationals and 0.4 per cent of nationals of North America/Australia/Oceania.

Taking age into account, the largest proportion of non-Irish nationals were aged 25 to 44 years (see Table A1.2). Migrants from the 'Rest of the World' category (68.5 per cent), Africa (64.7 per cent) and Asia (64.2 per cent) recorded the highest proportion in this age range. UK nationals were over-represented in the age range '45 to 65 years' (38.4 per cent) compared to other nationalities. The UK also had the highest proportion of nationals in the age range '65+ years' at 21.6 per cent followed by North America, Australia and Oceania at 6.3 per cent and Western European migrants at 2.6 per cent. Migrants from Eastern Europe (15.4 per cent), 'Rest of the World' (12.6 per cent) and Africa (12.5 per cent) had the highest proportion of non-Irish national children aged 0-14 (see Table A1.2). The gender of non-Irish nationals in Ireland in 2019 was largely balanced across all groups (Table A1.3) with the exception of migrants from North America, Australia and Oceania who were more likely to be female (58.9 per cent).

Non-Irish nationals also differ considerably as to how long they have been living in Ireland. Table A1.4 shows that 77.3 per cent of UK nationals had been living in Ireland for more than ten years: nearly 40 per cent of them had been living in Ireland more than 20 years. Over half (56.4 per cent) of people from EU-East had been living in Ireland for over ten years. Other migrant groups have come to Ireland relatively recently. Around 30 to 38 per cent of people from Africa, EU-West, and North America, Australia and Oceania had been in Ireland for over ten years. The proportion of 'Rest of the World' who had come in the past ten years was much lower at 8.4 per cent. Almost half of North America, Australia and Oceania and Asian migrants and over 60 per cent of migrants from the 'Rest of the World' group had been living in Ireland five years or less.

**TABLE A1.1 NATIONALITY BY YEAR, LFS Q1 2015-Q1 2019**

|   | 2015 |        | 2016 |        | 2017 |        | 2018 |        | 2019 |        | Weighted N<br>in pop |
|---|------|--------|------|--------|------|--------|------|--------|------|--------|----------------------|
|   | %    | Count  | %    | Count  | %    | Count  | %    | Count  | %    | Count  |                      |
| <b>Irish</b>                                | 88.6 | 45,032 | 88.5 | 37,632 | 88.2 | 40,053 | 88   | 32,925 | 87.5 | 35,375 | 4,277,106            |
| <b>Non-Irish</b>                            | 11.4 | 4,165  | 11.6 | 3,653  | 11.8 | 3,973  | 12   | 2,660  | 12.5 | 3,214  | 612,011              |
| <i>Of Which:</i>                            |      |        |      |        |      |        |      |        |      |        |                      |
| <b>UK</b>                                   | 2.3  | 631    | 2.2  | 647    | 2.2  | 743    | 2.3  | 545    | 2.3  | 559    | 112,410              |
| <b>EU-West</b>                              | 1.3  | 485    | 1.4  | 528    | 1.4  | 505    | 1.5  | 372    | 1.7  | 440    | 80,602               |
| <b>EU-East</b>                              | 5.3  | 1,981  | 5.3  | 1,649  | 5.2  | 1,755  | 5.3  | 1,186  | 5.2  | 1,409  | 256,047              |
| <b>Rest of the World</b>                    | 0.8  | 340    | 1.0  | 304    | 1.0  | 330    | 1.0  | 175    | 1.1  | 269    | 55,141               |
| <b>Nth America, Australia &amp; Oceania</b> | 0.4  | 141    | 0.3  | 102    | 0.4  | 141    | 0.4  | 84     | 0.4  | 98     | 18,036               |
| <b>Africa</b>                               | 0.4  | 183    | 0.5  | 145    | 0.4  | 139    | 0.5  | 95     | 0.5  | 126    | 25,104               |
| <b>Asia</b>                                 | 1.0  | 404    | 1.0  | 278    | 1.1  | 360    | 1.1  | 203    | 1.3  | 313    | 64,669               |
| <b>Total</b>                                | 100  | 49,197 | 100  | 41,285 | 100  | 44,026 | 100  | 35,585 | 100  | 38,589 | 4,889,117            |

Source: Own calculations from LFS microdata Q1 2015-Q1 2019.

Notes: Percentages are weighted; N of cases are unweighted. Final column 'weighted N in pop' refers to the estimated total number in each group in the population in 2019.

**TABLE A1.2 NATIONALITY BY AGE, LFS Q1 2019**

|   | 0-14<br>years | 15-24<br>years | 25-44<br>years | 45-64<br>years | 65 +<br>years | Total % | Total<br>Count |
|---|---------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|---------------|---------|----------------|
| <b>Irish</b>                              | 21.7          | 12.9           | 24.8           | 25.3           | 15.4          | 100     | 35,375         |
| <b>Non-Irish</b>                          | 11.0          | 10.6           | 55.2           | 18.1           | 5.1           | 100     | 3,214          |
| <i>Of Which:</i>                          |               |                |                |                |               |         |                |
| <b>UK</b>                                 | 5.5           | 7.6            | 26.9           | 38.4           | 21.6          | 100     | 559            |
| <b>EU-West</b>                            | 6.4           | 8.8            | 63.6           | 18.5           | 2.6           | 100     | 440            |
| <b>EU-East</b>                            | 15.4          | 10.8           | 59.5           | 13.1           | 1.2           | 100     | 1,409          |
| <b>Rest of the World</b>                  | 12.6          | 12.0           | 68.5           | 6.9            | 0.0           | 100     | 269            |
| <b>Nth America, Australia and Oceania</b> | 5.6           | 16.1           | 45.3           | 26.8           | 6.3           | 100     | 98             |
| <b>Africa</b>                             | 12.5          | 6.2            | 64.7           | 14.2           | 2.4           | 100     | 126            |
| <b>Asia</b>                               | 8.1           | 16.2           | 64.2           | 10.8           | 0.6           | 100     | 313            |

Source: Own calculations from LFS microdata Q1 2019.

Notes: Percentages are weighted; N of cases are unweighted.



**TABLE A1.3 NATIONALITY BY GENDER, LFS Q1 2019**

|   | Male (%) | Female (%) | Total (%) | Total Count |
|---|----------|------------|-----------|-------------|
| <b>Irish</b>                                | 49.5     | 50.5       | 100       | 35,375      |
| <b>Non-Irish</b>                            | 50.0     | 50.0       | 100       | 3,214       |
| <i>Of Which:</i>                            |          |            |           |             |
| <b>UK</b>                                   | 52.5     | 47.5       | 100       | 559         |
| <b>EU-West</b>                              | 48.5     | 51.5       | 100       | 440         |
| <b>EU-East</b>                              | 49.2     | 50.8       | 100       | 1,409       |
| <b>Rest of the World</b>                    | 50.4     | 49.7       | 100       | 269         |
| <b>North America, Australia and Oceania</b> | 41.1     | 58.9       | 100       | 98          |
| <b>Africa</b>                               | 54.4     | 45.6       | 100       | 126         |
| <b>Asia</b>                                 | 51.5     | 48.5       | 100       | 313         |

Source: Own calculations from LFS microdata Q1 2019.

Notes: Percentages are weighted; N of cases are unweighted.

**TABLE A1.4 NATIONALITY BY DURATION OF RESIDENCE IN IRELAND, LFS Q1 2019**

|   | Born in Ireland | <5 years | 5-10 years | 11-20 years | >20 years | Total (%) | Total Count |
|---|-----------------|----------|------------|-------------|-----------|-----------|-------------|
| <b>Irish</b>                                | 92.5            | 0.4      | 0.9        | 3.3         | 3.0       | 100       | 35,329      |
| <b>Non-Irish</b>                            | 3.6             | 25.9     | 22.9       | 37.6        | 10.1      | 100       | 3,163       |
|   |                 |          |            |             |           |           |             |
| <b>UK</b>                                   | 0.6             | 10.4     | 11.7       | 38.0        | 39.3      | 100       | 551         |
| <b>EU-West</b>                              | 1.5             | 40.4     | 28.8       | 17.6        | 11.8      | 100       | 430         |
| <b>EU-East</b>                              | 6.1             | 13.0     | 24.5       | 55.1        | 1.3       | 100       | 1,392       |
| <b>Rest of the World</b>                    | 1.9             | 62.6     | 27.1       | 7.9         | 0.5       | 100       | 264         |
| <b>North America, Australia and Oceania</b> | 1.7             | 48.4     | 16.9       | 15.2        | 17.9      | 100       | 97          |
| <b>Africa</b>                               | 1.3             | 35.1     | 25.9       | 35.5        | 2.3       | 100       | 125         |
| <b>Asia</b>                                 | 4.0             | 45.3     | 25.9       | 23.8        | 1.0       | 100       | 304         |

Source: Own calculations from LFS microdata Q1 2019.

Notes: Percentages are weighted; N of cases are unweighted. N = 199 missing cases for 'years of residence'.



## CHAPTER 2

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### Employment and integration

By Ivan Privalko and Shannen Enright

Access to employment is often described as the most important measure of integration, since work allows migrants an income and a chance to find their place in the host society (OECD, 2018a; 2015a; McGinnity et al., 2020).

Employment also helps migrants avoid poverty, deprivation and social exclusion – at least for many. For migrants born outside the EEA, employment is also a key mechanism by which many of these migrants arrive in Ireland (McGinnity et al., 2020). Further, the OECD notes two important benefits to having a diverse workforce with a strong migrant presence. First, migrants contribute to Ireland’s productivity<sup>39</sup> and are particularly over-represented in new and growing sectors of the economy, where the Irish population lack skill and experience. Second, migrants typically contribute more in taxes and other contributions than they receive, when compared to non-migrant groups (OECD, 2018a).

This year’s Monitoring Report will confirm that Ireland’s gradual recovery from the economic shock of 2008 improved labour market access for Irish and non-Irish nationals alike in the period 2012-2019; this point was also made in the previous Monitoring Report. However, the economic impact of COVID-19 will likely affect Irish and non-Irish nationals differently, making data with a distinction between these groups prior to the pandemic especially important for understanding the labour market impact of the crisis. The impact of COVID-19 on the Irish labour market is the focus of an accompanying publication to this, *COVID-19 and non-Irish nationals in Ireland* (Enright et al., 2020).

In this chapter, we will consider four indicators of employment by nationality and, in places, country of birth. The core indicators are employment, unemployment, labour market activity, and self-employment. In addition to these we also compare non-Irish and Irish nationals in terms of the nature of their jobs (occupations) and the economic activity of the organisations they work for (sector). Of course, not all jobs are created equal: employment will be less positive for integration and inclusion where it involves anti-social hours, poor pay and conditions and may make it harder for migrants to learn English and participate in other aspects of

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<sup>39</sup> <https://www.oecd.org/migration/OECD%20Migration%20Policy%20Debates%20Numero%202.pdf>.

society and economy. Further analysis is beyond the scope of this chapter, but it is a point we return to in the conclusion.<sup>40</sup>

We will focus on the Labour Force Survey (LFS) throughout, which is a large-scale nationally representative survey of households in Ireland. It is conducted by the Central Statistics Office (CSO). The 2018 Integration Monitor showed that employment rates between Irish and non-Irish nationals were similar at 64 per cent in 2016 and 66 per cent in 2017. However, that report also showed significant differences between Irish and non-Irish respondents by their region of origin. We will explore the basic differences in this chapter, as well as the broader differences between Irish workers, and workers from other regional categories.

We will use Q1 2018 and Q1 2019 of the Labour Force Survey (LFS) throughout, unless otherwise stated. In order to remain consistent with previous Integration Monitors, we will focus on the working population (those aged 15-64 years of age) and consider the same definitions of employment, unemployment, activity, and self-employment. These are standard definitions used by the International Labour Office.

## 2.1 EMPLOYMENT UNEMPLOYMENT AND ACTIVITY

Before considering group differences in employment, we will first summarise the general trend in these measures for everyone. The total participation rate between 2010 and 2019 remains at roughly 62 per cent (CSO, 2020a). As seen in previous Monitoring reports on integration, the employment rate increased, from 59 per cent in 2012 to 69 per cent in 2019; while the unemployment rate has fallen from 15 per cent in 2012 to 4.5 per cent in 2019<sup>41</sup> (*ibid.*). In short, the period marks a slow recovery after the 2008 recession. This recovery reflects a sustained improvement in the labour market since the recession began in 2008 although it will likely be challenged by the COVID-19 pandemic.

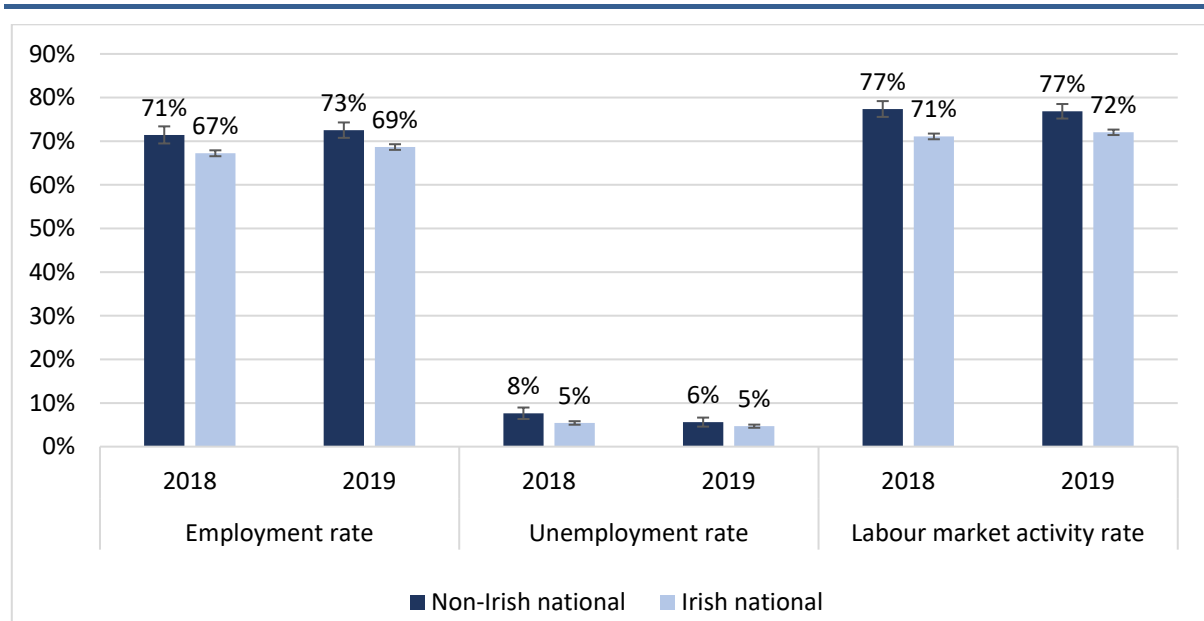
Figure 2.1 lists the employment, unemployment and activity rates for Irish and non-Irish nationals aged 15-64 for the first quarters of 2018 and 2019. The employment rate is measured as the proportion of working-age adults who did any paid work in the week prior to the survey, expressed as a proportion of the total working-age population. The rate gradually increased for both Irish nationals and non-Irish nationals since 2012, where 58.2 and 58.9 per cent of Irish and non-Irish

<sup>40</sup> See also analyses from earlier years, e.g. McGinnity et al., 2010 for a detailed comparison of working conditions, such as working hours, job security and work pressure in 2009; McGinnity et al., 2020 for more recent data on occupational positions (from 2016 data). On pay, see Voitchovsky, 2014; Barrett et al., 2017.

<sup>41</sup> The Unemployment rate reported by the CSO considers respondents aged 15-74. <https://statbank.cso.ie/px/pxeirestat/Statire/SelectVarVal/Define.asp?maintable=QLF18&PLanguage=0>.

nationals were employed respectively (McGinnity et al., 2014). Between 2018 and 2019, the rate increased from 67 per cent to 69 per cent for Irish nationals, and from 71 per cent to 73 per cent for non-Irish nationals. As in previous Monitors, non-Irish nationals record a higher employment and participation rate when compared to Irish nationals.

**FIGURE 2.1 KEY EMPLOYMENT INDICATORS FOR IRISH AND NON-IRISH NATIONALS, Q1 2018 AND Q1 2019**



Source: Labour Force Survey (Q1 2018, Q1 2019).

Note: Respondents aged 15-64.

The next indicator is the unemployment rate, which is the number of unemployed expressed as a percentage of the labour force (the sum of the numbers employed plus unemployed).<sup>42</sup> Unemployment decreased slightly for both Irish and non-Irish nationals between 2018 and 2019. The unemployment rate of Irish nationals remained at 5 per cent in both years. The unemployment rate fell among non-Irish nationals from 8 per cent in 2018 to 6 per cent in 2019. The gap between Irish nationals and non-Irish nationals was significant in 2018, but not in 2019, suggesting the fall in unemployment for non-Irish nationals closed the difference between both groups by 2019.

The final indicator is the activity rate, calculated as the share of working-age adults in the population who are in the labour force. This figure combines the number of people employed and unemployed. Those outside of the labour market have done

<sup>42</sup> Unemployment is defined using the International Labour Organization definition. To count as unemployed, respondents must have done no paid work in the week preceding the survey; be available for work and have actively sought work in the past four weeks.

no paid work in the week preceding the survey and have not been actively seeking or available for work. In the working-age population, this group typically includes students, those with full-time unpaid caring responsibilities, those with a disability or those cannot work for another reason, one of which may be that their residence permission does not permit them to do any paid work.<sup>43</sup> The activity rate remained at 77 per cent for non-Irish respondents between 2018 and 2019, and increased for Irish respondents from 71 per cent to 72 per cent. In general, migrants report a higher rate of labour market activity when compared to Irish nationals, although this varies by national group. Glimartin and Dagg (2020) highlight that labour market outcomes for non-Irish nationals vary by region of residence: those in border counties, and also the West region, have much higher unemployment rates than non-Irish nationals who live in Dublin. The gap between Irish and non-Irish in terms of unemployment is also lower in Dublin than the other regions.<sup>44</sup>

Table 2.1 digs deeper and turns to differences in the same measures between nationality groups.<sup>45</sup> In addition to these categories, we will also split the Irish group into two groups; those born in Ireland and those Irish nationals who were born outside the Republic of Ireland. The latter are a diverse group that includes the descendants of Irish emigrants, many of whom were born in the UK but are now resident in Ireland. This group also includes foreign-born immigrants without Irish parents, who acquired Irish citizenship through naturalisation (see Chapter 5). It is important to note that respondents born in Northern Ireland who automatically receive Irish citizenship are also recorded in this group. Given that UK nationals did not naturalise in significant numbers since 2016, (see Chapter 5) many of these foreign-born Irish may be Irish citizens by birth or descent, rather than by naturalisation. Table 2.1 lists employment outcomes for Irish nationals born in Ireland and those born abroad. There is no difference in terms of employment between Irish nationals born in Ireland (67 per cent) and Irish nationals born abroad (67 per cent). This is true for both 2018 and 2019. In terms of unemployment, there is a significant difference between groups in both 2018 and 2019, with Irish nationals born abroad reporting a higher unemployment rate (7 per cent) when compared to Irish nationals born in Ireland (5 per cent). This difference is significant in 2018 data and 2019, despite a fall in unemployment for 2019. Finally, the activity rate for Irish nationals born in Ireland (71 per cent) is similar to Irish nationals born elsewhere (71 per cent). Once again, there is a minor increase in activity in 2019, but the difference between groups remains statistically insignificant.

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<sup>43</sup> However note if respondents have done any paid work they are counted as employed (this would apply to students working less than 20 hours, for example).

<sup>44</sup> This is based on Census 2016 data, which uses a different definition of unemployment from the one presented in this chapter (see McGinnity et al., 2020 for a discussion).

<sup>45</sup> These groups are based on nationality classifications used by the EU Labour Force Survey since 2011.

We further consider these differences between wider nationality groups. Regarding employment, for 2018 Irish nationals have similar employment levels to respondents from the UK, North America, Asia, and those from the 'Rest of the World'. However, respondents from EU-West and EU-East show significantly higher employment rates when compared to Irish nationals, while African respondents show significantly lower employment than Irish nationals. In 2019 the employment rate increased for some groups including Irish nationals, and those from the UK, EU-East, and Africa. The rate fell for respondents from EU-West, North America, Asia, and those from the 'Rest of the World'. In that year respondents from Ireland, the UK, North America, Australia and Oceania, and Africa had similar rates of employment, while respondents from EU-West, and EU-East had significantly higher employment rates, when compared to Irish nationals. Respondents from Asia had significantly lower employment rates when compared to Irish nationals. With some yearly variation, the general pattern is that compared to Irish nationals, employment rates are higher among EU-West and EU-East nationals, lower among non-EU nationals and similar among UK nationals; EU migrants typically come to Ireland to work and have high employment rates. Non-EU migrants have a diverse range of reasons for coming to Ireland: to study, to work, to seek international protection, or to join family members (see Figure 1.5). Non-EU migrants may be working although the primary motivation for migration was different,<sup>46</sup> but given diverse mechanisms of arrival, unemployment is perhaps a more instructive measure of labour market disadvantage. Unemployment captures individuals who are in the labour market – they would like a job and are actively seeking work.

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<sup>46</sup> For example, most non-EU migrants on student visas are allowed to work up to 20 hours per week; since 2019 the partners/spouses of those on Critical Skills permits are allowed to apply for an employment permit.

**TABLE 2.1 KEY EMPLOYMENT INDICATORS BY NATIONAL GROUP Q1 2018 AND Q1 2019**

|                                  | Employment (%) |      | Unemployment (%) |       | Activity (%) |      |
|----------------------------------|----------------|------|------------------|-------|--------------|------|
|                                  | 2018           | 2019 | 2018             | 2019  | 2018         | 2019 |
| <b>Irish</b>                     | 67             | 69   | 5                | 5     | 71           | 72   |
| <b>Non-Irish</b>                 | 71             | 73   | 8                | 6     | 77           | 77   |
| <b>UK</b>                        | 64             | 72   | 9*               | 7     | 71           | 78*  |
| <b>EU-West</b>                   | 84*            | 80*  | 5                | 4     | 88*          | 84*  |
| <b>EU-East</b>                   | 75*            | 76*  | 7                | 5     | 80*          | 80*  |
| <b>North America and Oceania</b> | [60]           | [62] | [11]             | [7]   | [68]         | [67] |
| <b>Africa</b>                    | [54*]          | [60] | [15*]            | [12*] | [64]         | [69] |
| <b>Asia</b>                      | 63             | 61*  | 7                | 6     | 68           | 65*  |
| <b>Rest of the World</b>         | 72             | 64   | 10               | 5     | 80*          | 67   |
|                                  |                |      |                  |       |              |      |
| <b>Irish, born elsewhere</b>     | 67             | 69   | 7*               | 6*    | 72           | 74   |
| <b>Irish-born</b>                | 67             | 69   | 5                | 5     | 71           | 72   |

Source: Labour Force Survey (Q1 2018, Q1 2019).

Notes: \* is to signal that the group value is significantly different from the Irish value at  $p < 0.05$ . Estimates in square brackets have low denominators and should be read with caution ( $> 50$  but  $< 100$ ).

In terms of unemployment, there are significant differences between migrant groups in 2018, with respondents from the UK and Africa showing significantly higher unemployment compared to Irish nationals. Beyond these groups, respondents from North America, Australia and Oceania also show a high unemployment rate (11 per cent), although their rates are not significantly different from their Irish group.<sup>47</sup> In 2019, the difference between Irish nationals and UK nationals is no longer significant, although the difference between Irish nationals and African nationals remains significant, consistent with previous research (O’Connell et al., 2019). We consider these differences further in a logistic regression (see Chapter 2 Appendix Table A2.1), and note that age, gender, and family status do not explain the unemployment gaps between the Irish group, and the UK and African groups. These findings reflect other studies although it is important to note that African migrants are a diverse and heterogeneous group, especially in terms of unemployment rates (McGinnity et al., 2020). In short, migrants from Zimbabwe and migrants from Libya who live in Ireland will likely have different unemployment rates. However, the LFS prevents us from considering these differences further.

In 2018 migrants from EU-West, EU-East and the ‘Rest of the World’ category have significantly higher labour market activity rates when compared to Irish nationals. The remaining groups show similar rates of activity. For 2019, respondents from EU-West and EU-East show significantly higher activity rates when compared to

<sup>47</sup> Table A2.1 shows a logistic regression using pooled data, where North American, Australian and Oceania nationals have higher unemployment once a range of compositional measures are controlled for.



Irish respondents. However, migrants from Asia have significantly lower rates of activity when compared to Irish respondents, though not higher unemployment. Part of this may be linked to why this group came to Ireland, for example as students (Groarke and Durst, 2019).

Several mechanisms may be limiting non-EU migrants' lower employment rates: as discussed above this may be linked to why non-EU migrants came to Ireland. While we cannot rule out that some non-EU migrants outside the labour market would like to work if they could find a job, given this is not true for all, it is perhaps better to focus on unemployment as an indicator of disadvantage. Here it is African nationals who remain at significantly higher risk of unemployment than others. McGinnity et al. (2020) argue that the mechanisms used by migrants to arrive in Ireland have a significant impact on their risk of unemployment, even when controlling for their individual language ability and education, with those who are likely to have come through the protection system at higher risk of unemployment (see also O'Connell et al., 2019). Some of the effect may also stem from racial discrimination, in the same research McGinnity et al. (2020) find that Black respondents are particularly likely to be unemployed, even when international protection channels are considered, and measures of human capital are controlled for. The disadvantage experienced by African migrants is also reflected in a study using Ireland's Jobseeker's Longitudinal Database (JLD), an administrative database. Cronin et al. (2018) show that African migrants have longer unemployment durations, and fewer exits to employment when compared to other unemployed. They also find a high rate of first-time jobseekers among this group, where 38 per cent of African migrants claim never to have formally worked before.

**TABLE 2.2 KEY EMPLOYMENT INDICATORS BY NATIONALITY AND AGE Q1 2018 AND Q1 2019**

| Age   | Nationality | Employment |        | Unemployment |        | Activity |        |
|-------|-------------|------------|--------|--------------|--------|----------|--------|
|       |             | 2018 %     | 2019 % | 2018 %       | 2019 % | 2018 %   | 2019 % |
| 15-24 | Non-Irish   | 41         | 40     | 17           | 9      | [49*]    | [44]   |
|       | Irish       | 37         | 39     | 12           | 11     | 42       | 44     |
| 25-44 | Non-Irish   | 78*        | 79*    | 7*           | 5      | 84       | 83*    |
|       | Irish       | 81         | 82     | 5            | 4      | 85       | 86     |
| 45-64 | Non-Irish   | 66         | 71     | 9*           | 7*     | 73       | 76     |
|       | Irish       | 69         | 70     | 4            | 3      | 72       | 73     |

Source: Labour Force Survey (Q1 2018, Q1 2019)

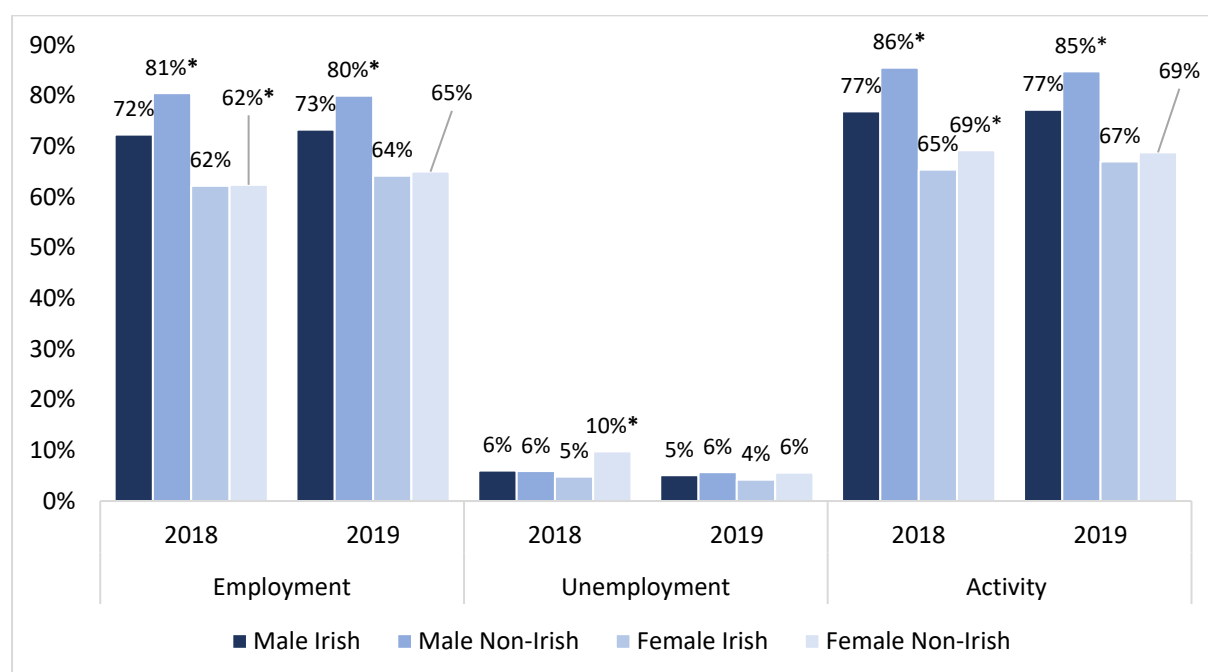
Notes: \* is to signal that the group value is significantly different from the Irish value at  $p < 0.05$ . Estimates in square brackets have low denominators and should be read with caution ( $> 50$  but  $< 100$ ).

We further split the main employment indicators by age and nationality. In general, we find a similar trend where younger groups have lower employment and higher unemployment compared to older groups, who show slightly lower levels of

employment than the middle groups. Lower activity rates among young Irish stem from participation in education and so this group is less likely to look for a job. Lower activity among older groups may stem from early retirement, early leave for family reasons, or disability (Russell et al., 2019).

The employment and activity rates among non-Irish nationals are higher than among natives for those aged 15-24. However, among those aged 25-44, Irish respondents display significantly higher employment, lower unemployment and higher activity, when compared to non-Irish nationals, especially in 2019. The oldest age group contains few significant differences between migrants and non-migrants, although older migrants show a significantly higher unemployment when compared to older Irish nationals in both 2018 and 2019. This difference suggests that older migrants are particularly vulnerable to unemployment, although previous research has shown that this group contains significant variation (McGinnity et al., 2020), and a smaller share of non-Irish nationals are aged 45-64 than Irish nationals (see Table A1.2).

**FIGURE 2.2 KEY EMPLOYMENT INDICATORS BY GENDER Q1 2018 AND 2019**



Source: Labour Force Survey (Q1 2018, Q1 2019).

Note: \* signals that the group value is significantly different from the Irish value at  $p < 0.05$ .

We can split these rates further by considering gender instead of age; we again find that migrants have a higher rate of employment when compared to non-migrants, although this difference appears to be stronger among men than women. Migrant men show significantly higher rates of employment when compared to Irish men, but this difference does not emerge between migrant women and Irish women.

There is no significant difference between migrants and non-migrants for measures of unemployment. The only exception is among women in 2018, where migrant women have higher unemployment rate compared to non-migrant women. However, this difference becomes insignificant in 2019 as migrant women's unemployment falls to 5 per cent. These differences are again reflected in the general activity rate. The difference between migrants and non-migrants emerges for men in both years. However, the difference between migrants and non-migrants only emerges for women in the 2018 wave of data, most likely due to the fall in unemployment that we mentioned earlier.

We can also consider rates of self-employment among migrants and non-migrants. Table 2.3 shows the rate of self-employment by nationality groups, and for Irish respondents, between those born in Ireland and those born abroad. Since farming is an especially important aspect of self-employment, we also consider the rate of self-employment without this sector.

**TABLE 2.3 SELF-EMPLOYMENT RATES BY NATIONAL GROUP Q1 2018 AND 2019**

|   | Self-employment |        | Self-employment without agriculture |        |
|---|-----------------|--------|-------------------------------------|--------|
|   | 2018 %          | 2019 % | 2018 %                              | 2019 % |
| <b>Ireland</b>                              | 15              | 14     | 12                                  | 11     |
| <b>United Kingdom</b>                       | 15              | 16     | 14                                  | 15*    |
| <b>EU-West</b>                              | 8*              | 7*     | 8*                                  | 7*     |
| <b>EU-East</b>                              | 8*              | 6*     | 8*                                  | 6*     |
| <b>North America, Australia and Oceania</b> | 16              | 8      | 16                                  | 8      |
| <b>Africa</b>                               | 5               | 9      | 5                                   | 9      |
| <b>Asia</b>                                 | 7*              | 3*     | 7                                   | 3*     |
| <b>Rest of the World</b>                    | 6*              | 5*     | 6                                   | 5*     |
| <b>Irish-born</b>                           | 14              | 12     | 14                                  | 12     |
| <b>Irish, born elsewhere</b>                | 15              | 14     | 12                                  | 11     |
| <b>Non-Irish national</b>                   | 9*              | 8*     | 9*                                  | 8*     |

Source: Labour Force Survey (Q1 2018, Q1 2019), provided by the ISSDA.

Note: \* signals that the group value is significantly different from the Irish value at  $p < 0.05$ .

Considering Irish respondents born abroad and born in Ireland, we find no significant difference in their rates of self-employment. Irish nationals born in Ireland have a similar rate of self-employment (14 per cent in 2018 and 12 per cent in 2019) when compared to Irish nationals born elsewhere (15 per cent in 2018 and 14 per cent in 2019). Removing respondents working in agriculture does not change the distribution in a meaningful way, although the rate of self-employment

does fall slightly for both years. However, the similarity of self-employment for both groups remains.

If we consider differences between nationalities, we note that migrants show lower rates of self-employment when compared to Irish nationals. In 2018, migrants from EU-West (8 per cent) and EU-East (8 per cent) show significantly lower rates of self-employment when compared to Irish nationals (15 per cent). This also emerges for respondents from Asia (7 per cent) and the 'Rest of the World' category (6 per cent) who also display significantly less self-employment when compared to Irish nationals. These differences remain in place in 2019, with less self-employment among migrant groups when compared to the Irish group. Removing agricultural workers from the self-employed does not change the distribution, although the results for workers born in the UK appears significant in 2019. African migrants do not show a significant difference from Irish workers in either year.

## 2.2 SECTOR AND OCCUPATIONAL DIFFERENCES

This section considers the nationality breakdown of economic sectors and occupations. Sector refers to the economic activity of the organisation someone works for, based on the NACE international classification scheme (Table 2.4).<sup>48</sup> Occupation refers to the role a worker plays in the organisation. For occupational groups, jobs are classified in terms of their skill level and content using 1-digit ISCO 08 categories (Table 2.5). So for example, an organisation which processes food will be counted as in the manufacturing sector (Table 2.4), but will comprise a whole range of occupations (Table 2.5), which could include plant and machine operatives, clerical staff, managers and technicians.<sup>49</sup> In Table 2.4, broad sectors are presented to give an overview of which sectors Irish nationals and non-Irish nationals work in. This approach is useful for presenting sectors where migrants are particularly likely to work. In order to make the comparison, we compare the proportion of migrants in each sector, compared to the proportion of Irish nationals in each sector.

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<sup>48</sup> The Labour Force Survey uses the new version of the European industrial activity classification (NACE Rev.2). For further details of what is included in each major category, see <https://statbank.cso.ie/px/u/NACECoder/NACEItems/searchnace.asp>.

<sup>49</sup> Sectors do vary in terms of the distribution of occupations within them, and not all occupations are found in each sector, but they are distinct measures of the nature of employment.

**TABLE 2.4 EMPLOYED IRISH AND NON-IRISH NATIONALS BY SECTOR Q1 2018 AND 2019 (POOLED)**

| Sector                                  | Ireland    | United Kingdom | EU-West    | EU-East    | Non-EU     | Total      |
|---|------------|----------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| Agriculture, forestry                   | 4.5        | 1.4            | 0.2        | 1.0        | 0.9        | 3.9        |
| Industry                                | 12.2       | 14.2           | 14.5       | 21.4       | 9.3        | 12.8       |
| Construction                            | 6.6        | 5.4            | 1.3        | 7.2        | 2.5        | 6.3        |
| Wholesale and retail                    | 13.2       | 15.0           | 8.8        | 18.4       | 10.3       | 13.4       |
| Transportation and storage              | 4.5        | 3.4            | 3.5        | 5.3        | 2.5        | 4.4        |
| Accommodation and food                  | 6.3        | 9.4            | 11.4       | 15.8       | 20.2       | 7.8        |
| Information & communication             | 4.6        | 6.2            | 21.0       | 3.7        | 12.5       | 5.3        |
| Financial, insurance                    | 5.2        | 4.8            | 6.4        | 1.4        | 3.5        | 4.9        |
| Professional, scientific                | 6.3        | 6.9            | 6.5        | 3.1        | 4.2        | 6.0        |
| Administrative and support              | 4.0        | 5.0            | 7.2        | 9.7        | 8.0        | 4.7        |
| Public administration                   | 5.6        | 3.3            | 0.9        | 0.8        | 1.1        | 4.8        |
| Education                               | 8.6        | 6.1            | 6.1        | 1.5        | 4.4        | 7.8        |
| Human health and social work activities | 13.3       | 12.9           | 8.4        | 5.9        | 15.0       | 12.7       |
| Other NACE activities                   | 5.3        | 6.12           | 3.6        | 5.0        | 5.7        | 5.3        |
| <b>Total</b>                            | <b>100</b> | <b>100</b>     | <b>100</b> | <b>100</b> | <b>100</b> | <b>100</b> |

*Source:* Labour Force Survey (Q1 2018, Q1 2019 pooled) provided by the ISSDA. Population aged 15-64 at work. Accessed via the Irish Social Science Data Archive – [www.ucd.ie/issda](http://www.ucd.ie/issda).

*Notes:* Major sectors of activity using the European industrial activity classification (NACE Rev.2).

Starting with UK migrants, they are over-represented in Industry (14 per cent) and Wholesale and retail (15 per cent). A significant portion of UK migrants also work in Health and social work activities (12 per cent). However, overall, their distribution is not too different from Irish workers. Migrants from EU-West are especially reliant on the Information and IT sector (21 per cent), much more than the Irish population. These migrants are also likely to work in Industry (14 per cent). Migrants from EU-East are especially prominent in Industry (21 per cent), Wholesale and retail (18 per cent), and Accommodation and food (15 per cent). Migrants from the 'Rest of the World' are especially concentrated in the Accommodation and food sector (20 per cent) and the Human health and social work sector (15 per cent), where fewer Irish workers are found.<sup>50</sup> As noted by Gilmartin and Dagg (2020), average earnings in Accommodation and food are much lower than other sectors of economic activity in Ireland.

<sup>50</sup> Using data from 2016, Gilmartin and Dagg show not so much variation in sector of activity for non-Irish nationals in different regions, with the exception of manufacturing, which is less prevalent among non-Irish nationals in Dublin than either the Border or West regions.

**TABLE 2.5 EMPLOYED IRISH AND NON-IRISH NATIONALS BY OCCUPATIONAL GROUPS Q1 2018 AND 2019 (POOLED)**

|  | Ireland | United Kingdom | EU-West | EU-East | Non-EU | Total |
|--|---------|----------------|---------|---------|--------|-------|
| <b>Occupational groups</b>                   |         |                |         |         |        |       |
| <b>Armed forces</b>                          | 0.28    | 0              | 0       | 0       | 0      | 0.25  |
| <b>Managers</b>                              | 9.00    | 14.01          | 5.90    | 5.15    | 6.09   | 8.76  |
| <b>Professionals</b>                         | 24.58   | 25.14          | 31.37   | 8.05    | 31.88  | 23.98 |
| <b>Technicians and associate technicians</b> | 11.32   | 10.56          | 23.80   | 9.20    | 14.06  | 11.47 |
| <b>Clerical support work</b>                 | 9.37    | 7.10           | 14.02   | 5.51    | 6.09   | 9.13  |
| <b>Service and sales workers</b>             | 19.77   | 17.66          | 15.13   | 21.00   | 20.43  | 19.74 |
| <b>Skilled agricultural</b>                  | 4.02    | 0.96           | 0       | 0.73    | 0.43   | 3.63  |
| <b>Craft and related trades</b>              | 8.84    | 8.45           | 4.43    | 16.34   | 6.67   | 9.12  |
| <b>Plant and machine operatives</b>          | 5.72    | 7.68           | 1.85    | 11.44   | 1.74   | 5.90  |
| <b>Elementary occupation</b>                 | 7.10    | 8.45           | 3.51    | 22.58   | 12.61  | 8.03  |
| <b>Total</b>                                 | 100     | 100            | 100     | 100     | 100    | 100   |

*Source:* Labour Force Survey (Q1 2018, Q1 2019), provided by the ISSDA. Accessed via the Irish Social Science Data Archive – [www.ucd.ie/issda](http://www.ucd.ie/issda).

*Notes:* Jobs are classified in terms of their skill level and content using 1-digit ISCO 08 categories.

Regarding the occupational groups we show their nationality breakdowns in Table 2.5. Workers from the UK are especially prevalent in Professional occupations (25 per cent) and Service and sales positions (17 per cent), although these rates are similar to the total and the rate for Irish workers. UK workers are not prominent among Agricultural workers (1 per cent). Workers from EU-West are heavily concentrated in Professional occupations (31 per cent) and in Technical roles (23 per cent), they are less often located in Agricultural occupations or in Plant and machinery occupations (4 per cent). Migrants from EU-East are especially likely to hold Elementary occupations (22 per cent) and Craft and related positions (16 per cent), they are unlikely to work in Agricultural positions (1 per cent) and in Management positions (5 per cent). Migrants from the ‘Rest of the World’ are located in Professional positions (31 per cent) and in Service and sales positions (20 per cent).

## 2.3 INTERNATIONAL COMPARISONS

Finally, we will consider Ireland’s indicators relative to the UK, and the average figures for EU28 countries. We list these figures in Table 2.6 focusing on employment, unemployment, and activity rates for Ireland, the UK (where labour market conditions and institutions are similar to Ireland), and average rates for the EU28 countries in 2018 and 2019. We split these figures by nationality considering rates for Irish nationals, non-Irish nationals and for non-EU nationals. Note that the figures for Ireland presented here are slightly different to those shown in Table 2.1

because they relate to the entire year, rather than just the first quarter of 2018-2019.

**TABLE 2.6 COUNTRY COMPARISONS Q1 2018 AND 2019**

| Reporting country | Nationality                                    | Employment rate |      | Unemployment rate |      | Activity rate |      |
|-------------------|--|-----------------|------|-------------------|------|---------------|------|
|                   |  | 2018            | 2019 | 2018              | 2019 | 2018          | 2019 |
| Ireland           | Non-EU Nationals                               | 64.8            | 64.8 | 8.7               | 7.2  | 70.9          | 69.8 |
|                   | All non-Irish nationals                        | 72.6            | 72.7 | 6.9               | 5.7  | 78.0          | 77.2 |
|                   | Irish Nationals                                | 67.9            | 68.9 | 5.7               | 4.9  | 72.0          | 72.5 |
| UK                | Non-EU Nationals                               | 62.9            | 64.7 | 6.8               | 6.7  | 67.6          | 69.4 |
|                   | All non-UK nationals                           | 74.0            | 74.8 | 4.6               | 4.5  | 77.5          | 78.3 |
|                   | UK nationals                                   | 74.8            | 75.2 | 4.0               | 3.7  | 77.9          | 78.1 |
| EU28              | Non-EU Nationals                               | 56.6            | 58.0 | 15.2              | 14.1 | 66.8          | 67.5 |
|                   | All foreign nationals living in EU28 countries | 64.0            | 65.0 | 11.5              | 10.7 | 72.3          | 72.8 |
|                   | Host country nationals (natives)               | 69.0            | 69.7 | 6.5               | 6.0  | 73.8          | 74.1 |

*Source:* Eurostat, Employment, unemployment, and activity rates (2018 and 2019). Series *lfsa\_ergan*, *lfsa\_urgan*, and *lfsa\_argan*.  
*Notes:* Analysis is restricted to the working-age population (15-64) in all cases. Respondents are classified according to whether they are citizens or not of the country they are living in. All foreign nationals includes those born in other EU countries and non-EU countries. The data in Table 2.5 refer to annual averages for 2018 and 2019, which may lead to discrepancies between these data and indicators reported in Table 2.1, which refer to Quarter 1 of both years.

The employment rate among natives in Ireland (68 per cent in 2018 and 69 per cent in 2019) was just below the EU average (69 per cent in 2018 and 2019), and both were substantially lower than the equivalent rate in the UK, which has achieved higher overall employment rates in recent years (75 per cent in 2018 and 2019). The employment rate of all foreign residents in Ireland, at 72 per cent, was higher than the average rates of foreign residents elsewhere in the EU. However, these Irish and EU rates fell below the employment rate of 75 per cent among foreign residents in the UK. In general, the employment rates of those from non-EU countries were lower than the average for all foreign residents throughout Europe, including both Ireland and the UK. The employment rate among non-EU nationals in Ireland and the UK are similar (65 per cent) and both are a good deal higher than the EU average (56 per cent).

In general, unemployment rates are higher among non-nationals than natives. Ireland follows this pattern, though the gap is not likely to be significant. The average unemployment rate among all non-nationals in Ireland in 2018 was 7 per cent, compared to 6 per cent among natives. This gap between nationals and non-nationals is much lower in Ireland than is found, on average, in the EU28 (see Table 2.6). The unemployment rate among non-EU nationals living in Ireland was higher than the average for all non-Irish nationals, though among this group the

unemployment rate in Ireland, at 8 per cent in 2018, was substantially lower than the EU average for non-EU nationals at 15 per cent.

The activity rate reflects patterns of both employment and unemployment. The activity rate of Irish natives, 72 per cent, is similar to the corresponding EU average and nearly six percentage points lower than that for natives in the UK. However, overall activity rates of non-Irish in Ireland (78 per cent) are higher than among Irish nationals, while activity rates among non-nationals are comparable with natives, on average, in the UK and on average across the EU (77 and 72 per cent respectively). The lowest activity rates were to be found among immigrants from non-EU countries – 70 per cent in Ireland, and marginally lower than that, on average, in the EU and the UK.

## 2.4 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Ireland's recovery from a deep and prolonged recession may soon be challenged by a second downturn. Previous Integration Monitors have shown that non-Irish nationals were disproportionately affected by the recession, at least when compared to Irish nationals, in terms of both employment and unemployment. Although the current report presents an optimistic picture where differences are slight, it serves as an important reminder of these potential gaps. In the context of improving labour market conditions, the gaps between Irish and non-Irish residents have receded to the point where they are no longer statistically significant. The employment gap between Irish nationals (67 per cent) and non-Irish nationals (71 per cent) is minor and suggests that migrants are in fact more likely to be employed. By 2019, the unemployment gap between Irish nationals (5 per cent) and non-Irish nationals (6 per cent) is not statistically significant. The unemployment rate was low for both groups.

While these wider averages are informative, we show elsewhere that there are substantial differences within the non-Irish group. This is particularly true for migrants from outside the EU, who often have lower employment rates when compared to Irish nationals. Some of this is linked to lower labour market participation rates, for example among Asian nationals. Part of this explanation for lower labour market participation rates is linked to the nature of the residence permissions: many non-EU migrants came to Ireland to study (see Figure 1.5). As noted in Chapter 1, around one-quarter of residence permissions in 2019 were for the purposes of work – though some non-EU nationals on different residence permits may also work, for example students may work up to 20 hours, and other non-EEA nationals in certain categories may also work without an employment



permit.<sup>51</sup> By 2019, the unemployment rate (that is those in the labour market and actively seeking work but not currently employed) among many non-EU groups (Asian, North American/Australian/Oceania nationals, 'Rest of the World') was similar to the unemployment rate among Irish nationals.

Of non-Irish nationals the most disadvantaged group is African nationals, who have much lower employment and activity rates, and higher unemployment, than any other group of immigrants. However, some of these gaps have closed between 2018 and 2019, with an increase in employment, and a fall in unemployment for this group. By 2019 however the African unemployment rate was 12 per cent, more than double that of Irish nationals (5 per cent).

An important qualification is that this chapter does not consider common indicators of job quality, such as job security, wages, working hours including unsocial hours, harassment, or health and safety. Previous research has found that East Europeans, for example, have high employment rates but are much less likely to be in professional/managerial jobs and earning higher wages (McGinnity et al., 2020; Barrett et al., 2017). A detailed current comparison of the working conditions of Irish and non-Irish nationals would be a useful complement to labour market indicators presented in this chapter.

By comparing labour market indicators for Irish and non-Irish nationals immediately prior to the pandemic in 2019, which varied by national group but were favourable for most overall, the analysis in this chapter also forms an important backdrop to any analysis of COVID-19 and its impact on non-Irish nationals in the Irish labour market in 2020.

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<sup>51</sup> These include family members of Irish/EEA nationals; people with permission to remain; Start-up/entrepreneurs/immigrant investor and long-term residence holders who apply for exemption. As of March 2019, for example, the spouses and partners of Critical Skills employment permit holders may also access the labour market without an employment permit (see Arnold et al., 2019a).

**BOX 2.1 ACCESS TO EMPLOYMENT**

All nationals of the European Economic Area (EEA) may migrate to Ireland to take up employment without restriction. Barrett et al., 2017 outline the different means of access to employment applicable to non-EEA nationals. Labour migration policy is developed and administered by the Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation in co-operation with the Department of Justice and Equality. As of 2018, asylum applicants, who have been waiting on a first instance recommendation on their protection application for nine months, may access the labour market by way of a permission issued by the Minister for Justice and Equality: the waiting period has recently been shortened to six months.<sup>52</sup> Since its introduction in June 2018, over 5,500 permissions to access the labour market have been issued, including over 4,200 permissions to direct provision residents.<sup>53,54</sup>

Most newly arrived non-EEA workers hold a Stamp 1 registration certificate and an employment permit. The eight main types of employment permit are: Critical Skills; general; intra-company transfers; contract for services; reactivation; internship employment permit holders; sport and cultural employment permit holders; and exchange agreement employment permit holders.<sup>55</sup> As of March 2019, the spouses and partners of Critical Skills employment permit holders may access the Irish labour market without needing an employment permit. The spouses and partners of other employment permit holders may not work unless they hold an employment permit in their own right (Arnold et al., 2019).

The Critical Skills Employment Permit is designed to attract highly skilled non-EEA persons to the Irish labour market for occupations deemed critically important to the Irish economy or which are experiencing skills shortages. Critical Skills permits are issued to non-EEA workers earning a minimum of €60,000 per year. Additionally, a restricted number of permits are issued to workers earning a minimum of €30,000 per year. General Employment Permits are available for occupations with an annual salary of €30,000 or more and for a restricted number of occupations with salaries below this.<sup>56</sup>

In general, holders of employment permits may only change employers after 12 months and must apply for a new permit to do so. The Atypical Working Scheme administered by the Department of Justice and Equality provides for short-term employment contracts in the State, which are not facilitated by the employment

<sup>52</sup> The duration of a labour market access authorisation will increase from six to 12 months. The revised arrangements will remove the restriction preventing people accessing employment with public health employers, subject to them having the necessary qualifications:

<https://www.gov.ie/en/press-release/59532-minister-ogorman-and-minister-mcentee-publish-the-report-by-the-advisory-group-on-direct-provision-and-announce-a-reduction-in-the-waiting-period-for-international-protection-applicants-to-access-work>.

<sup>53</sup> <https://www.gov.ie/en/press-release/59532-minister-ogorman-and-minister-mcentee-publish-the-report-by-the-advisory-group-on-direct-provision-and-announce-a-reduction-in-the-waiting-period-for-international-protection-applicants-to-access-work>.

<sup>54</sup> As of the end of July 2020, there were 8,812 applicants for protection awaiting decision (Government of Ireland, 2020c; Table 2.2.1). Note until recently a permission was valid for six months and any individual can have multiple permissions, and not all applicants are eligible to apply for one (i.e. if they haven't been waiting for a decision for the required amount of time).

<sup>55</sup> See <https://dbe.gov.ie/en>.

<sup>56</sup> See <https://dbe.gov.ie/en/What-We-Do/Workplace-and-Skills/Employment-Permits/Permit-Types>.

permit system. A total of 2,911 applications were approved under this scheme in 2017 (Sheridan, 2019).

In 2018 the Department of Business, Entrepreneurship and Innovation published a *Review of Economic Migration Policy; Report of the Inter-Departmental Group* (Department of Business, Entrepreneurship and Innovation, 2018). One finding was the need to introduce a seasonal work permit. A Pilot Scheme in the Agri-Sector was introduced, with employment permit quotas for occupations in agriculture, previously deemed ineligible. The quotas were filled, and the sector submitted a request for an extension of the scheme (see Polakowski, forthcoming).

A total of 13,398 employment permits were issued during 2018. The top nationality was Indian with 4,313 permits. The top three sectors were the Service industry, Medical and nursing, and Industry (Sheridan, 2019). Despite a significant increase in the numbers issued in recent years, holders of employment permits still account for a very small proportion of migrant workers in Ireland.

#### *Self-employment*

An Immigrant Investor Programme was introduced in 2012 and facilitates non-EEA nationals and their families who commit to an approved investment in Ireland.<sup>57</sup> The Start-Up Entrepreneur Programme, introduced to attract 'high-potential start-ups' in 2012 was renewed in 2020 (See McNamara and Quinn, 2020).

#### *Support with accessing employment*

Several support organisations may be accessed by migrants in Ireland, including Intreo, a service of the DEASP, which was formed through the merger of social welfare offices, FÁS and community welfare officers. The EPIC programme in Business in the Community Ireland is one of several migrant employability programmes funded by the Department of Justice and Equality.<sup>58</sup> Migrants who are in receipt of Jobseeker's payments may also be referred to JobPath, a job-seeking support service provided by private companies on contract from DEASP. These services may be accessed by EU citizens and non-EEA citizens with Stamp 4 residence permission.

Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) has a range of responsibilities, including facilitating the recognition of qualifications gained outside the State. An online international qualifications database is maintained, which lists certain foreign qualifications and provides advice regarding the comparability of a qualification to one gained in Ireland. Individuals whose qualifications are not listed in the database may apply to the qualifications recognition service, part of Quality and Qualifications Ireland, to have their qualification recognised.<sup>59</sup>

<sup>57</sup> Investment terms range from a minimum investment of €450,000 to €2 million, See: [www.inis.gov.ie/en](http://www.inis.gov.ie/en).

<sup>58</sup> RISE, the Refugee Interactive Skills for Employment project, <https://rise-project.eu> and the Immigrant Integration Initiative, run by NASC, are two others.

<sup>59</sup> [www.qqi.ie](http://www.qqi.ie).

## CHAPTER 2 APPENDIX

**TABLE A2.1 LOGISTIC REGRESSION, UNEMPLOYMENT LFS Q1 2018 AND 2019 (POOLED)**

|  | M1 Unemployed | M2 Unemployed |
|--|---------------|---------------|
| <b>Ref: Irish</b>                            | 1             | 1             |
| <b>UK</b>                                    | 1.60**        | 1.85***       |
| <b>EU-West</b>                               | 0.96          | 1.17          |
| <b>EU-East</b>                               | 1.20          | 1.08          |
| <b>North America, Australia and Oceania</b>  | 1.82          | 2.44*         |
| <b>Africa</b>                                | 2.95***       | 2.74***       |
| <b>Asia</b>                                  | 1.41          | 1.61          |
| <b>Rest of the World</b>                     | 1.48          | 1.54          |
| <b>Ref: Female</b>                           |               | 1             |
| <b>Male</b>                                  |               | 1.11          |
| <b>Age</b>                                   |               | 0.98***       |
| <b>Ref: Couples no kids</b>                  |               | 1             |
| <b>Couples kids</b>                          |               | 1.02          |
| <b>Lone parent family</b>                    |               | 2.12***       |
| <b>Single</b>                                |               | 1.469***      |
| <b>Ref: Does not hold third-level degree</b> | 1             |               |
| <b>Holds third-level degree</b>              | 0.445***      |               |
| <b>Observations</b>                          | 31,383        | 31,383        |

*Source:* Own calculations from pooled LFS Q1 2018 and 2019. Labour force participants only.

*Note:* \*\*\*p<0.001; \*\*p<0.01; \*p<0.05.

The models above consider the odds of unemployment. Model 1 looks only at migrant groups relative to Irish nationals. UK and African nationals have significantly higher odds of unemployment when compared to Irish nationals, and the other migrant groups have similar odds of unemployment relative to Irish nationals. Model 2 considers three explanatory measures as well as nationality groups, which are gender, age, household type, and a binary measure for third-level education. These measures do not explain migrant differences in unemployment. Even when we consider these measures, UK and African migrants have higher odds of unemployment relative to Irish nationals.

## CHAPTER 3

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### Education and integration

By Merike Darmody and Shannen Enright

Educational attainment plays a key role in the integration of both adult and child migrants. Limited action by governments, education systems and wider society in supporting the integration of migrants can lead to poorer economic and social outcomes which can span more than one generation (OECD, 2019). Third-level graduates are more likely to be employed compared to non-graduates in all OECD countries (OECD, 2012). Higher educational attainment is also associated with higher income levels: in 2016, individuals aged 25 to 64 with third-level degrees earned 54 per cent more than those with upper secondary education (OECD, 2018b). Individuals with higher educational attainment also have better physical health, improved socio-emotional wellbeing and are more actively involved in their societies (*Ibid.*).

Reflecting Ireland's immigration history, many non-Irish nationals are first-generation immigrants who arrived in Ireland as adults (McGinnity et al., 2020). Compared to countries with a longer history of immigration, the proportion of second-generation immigrants, defined as children born in Ireland with immigrant parents, is notably lower. Considering the age profile, the majority of migrants completed their formal education in their home countries, which impacts any assessment of possible benefits accrued to them through participation in Irish education. As migrants in Ireland are a very heterogeneous group, the levels of educational attainment among this group are likely to vary between and within countries of origin.

Section 3.1 of this chapter compares the levels of educational attainment of the Irish and non-Irish population, focussing on third-level education. It also explores the level of early school leaving among Irish and non-Irish nationals. This section also discusses the levels of educational attainment of migrant groups who received their formal education in Ireland or abroad. The educational outcomes for immigrant children who have received (at least some of) their schooling in the Irish educational system are examined in Section 3.2.

### 3.1 EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES FOR ADULTS IN IRELAND

#### 3.1.1 Educational attainment

Educational attainment refers to the highest level of education that an individual has successfully completed. Educational attainment levels of foreign-born working-age populations vary across European countries. In Luxembourg, Romania, Bulgaria, Ireland, Poland and Estonia half of this group had attained third-level education in 2019 (Eurostat, 2020a).

Table 3.1 uses Labour Force Survey (LFS) data to present a comparison of educational attainment between working-age Irish and non-Irish nationals. Conforming to previous issues of the Integration Monitor, data available at the time of writing from the first quarter of the previous two years, 2018 and 2019, were combined to boost sample size. The measure of educational attainment used here is a recoded version of the standard ISCED variable. There are four categories: a group with no education beyond lower-secondary level (including people with no formal education); respondents with upper secondary (Leaving Certificate or equivalent) only; people with Post-Leaving Certificate qualifications,<sup>60</sup> and people with third-level qualifications. The 'Post-Leaving Certificate' group is relatively small, making up only 13 per cent of the population, meaning that estimates for some groups need to be considered with some caution. The analysis is restricted to the working-age population, between the ages of 15 and 64.

In line with previous Integration Monitors, the results show large statistical differences in educational attainment between the non-Irish and Irish populations with the former group holding a significant advantage. The probability of having no formal education or just secondary education is over twice as high for the Irish population (24 per cent) compared to the non-Irish (11 per cent). Over half of the non-Irish population (52 per cent) has a third-level degree compared to 38 per cent of the Irish population. This may be explained by the selection effect whereby people with higher propensity to migrate tend to be highly educated, particularly college-educated individuals and younger individuals (between 20-40 years of age) (Peri and Sparber, 2011). For non-EU nationals, this may be linked to selective migration policy, whereby work permits are typically issued for high-skilled jobs that require non-EU migrants to be highly skilled (McGinnity et al., 2020). However, as discussed earlier in the report, low employment rate among some non-EU groups (e.g. relatively highly educated African nationals) is of concern. This could, in part, be explained by discrimination of certain migrant groups in the labour

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<sup>60</sup> A Post-Leaving Certificate course is taken after a student has passed their Leaving Certificate, and is generally a one- or two-year course. PLC courses are aimed primarily at students who would like to develop vocational or technological skills in order to enter an occupation, or go on to higher education.

market or policy of excluding asylum seekers from the labour market in the direct provision system (McGinnity and Lunn, 2011; O'Connell, 2019).

**TABLE 3.1 HIGHEST EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT BY NATIONALITY, Q1 2018 AND Q1 2019 (POOLED), FOR THOSE AGED 15-64**

|  | No formal to lower Secondary (%) | Upper Secondary (%) | Post-Leaving Certificate (%) | Third Level (%) | Total (000) |
|--|----------------------------------|---------------------|------------------------------|-----------------|-------------|
| <b>Irish</b>                               | 23.6                             | 24.9                | 13.2                         | 38.3            | 6,538.7     |
| <b>Non-Irish</b>                           | 11.4*                            | 24.3                | 12.7                         | 51.5*           | 980.0       |
| <i>Of which</i>                            |                                  |                     |                              |                 |             |
| <b>UK</b>                                  | 19.4*                            | 19.7*               | 15.0                         | 45.9*           | 204.4       |
| <b>EU-West</b>                             | 4.9*                             | 15.0*               | 6.6*                         | 73.4*           | 135.5       |
| <b>EU-East</b>                             | 12.7*                            | 33.3*               | 16.4*                        | 37.6            | 391.3       |
| <b>N. America, Australia &amp; Oceania</b> | 4.1*                             | 11.5*               | 5.3*                         | 79.1*           | 31.6        |
| <b>Africa</b>                              | 15.8*                            | 21.4                | 13.8                         | 49.0*           | 40.5        |
| <b>Asia</b>                                | 5.9*                             | 15.8*               | 6.9*                         | 71.4*           | 94.0        |
| <b>Rest of the World</b>                   | 6.9*                             | 21.5                | 9.3*                         | 62.3*           | 82.9        |

Source: Labour Force Survey Q1 2018 and Q1 2019 (pooled) weighted. Working-age respondents (15-64).

Notes: 'Third level' includes non-honours degrees and honours degrees or above; \*denotes that the indicator for this group is significantly different from Irish nationals at  $p \leq 0.05$ .

Although the non-Irish population have an educational advantage in comparison to Irish nationals, this varies significantly within the non-Irish group. Educational attainment tends to be higher among individuals from high income countries such as North America, Australia, Oceania and Western Europe. Approximately four-fifths of immigrants from North America, Australia and Oceania and just under three-quarters of those from Western Europe had a third-level education, while fewer than 5 per cent of each group had the lowest levels of educational attainment. The probability of having a third-level qualification was almost twice as high for Western Europeans compared to those from Eastern Europe. In line with previous Monitors, Eastern European immigrants who comprise the largest immigrant group in Ireland, had the lowest levels of educational attainment, with 13 per cent having educational attainment up to lower secondary school level. About a third of these immigrants had upper secondary education and 16 per cent had Post-Leaving Certificate equivalent qualifications. The high rates of Post-Leaving Certificate qualifications among Eastern European migrants may be reflective of the vocational nature<sup>61</sup> of the education systems in some EU-East countries (Ulicna et al., 2016). However, this may also be explained by the profile

<sup>61</sup> Vocational education and training (VET) in Eastern Europe is provided either during secondary or post-secondary education with some differences between countries. For example, in the Baltic countries after the completion of nine-year Basic School, students move either to a college-bound gymnasium, or secondary vocational schools. The latter provides secondary education as well as skills to enter into a specific trade. Vocational education can also be undertaken after the completion of gymnasium.

of immigrants who had decided to move abroad, namely those with lower levels of educational attainment seeking higher paid employment opportunities abroad. It could also be driven by the openings in specific employment sectors in Ireland (e.g. hospitality, building, manufacturing, service sector). Immigrants from the United Kingdom were found to have higher levels of educational attainment than Irish nationals. Nearly half (46 per cent) of immigrants from the UK had third-level qualifications and were significantly less likely to have no formal education or education up to a Junior Certificate level or less (19 per cent) compared to Irish nationals (24 per cent).

Asian immigrants and immigrants from the 'Rest of the World' group (e.g. Central America, South America and Middle East among other countries) also fared better than Irish nationals in terms of their levels of educational attainment, in line with McGinnity et al., 2020. Both Asian (71 per cent) and 'Rest of the World' immigrants (62 per cent) had a significantly higher probability of having a third-level qualification compared to Irish nationals (38 per cent), although as McGinnity et al. (2020) find using 2016 Census data, educational attainment varies considerably between different country of origin groups in both the Asian and the 'Rest of the World' groups. In addition, the proportion of both groups with less than upper secondary education is very low indeed (Table 3.3)

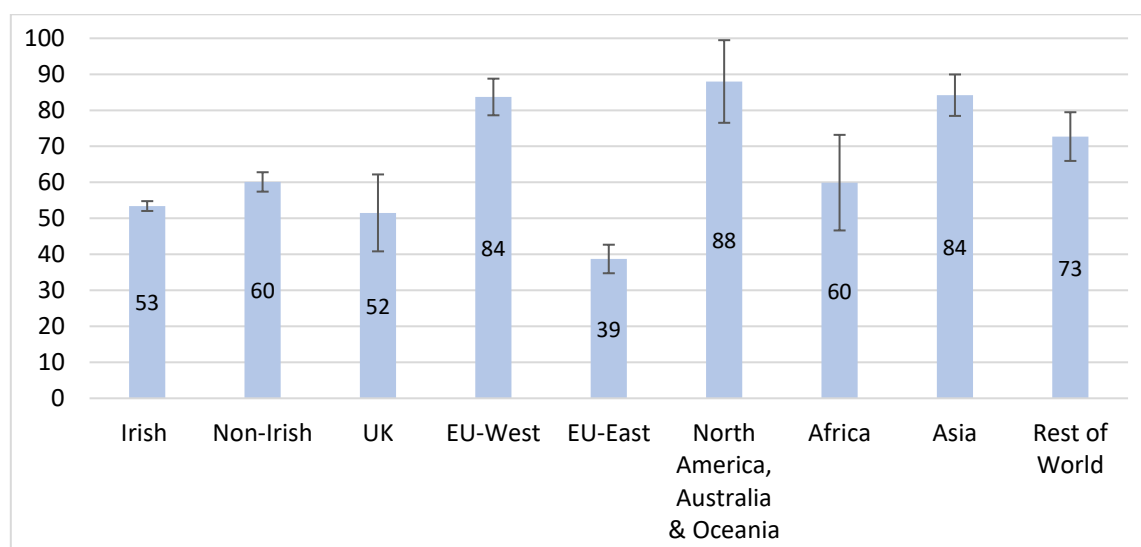
While African immigrants had higher educational attainment compared to the Irish population, their attainment levels were lower relative to some other immigrant groups (with the exception of Eastern European and UK immigrants). The African group (49 per cent) is significantly more likely to have a third-level education compared to the Irish population (38 per cent). Similarly, African immigrants (16 per cent) are significantly less likely to have a Junior Certificate qualification or less compared to the Irish population (24 per cent). This finding may reflect Irish immigration policy that favours highly educated entrants from non-EU countries.

It is possible that some of the educational advantage enjoyed by migrants in Ireland can be attributed to their age profile. Younger people are more likely to have third-level education in both the Irish and non-Irish populations. The analysis showed that when considering the working-age category as a whole, all immigrant groups (with the exception of the UK) were younger than the Irish population. This is especially true for immigrants from the 'Rest of the World' group, as well as those from Asia and Africa who had median ages of 30, 32, and 34 compared to 42 for Irish nationals. In order to determine whether differences in educational attainment are partially due to the age of immigrant groups, we compare attainment of third-level education while restricting the age group to those aged 25 to 34 (see Figure 3.1).



As predicted, utilising this approach, the probability of having a third-level education increased substantially for Ireland rising from 38 per cent to 53 per cent. The non-Irish groups also show an increase in the attainment level from 52 per cent to 60 per cent; however, this increase is smaller than that seen with the Irish group. Despite the increase in educational attainment among Irish nationals while considering the younger age category, a significant difference is still found between non-Irish and Irish nationals.

**FIGURE 3.1 SHARE OF 25-34 YEAR AGE GROUP WITH THIRD-LEVEL EDUCATION, Q1 2018 AND Q1 2019 (POOLED)**



Source: Labour Force Survey Q1 2018 and Q1 2019 (Pooled) weighted. Age 25-34 years.

Notes: Figure lists proportions and 95 per cent confidence intervals by group.

The largest differences can be seen for migrants from Africa (60 per cent),<sup>62</sup> 'Rest of the World' (73 per cent), Western Europe (84 per cent) and North America/Australia/Oceania (88 per cent). The probability of having third-level education increases 11 per cent when the analysis is restricted to young adults in these regions. We also find that the educational advantage migrant groups have over Irish nationals decreases when age is restricted to those aged 25-34. In the unrestricted analysis (see Table 3.1), non-Irish nationals had a 13-percentage point advantage to Irish nationals compared to 7 percentage points when age is restricted to 25-34. Although this advantage decreases, migrants from North America, Australia and Oceania, Western Europe, Asia and 'Rest of the World' still have a significantly higher educational advantage over Irish nationals.

<sup>62</sup> Note that despite high qualifications, the unemployment rate for African nationals in this age group is still very high – around 12 per cent – compared to around 6.5 per cent for Irish nationals in this age group (2018-2019) (see also Table 2.1).

Migrants from Eastern Europe are a distinct group among the other migrants in terms of their age and levels of educational attainment. While their levels of educational attainment at a third level are similar to that of Irish nationals when a wider range of respondents' ages (15-64) are considered, the likelihood of having a third-level education is significantly lower for the younger age category when compared to the Irish nationals (39 per cent versus 53 per cent) (see Figure 3.1).

In order to determine whether differences in third-level education were due to the age gradient between groups, a regression analysis was carried out which controlled for respondent's age (see Table A3.1). The results show that even after accounting for age and gender, the odds of having third-level education were significantly higher for all migrant groups compared to the Irish nationals, with the exception of Eastern European migrants. However, there was no significant difference between Eastern European migrants and Irish nationals after accounting for respondent's age.

Considering the way age and education related data are grouped in the dataset, it is not possible to establish to what extent the educational advantage experienced by migrants is a result of immigrants doing well in the Irish education system, or of selective migration of graduates from source countries. Existing studies indicate that in many cases immigrants lag behind their peers in the education systems of the host countries due to language difficulties, economic deprivation, low levels of prior education and unfamiliarity with the new education system, with low levels of attainment reported for some groups such as Eastern Europeans in the UK (Demie, 2019). However, despite disadvantaged backgrounds many migrants have high educational aspirations, expectations and motivation to do well in school (Friberg, 2019; Faas et al., 2019).

In order to gauge the link between educational attainment and region where migrants obtained their education, an analysis is undertaken utilising LFS data. Table 3.2 uses LFS data to present a comparison of education attained in Ireland and abroad between Irish and non-Irish nationals. Respondents were classified as having been educated abroad if the years since a respondent completed their formal education was greater than their length of time in the country.<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>63</sup> Educated in Ireland or abroad was calculated using the best available variables. However, it only represents the highest level of educational attainment achieved by respondents. For example, if someone arrived in Ireland five years ago and completed their third-level education a year ago, they would be defined as educated in Ireland despite receiving most of their formal education abroad.

**TABLE 3.2 COUNTRY WHERE THE HIGHEST LEVEL OF FORMAL EDUCATION WAS COMPLETED, Q1 2018 AND Q1 2019 (POOLED)**

|   | Educated in Ireland (%) | Educated Abroad (%) | N (000) |
|---|-------------------------|---------------------|---------|
| <b>Irish</b>                                  | 96.1                    | 3.9                 | 5,574.8 |
| <b>Non-Irish</b>                              | 22.0*                   | 78.0*               | 907.4   |
| <i>Of which</i>                               |                         |                     |         |
| <b>UK</b>                                     | 27.4*                   | 72.6*               | 185.7   |
| <b>EU-West</b>                                | 17.6*                   | 82.4*               | 124.2   |
| <b>EU-East</b>                                | 21.6*                   | 78.4*               | 365.9   |
| <b>North America, Australia &amp; Oceania</b> | 20.5*                   | 79.5*               | 29.4    |
| <b>Africa</b>                                 | 37.5*                   | 62.5*               | 36.8    |
| <b>Asia</b>                                   | 21.1*                   | 78.9*               | 87.6    |
| <b>Rest of the World</b>                      | 11.9*                   | 88.1*               | 77.9    |

Source: Labour Force Survey Q1 2018 and Q1 2019 (pooled) weighted. Working-age population (18-64).

Notes: \*denotes that the indicator for this group is significantly different from Irish nationals at  $p \leq 0.05$ .

As expected, non-Irish nationals (78 per cent) were significantly more likely to have received their highest level of formal education outside Ireland compared to Irish nationals (4 per cent). Migrants from the 'Rest of the World' (12 per cent), Western Europe (18 per cent) and North America, Australia and Oceania (21 per cent) are the least likely to have received their education in Ireland whereas those from Africa (38 per cent) and the UK (27 per cent) are the most likely to have received their highest level of education in Ireland.<sup>64</sup> Despite a significant proportion having been educated in Ireland, African-origin migrants have higher level of unemployment and work in lower skill jobs, as discussed earlier in the report.

Table 3.3 shows the proportion of Irish nationals educated in Ireland or abroad with a third-level education. The analysis presented here shows that for most migrant groups (except the 'Rest of the World') educational attainment did not differ by the country where education was completed. Just under half of migrants from 'Rest of the World' (48 per cent) who were educated in Ireland have a third-level education compared to 68 per cent of those educated abroad. As mentioned previously, this may be linked to selective migration policy which favours highly skilled and educated applicants from non-EU countries. There is also likely to be variation within this group.

<sup>64</sup> Numbers are too small in the sample to explore whether the highest qualification achieved differs systematically between those educated in Ireland and those educated abroad.

**TABLE 3.3 PROPORTION NON-IRISH EDUCATED IN IRELAND OR ABROAD WITH THIRD-LEVEL EDUCATION, Q1 2018 AND Q1 2019 (POOLED)**

|                                      | Educated in Ireland     |       | Educated Abroad         |       |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------|-------|-------------------------|-------|
|                                      | % Third-level Education | Count | % Third-level Education | Count |
| <b>All non-Irish</b>                 | 49.2                    | 472   | 53.3                    | 1,800 |
| <b>UK</b>                            | 48.1                    | 124   | 47.0                    | 320   |
| <b>EU-West</b>                       | 73.3                    | 81    | 73.1                    | 364   |
| <b>EU-East</b>                       | 39.0                    | 156   | 38.9                    | 587   |
| <b>Rest of the World<sup>#</sup></b> | 48.3                    | 61    | 67.8                    | 325   |
| <b>Asia</b>                          | 69.1                    | 50    | 72.3                    | 204   |

Source: Labour Force Survey Q1 2018 and Q1 2019 (pooled).

Notes: <sup>#</sup>The African, North American groups needed to be merged with 'Rest of the World' given small numbers in some cells.

### 3.1.2 Early school leaving among young adult immigrants

In Ireland, there has been a notable decline in early school leaving over the last decade (Smyth et al., 2019). The legal definition of early school leaving in Ireland refers to non-participation in school before reaching the age of 16 years or before completing three years post-primary education, whichever is later. Young people who leave the education system prematurely, without qualifications, are likely to face a number of barriers when entering the labour market as well as increased levels of social exclusion. Early school leaving can be predicted by educational expectations of the individuals, including expectations to drop out of school as these expectations are closely linked to realised educational career patterns (Hippe and Jakubowski, 2018). Drawing on PISA and Eurostat data, the report indicates that the reasons why students expect to leave school early are the same for both immigrant students and natives across Europe. The school environment appears to play a key role in shaping educational expectations.

In Table 3.4 we examine the lowest educational attainment levels by analysing early school leavers among nationality groups. This Monitor uses the Eurostat definition of early school leavers which is defined as the proportion of 'those aged 18-24 with, at most, lower secondary education and who were not in further education or training' (Eurostat, 2020b). As the analysis of age groups is restricted by the groups within the LFS, we focus on the proportion of early school leavers aged 20-24. In line with previous Monitors we find no significant difference in the proportion of early school leavers between Irish (4.3 per cent) and non-Irish nationals (3.7 per cent). We find that migrants from the UK (5.3 per cent) and Eastern Europe (6.7 per cent) have higher probabilities of leaving the education system prematurely, compared to Irish nationals. Similar to the educational advantage of non-EU nationals seen in Table 3.1 we see lower proportions of early school leavers among non-EU migrants compared to Irish nationals. Due to very small numbers of early school leavers, the analysis cannot present figures for North

America/Australia/Oceania, Africa and 'Rest of the World' (see Chapter 3 Appendix). Asian migrants were found to have a very low probability of leaving school early. As mentioned previously, the educational advantage possessed by non-EU migrants is likely due to the selection effect of Irish immigration policy which favours individuals holding high skilled occupations. It is important to note that the differences between migrant groups and Irish nationals are not statistically significant; however, this is likely due to the small numbers within the migrant's early leaver groups.

**TABLE 3.4 SHARE OF NATIONALITY GROUPS AGED 20-24 DEFINED AS EARLY SCHOOL LEAVERS, Q1 2018 AND Q1 2019 (POOLED)**

|   | Early School Leavers (%) | Number of Early Leavers (Weighted) |
|---|--------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <b>Irish</b>                                  | 4.3                      | 21,658                             |
| <b>Non-Irish</b>                              | 3.7                      | 2,735                              |
| <b>UK</b>                                     | 5.3                      | 586                                |
| <b>EU-West</b>                                | 2.5                      | 204                                |
| <b>EU-East</b>                                | 6.7                      | 1,625                              |
| <b>North America, Australia &amp; Oceania</b> | **                       | **                                 |
| <b>Africa</b>                                 | **                       | **                                 |
| <b>Asia</b>                                   | 2.3                      | 320                                |
| <b>Rest of the World</b>                      | **                       | **                                 |

Source: Labour Force Survey Q1 2018 and Q1 2019 (Pooled). Eurostat indicator of early school leaving.

### 3.2 IMMIGRANT CHILDREN IN IRISH SCHOOLS

Section 3.1 focused on educational differences between Irish and non-Irish adults. In this section we turn our attention to differences in the educational attainment for children still in the formal education system. The education of the children of immigrants, raised and educated in the host country, is seen as a major integration outcome and is considered a benchmark for integration (OECD, 2015b). School participation and educational achievement are important protective factors for immigrant children as they build their lives in the host countries (McGinnity and Darmody, 2019). A considerable body of evidence reviewing educational achievement of young people refers to a gap between immigrant and native children, although differences exist between countries as well as between groups of immigrants (Volante et al., 2018; OECD, 2015b; Demie, 2019). First-generation immigrant students,<sup>65</sup> and, to a smaller extent, second-generation immigrant students<sup>66</sup> tend to be less successful than their native peers (Algan, et al., 2010; Dustmann et al., 2012; OECD, 2015b). Immigrant-origin children are also found to

<sup>65</sup> Students born outside the destination country whose parents were also born outside that country.

<sup>66</sup> Those born in the destination country to parents who were born outside of the country.

experience greater difficulties in making a transition to post-primary schools, compared to the native young people (Williams et al., 2018).

Previous research has found that immigrants experience educational disadvantage compared to natives, though this varies across countries and groups (Sylke, 2007; Volante et al., 2018). This section examines educational differences between immigrant and native children using the 2018 PISA data, an international survey conducted every three years. The PISA survey focusses on academic achievement of 15-year-old learners in formal assessments in reading, Mathematics and Science. In general, Ireland performs higher than the OECD average in all three domains. Fifteen is the target age because this represents the end of compulsory schooling in many countries. While the 2018 assessment focussed mainly on reading literacy, it also collected information on Science and Mathematics. This section will focus on scores across all three dimensions for consistency with the previous Integration Monitors and as these are generally recognised as core skills.

In Ireland 167 secondary schools took part in PISA 2018, with 5,577 students completing the assessment. The OECD calculates an immigrant background index (IMMIG) based on variables within the survey and differentiates between native students, first-generation students and second-generation students. Native students are defined as those who were born in Ireland and who have at least one parent born in Ireland,<sup>67</sup> first-generation students are defined as those born abroad whose parents were also born outside of Ireland, and second-generation students are defined as students who were born in Ireland but whose parents were born outside of the country (OECD, 2011). Using the IMMIG classification, 18 per cent of students have an immigrant background with 10 per cent of students classified as first-generation immigrants and 8 per cent classified as second-generation immigrants. Ireland's proportion of second-generation students (8 per cent) does not differ from the OECD average (8 per cent). However, Ireland has a substantially larger proportion of first-generation students (10 per cent) compared to the OECD average (6 per cent) reflecting its immigration history and profile of immigrants. Previous research has emphasised the importance of language in academic achievement, specifically whether the language spoken in the home matches the language of instruction in schools (Darmody and Smyth, 2018a). Grouping students by background and language we find that 82 per cent of students are native Irish; 9 per cent of students have an immigrant background with English or Irish spoken in the home; and 9 per cent of students have an immigrant background with another language spoken in the home. Table 3.4 presents mean achievement scores in English reading, Mathematics and Science by immigrant status and language spoken in the home.

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<sup>67</sup> It is unclear how those from Northern Ireland are counted in the PISA data.

**TABLE 3.5 MEAN SCORES IN ENGLISH READING, MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE BY STUDENTS' IMMIGRANT AND LANGUAGE BACKGROUND IN IRELAND, PISA 2018**

|   | Reading Score | Mathematics Score | Science Score | % of Students |
|---|---------------|-------------------|---------------|---------------|
| <b>Irish</b>  | 522           | 502               | 498           | 82%           |
| <b>First-Generation, English Speaking Background</b>  | 526           | 498               | 510           | 3%            |
| <b>First-Generation, Other Language</b>               | 500*          | 501               | 499           | 7%            |
| <b>Second-Generation, English Speaking Background</b> | 514           | 492               | 494           | 6%            |
| <b>Second-Generation, Other Language</b>              | 494*          | 491               | 487           | 2%            |

Source: Results generated from OECD PISA data explorer. <https://pisadataexplorer.oecd.org/ide/idepisa>.

Note: \* significantly different from Irish nationals at the  $p < .05$  level.

Mean English reading scores do not differ significantly between Irish 15-year olds and immigrants from an English-speaking background. First-generation immigrants from an English-speaking background were found to have higher English scores than Irish students but this difference is not statistically significant. However, first- and second-generation immigrants who speak another language at home have significantly lower reading scores than Irish students, with their reading scores falling 22 to 28 points below the Irish average. For Mathematics, first-generation immigrant students were found to have similar scores to Irish students. In contrast, second-generation students from an English-speaking background and other language background have Mathematics scores 10 to 11 points below the Irish average although again this difference is not statistically significant. For Science scores, we find that first-generation migrants outperform Irish students, with those who speak English in the home scoring 12 points higher on average. Similar to the results found for Mathematics we find that second-generation immigrants score worse than Irish students with those who speak another language at home scoring 11 points lower. Again, differences in Science scores are not statistically significant (see Table 3.5).

These findings are consistent with previous studies for reading, Mathematics and Science scores using 2015 PISA data (McGinnity et al., 2018; Darmody and Smyth, 2018a), and for studies on reading and Mathematics using earlier waves of PISA data (2006, 2009 and 2012) (McGinnity et al., 2011; 2012; 2014). Using PISA data from 2015, Darmody and Smyth (2018a) found that students from a non-English speaking household had significantly lower scores across all three subjects than students from English speaking households. Students of immigrant origin at age nine were also found to have significantly lower Drumcondra scores in reading and Mathematics than Irish students (*ibid.*). However, at age 13, differences in numerical ability were not significant between immigrant and Irish students.

Overall, these data show that immigrant students who do not speak English in the home have lower PISA reading scores at age 15 compared to their Irish counterparts. It is worth noting that English language background has more of an effect on reading scores than whether immigrant students are first or second generation. This highlights the importance of language proficiency in shaping educational outcomes. As English is used in a large proportion of subjects in secondary school, poor English language ability may negatively impact performance in other subjects.

### 3.3 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This chapter examined the educational attainment of the non-Irish national and Irish population, as well as subject scores at age 15. Non-Irish adults aged 15 to 64 were significantly more likely to have a third-level educational qualification compared to Irish adults. This is partly due to the fact that non-Irish nationals are on average younger than Irish nationals (with the exception of UK immigrants). Focusing on younger respondents (aged 25-34), we find that the gap in third-level education between non-Irish and Irish nationals narrows, however non-Irish nationals still have significantly higher attainment. The rate of early school leavers was low among immigrants and the Irish population. Non-Irish nationals are slightly less likely to be early school leavers compared to Irish nationals, but this difference was not significant.

In order to counter early school leaving and longer-term disadvantage it is important to provide opportunities for early intervention and support not just for all disadvantaged individuals, but also families and communities (Darmody and Smyth, 2018b). For young people, participation in school engagement programmes helps them to engage with schools more fully and, in so doing, assists in addressing the issue of early school leaving (Smyth et al., 2015). The importance of such interventions cannot be underestimated, as the early leaver group are becoming more disadvantaged and require greater levels of assistance (Smyth et al., 2019). There is some evidence suggesting that migrant youth seem to be less likely to participate in programmes such as Youthreach (making up an average of 6 per cent of the learners across centres; see Smyth et al., 2019). Low participation rates may, in part, be explained by lack of information about such support programmes (*ibid.*).

There is substantial variation in educational attainment among nationality groups. North American, Australian and , Western European and Asian immigrants have the highest levels of third-level educational attainment among the working-age population. Eastern Europeans, UK, and African immigrants have the lowest levels of third-level educational attainment among all immigrant groups (see Table 3.1). Eastern European and UK nationals have higher levels of early school leaving



compared to Irish nationals though these differences are not significant (see Table 3.4).

Although the majority of non-Irish nationals received their education abroad (see Table 3.2), a significant proportion of African and UK migrants received their education in Ireland. There is an increasing population of students of migrant origin passing through the Irish school system, with first or second-generation migrants constituting 18 per cent of 15-year-old students in the PISA student survey (see Table 3.5). This compares to 8 per cent of 15-year-old students in the 2006 PISA data when this integration monitoring exercise began (McGinnity et al., 2011). Reading scores are significantly lower for immigrant students who speak a language other than English in the home compared to Irish nationals, regardless of whether they are first or second-generation immigrants. Second-generation students have lower scores than Irish nationals or first-generation students on all three subjects (reading, Mathematics and Science) however, differences in Mathematics and Science scores were not significant. The findings presented in this chapter confirm the information presented in previous Monitors showing differences between countries regarding educational attainment among the adult population. As for migrant children in schools, the chapter has shown differences in academic achievement that vary by language spoken in the home and by generation.

### BOX 3.1 INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

While not considered ‘immigrants’, international students form a notable proportion among the student body in Irish higher education institutions. The Stay Back Option allows non-EU/EEA students who have graduated from Irish higher education institutions to remain in Ireland for up to 24 months to seek employment. Information about their numbers and profile adds another dimension to understanding the profile of non-Irish individuals in Ireland.

In previous years, the sector of international students in Ireland has grown substantially, reflecting international trends in the developed countries. The number of international student enrolments in Ireland grew from just over 13,600 in the 2007/2008 academic year to more than 20,600 in 2014/2015 (HEA, 2020a), and increased further to more than 27,500 in the 2018/2019 academic year (HEA, 2020b). International students accounted for 12 per cent of all enrolments in higher education institutions in Ireland in 2018/2019. However, due to COVID-19 related restrictions, the numbers of these students are expected to drop substantially. Information gathered annually by the Irish Survey of Student Engagement (see <http://studentsurvey.ie/>) indicates that the profile of these students has changed over time; while in 2016, 29 per cent of internationally domiciled respondents were from the EU, this decreased to 22 per cent in 2019. The proportion of internationally domiciled respondents from India, for instance, has increased from 6 per cent in 2016 to 22 per cent in 2019, making it the country of permanent address of the greatest

proportion of internationally domiciled students to take the survey. There were more international students in 2019 studying at postgraduate level, reflecting the rise in the numbers of those 24 years of age and above. The students demonstrate high indicator scores across all nine of the engagement indicators: higher order learning, reflective and integrative learning, quantitative reasoning, learning strategies, collaborative learning, student-faculty interaction, effective teaching practices, quality of interactions, supportive environment. However, while international students were generally positive about their teaching and learning experiences, they experienced difficulties in social interaction with other (native) students.

### **BOX 3.2      NEW INITIATIVES**

Compared to the previous Integration Monitor, there have been few changes to initiatives targeting migrants or non-native English speakers in the education system (see McGinnity et al., 2018, Box 3.1 for a summary of access to education and supports available).

As a response to calls for providing greater diversity within the teaching profession, Marino Institute of Education provides a bridging programme for foreign-qualified teachers to help them to integrate into Irish schools. The three-year programme is funded by the Department of Justice and Equality through the EU Asylum Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF) with co-funding provided by the Department of Education and Skills and is expected to run until 2022. The initiative offers annual Bridging Programmes, for Immigrant Internationally Educated Teachers (IETs), and supports them through the process of registration as a teacher with the Teaching Council and seeking employment. The first bridging programme participants included 34 teachers from 17 countries. The programme was supported by DJE, Migrant Integration Strategy, National Funding Programme.

## CHAPTER 3 APPENDIX

**TABLE A3.1 LOGISTIC REGRESSION (ODDS RATIO) OF HAVING THIRD-LEVEL EDUCATION, LFS Q1 2018 AND 2019 (POOLED)**

|                                      | Model 1  | Model 2 |
|--------------------------------------|----------|---------|
| <b>Nationality (ref. Irish)</b>      |          |         |
| UK                                   | 1.509*** | 1.56*** |
| EU-West                              | 4.98***  | 4.75*** |
| EU-East                              | 1.15**   | 1.07    |
| Rest of the World                    | 3.16***  | 2.90*** |
| North America, Australia and Oceania | 6.84***  | 6.50*** |
| Africa                               | 1.83**   | 1.73**  |
| Asia                                 | 4.68***  | 4.42*** |
| <b>Age</b>                           |          | 0.99*** |
| <b>Gender (ref. Male)</b>            |          |         |
| Female                               |          | 1.30*** |
| <b>Observations</b>                  | 57,742   | 57,742  |

Source: Own calculations from pooled LFS Q1 2018 and 2019.

Note: \*\*\*p<0.001; \*\*p<0.01; \*p<0.05.

The results show that even after accounting for age and gender, the odds of having third-level education were significantly higher for all migrant groups with the exception of Eastern European migrants. After accounting for age and gender, East European nationals are not significantly more likely to have third-level education than Irish nationals.



## CHAPTER 4

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### Social Inclusion and integration

By Bertrand Maître

#### 4.1 INCOME AND POVERTY

The Irish government definition of poverty establishes clearly the relationship between the experience of living in poverty and social exclusion outcomes:

*People are living in poverty if their income and resources (material, cultural and social) are so inadequate as to preclude them from having a standard of living which is regarded as acceptable by Irish society generally. As a result of inadequate income and resources, people may be excluded and marginalised from participating in activities which are considered the norm for other people in society. (Government of Ireland, 1997)*

This definition highlights the crucial role of income as a contributing factor to people's economic and social outcomes. While important for all, the role of financial resources is likely to be even more crucial for migrants. Indeed, being able to generate enough financial resources is a key condition to meet essential and basic needs, to good healthcare but also to adequate and good housing. Those achievements are essential for successful integration in the host country.

In this chapter we present the key Zaragoza social inclusion indicators by nationality including the level of household income, the at risk of poverty rate, self-reported health status and property ownership. The results presented in this chapter are based on the analysis of the Survey on Income and Living Conditions (SILC). The SILC survey is the primary data source to measure and monitor poverty and social exclusion in Ireland with indicators such as income poverty and material deprivation (NAP Inclusion, 2007; Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection, 2018). The analysis is based on a pooled sample for the years 2017 and 2018. By pooling two years of data we increase the total number of migrants classified by nationality so that we can report reliable statistics as well as following the CSO statistical disclosure guidelines in relation to insufficient sample cases. In 2017 the SILC sample included 5,029 households and 12,612 individuals and in 2018 it was 4,982 households and 11,130 individuals.

Since 2016 the Irish economy growth, as measured by GDP, increased annually by 8 per cent in 2017 and 2018 (McQuinn et al., 2019) and unemployment rate fell below 5 per cent in early 2020 (CSO Statbank). Between 2016 and 2018 the

disposable household income increased by 12 per cent and there was an improvement in poverty and standard of living. The at risk of poverty rate fell by two percentage points and material deprivation by six percentage points to reach a low 15 per cent, half of the level at the peak of the recession in 2013.

In this chapter we examine whether the differences we observed in income, poverty and standard of living in previous Monitors between Irish and non-Irish nationals have been reduced over the recent period. In order to be consistent both with other chapters of this volume and with the previous Integration Monitor publications, we use the SILC nationality variable to identify the migrant population. Therefore, migrants who have settled in Ireland and have since naturalised as Irish citizens are identified as Irish nationals (see Chapter 5, also Appendix Table A4.a).<sup>68</sup>

#### 4.1.1 Household income

The SILC survey is conducted every year by the CSO since June 2003 and households are interviewed throughout the year on a weekly basis. While much of the information collected relates to the household current circumstances during the year of the interview, the income reference period is the 12 months prior to the date of the interview.<sup>69</sup> The total annual disposable household income is the sum of all sources of income (employment, private pensions, rental income, interests, savings, social transfers) of all individuals living in the household, less their total tax and social insurance contributions. The vast majority of the income information is drawn from two data sources; the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection social welfare data, and the Revenue Commissioner employee income data, which makes the SILC income data extremely reliable. As households differ in terms of size and age composition, in order to allow comparison between households we adjust household income to these differences with an equivalence scale. There are many international equivalence scales available, but we use the official national scale as used by CSO. The Irish scale gives a weight of 1 to the first adult (aged 14+) and a weight of 0.66 to each additional adult and a weight of 0.33 to each child (aged less than 14). The equivalence scale for each household is the sum of these weights. The equivalised disposable income is then the total disposable household income divided by the equivalence scale. The equivalised disposable income is then attributed to each individual in the household. Equivalised and non-equivalised household disposable income are used by CSO and the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection to monitor the trend of household income over time (CSO, 2019; Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection, 2018). The median equivalised and

<sup>68</sup> See Section 5.1 in Chapter 5 for the trend in the number of naturalisations.

<sup>69</sup> For example, during the 2017 survey the income reference period ranges from January 2016 to December 2017.

non-equivalised household disposable income is one of the social inclusion Zaragoza indicators.

In Table 4.1 we report the median annual disposable household income and median annual equivalised disposable household income across the various groups. All groups have experienced an increase in the disposable household income since 2016.<sup>70</sup> The median disposable household income for Irish nationals, at €51,658, is significantly higher than for the non-Irish at €46,132. This figure represents 89 per cent of the value for Irish nationals, a slightly improvement to the gap of 86 per cent observed in 2016 (McGinnity et al., 2018).

The ranking pattern of distribution across groups remained unchanged since the 2014 and 2016 results (Barrett et al., 2017; McGinnity et al., 2018). UK nationals, at €41,268, still report the lowest median income followed by the non-EU at €42,771 and the EU-East at €45,188. The EU-West migrants have the largest household income at €67,943, 30 per cent higher than Irish national households.

Using the equivalence scale does not change the ranking pattern across groups. Irish nationals still have higher median equivalised income (€22,125) than non-nationals (€19,869). The UK nationals have the lowest median equivalised income at €17,757, followed closely by the non-EU and EU-East groups at €18,401 and €19,335 respectively. The EU-West nationals at €32,864 is now 49 per cent higher than the Irish nationals one as the average household equivalence scale of the former (2.1) is lower than the latter (2.3).

**TABLE 4.1 YEARLY HOUSEHOLD INCOME AND HOUSEHOLD EQUIVALISED INCOME, 2017 AND 2018 (POOLED)**

|                  | Disposable Household Income (Median) € | Equivalised (needs adjusted) Income (Median) € | No of individuals in each group (unweighted) |
|------------------|--|--|--|
| <b>Irish</b>     | 51,658                                 | 22,125   | 21,662                                       |
| <b>Non-Irish</b> | 46,132*                                | 19,869*  | 1,898  |
| <b>Of which:</b> |  |  |  |
| <b>UK</b>        | 41,268*                                | 17,757*  | 437  |
| <b>EU-West</b>   | 67,943*                                | 32,864*  | 250  |
| <b>EU-East</b>   | 45,188*                                | 19,335*  | 833  |
| <b>Non-EU</b>    | 42,771*                                | 18,401*  | 378  |
| <b>All</b>       | 50,762                                 | 21,849   | 23,560                                       |

Source: Own calculations from pooled SILC 2017 and 2018, weighted.

Notes: Equivalised income is income adjusted for the size and composition of the household, see text for further details. \* is to signal that the group median is significantly different from the Irish median at  $p < 0.05$ .

<sup>70</sup> The median income is the mid-point of the income distribution once incomes have been sorted by from lowest to highest.

### 4.1.2 Poverty rates

In Ireland and at a European level, policymakers use a wide range of economic indicators to monitor poverty and social exclusion. We report in Table 4.2 three official poverty indicators that are used in Ireland to monitor poverty and social exclusion (NAP Inclusion, 2017; Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection, 2018). The most widely used indicator in poverty research is the at risk of poverty measure. The at risk of poverty rate identifies individuals that are living below a certain percentage of the average (or median) household income of the total population. Different proportions of the average (or median) can be used but the most widely used poverty threshold is the 60 per cent of the median measure. The 60 per cent median poverty threshold is the official poverty line used in Ireland and in the EU.

All poverty indicators have their strengths and limits and there is no perfect single indicator of poverty that captures the complexity of poverty and social exclusion. One of the limits of the at risk of poverty measure is that it is a relative measure with a poverty threshold that can change as the economy fluctuates over time, and it might fail to capture any change in the standard of living of the population. This is why the Irish Government also uses a measure of material deprivation designed by the ESRI (Nolan et al., 2002; Whelan et al., 2003) in addition to the at risk of poverty indicator. Unlike the at risk of poverty indicator, the advantage of the measure of deprivation is that it captures an absolute standard of living and any absolute change in people living circumstances.

The basic deprivation measure includes 11 basic items (shoes, clothes, heating etc.) that are regarded as essential to fully participate in our society with a minimum standard of living.<sup>71</sup> A household is materially deprived if its members cannot afford to have two or more of these 11 items.

The last indicator is the consistent poverty measure and it is the overlap of the two previous measures. A household is consistently poor when it is both at risk of poverty and materially deprived.

We report in Table 4.2 the percentage of persons that are experiencing poverty according to each of these poverty indicators by groups of the population.

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<sup>71</sup> Two pairs of strong shoes; a warm waterproof overcoat; to buy new (not second-hand) clothes; to respectively eat a meal with meat, chicken, fish (or vegetarian equivalent) every second day; to have a roast joint or its equivalent once a week; to have had to go without heating during the last year through lack of money; to keep the home adequately warm; to buy presents for family or friends at least once a year; to replace any worn out furniture; to have family or friends over for a drink or meal once a month; and to have a morning, afternoon or evening out in the last fortnight for entertainment.



Since the last Integration Monitor publication, the at risk of poverty rate for the total population continued to fall from 16.2 per cent in 2016 to 15.7 per cent in 2017 and then to a low 14 per cent in 2018. Irish nationals have a much lower at risk of poverty rate than non-Irish, 14.5 per cent and 18.1 per cent respectively, but large variation within this latter group exists.

The EU-West at 9 per cent has the lowest at risk of poverty rate of all nationalities followed by the EU-East at 13 per cent, but it is not significantly different from Irish nationals. The at risk of poverty rates for the UK and non-EU groups are much higher at 25.3 per cent and 34.8 per cent respectively. Because the latter group is quite heterogeneous in composition including people from North America, Asia and Africa, we can also expect large variation in at risk of poverty rates within this group.

Unlike the at risk of poverty rate, the reduction in the level of deprivation was much sharper between 2016 and 2017 and more particularly up to 2018. Indeed, the overall percentage of the population materially deprived went from 21 per cent in 2016 to 18.8 per cent in 2017, to reach 15.1 per cent in 2018 with an average of 17.1 per cent for the latter two years.

Excluding the very low rate for the EU-West, the percentage range on the deprivation measure is also narrower between nationality groups, and there are no significant differences in deprivation between the Irish (17 per cent) and the non-Irish groups (18 per cent) and the EU-East (19 per cent). We observed the same pattern as in 2016 (McGinnity et al., 2018). The UK nationals, at 23 per cent, report the highest level of deprivation followed by the non-EU group at 21 per cent. The latter group experienced a very sharp reduction in poverty after 2016 as their deprivation rate dropped from 35 per cent in 2016 to 21 per cent in 2017/2018.

There are no significant differences for consistent poverty between Irish nationals and non-nationals both at 6 per cent, showing a slight improvement from the overall consistent poverty result of 8 per cent in 2016. The consistent poverty rates for the EU-West and EU-East are lower than for the Irish nationals while they are above for the UK and non-EU at almost 10 per cent and 12 per cent respectively.

**TABLE 4.2      'AT RISK OF POVERTY', DEPRIVATION AND CONSISTENT POVERTY RATES, 2017 AND 2018 (POOLED)**

|                  | At Risk of Poverty<br>(under the 60 median<br>poverty line) (%) | Deprivation<br>(enforced lack of 2<br>or more items) (%) | Consistent Poverty<br>(At Risk +<br>Deprived) (%) | No of individuals<br>(unweighted) |
|------------------|---|--|---|-----------------------------------|
| <b>Irish</b>     | 14.5  | 17.0   | 6.2   | 21,662                            |
| <b>Non-Irish</b> | 18.3*   | 18.0   | 6.5   | 1,898                             |
| <b>Of which:</b> |   |  |   |                                   |
| <b>UK</b>        | 25.4*   | 22.8*  | 9.5*  | 437                               |
| <b>EU-West</b>   | 9.1*  | [4-10]   | [1-6]   | 250                               |
| <b>EU-East</b>   | 13.1  | 18.7   | 4.7*  | 833                               |
| <b>Non-EU</b>    | 34.8*   | 21.1*  | 11.6*   | 378                               |
| <b>All</b>       | 14.9  | 17.1   | 6.2   | 23,560                            |

Source: Own calculations from pooled SILC 2017 and 2018, weighted.

Notes: \* is to signal that the group value is significantly different from the Irish value at  $p < 0.05$ . [ ] indicates that the value is in the range reported but has to be interpreted with caution due to the small count in the cell.

## 4.2 HEALTH STATUS

Poverty and social exclusion have many and a diverse range of negative outcomes on people. There is an extensive body in the poverty and health literature showing the strong association between social exclusion and health inequality (Mathieson et al., 2008; WHO, 2010; Watson et al., 2016). As migrants might tend to be more exposed to poverty and social exclusion there is a strong concern that such exposure could have an impact on their physical and mental health and therefore on their chances of participation within society. This is the reason why a health measure is included in the Zaragoza indicators. In this section we explore the general health status of migrants as compared to the Irish population.

In the SILC survey all individuals aged 16 and over have been asked to self-assess their health condition from the following question 'How is your health in general?'. From five possible answers ranging from 'very good' to 'very bad' we report the percentage of people reporting having 'very good' and 'good' health in Table 4.3. This is a very standard and widely used approach to measure people's health status.

There has been no change in the overall percentage of the population reporting very good or good health (83 per cent) since SILC 2014 and 2016. The pattern and level across migrant groups is also almost identical to the one observed in 2016 (McGinnity et al., 2018). The only difference is in the percentage of UK nationals reporting very good or good health which has decreased to 77 per cent from 80 per cent in 2016. Overall, non-Irish nationals report better health outcome (88 per cent) than the Irish nationals (82 per cent), and there is very little variation across

migrant groups with the exception of UK nationals. Western Europeans report the highest level of good general health at 92 per cent.

The Irish result showing in general a better health outcome for migrants than for the natives is called the ‘healthy immigrant effect’ in the literature. This is not a general feature as there are many contradictory country studies showing that migrants have poorer health outcomes than the natives such as in France and the UK (Dourgnon et al., 2008; Cooper, 2002), while other studies like in Canada and Australia (McDonald and Kennedy, 2004; Chiswick et al., 2008) find a ‘healthy immigrant effect’. In Ireland, Nolan (2012) also found some evidence for a healthy immigrant effect as well as other factors such as education, household income and age. Because age is also a contributing factor to better general health, we note that indeed non-Irish nationals are much younger on average (39) than Irish nationals (47). With the exception of UK migrants with an average age of 53, the average age of migrants ranges between 35 and 38. It is quite likely that the poorer health outcomes among UK migrants can be partially explained by the older average age of this group. Indeed, results from a statistical regression model presented in the Chapter 4 Appendix (Table A4.1) show that once we take account of people’s characteristics such as age, non-nationals (with the exception of EU-East) are no longer significantly different from the Irish nationals in terms of health outcomes.

**TABLE 4.3 SELF-ASSESSED HEALTH STATUS BY NATIONALITY, 2017 AND 2018 (POOLED)**

|                  | Very Good or Good health<br>( % ) | Mean Age<br>(rounded) | No of individuals<br>(16 and over) |
|------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------------------|
| <b>Irish</b>     | 83.1                              | 47                    | 16,654                             |
| <b>Non-Irish</b> | 87.7*                             | 39                    | 1,756                              |
| <b>Of which:</b> |                                   |                       |                                    |
| <b>UK</b>        | 76.5*                             | 53                    | 415                                |
| <b>EU-West</b>   | 91.9*                             | 38                    | 235                                |
| <b>EU-East</b>   | 89.9*                             | 35                    | 751                                |
| <b>Non-EU</b>    | 88.1*                             | 35                    | 355                                |
| <b>All</b>       | 82.8                              | 46                    | 18,410                             |

Source: Own calculations from pooled SILC 2017 and 2018, percentages weighted; N unweighted.

Notes: \* is to signal that the group value is significantly different from the Irish value at  $p < 0.05$ .

### 4.3 HOUSING TENURE AND CONDITIONS

In many societies, for both natives and non-natives, homeownership is very often considered as a marker of social and economic success. But more importantly for the host country and for migrants, homeownership is also the manifestation of social integration in the host country. Across OECD countries, the vast majority of migrants are less likely to own their home compared to the natives of the host countries (OECD, 2015c). This can be explained by a large number of factors such

as the fact that the host country has only a recent history of migration but also by the characteristics of the migrant population such as household size, length of stay, being young and therefore being more likely to have lower income from work (OECD, 2015c; Mundra and Uwaifo Oyelere, 2017; Amuedo-Dorantes and Mundra 2012; Gobillon and Solignac, 2015). In addition to the fact that migrants are more likely to have lower household income and savings, the characteristics of the property market, the banking sector and credit regulations of the host country can also contribute to lower homeownership among migrants.

Since the beginning of the economic recovery, the average first-time buyer house prices increased by 56 per cent between 2013 and 2018 (Allen-Coghlan et al., 2019) and rental prices increased by 51 per cent on the rental market over the same period.<sup>72</sup> The recovering economy, rising demand for property and a shortage of supply were all factors that contributed to the surge of prices on both markets.

During the survey interviews, some general questions about the household were only asked to one person in the household (generally the head of household). Therefore, in this section we select this person's answers (and nationality) about the housing conditions. The results reported in the next Tables 4.4 and 4.5 are based on a household level rather than at individual level unlike all the previous results.

There has been no change for homeownership among Irish nationals since 2016 unlike all other groups (McGinnity et al., 2018). Indeed, almost 80 per cent of Irish nationals own their home while it is only 28 per cent for non-Irish nationals, a fall of 6 percentage points since 2016 (McGinnity et al., 2018). Detailed results in Table 4.4 show that homeownership fell for the UK and EU-West nationals since 2016. It went from 74 per cent to 69 per cent for the former group and from 52 per cent to 44 per cent for the latter one. There is also large variation in homeownership among non-Irish Nationals as unlike the two former groups, homeownership does not reach 20 per cent for the EU-East and non-EU groups.

Overall, there has been an increase in the population of private renters since 2016, from 12 per cent to 16 per cent, mostly due to the increase among Irish nationals on the rental market. The fall in homeownership among non-Irish nationals is explained by their sharp rise in privately rented accommodation. In 2016, 51 per cent of migrant groups were private renters and it increased to a high 65 per cent in 2017/2018. The increase was spread among all non-Irish nationals, but the UK

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<sup>72</sup> Author's calculation based on the RTB Rent index. RTB Rent Index 2019 Quarter 4 [https://onestopshop.rtb.ie/images/uploads/Comms%20and%20Research/RTB\\_Rent\\_Index\\_2019\\_Q4\\_%284%29\\_FIN\\_AL\\_WEB.pdf](https://onestopshop.rtb.ie/images/uploads/Comms%20and%20Research/RTB_Rent_Index_2019_Q4_%284%29_FIN_AL_WEB.pdf).

group had the lowest increase of all, going from 10 per cent in 2016 to 15 per cent in 2017/2018. It increased more dramatically for the non-EU and EU-East groups going from 62 per cent to 79 per cent and from 72 per cent to 83 per cent respectively. There was also a slight increase of private renters among Irish nationals as it went from 7 per cent in 2016 to 11 per cent in 2017/2018. The large increase of private renters among non-Irish nationals could be due to increased difficulty to enter the homeownership market (property price, tighter financial regulations for home mortgage etc.). Finally, only half of the EU-West are renting private accommodation, much less than the EU-East and non-EU groups.

**TABLE 4.4 HOUSING TENURE BY NATIONALITY, 2017 AND 2018 (POOLED)**

| Nationality      | Homeowners (%) | Private rented | Local Authority Rented | No of households (unweighted) |
|------------------|----------------|----------------|------------------------|-------------------------------|
| <b>Irish</b>     | 78.4           | 10.5           | 11.1                   | 8,392                         |
| <b>Non-Irish</b> | 28.3*          | 64.7*          | 7.0*                   | 818                           |
| <i>Of which:</i> |                |                |                        |                               |
| <b>UK</b>        | 69.0*          | 14.9           | 16.2*                  | 235                           |
| <b>EU-West</b>   | 44.6*          | [48-61]        | [<=5]                  | 105                           |
| <b>EU-East</b>   | [10-15]        | 83.2*          | [3-7]                  | 307                           |
| <b>Non-EU</b>    | [11-19]        | 78.9*          | [2-7]                  | 109                           |
| <b>All</b>       | 73.0           | 16.4           | 10.6                   | 9,210                         |

*Source:* Own calculations from pooled SILC 2017 and 2018, percentages weighted; N unweighted. A small number of households living rent-free have been excluded from the analysis.

*Notes:* The questions on homeownership were answered by the person who answered the household questionnaire, and their nationality is used. The total number of households does not add up because we have a few cases of non-Irish with no precise info about the nationality. \* is to signal that the group value is significantly different from the Irish value at  $p < 0.05$ . [ ] indicates that the value is in the range reported but has to be interpreted with caution due to the small count in the cell (see Chapter 3 Appendix).

With fewer homeowners and more private renters, Table 4.4 shows that fewer people live now in Local Authority (LA) rented accommodation as it went from 14 per cent in 2016 to 11 per cent in 2017/2018. This reduction could be due to the shift in the recent years from the provision of social housing by LA and Approved Housing Bodies to a model relying on the private sector through various rental subsidies such as rent supplement (Malone, 2019). The fall was modest among Irish Nationals as it went from 14 per cent to 11 per cent between 2016 and 2017/2018, but it was halved for non-Irish Nationals reaching 7 per cent in 2017/2018. As there was no change for the UK nationals at 15-16 per cent at both periods, the large fall took place among the other migrant groups ending with low rates in 2017/2017 up to a maximum of 7 per cent.

Poor housing conditions, living in deprived and disadvantaged areas are important contributing factors to social exclusion and they affect people in a wide range of domains. To cite a few, people living in such circumstances are more exposed to lower quality of life and wellbeing (Barnes et al., 2011) and poor physical and

mental health (Marmot, 2015; Mendell, 2015). With the exception of a few countries, an OECD study found that migrants were more likely to live in poorer accommodation standards and in deprived neighbourhoods compared to the country natives (OECD 2015c). In Ireland, Grotti et al. (2018) found that non-EU nationals were more likely to report higher levels of housing deprivation, live in overcrowded accommodations, and that Black people were much more likely to experience housing discrimination than White Irish nationals. In a recent study of discrimination in the Irish private rental market testing Irish, Polish and Nigerian applicants, Gusciute (2019) found that, compared to Irish applicants, Polish applicants were less likely to be invited to view a rental property, and Nigerian applicants were much less likely to be invited to view a property.

During the SILC interviews, household respondents were asked a few questions about the quality of the dwelling, the housing facilities as well as their neighbourhoods. From this information we construct two dimensions of deprivation, relating to housing and the neighbourhood's environment as used previously by Maître et al. (2006).

The housing deprivation dimension is a four-item scale capturing the lack of facilities in the accommodation for hot water, a bath or a shower, indoor toilets and central heating. A household is deprived on this dimension if they lack any of these four items.

The neighbourhood environment is based on a five-item scale about the area where households live as well as poor housing conditions. The environment items are about noise from neighbours or from the street, pollution, grime or other environmental problems and finally living in an area with crime, violence or vandalism. The housing condition items are presence of leaks or dampness in the accommodation and having inadequate light. A household is deprived on this dimension if they lack any of these five items.

In Table 4.5 we report the percentage of households experiencing any of these housing and environmental issues. Overall, non-Irish households are one-and-a-half times more likely than Irish households to experience housing deprivation at 15 per cent and 10 per cent respectively while there was no significant difference in 2016 (McGinnity et al., 2018). Overall, housing deprivation has slightly increased for non-Irish, but it has increased for both Irish and non-Irish private renters since 2016 with no significant difference between these groups.

Non-Irish households are significantly more deprived on the environment dimension than Irish households but there is no significant difference between

Irish private renters and non-Irish private renters. Unlike housing deprivation, the trend in the level of environment deprivation that we observed since 2014 (McGinnity et al., 2018) has continued to improve and has been quite sharp among non-Irish.

Overall, Irish nationals who are private renters are worse off on both housing and environment deprivation than Irish nationals in general, while this is only the case on housing for non-Irish nationals.<sup>73</sup>

**TABLE 4.5 HOUSING CONDITIONS, 2017 AND 2018 (POOLED)**

|                  | All Households        |                        | Private Rented        |                        |
|------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|
|                  | % deprived on housing | % deprived on environ. | % deprived on housing | % deprived on environ. |
| <b>Irish</b>     | 9.6                   | 17.3                   | 15.3                  | 25.7                   |
| <b>Non-Irish</b> | 15.0*                 | 20.3*                  | 18.1                  | 21.8                   |

Source: Own calculations from pooled SILC, 2017 and 2018, weighted percentages.

Notes: \* is to signal that the group value is significantly different from the Irish value at  $p < 0.05$ .

#### 4.4 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

In the latest Monitoring report (McGinnity et al., 2018) we highlighted that as the economy was recovering from the recession the overall median annual disposable household income was increasing for all nationality groups between 2014 and 2016. While the overall increase is now more modest at 6 per cent (17 per cent between 2014 and 2016), the pace of increase has been greater among non-nationals (9 per cent versus 6 per cent for Irish nationals). However, there is large variation among migrants themselves from a low 8 per cent for the EU-East to 32 per cent for the EU-West and the overall gap between Irish nationals and non-Irish nationals remained the same as observed in 2016.

During the period 2016 to 2017/2018 the overall at risk of poverty fell slightly from 17 per cent to 15 per cent and the improvement was spread across all nationality groups. The reduction of the at risk of poverty rate was much more pronounced among non-Irish nationals which could be due to the faster pace of increase of their median annual disposable household income. This was particularly true among the non-EU group (though they still report the highest at risk of poverty rate) but the heterogeneous composition of this group could hide large variation across countries of origins that we cannot explore due the small number of people in some cases. In addition, we also observed a general improvement with the

<sup>73</sup> It is likely that non-Irish nationals are living in more recent, and typically better-quality accommodation than many Irish nationals.

measures of material deprivation and consistent poverty. The improvement in material deprivation was particularly important among EU-West migrants mirroring the progress achieved with the at risk of poverty measure.

Overall, since 2016 the living standard of the overall population as well as for all migrant groups has improved and quite considerably for the latter group. However, among this group we have to be careful about the interpretation of these results for the non-EU group as the large improvement in their living standard could be due to a change in the composition of this group rather than an absolute increase in living standards. Table A1.1 shows that the proportion of non-EU nationals in Ireland who are Asian has increased modestly since 2016, whereas the proportion of other groups within this category such as UK or Africa has not changed significantly since 2016.

Since 2016 there has been no change in the level and pattern of the distribution of self-assessed health status of migrants and Irish nationals. Non-nationals report better health than Irish nationals particularly among EU-West migrants, while it is the opposite for UK nationals. With the exception of the UK nationals, who have a mean age (53), that is higher than Irish nationals (47), non-Irish nationals tend to be much younger than Irish nationals which helps to explain their better health outcomes (see Table 4.3). Previous Monitoring reports have already highlighted that UK nationals tend to report worse health and poverty outcomes than other EU groups (McGinnity et al., 2018; 2014; 2012). This could be because they are older on average, and that they have also a labour market history of more precarious employment than other EU groups. This would require further investigation which is beyond the scope of this study.

Compared to the situation in 2016, there has been some change in relation to housing tenure both for Irish and non-Irish. Indeed, while the proportion of homeowners among Irish nationals remained identical at 78 per cent, there has been an increase among this group into the private rental market due to a reduction in LA rented accommodation. We observe a similar situation among migrants but with the exception that not only there has there been a substantial increase of private renters and a strong reduction in LA renters but also there has been a small reduction in the proportion of homeowners. The housing tenure pattern shift among migrants is quite likely to be the result of the continuous rising prices in the property market, and the more severe restrictions to getting access to the mortgage market. Moreover, the absence of significant development of social housing during the recent period, and the shift from provision of social housing to rental subsidies might have contributed to constraining migrants to the private rental market.



Finally, migrants are more likely to experience housing and environment deprivation than Irish nationals. Since 2016 migrants have also experienced an increase in housing deprivation particularly among private renters (as well as for their Irish counterparts) but both groups, migrants and Irish nationals have enjoyed an improvement in their environment.

In this report findings about the UK migrant groups have been consistent with findings from previous Monitoring reports showing that this group tend to report worse poverty and health outcomes than other EU groups. This could be due to specific current and historic labour market characteristics that would require further investigation to fully understand.

#### BOX 4.1 SOCIAL WELFARE

The social welfare system is administered by the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection. It is divided into the following main types of payments:

- Social insurance payments;
- Social assistance or means tested payments;
- Universal payments.

To qualify for social insurance payments an individual must have made the necessary number of social insurance (PRSI) payments for the scheme in question and satisfy certain conditions. Social assistance payments are made to those who do not have enough PRSI contributions to qualify for the equivalent social insurance-based payments. Universal payments, such as child benefit, do not require a means test or insurance contributions.

EU law requires that EU nationals are treated equally to Member State nationals in regard to accessing social welfare. In practice, national administrative rules lead to differing levels of access. This is evidenced in Ireland by the application of a Habitual Residence Condition (HRC) to social assistance payments and to child benefit, which means that applicants must show they are both resident in and have a proven close link to Ireland (Department of Social Protection, 2013).

##### *Pandemic Unemployment Payment and the Temporary Wage Subsidy Scheme*

Due to the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on unemployment levels and incomes, the government introduced the pandemic unemployment payment (PUP) and the temporary wage subsidy scheme (TWSS). PUP is available to both employees and the self-employed who lost their job on or after 13 March 2020 due to the pandemic. Individuals can apply for PUP if they:

- are aged between 18 and 66 years old and
- currently living in the Republic of Ireland and
- have lost their job due to the COVID-19 pandemic or

- have been temporarily laid off due to the COVID-19 pandemic and
- worked in the Republic of Ireland or were a cross border frontier worker and
- are not in receipt of any employment income.

(COVID-19 Pandemic Unemployment Payment, 2020)

The payment also applies to students, part time workers, and non-EU workers who have lost employment due to the pandemic. According to figures from the CSO (2020b), 498,750 people were availing of PUP in the week ending 14 June, of which 28 per cent were non-Irish nationals while 17 per cent of the labour force were non-Irish nationals (CSO, LFS Q2 2020b). This highlights the disproportionate impact of the pandemic on non-Irish nationals. The TWSS was introduced on 26 March 2020 and to enable employers to pay their workers during the pandemic. Employers qualify if they can prove that they have lost at least a quarter of their trade due to the pandemic. Employers who are part of this scheme can claim a percentage of a worker's net wages back (Temporary COVID-19 Wage Subsidy Scheme, 2020). Overall, 244,755 people were availing of this scheme in the week ending 14 of June; similar to PUP figures 23 per cent of those availing of TWSS were non-Irish nationals.

## CHAPTER 4 APPENDIX

**TABLE A4.1 LOGISTIC REGRESSION (ODDS RATIOS) OF HAVING VERY/GOOD HEALTH, 2017 AND 2018 (POOLED)**

| Socio-economic characteristics                   | Model 1 | Model 2 | Model 3 |
|--|---------|---------|---------|
| <b>Nationality: Irish(ref)</b>                   |         |         |         |
| UK   | 0.80    | 0.91    | 0.87    |
| EU-West  | 1.82**  | 1.38    | 1.10    |
| EU-East  | 1.97*** | 1.39**  | 1.30*   |
| Non-EU   | 1.28    | 0.91    | 0.94    |
| <b>Gender: Male (ref)</b>                        |         |         |         |
| Female   |         | 1.05    | 1.16**  |
| <b>Age</b>                                       |         | 0.27*** | 0.68*** |
| <b>Education: Primary (ref)</b>                  |         |         |         |
| Secondary  |         |         | 1.82*** |
| Post-secondary & third-level                     |         |         | 2.48*** |
| <b>Principal economic status: Inactive (ref)</b> |         |         |         |
| At work  |         |         | 2.86*** |
| Unemployed                                       |         |         | 0.78**  |
| Full-time education                              |         |         | 3.83*** |
| Observations                                     | 17,037  | 17,037  | 17,037  |

Source: Own calculations from pooled SILC 2017 and 2018.

Note: \*\*\*p<0.001; \*\*p<0.01; \*p<0.05.

Table A4.1 reports the results of a logistic regression on having very good or good health by comparing Irish nationals to several groups of non-Irish nationals. The results reported are expressed as odds ratios. An odd ratio greater than one means a greater likelihood to report the outcome of interest and an odd ratio less than one means to be less likely to report the same outcome. In the first model when we take account only of nationalities, we note that only EU-West and EU-East nationals are more likely to report a better health status than Irish nationals. In Model 2 there is no gender difference to explain better health status, but people's health status is not as good as they get older and now only EU-East nationals are more likely to be healthier than Irish nationals. In Model 3, people's education level and principal economic status explain better health outcomes but even controlling for these characteristics, EU-East nationals are still reporting better health status than Irish nationals.



## CHAPTER 5

### Active Citizenship

By Emma Quinn, Michał Polakowski and Frances McGinnity

Three indicators, designed to measure integration in the ‘active citizenship’<sup>74</sup> domain, are presented in this chapter. Firstly, the naturalisation rate, measured as the ratio of resident immigrants to those who acquired citizenship; secondly the share of immigrants holding permanent or long-term residence permits; and thirdly the share of immigrants among elected representatives. These indicators describe the context and the opportunities for integration in the domain of active citizenship, specifically in relation to naturalisation, long-term residence and political participation. The core indicators in this chapter do not draw direct comparisons of outcomes between Irish and non-Irish nationals, and therefore differ from others in the Monitoring report. This chapter presents the calculation of these indicators based on the best available national data, together with available supplementary information and data. We also present data on political engagement of non-Irish population in terms of interest in political affairs and participation in the elections since 2018, as well as sports volunteering.

#### 5.1 NATURALISATION

Naturalised migrants may participate fully in the democratic process and are entitled to equal access to the institutions, goods and services of the State. Over 153,000 non-Irish nationals acquired Irish citizenship through naturalisation between 2005 and 2019.<sup>75</sup> Figure 5.1 shows that the number of naturalisation certificates issued annually accelerated rapidly from 2010, to peak in 2012 at 25,088. Since then the number fell steadily, and stabilised at around 8,200 in 2017 and 2018, before declining again in 2019 to just over 5,790. The decreasing trend in the number of naturalisations since 2012 reflects a decline in non-EEA residents during the 2008-2012 recession, as well as the introduction of processing improvements in 2011 which cleared a large backlog of applications.<sup>76</sup>

<sup>74</sup> The term ‘active citizenship’ is used here as a broad concept embracing formal and non-formal, political, cultural, inter-personal and caring activities (Taskforce on Active Citizenship, 2007) and as such is not limited to the activities of Irish citizens. However, due to data constraints, the indicators presented in this chapter measure integration with respect to only a limited part of the active citizenship domain.

<sup>75</sup> Exact figure 153,228 includes an estimation of 20,000 certificates issued between 2005 and 2009 plus precise annual figures between 2010 and 2019. Source: Research and Data Analytics, Department of Justice and Equality. These administrative data do not take account of the fact that not everyone who naturalises stays in Ireland (see further discussion in Section 5.1.2). Census 2016 records that approximately 310,000 Irish citizens were born abroad (see Table A4.a). However Irish citizenship may be acquired by way of several different ‘pathways’, for example by birth in Northern Ireland, Irish descent etc. See Box 5.1 and Groarke and Dunbar (2020) for further information.

<sup>76</sup> Approximately 22,000 applications were awaiting decision in March 2011 and this number had fallen to approximately 8,500 applications pending decision in December 2013 (Barrett et al., 2017).

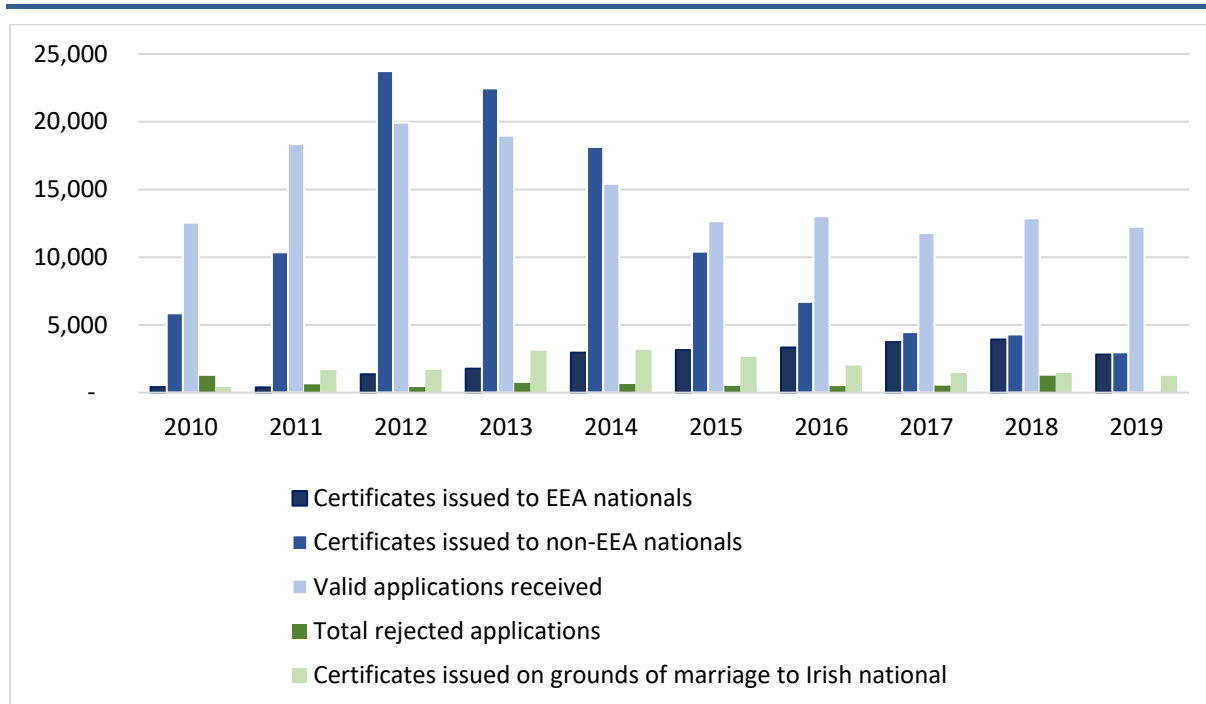
While application numbers remained relatively stable, between 11,777 and 13,018 in the period 2015 to 2019, grants and refusal rates have fluctuated. During 2019 the number of naturalisation certificates issued fell by 30 per cent to just over 5,790 – a record low in the available data. This probably reflects a freeze in case processing between July and November 2019, arising from a High Court judgment, discussed further in Section 5.1.3. Refusals jumped significantly in 2018, to 1,255, more than double the 2017 figure of 522. The Department of Justice and Equality indicated that the 2018 refusals include cases processed in 2017 but concluded in 2018. Just 38 refusals were issued in 2019 as a result of the processing freeze referred to above.<sup>77</sup>

Figure 5.1 also shows that a significant proportion of naturalisation certificates issued each year are to the spouses of Irish nationals. In 2018, 17.8 per cent of certificates issued were on the basis of marriage to an Irish national increasing to 21.3 per cent in 2019.<sup>78</sup>

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<sup>77</sup> Information received from Immigration Service Delivery, Department of Justice and Equality, September 2020.

<sup>78</sup> Data on the numbers of persons who naturalised on the grounds of marriage to Irish national: 1,234 (2019); 1,461 (2018); 1,456 (2017); 2,004 (2016); 2,643 (2015); 3,167 (2014); 3,094 (2013); 1,686 (2012); 1,656 (2011); 422 (2010). Data received from the Research and Data Analytics, Department of Justice and Equality, April 2020.

**FIGURE 5.1 NATURALISATION CERTIFICATE APPLICATIONS, REJECTIONS AND CERTIFICATES ISSUED 2010-2019**

Source: Data received from Research and Data Analytics, Department of Justice and Equality, April 2020. Data 2014-2017 have been revised and therefore totals may differ from those presented previous Monitoring reports.

The Department of Justice and Equality makes data available on processing times, which are defined to run from the date Immigration Service Delivery (ISD)<sup>79</sup> within the Department of Justice and Equality deems an application complete, up to the date a decision is made. These data show that processing times for naturalisation applications increased significantly, from an average<sup>80</sup> of ten months in 2018 and 11 months in 2019. The Department of Justice and Equality (2019b) noted that while the majority of applications are straightforward, some are more complex and take longer to check, referring in particular to the need to conduct checks related to the 'good character' requirement. See Groarke and Dunbar (2020) for further discussion of naturalisation conditions and the process involved in applying for naturalisation in Ireland. In May 2020 media reports indicated that more than 20 per cent of live citizenship applications had been in the system for longer than 24 months.<sup>81</sup> In September 2020, the Minister reported that approximately 21,000 applications were being processed.<sup>82</sup>

<sup>79</sup> During 2019 the Irish Naturalisation and Immigration Service (INIS) was replaced with Immigration Service Delivery (ISD) as part of a broad departmental reorganisation.

<sup>80</sup> Average time taken to process all applications processed to a decision during the reference year. Source: Data received from the Research and Data Analytics, Department of Justice and Equality, April 2020.

<sup>81</sup> *The Irish Times*, 26 May 2020.

<sup>82</sup> Parliamentary Question [22808/20], 10 September 2020, [www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/question/2020-09-10/44](http://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/question/2020-09-10/44).

In 2018, three citizenship ceremonies were held. This was the first year in which large-scale citizenship ceremonies were held outside Dublin (Sheridan, 2019). Five ceremonies took place in 2019 and six in 2010. The first virtual citizenship ceremony took place during the COVID-19 pandemic in July 2020 (Groarke and Dunbar, 2020).

### 5.1.1 Profile of naturalised Irish citizens<sup>83</sup>

Prior to 2017, non-EEA nationals far outnumbered EEA nationals among recipients of naturalisation certificates. Table 5.1 shows that the proportion of EEA nationals naturalising has increased from 7 per cent in 2010 to 49 per cent in 2020.

**TABLE 5.1 PERSONS WHO ACQUIRED CITIZENSHIP THROUGH NATURALISATION BY FORMER NATIONALITY GROUP (EEA AND NON-EEA): 2010-2019**

|                | 2010  | 2011   | 2012   | 2013   | 2014   | 2015   | 2016   | 2017  | 2018  | 2019  |
|----------------|-------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|-------|-------|-------|
| <b>EEA</b>     | 417   | 392    | 1,352  | 1,770  | 2,953  | 3,143  | 3,332  | 3,730 | 3,919 | 2,814 |
| <b>Non-EEA</b> | 5,858 | 10,360 | 23,736 | 22,467 | 18,137 | 10,404 | 6,702  | 4,462 | 4,303 | 2,977 |
| <b>Total</b>   | 6,275 | 10,752 | 25,088 | 4,237  | 21,090 | 13,547 | 10,034 | 8,192 | 8,222 | 5,791 |
| <b>% EEA</b>   | 6.6%  | 3.6%   | 5.4%   | 41.8%  | 14.0%  | 23.2%  | 33.2%  | 45.5% | 47.7% | 48.6% |

*Source:* Data received from Research and Data Analytics, Department of Justice and Equality, April 2020. Data 2014-2017 have been revised and therefore totals may differ from those presented previous Monitoring reports.

*Note:* Where relevant, individuals recorded as stateless are shown in the non-EEA category as follows: 2010, three stateless persons; 2011, three stateless persons; 2012, six stateless persons; 2014, two stateless persons. Non-EEA data include certificates issued to persons in respect of whom nationality information is 'not readily available' as follows: 2015, one person. *Source:* Research and Data Analytics, Department of Justice and Equality, April 2020.

Table 5.2 shows the top ten nationalities among people who naturalised between 2014 and 2019. Since 2016, Polish nationals have formed the largest group among new Irish citizens, replacing Indian nationals in 2015 and Nigerian nationals in 2014. Polish nationals accounted for 18 per cent of recipients of naturalisation certificates in 2018 and 16 per cent in 2019. Census data show that the Polish population in Ireland has increased significantly in the last two decades, from just over 2,000 in 2002, to 63,276 in 2006 and 122,515 in 2016 (CSO, 2012; 2017). UK nationals are a particularly rapidly growing group among new Irish citizens and formed the second largest group in 2019. In 2015, just 0.4 per cent of new citizens were UK nationals (54 persons), increasing to 6 per cent in 2017 (525) and 12 per cent (665) in 2019.<sup>84</sup> This trend is likely to be related to the UK's withdrawal from the EU on 31 January 2020. Romanian nationals were among the top ten nationalities in each year 2014-2019 and formed the third largest group in 2019 with 552 persons naturalising.

<sup>83</sup> Statistics on applications for citizenship disaggregated by age, gender and nationality are now published annually in line with Action 9 under the Migrant Integration Strategy. Department of Justice and Equality, 2018.

<sup>84</sup> UK nationals naturalising: 54 (2015); 98 (2016); 525 (2017); 686 (2018); 665 (2019). Data received from Research and Data Analytics, Department of Justice and Equality. April 2018; April 2020.



Over the period 2014-2019 declines were seen across all non-EEA national groups listed in the 2014 top ten. Some national groups saw particularly steep drops: naturalisation certificates issued to Nigerian nationals decreased by 91 per cent from 3,295 to 305. Certificates issued to Indian nationals saw an 82 per cent drop in the period, from 2,942 to 515, while certificates issued to Philippine nationals fell by 91 per cent between 2014 and 2019 from 2,184 to 191. Nigerian nationals accounted for 16 per cent of recipients in 2014, falling to 5 per cent in 2019. Similarly, Indian nationals accounted for 14 per cent of recipients in 2014, declining to 9 per cent in 2019.

In order to interpret naturalisation trends, it is helpful to look at data on the relevant population at least five years prior to the year in question, as this is the minimum period a non-EEA national may be in the State before applying to naturalise. Residence permit data show that the Nigerian, Philippine and Indian nationality groups significantly reduced in size between 2010 (the earliest data available) and 2014.<sup>85</sup>

As discussed in detail in the previous *Monitoring Report on Integration*, declines have been seen across non-EEA national groups naturalising since 2012. This partly reflects a fall during the recession (2008-2012) in the number of non-EEA nationals residing in Ireland for work purposes (see Figure 1.5). In 2011 some 49,504 non-EEA nationals held employment-related residence permits in Ireland. By 2014 this number had fallen by 68 per cent to reach 15,831.<sup>86</sup>

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<sup>85</sup> Residence permissions in 2009: Nigeria, 13,938; Philippines, 11,368; India, 16,531. Residence permissions 2014: Nigeria, 5,306; Philippines, 4,104; India, 11,118. Source: Eurostat [migr\_resvalid]. Extracted 16 September 2020.

<sup>86</sup> Total residence permissions issued fell from Eurostat [migr\_resvalid]. Extracted 16 September 2020.

**TABLE 5.2 TOTAL NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS WHO ACQUIRED CITIZENSHIP BY NATURALISATION BY FORMER NATIONALITY 2014-2019 (TOP 10)**

| Acquired Citizenship 2014 |               | Acquired Citizenship 2015 |               | Acquired Citizenship 2016 |               | Acquired Citizenship 2017 |              | Acquired Citizenship 2018 |              | Acquired Citizenship 2019 |              |
|---------------------------|---------------|---------------------------|---------------|---------------------------|---------------|---------------------------|--------------|---------------------------|--------------|---------------------------|--------------|
| Former Nationality        | N             | Former Nationality        | N             | Former Nationality        | N             | Former Nationality        | N            | Former Nationality        | N            | Former Nationality        | N            |
| Nigeria                   | 3,295         | India                     | 1,617         | Poland                    | 1,326         | Poland                    | 1,358        | Poland                    | 1,464        | Poland                    | 925          |
| India                     | 2,942         | Nigeria                   | 1,363         | India                     | 1,028         | Romania                   | 762          | Romania                   | 819          | UK                        | 665          |
| Philippines               | 2,184         | Philippines               | 1,165         | Nigeria                   | 776           | India                     | 665          | UK                        | 686          | Romania                   | 552          |
| Pakistan                  | 1,246         | Poland                    | 1,158         | Romania                   | 756           | UK                        | 525          | India                     | 629          | India                     | 515          |
| Romania                   | 1,029         | Romania                   | 902           | Philippines               | 729           | Nigeria                   | 508          | Nigeria                   | 478          | Nigeria                   | 305          |
| Poland                    | 939           | Pakistan                  | 732           | Pakistan                  | 418           | Latvia                    | 392          | Pakistan                  | 364          | Latvia                    | 221          |
| China                     | 575           | China                     | 478           | Latvia                    | 380           | Philippines               | 362          | Philippines               | 320          | Philippines               | 191          |
| S. Africa                 | 563           | Brazil                    | 391           | Brazil                    | 304           | Pakistan                  | 340          | Latvia                    | 308          | Brazil                    | 188          |
| Ukraine                   | 535           | S. Africa                 | 367           | China                     | 304           | Brazil                    | 264          | China                     | 233          | China                     | 162          |
| Brazil                    | 457           | Latvia                    | 328           | US                        | 232           | China                     | 222          | Brazil                    | 220          | US                        | 154          |
| Other                     | 7,325         | Other                     | 5,046         | Other                     | 3,781         | Other                     | 2,794        | Other                     | 2,701        | Other                     | 1,913        |
| <b>Total</b>              | <b>21,090</b> | <b>Total</b>              | <b>13,547</b> | <b>Total</b>              | <b>10,034</b> | <b>Total</b>              | <b>8,192</b> | <b>Total</b>              | <b>8,222</b> | <b>Total</b>              | <b>5,791</b> |

Source: Data received from Research and Data Analytics, Department of Justice and Equality, April 2020.

Notes: China includes Hong Kong.

Despite the upward trend of EEA nationals naturalising, the proportion of the resident EEA population choosing to naturalise annually remains very low, at 0.9 per cent in 2018 (see Table 5.4), compared to 2.5 per cent for non-EEA nationals in the same period (see Table 5.3). This is not unusual in an international context. OECD (2018a) finds that 45 per cent of European immigrants resident in EU countries have sought to acquire their host-country's nationality compared to around two-thirds of those from non-European countries. Citizenship acquisition is found to be much higher among Europeans in countries that are not part of mobility agreements, such as Australia and the United States (more than 80 per cent). Vink et al. (2013) showed that the level of economic development<sup>87</sup> of migrants' country of origin is important in understanding the likelihood to naturalise, with immigrants from highly developed countries much less likely to make this choice. Intra-EU migration may be also be more flexible, and less permanent, than non-EU immigration (Favell 2008).

Non-EEA nationals in Ireland do not share the benefits of mobility and security of residence that EEA nationals enjoy, and therefore have a greater incentive to naturalise. Resident EEA nationals have rights and entitlements that are very similar to those held by Irish citizens, the main exception being that only Irish citizens have the right to stand and vote in all national elections and referenda. Recent research has shown that among non-EU migrants, being an Irish citizen is associated with lower unemployment rates, while the opposite is true for EEA migrants. Reporting Irish nationality has a strong, positive impact on the likelihood of being in a high-skilled occupation for both EEA and non-EEA migrants (McGinnity et al., 2020).

In terms of age profile 17 per cent of non-EEA nationals who naturalised in 2019 were children aged under 16 years. In the EEA group the proportion was substantially lower at 10 per cent. In 2018 children aged under 16 years represented 17 per cent of the non-EEA group and 8 per cent of the EEA group. In a further breakdown, the Department of Justice and Equality noted that of the top 20 nationalities receiving citizenship in 2018, Bangladeshi nationals were youngest with an average age of 33 while the oldest were from the UK, with an average age of 56. In the same year 67 per cent of new citizens were aged between 25 and 45, and 11 per cent were aged over 55.<sup>88</sup> New Irish citizens are almost evenly split between males and females in both 2018 (50 per cent female) and 2019 (51 per cent female).<sup>89</sup>

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<sup>87</sup> Using data from the Human Development Index, a comparative measure of life expectancy, literacy, education, and standard of living.

<sup>88</sup> Department of Justice and Equality (2019). Media release 'Minister Flanagan announces that over 10,000 people were granted Irish citizenship in 2018'. <http://www.inis.gov.ie>.

<sup>89</sup> Data received from Research and Data Analytics, Department of Justice and Equality, April 2020.

### 5.1.2 Citizenship indicators

The naturalisation rate is measured as the ratio of those who acquired citizenship to the number of resident immigrants in a given year. It captures information on the opportunities to naturalise (policies) as well as on a range of other contextual factors such as immigrants' motivation to naturalise, duration of residence, and settlement in the country (European Services Network and Migration Policy Group, 2013). This section presents separate annual naturalisation rates for non-EEA and for EU nationals. In order to produce the most up-to-date and precise indicator possible we use administrative data on residence permissions to calculate a rate for non-EEA nationals. A similar rate is provided for EU nationals, however because residence permission data are not available for this group, we report an indicator compiled by Eurostat. These data are less up-to-date but have the advantage of allowing us to place Ireland in an EU context.

#### *Citizenship Indicator for non-EEA Nationals*

The annual naturalisation rate for non-EEA nationals i.e. the ratio of the number of people who acquired citizenship through naturalisation in the reference year to the number of non-EEA persons holding 'live' immigration permissions, is shown in Table 5.3. As only non-EEA nationals aged 16 and over are required to register with Immigration Service Delivery/Garda National Immigration Bureau the indicator refers to the age group 16 and over.

The annual naturalisation rate for non-EEA nationals aged 16 and over has declined steadily since the 2012 peak. As discussed above, this trend reflects the decline in overall residence permits issued to non-EEA nationals between 2008 and 2014, which was driven by the decline in employment-related permits issued as Ireland's economy experienced a severe recession. This meant that reducing numbers of non-EEA nationals accrued the required residence period each year.<sup>90</sup> In addition, the annual naturalisation rate was inflated from 2011 by the working through of backlogs following processing improvements (see McGinnity et al., 2013), the effect of which tailed off in subsequent years. The rate fell slightly between 2017 and 2018, from 2.9 to 2.5 per cent, and again by a full percentage point in 2019 to reach 1.5. As noted above this very low 2019 rate reflects a freeze in processing during 2019.

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<sup>90</sup> While the number of permits issued for education-related reasons remained substantial in this period, periods spent in Ireland as a student are not considered when calculating reckonable residence.

**TABLE 5.3 CITIZENSHIP INDICATOR FOR NON-EEA NATIONALS AGED 16 AND OVER 2009-2019**

| Annual Naturalisation Rate  |         |         |         |         |         |         |         |         |         |          |
|---|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|----------|
|   | 2010    | 2011    | 2012    | 2013    | 2014    | 2015    | 2016    | 2017    | 2018    | 2019     |
| <b>Non-EEA aged ≥16 who acquired citizenship in reference year</b>  | 4,836   | 9,760   | 19,779  | 17,360  | 13,447  | 8,585   | 5,396   | 3,709   | 3,594   | 2,479    |
| <b>Non-EEA aged ≥16 holding immigration permissions</b>   | 133,232 | 128,104 | 120,281 | 107,435 | 105,569 | 113,914 | 110,927 | 128,066 | 142,286 | 168,297* |
| <b>Share of total number of non-EEA aged ≥16 holding permissions in ref. year who acquired citizenship in ref. year (%)</b> | 3.6     | 7.6     | 16.4    | 16.2    | 12.8    | 7.5     | 4.8     | 2.9     | 2.5     | 1.5      |

Source: Data received from Research and Data Analytics, Department of Justice and Equality, April 2020. Eurostat (migr\_resvalid), August 2020: all valid residence permits on 31 December on reference year. \*Data are provisional.

A total of 108,945<sup>91</sup> non-EEA nationals aged 16 and over naturalised between 2005 and 2019, indicating that a substantial proportion of the population of non-EEA origin has now acquired Irish citizenship.

In previous Monitoring reports we reported an estimate of the proportion of the population of non-EEA origin that had naturalised using data from the Department of Justice and Equality, recognising that it was likely to be an overestimation (McGinnity et al., 2018). Newly available Census 2016 microdata allow us to estimate the extent of this overestimation. Census data indicate that in 2016, 43 per cent of the resident population aged 15+ who were born outside the EEA (197,748)<sup>92</sup> were Irish citizens (84,049) (see Appendix 4 Table A4.b). This includes respondents who report dual citizenship, where one of these is an Irish citizen. A small number of these may have been Irish citizens by birth, but we expect this to be very small for those of non-EEA origin. In addition, this estimate includes 15-year-olds, while the Integration Monitor Indicator age range is 16 and older, as no residence permit data exist in Ireland for non-EEA children under 16 (Fahey et al., 2019a).<sup>93</sup> Naturalisation statistics from the Department of Justice and Equality, reported in the *2016 Monitoring Report on Integration*, show that a total of 93,016 non-EEA nationals aged 16 and over had acquired Irish citizenship in the period 2005 to end December 2015 (Barrett et al., 2017). This suggests at minimum an outflow of around 10 per cent of naturalised citizens.<sup>94</sup>

<sup>91</sup> Includes an estimation of 20,000 certificates issued between 2005 and 2009.

<sup>92</sup> I.e. those with valid information on citizenship and country of birth.

<sup>93</sup> It is not possible to exclude 15-year-olds using Census microdata.

<sup>94</sup> This is likely to be a slight underestimate of 'ever naturalised' as Census figures include 15-year-old Irish citizens of non-EEA origin, and also some non-EEA origin Irish citizens who are Irish by descent, but we have no way of quantifying this.

Therefore, in the current report we have adjusted the indicator to take account of a 10 per cent outflow, i.e. emigration and deaths among naturalised Irish citizens. In 2019 we estimate that up to 37 per cent of the resident adult population of non-EEA origin (defined as the currently registered non-EEA adult population, plus those naturalised resident in Ireland) had acquired Irish citizenship through naturalisation.<sup>95</sup> This compares to an estimated 13 per cent at end December 2009 in the *2010 Monitoring Report on Integration* (McGinnity et al., 2011). While this indicator is not without the problems discussed above, it does document a remarkable rise in the proportion of non-EEA residents in Ireland who have acquired Irish citizenship, consistent with the marked increase in naturalisation acquisition in the period 2010-2015 (see Table 5.3). To the extent that acquiring citizenship facilitates integration for this group, this is a very positive development in Ireland.

#### *Citizenship Indicator for EU Nationals*

Table 5.4 shows Eurostat estimates of the percentage of non-Irish EU nationals who acquired citizenship in the reference year. It is estimated that less than 1 per cent of the resident non-Irish EU population in Ireland acquired citizenship each year between 2009 and 2016, although the rate has increased steadily and significantly in the period from 0.06 per cent in 2009 to 0.9 per cent in 2018.

**TABLE 5.4 CITIZENSHIP INDICATOR FOR EU NATIONALS IN IRELAND**

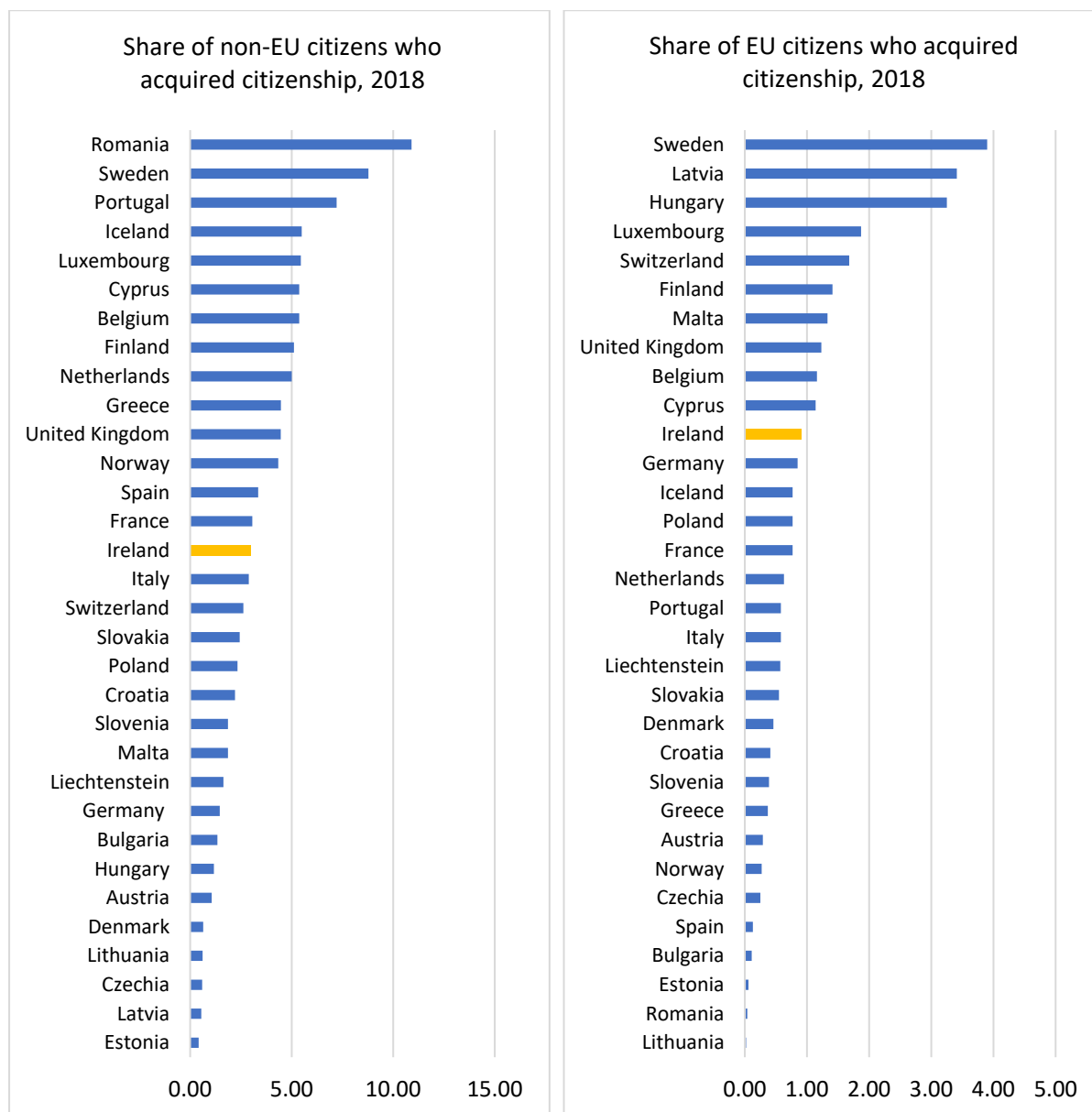
|   | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 |
|---|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| <b>EU residents who acquired citizenship as a share of EU residents (%)</b> | 0.06 | 0.09 | 0.09 | 0.33 | 0.45 | 0.72 | 0.76 | 0.80 | 0.87 | 0.90 |

Source: EUROSTAT (migr\_acqs), extracted August 2020. 2013 and 2015 data are provisional.

Figure 5.2 shows Ireland in an EU context, using Eurostat indicators on the share of EU citizens and non-EU citizens who acquired citizenship in 2018. The rate of naturalisation of EU citizens is calculated as the total number of persons of EU origin granted citizenship through naturalisation in the reference year, divided by the total estimated resident population of EU nationals. A similar method is used to calculate the non-EU rate.

<sup>95</sup> The non-EEA adult population 'ever naturalised' (108,945) is reduced by 10 per cent to take account of outflows by 2019 to estimate 'naturalised remaining' (98,078). This is expressed as a proportion of the 'population of non-EEA origin' (266,375). The latter is defined as the currently registered non-EEA population aged 16 and over (168,297), plus those 'naturalised remaining' (98,078).

**FIGURE 5.2 RESIDENTS WHO ACQUIRED CITIZENSHIP AS A SHARE OF RESIDENT NON-CITIZENS BY FORMER CITIZENSHIP (%), 2018, IN EUROPEAN UNION MEMBER STATES PLUS NORWAY**



Source: Eurostat.

In 2016, Ireland lay 17<sup>th</sup> in the ranking of Member States plus Norway, according to the percentage of EU residents who acquired citizenship as a share of resident non-citizens. By 2018 Ireland had moved up to 11<sup>th</sup> place. In the case of non-EU nationals, Ireland was in 15<sup>th</sup> place among Member States in both years.

### 5.1.3 Policy issues related to naturalisation

In July 2019 the judgment in *Jones v Minister for Justice and Equality*<sup>96</sup> led to the suspension of processing of all citizenship applications until November 2019. The case centred on the requirement for ‘reckonable residence’ of five years during the previous nine years, including one year of continuous residence prior to a naturalisation application. A discretionary ‘six-week rule’ operated on an administrative basis, which allowed absences from the State for short periods during the year prior to application. In July 2019 this six-week rule was found to be unlawful, with the Court holding that ‘continuous residence’, as set down in the 1956 Act, means unbroken and uninterrupted residence.<sup>97</sup> The judgment was met with concern from NGOs, who argued that the burden on applicants was illogical in a globalised society and pointed to the potential implications for thousands of applicants and prospective applicants.<sup>98</sup> In November 2019 the Court of Appeal held that the previous judgment was unworkable and overly literal. The Court of Appeal held that the six-week rule was reasonable and pragmatic and ‘facilitates flexibility, clarity and certainty’ in establishing how the ‘continuous residence’ requirement must be satisfied by naturalisation applicants<sup>99</sup> (Groarke and Dunbar, 2020).

Delays in the processing of naturalisation applications resulting from the processing freeze were exacerbated from March 2020 by COVID-19 shut-down measures. In May 2020 prospective applicants were ‘strongly advised’ to postpone submitting any new applications until mid-August 2020 (Department of Justice and Equality, 2020). Backlogs and delays were the subject of sustained media commentary during 2019 and 2020.<sup>100</sup> The Immigrant Council of Ireland reported that almost 20 per cent of calls handled by its Information Service related to citizenship during 2019 (Immigrant Council of Ireland, 2020).

The particular difficulties experienced by separated, stateless, asylum seeking and undocumented children accessing citizenship were highlighted in a report published by the Ombudsman for Children in June 2020. Such groups of children may not begin on a pathway to citizenship without already having an immigration permission. The fact that children may not apply for international protection independently, that no formal statelessness procedure exists, and that the

<sup>96</sup> [2019] IEHC 519.

<sup>97</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>98</sup> Immigrant Council of Ireland, ‘Citizenship Applications – Continuous Residence Requirement’, 18 July 2019, <https://www.immigrantcouncil.ie/news/citizenship-applications-continuous-residence-requirement>.

<sup>99</sup> *Roderick Jones v Minister for Justice and Equality* [2019] IECA 285. See also: Carolan, M. (2019) “‘Unworkable’ High Court finding on citizenship applications overturned”, *The Irish Times*, 14 November 2019.

<sup>100</sup> For example: Falvey, D. (2019) ‘Ireland’s citizens in waiting: 16,000 people now “in limbo”’, *The Irish Times*, 5 October 2019; Pollak, S. (2019). ‘Citizenship ceremonies to restart following five-month delay’, *The Irish Times*, 5 December 2019; Pollak, S (2020). ‘Over 3,600 people waiting two years for citizenship application to be processed’, *The Irish Times* 26 May 2020; *The Irish Times* 5 June 2020.



immigration status of non-asylum-seeking unaccompanied minors can be ambiguous, are among the potential barriers highlighted. Currently, non-EEA national children aged under 16 have no means of registering their presence in the State. They may be presumed to hold the same status as their parents and/or given incorrect immigration statuses upon turning 16, with implications for (future) naturalisation applications (Arnold, 2020).

The Migrant Integration Strategy 2017-2020 undertakes to finalise arrangements to enable registration of non-EEA migrants aged under 16 years ‘as a matter of urgency’. The Progress Report on the Strategy states that registration for minors will begin in 2022, when responsibility for it is fully transferred from the Gardaí to INIS (now ISD) (Department of Justice and Equality, 2019a).

In terms of developments in the Courts, during 2019 the High Court quashed the Minister’s decision to deny a minor citizenship based on her father’s failure to satisfy the good character test.<sup>101</sup> The Court of Appeal dismissed an appeal brought by a refugee who had been refused naturalisation application for reasons of national security.<sup>102</sup> The Minister’s decision not to disclose precise reasons for the refusal was upheld (Sheridan, 2019).

*The Irish Times* reported in October 2016 that there had been a surge in citizenship applications, foreign birth registrations and passport applications following the June Brexit referendum result (Sheridan, 2017). Passport applications from UK nationals have continued to increase. In October 2019, media reports indicated that the number of applications increased from under 26,000 in 2016 to almost 76,000 in 2018 and around 85,500 in the first eight months of 2019.<sup>103</sup> As noted above, large increases have also been seen in UK nationals naturalising.

Finally, a recurrent issue relates to the cost attached to applying for citizenship in Ireland (See Box 5 and Barrett et al., 2017). Commentators have noted high fees and the fact that there is no possibility to have the fee waived on economic or hardship grounds (Becker and Cosgrave, 2014). The Migrant Integration Strategy Progress Report states that Irish naturalisation fees compare favourably internationally and that they are reviewed annually; further than that Ireland has no plans to increase them at this time (Department of Justice and Equality, 2019a). EMN (2020) finds that naturalisation can be a lengthy and costly process across EU Member States, with limited available support.

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<sup>101</sup> *Iurescu (a minor) v Minister for Justice and Equality* [2019] 535.

<sup>102</sup> *AP v Minister for Justice* [2018] IECA 112.

<sup>103</sup> *The Irish Times*, 3 October 2019.

## 5.2 LONG TERM RESIDENCE

The provision of a statutory long-term residence status with ‘transparent rules, clearly articulated expectations and predictable benefits for law-abiding immigrants’ (European Commission, 2004) has been foreseen by Irish policymakers since 2008.<sup>104</sup>

Long-term residence is a permanent residence status for migrants who have been resident in the host country for a period of time (often five years), which offers the same basic socio-economic rights as citizens of the host country. As such, it is a central element of integration policy offering the migrant almost full inclusion in the host society. Such a status is provided for in the majority of EU Member States, under Directives 2003/109/EC and 2011/51/EU.<sup>105</sup> Ireland has not opted in to either Directive and resident non-EEA nationals have much more limited access to permanent residence than elsewhere in the EU.<sup>106</sup> In Ireland an administrative long-term residence is open to employment permit holders (and their dependent spouses) and scientific researchers only.

The number of applications for long-term residence in Ireland declined steadily between 2010 and 2016, falling from 2,415 to just 100. As noted in previous Monitoring reports and by the Department of Justice and Equality (2019a), this decline is probably related to the increase in naturalisation certificates issued since 2011. Ireland’s long-term residence scheme has been criticised as having ‘the most unclear and discretionary procedure’ of all 38 countries reviewed in the MIPEX study (Huddleston et al., 2015). By comparison, naturalisation may well be preferable, particularly since the introduction of improved processing since 2011 (see McGinnity et al., 2014). Since 2017 there has been a slight increase in applications each year reaching 160 in 2019. Holders of long-term residence accounted for just 0.9 per cent of non-EEA nationals with live residence permissions in 2018, and 0.7 per cent in 2019.

<sup>104</sup> Immigration, Residence and Protection Bill 2008.

<sup>105</sup> Directive 2011/51/EU of 11 May 2011 amends Council Directive 2003/109/EC concerning the status of third-country nationals who are long-term residents to extend its scope to beneficiaries of international protection. Only Ireland, UK and Denmark do not participate in the Directives.

<sup>106</sup> Under the terms of the protocol on the position of the UK and Ireland annexed to the Treaty on European Union and to the Treaty establishing the European Community by the Treaty of Amsterdam, Ireland does not take part in the adoption by the Council of proposed measures pursuant to Title IV of the EC Treaty unless Ireland opts in to the measure.

**TABLE 5.5 APPLICATIONS FOR LONG-TERM RESIDENCE (LTR) 2010-2018**

|   | 2010    | 2011    | 2012    | 2013    | 2014    | 2015    | 2016    | 2017    | 2018    | 2019     |
|---|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|----------|
| <b>New applications for LTR</b>   | 2,415   | 1806    | 703     | 287     | 173     | 83      | 100     | 108     | 144     | 160      |
| <b>Non-EEA nationals holding LTR</b>  | 8,367   | 7,721   | 5,771   | 3,392   | 2,309   | 2,019   | 1,473   | 1,484   | 1,272   | 1,125*   |
| <b>Number non-EEA aged ≥16 holding immig. permissions</b>   | 133,232 | 128,104 | 120,281 | 107,435 | 105,569 | 113,914 | 110,927 | 128,066 | 142,286 | 168,297* |
| <b>Share of total number non-EEA aged ≥16 holding immig. permissions in ref. year who held long-term residence in ref. year</b> | 6.3%    | 6.0%    | 4.8%    | 3.2%    | 2.2%    | 1.8%    | 1.3%    | 1.2%    | 0.9%    | 0.7%     |

*Source:* Data received from the Research and Data Analytics, Department of Justice and Equality, April 2018. Data for total non-EEA nationals with live residence permission taken from Eurostat (migr\_resvalid), extracted August 2018: all valid residence permits on 31 December of reference year. \*Data are provisional.

MIPEX (Huddleston et al., 2015) ranks Ireland 35<sup>th</sup> out of 38 countries on access to permanent residence (Huddleston et al., 2015). The 2019 Progress Report on the Migrant Integration Strategy states that a scoping exercise was undertaken in 2016 to examine the feasibility of introducing a statutory long-term residence scheme. The various existing categories of residence were examined, and qualifying criteria, process and permissions considered. The review resulted in an interim recommendation to opt for an administrative rather than statutory scheme, partly due to the low number of applications (Department of Justice and Equality, 2019a).<sup>107</sup> Statistics on applications for long-term residence are now published annually in line with Action 13 under the Migrant Integration Strategy.

### 5.3 POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

In the period 2018 – mid-2020, voters participated in three elections: presidential election on 28 October 2018, local elections and European Parliament election on 24 May 2019, while general elections took place on 8 February 2020. The focus on the local elections is of special importance as all ‘usual’ residents are able to vote and run for office. In 2019, 56 migrant<sup>108</sup> candidates ran in the local elections, almost double the number of candidates when compared with the 2014 local

<sup>107</sup> The Immigrant Council of Ireland has highlighted the lack of clarity on rights and entitlements held by long-term residents under the existing administrative scheme and have argued that a statutory scheme would set transparent rules and predictable benefits (Cosgrave, 2011; Becker et al., 2012).

<sup>108</sup> This number is based on the study commissioned by the Immigrant Council of Ireland. Importantly, the study does not differentiate between naturalised Irish citizens and non-Irish individuals which means that the first category might be counted as ‘migrants’.

elections. In total, there were 1,980 candidates which means that migrant candidates equalled 3 per cent of all individuals who decided to run.

Following the local elections in 2019, although still marginal, the share of councillors who are non-Irish increased from two to seven. Thus, out of 949 elected councillors, only seven have non-Irish citizenship which means that they constitute 0.7 per cent of all councillors (as compared to 0.3 per cent for previous elections). While such share demonstrates continuing under-representation of individuals with migrant background, nonetheless it is progress when compared to the results of previous elections.

Since the publication of the last Monitor in 2018, new European Social Survey (ESS) data have been published on various aspects of social and political involvement of individuals living in Ireland. As these data provided a general picture of differences between individuals born in Ireland and born abroad, they will be presented first. The next sections will provide more detailed description of migrants' engagement in the elections.

The recurring theme of this section is the (lack of) knowledge among migrants about electoral procedures and other aspects of running and voting in elections. As a response to this issue, Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government has prepared voter information packages in 16 language versions.<sup>109</sup> Such multi-language packages were proposed in the *Migrant Integration Strategy. A blueprint for future* in Action 60.<sup>110</sup> The documents included information on the eligibility, registering to vote, electoral procedures and financial aspects of running a campaign. Also, non-governmental organisations involving individuals with a migrant background ran campaigns aimed at increasing political participation.<sup>111</sup>

### 5.3.1 Political engagement of migrants in Ireland

Across Europe, migrants display lower levels of political activity compared to host societies (de Rooij, 2012). At the same time, political activity of migrants, especially voting, is seen as the culmination of integration in a host society (Heath et al., 2013). The international comparative research points to a number of factors which contribute to a low voting turnout; lack of resources, smaller social networks or insufficient knowledge of how political institutions and actors operate (Chaudhary,

<sup>109</sup> Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government prepared leaflets in several languages entitled 'The Register of Electors' devoted to description of the Register; 'How Ireland's MEPs are Elected' on various aspects of electoral process in European Parliament voting; 'How Members of Local Authorities are Elected' extensively discussing local elections; and another, longer information package on the Register of Electors.

<sup>110</sup> Action 60 of the Migration Integration Strategy: 'Multi-lingual materials on voter registration and on elections will be made accessible and available'.

<sup>111</sup> The examples of campaigns aiming at increasing turnout are 'Register, vote, run!' by the Immigrant Council of Ireland and 'You're at home. Vote' (*Jesteś u siebie. Zagłosuj*) by Forum Polonia.

2018). The European Social Survey (ESS) 2018 data for Ireland to a large degree confirm such results. The following presentation is based on a general breakdown for individuals born in Ireland and for those who were born outside of the State (see Appendix Table A5.1).

In 2018 the foreign-born population in Ireland scored somewhat lower on a number of dimensions of political activity compared to those born here. First, when it comes to interest in politics, 52 per cent of those born outside of Ireland stated they are very or quite interested, while for Irish-born this share equalled 56 per cent (see Appendix Table A5.1). Further, when asked about contacting a politician or a government official within 12 months before the survey, 16 per cent of respondents with born abroad background did so and the respective share of those born in Ireland was higher (22 per cent). Second, membership in trade unions is lower for migrants: 10 per cent of the foreign-born are members of a trade union as compared to 14 per cent for those born in Ireland. This may be linked to how recently they arrived in Ireland and the nature of their jobs. Finally, the only dimension where migrants engaged more often is participation in a lawful public demonstration (13 per cent and 10 per cent, respectively). Given what we know from other countries, these differences in political engagement between foreign-born and Irish-born are not large, though ideally we would distinguish between different groups of migrants, as elsewhere in this report; the level and nature of political engagement may differ between those from an English-speaking background and other migrants for example.<sup>112</sup>

### 5.3.2 Non-Irish individuals and local elections

The research conducted by the Immigrant Council of Ireland (Lima, 2020) among migrant candidates running for the 2019 local elections made a number of observations. First, non-Irish who registered to vote constituted from one-third to half of those eligible depending on the county (as can be seen in Table 5.6). Second, such individuals constituted only 3 per cent of all candidates. Importantly, a higher proportion of migrants in the local communities did not translate into a bigger share of migrant candidates. Third, whereas in general the total pool of candidates was male dominated, the proportion of female migrant candidates was higher (35 per cent) as compared to all candidates (28 per cent).

An important insight concerns whether candidates ran as an independent or with a party. All the candidates elected to the local councils were running from party lists (25 candidates out of the total 56 were running from party lists). Migrant candidates may be reluctant to run from a party list due to a lack of political

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<sup>112</sup> Further analysis would also be required to check whether these findings were statistically significant given the sample size.

alignment or lack of experience with the Irish political system. Conversely running from a party ticket may offer ideological alignment, as well as organisational and financial support including access to training. The assessment of parties' engagement in support of migrant candidates varies; in general the report indicates further need to incorporate migrants in their activities. Lima (2020) proposes reasons why political parties reduced their interest in promoting migrant candidates, including under-representation of migrant voters in the voting register but also under-representation of migrant communities in the party ranks.

Why did migrants decide to run in elections? The main reason given by candidates interviewed was a desire to engage in local matters. Other, less frequently mentioned reasons touched on the motivation to increase migrant voices in Irish politics and to promote migrant integration, as well as a personal need to 'give back' to the local community.

At the same time, one-third of interviewed candidates experienced racist incidents during their campaign. Further, all migrant female candidates interviewed who participated in the research had experience of sexual harassment while campaigning. A recent study in the UK shows that BAME female politicians receive much more abuse on social media than their White colleagues.<sup>113</sup> The research concludes that problems which female candidates face in general are amplified in the case of migrant women – such as the lack of sufficient networks, especially in rural areas.

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<sup>113</sup> The type of abuse often focuses on gender and race, and includes threats of sexual violence. See <https://www.amnesty.org.uk/online-violence-women-mps>.

**TABLE 5.6 PERCENTAGE OF NON-IRISH REGISTERED TO VOTE (2019) COMPARED TO PERCENTAGE OF NON-IRISH IN USUALLY RESIDENT POPULATION AGED 18 YEARS AND OLDER IN LOCAL AUTHORITIES**

|                        | Non-Irish on Voting register (A) % | % Non-Irish resident population aged 18+ (B) % | Difference (Ratio of B to A) |
|------------------------|------------------------------------|--|------------------------------|
| Carlow                 | 3.9                                | 11.7   | 3.00                         |
| Cavan                  | 4.1                                | 12.9   | 3.15                         |
| Clare                  | 5.3                                | 11.0   | 2.08                         |
| Cork                   | 5.8                                | 15.5   | 2.67                         |
| Donegal                | 3.0                                | 8.4  | 2.80                         |
| Dublin                 | 5.7                                | 19.2   | 3.37                         |
| Dún Laoghaire Rathdown | 4.4                                | 12.6   | 2.86                         |
| Fingal                 | 8.7                                | 18.8   | 2.16                         |
| Galway                 | 9.0                                | 19.7   | 2.19                         |
| Kerry                  | 6.2                                | 12.1   | 1.95                         |
| Kildare                | 3.3                                | 12.0   | 3.64                         |
| Kilkenny               | 3.4                                | 9.5  | 2.79                         |
| Laois                  | 5.5                                | 11.3   | 2.05                         |
| Limerick               | 4.0                                | 10.6   | 2.65                         |
| Leitrim                | 7.3                                | 12.6   | 1.73                         |
| Longford               | 8.0                                | 16.4   | 2.05                         |
| Louth                  | 5.5                                | 11.4   | 2.07                         |
| Mayo                   | 5.1                                | 11.1   | 2.18                         |
| Meath                  | 4.1                                | 11.7   | 2.85                         |
| Monaghan               | 6.3                                | 12.2   | 1.94                         |
| Offaly                 | 4.4                                | 9.5  | 2.16                         |
| Roscommon              | 5.8                                | 11.5   | 1.98                         |
| Sligo                  | 4.5                                | 10.3   | 2.29                         |
| Tipperary              | 5.0                                | 10.0   | 2.00                         |
| Waterford              | 4.0                                | 11.0   | 2.75                         |
| Wexford                | 4.0                                | 10.1   | 2.53                         |
| Wicklow                | 4.3                                | 10.8   | 2.51                         |

Source: Lima, 2020.

The main challenges identified by migrant candidates concern the lack of information. To start with, many migrants do not know that if they reside in Ireland, they are entitled to vote and run in local elections. Further, there is a lack of knowledge as to how the Irish political system works in terms of political parties functioning but also the nuances of politics. The research finds that individuals with a migrant background embedded in local communities and active in fields such as sport have a greater chance of being elected, underlining the importance of local networks.

### 5.3.3 European Parliament elections

The voting behaviour of mobile EU citizens in the context of the last European Parliament elections was explored by the recent Eurobarometer study (European Parliament, 2020). While the study has some limitations,<sup>114</sup> it provides unique insights into several dimensions of expatriates' political activity.

In all but three Member States (Czech Republic, Malta and Slovak Republic), EU citizens can vote either for candidates in their country of origin or for candidates running in their countries of residence.<sup>115</sup> Looking at the EU as a whole, expatriates tend to vote in their country of origin (53 per cent of respondents).<sup>116</sup> A factor which differentiates between voting for a party from their country of origin or a party in their country of residence is length of residence (the longer the residence, the bigger the share of voters choosing to vote in the host country). Difficulties were faced by 35 per cent of expatriates (for example access to polling station or the lack of knowledge on parties running) when voting. Importantly, this share is substantially higher in the case of those who cast a vote in their country of origin. The most frequent problem related to access to a voting station: this might be explained by the fact that such voting is only possible in diplomatic and consular representations of a given country. Finally, those who did not vote in the EP elections are on average younger, less educated, live in rural areas and have resided in another host Member State for a shorter period. A comparison of abstainers' characteristics between host societies and mobile EU citizens reveals similarities. The only noted difference is that abstainers from host society tend to live in big cities while expatriates live in smaller towns and in rural areas.

The Eurobarometer study presents the data for Ireland from the perspective of Polish expatriates; however due to the small sample detailed inferences are difficult. Some insights come from Lesinska et al. (2019) who studied political activity of Poles in Ireland. The very preliminary results of their study indicate that while over time Poles lose interest in Polish politics, it has not been compensated for by a growing interest in Irish politics.

The results of the survey of Poles living in Ireland conducted in June-October 2018 find that 33 per cent of Poles who live in Ireland voted at least once in Polish general elections during their stay. However, when asked about the Irish local government elections, more than three-quarters of those surveyed stated that

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<sup>114</sup> The survey is based on the convenience sample and focuses on biggest expatriate groups in the European Union.

<sup>115</sup> This is a guaranteed right – every EU citizen residing in Ireland, older than 18 years and listed in the Register of Electors can vote in EU elections. At the same time, they can choose to vote in their home countries by registering with an embassy/consulate.

<sup>116</sup> In practice they don't typically vote 'in' their country of origin but in an embassy or consulate of their country of origin in their host country.



they never participated. A similar proportion stated they did not participate in European Parliament elections.

When asked about the reasons for not participating with respect to Polish and Irish elections, in both cases 41 per cent of respondents stated a lack of interest in politics. In turn, a lack of knowledge of the elections was more frequently stated in respect of the Irish elections – 22 per cent compared to 13 per cent in the case of the Polish elections. Similarly, a lack of knowledge of voting eligibility was noted (Polish elections, 11 per cent; Irish elections, 18 per cent).

As for the political involvement of Poles in Ireland, 79 per cent of respondents indicated that they were not involved in social or political actions: 8 per cent had signed a petition; 6 per cent wore or displayed a badge/sticker, whereas 2 per cent took part in public demonstration or rally. Such lack of involvement is striking as only a minority of Poles living in Ireland state that they find it difficult to engage in a local community or organisation (*ibid.*).

#### 5.3.4 Volunteering in sports

Sports volunteering is one aspect of active citizenship in on which data became available during the monitoring period. The issue was analysed in a report by Volunteer Ireland<sup>117</sup> from 2019 (Volunteer Ireland, 2019). While the report was not based on a representative sample of non-Irish individuals and targeted only those registered on i-VOL, it delivers some interesting insights as to how and why non-Irish individuals volunteer. In many respects, the report delivers findings similar to those presented in the *Integration Monitor 2011* (McGinnity et al., 2012).

Based on the survey the study shows that the scale of volunteering is considerably smaller among the non-Irish than the Irish population. The main factors that contribute to smaller scale volunteering are different preferences regarding particular sports, and a lack of knowledge about opportunities to get involved. Why do migrants volunteer in sports? The main reasons indicated were a wish to be involved in the local community, to play an active role in sport, and to meet people and make friends. These and other reasons have a strong social and integration component, including a willingness to learn the language (especially important among migrants with a shorter stay) (Volunteer Ireland, 2019).

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<sup>117</sup> National volunteer development organisation and a support body for all local volunteer centres and volunteering information services in Ireland. See <https://www.volunteer.ie/>

## 5.4 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Over 153,000 non-Irish nationals acquired Irish citizenship through naturalisation between 2005 and 2019. In 2019 we estimate that 37 per cent of the resident adult population of non-EEA origin had acquired Irish citizenship through naturalisation. This means that a large group of migrants should now be able to participate fully in the democratic process and access to the institutions, goods and services of the state, on a par with native Irish. International research indicates that naturalised immigrants have better socio-economic outcomes than immigrants who do not take on the host country citizenship (Hoxhaj et al., 2019; Bloemraad, 2017; Liebig and Von Haaren, 2011). A recently published Irish study shows the positive effects of naturalisation on the unemployment of naturalised Irish nationals who were born outside the EEA (McGinnity et al., 2020).

The above shows that the number of naturalisations in Ireland declined steadily from a peak in 2012, levelling off in 2017-2018, before dropping further in 2019. The naturalisation rate for non-EEA nationals was steady at 2.9 and 2.5 in the years 2017 and 2018, and it declined to just 1.5 in 2019. While some of the decrease is most likely due to processing problems, it is undesirable from an integration perspective. Backlogs built up due to the processing freeze in 2019 are likely to be added to in the context of the 2020 COVID-19 restrictions. Long processing times and the associated uncertainty for applicants may also hamper integration.

Ireland's first Migrant Integration Strategy 2017-2020, which aims to ensure all migrants can actively participate in Irish communities, workplaces and politics, is now nearing the end of its term. While the Strategy Progress Report showed positive developments in some areas, others are slower to progress. Actions to introduce the registration of non-EEA migrant children and a statutory long-term residency scheme are among those facing 'major difficulties' (Department of Justice and Equality, 2019a). These delays underscore the importance of a timely follow-up strategy.

While non-EEA nationals represented 95 per cent of naturalised Irish citizens in 2012, by 2019 the group was split almost evenly between non-EEA (51 per cent) and EEA nationals (49 per cent). This is a significant shift from a decade ago when EU nationals represented around 5 per cent of persons naturalising each year. However, the overall proportion of resident EU nationals choosing to naturalise remains low, at less than 1 per cent.

The research presented in Section 5.3 indicates that migrants are less engaged with politics than the native population. While migrants tend to be less interested in politics, their political engagement is considerably lower. The recent local

government elections substantiated the under-representation among voters, candidates and elected councillors. Importantly, research by Fanning et al. (2020) based on a 2018 survey of 22-44-year-old migrants, points out the positive impact of naturalisation on political participation; it is substantially higher among individuals who have naturalised. The recurrent topic in the analyses of political engagement is the importance of knowledge and experiences which go beyond politics – local involvement and activity in non-political bodies such as sports clubs. McGinnity et al. (2018) showed that social contact generally promotes fewer negative attitudes to immigration and immigrants, and suggest that enhancing opportunities for meaningful and positive interactions may help to reduce anti-migrant sentiment.

Actions under the Strategy designed to increase political participation, for example encouraging migrants to register to vote and become involved in politics, have been progressed with the organisation of a range of events and improved information dissemination (Department of Justice and Equality, 2019a). However, the results of this chapter underline that much work is needed to ensure migrants are included in the political life of the State.

The growth in the naturalised migrant population has important implications for future monitoring, as a large cohort of migrants are no longer identifiable in datasets that use nationality as identifier (McGinnity et al., 2018; Fahey et al., 2019a). This is discussed further in the next chapter (Section 6.1).

### BOX 5.1 ACCESS TO CITIZENSHIP

#### *Irish Nationality and Citizenship*

The process by which a non-Irish national may become, or be recognised as, an Irish national is through a grant of citizenship (see Groarke and Dunbar, 2020). Citizenship describes the particular legal bond between an individual and the State, acquired by birth or naturalisation, whether by declaration, choice, marriage or other means according to national legislation (European Migration Network, 2020). In the Irish Constitution, the individual member of the State is referred to as a ‘citizen’, but the status is referred to as ‘nationality and citizenship’.<sup>118</sup> The Irish Nationality and Citizenship Act, 1956 provides for the issue of ‘certificates of nationality’.

Citizenship by descent may be granted to a person whose parent was, or would have been if deceased, an Irish citizen at the time of the person’s birth, irrespective of their

<sup>118</sup> The EUDO Citizenship Observatory notes that the two terms describe different elements of the relationship between the individual and the Irish State. Nationality relates to the external (international) dimension, whereas citizenship relates to the internal (domestic) dimension. EUDO Citizenship Observatory, ‘Translations and a brief discussion of the use of the terms ‘citizenship’ and ‘nationality in legal documents and political debates’. <http://eudo-citizenship.eu>.

country of birth. The granting of such citizenship is automatic at birth.<sup>119</sup> Persons born in Ireland may be granted citizenship where they are born on the island to at least one parent who has Irish or British citizenship.<sup>120</sup> Persons born to non-Irish citizens may also be entitled to Irish citizenship where at least one of their parents has been legally resident in Ireland for three out of the previous four years prior to the birth<sup>121</sup> (see Groarke and Dunbar, 2020). Irish citizens may hold the citizenship of another country without giving up their Irish citizenship.

### *Naturalisation*

An application for a certificate of nationality is considered under the Irish Nationality and Citizenship Act, 1956, as amended. Foreign nationals living in Ireland may apply to the Minister for Justice and Equality to become an Irish citizen by naturalisation if they are over 18 years, or a minor who was born in the State after 1 January 2005. In general, the applicant must 'be of good character' and have had a period of one year's continuous reckonable residence in the State immediately before the date of application and, during the previous eight years, have had a total reckonable residence in the State amounting to four years. The applicant must intend in good faith to continue to reside in the State after naturalisation and make a declaration of fidelity to the nation and loyalty to the State. Applicants are usually required to have been 'self-supporting' i.e. not dependent on social welfare for the three years prior to application. Periods spent in Ireland as an asylum applicant or as a student are not considered when calculating reckonable residence.

There is now an obligation on the State to provide reasons for a refusal of an application for naturalisation (although this issue continues to be a source of some debate).<sup>122</sup> Aside from judicial review of proceedings there is no mechanism for challenging the refusal of an application. Currently Irish citizenship acquired through naturalisation may be withdrawn no matter how long a person has been an Irish citizen (though not if it would make them stateless).

### *Application Fees*

The standard application fee payable by all applicants is €175. A further €950 is payable by successful adult applicants for naturalisation. The naturalisation fee is €200 in the case of minors and widows or widowers of Irish citizens. Persons granted refugee status and those recognised as stateless persons are exempt from payment of the naturalisation fee.

<sup>119</sup> Irish Nationality and Citizenship Act 1956 (as amended), s 7(1).

<sup>120</sup> Irish Nationality and Citizenship Act 1956 (as amended), s 6(6).

<sup>121</sup> Irish Nationality and Citizenship Act 1956 (as amended), s 6A.

<sup>122</sup> In *AP v Minister for Justice and Equality*, the Court stated the primary objective should be to seek the maximum disclosure possible (*AP v Minister for Justice and Equality* [2019] IESC 47 [5.12]). Source: Groarke and Dunbar, forthcoming.

**BOX 5.2      ACCESS TO LONG-TERM RESIDENCE**

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Ireland does not have a statutory long-term residence status. The current administrative scheme allows persons who have been legally resident in the State for a continuous period of five years or more on the basis of an employment permit (and their dependent spouses) or scientific researchers, to apply for a five-year residency extension. They may also then apply to work without the need to hold an employment permit. A €500 fee for processing applications under this scheme was introduced in 2009. This long-term residency scheme is available to those who are still in employment and to those with an employment permit who, having completed five years' work, have been made redundant.

A small number of non-EEA nationals who have lived in Ireland for at least eight years and who are of 'good character' are permitted to remain in Ireland 'without condition as to time'. They receive a Stamp 5 registration on their passport and can work without an employment permit (Becker, 2010). In 2019, 1,231 persons held a Stamp 5 permission.<sup>123</sup>

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<sup>123</sup> Provisional data received from INIS, June 2020.

## CHAPTER 5 APPENDIX

**TABLE A5.1 SELECTED DIMENSIONS OF ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP FOR IRISH AND NON-IRISH BORN INDIVIDUALS (2018)**

| Born in Ireland   | Born in Ireland | Born Abroad |
|---|-----------------|-------------|
| <i>How interested in politics?</i>                                |                 |             |
| Very interested   | 16.3            | 13.8        |
| Quite interested  | 39.6            | 37.9        |
| Hardly interested   | 24.3            | 24.8        |
| Not at all interested   | 19.9            | 23.5        |
| Total   | 100             | 100         |
| N=2,210   |                 |             |
| <i>Member of trade union or similar organisation</i>              |                 |             |
| Yes, currently  | 14.1            | 10.3        |
| Yes, previously   | 21.0            | 12.6        |
| No  | 64.8            | 77.1        |
| Total   | 100             | 100         |
| N=2,193   |                 |             |
| <i>Contacted politician or government official last 12 months</i> |                 |             |
| Yes   | 22.4            | 16.3        |
| No  | 77.6            | 83.7        |
| Total   | 100             | 100         |
| N=2,201   |                 |             |
| <i>Taken part in lawful public demonstration last 12 months</i>   |                 |             |
| Yes   | 9.6             | 12.6        |
| No  | 90.4            | 87.4        |
| Total   | 100             | 100         |
| N=2,200   |                 |             |

Source: European Social Survey 2018, <http://nesstar.ess.nsd.uib.no/webview>.

## CHAPTER 6

### Challenges for policy and data collection

By Frances McGinnity

The key focus of this Integration Monitor is integration outcomes. This chapter considers some implications for future data needs, as well as highlighting policy issues that have persisted or emerged.

Ireland continues to have one of the highest proportions of the population born abroad of any OECD country (17 per cent were born abroad in 2019). Yet the migrant population in Ireland differs from many other EU countries. One distinctive feature is that most migrants to Ireland come from other EU countries: EU migrants make up around three-quarters of residents born abroad in 2019, one of the highest proportions of all EU countries (Figure 1.1). EU migrants primarily come to work, non-EU migrants come here primarily to study or to work; family reunification plays less of a role here than in many other countries (OECD, 2018a; Groarke et al., forthcoming). Thus, a second distinctive feature of migrants in Ireland is that the employment and participation rates of non-Irish nationals is actually higher in 2019 than Irish nationals, though some groups are struggling in the labour market (Chapter 2). A third feature is that in general migrants are highly educated. Many have higher educational qualifications than Irish nationals, particularly those from Western Europe and Asian countries (Chapter 3). A final distinctive feature of migrants in Ireland is that a significant minority of those of non-EEA origin are now Irish citizens (see Chapter 5 and Appendix 4). This, and the growing second generation, underlines the need for a long-term proactive approach to policy on integration.

The Migrant Integration Strategy, published in early 2017, represents a significant statement of policy intent and brought new energy and focus into efforts to integrate migrants in Ireland. The 2019 review of this strategy highlighted particular areas where outcomes for migrants need to be improved, and some of these are discussed in light of evidence below. Some additional concerns emerging from findings in this report are also considered.

#### 6.1 ISSUES FOR FUTURE DATA USE AND COLLECTION

The OECD and the EU continue to emphasise the importance of monitoring integration (European Services Network and Migration Policy Group, 2013; OECD, 2018a). Yet the usefulness of such monitoring will only be as good as the data and

evidence on which they are based, and an understanding of the strengths and limitations of the data.

This Integration Monitor is largely based on repeated national social surveys, to be cost-effective, to allow comparisons with the host population and to allow comparisons of the same indicators over time. But these surveys were not designed to survey migrants, so it is important to consider how well the migrant population is represented. The Labour Force Survey and the SILC are both surveys of private households in Ireland. Some groups, both Irish and non-Irish nationals, are thus excluded – those residing in institutions, communal accommodation, direct provision centres and the homeless, a group that may be particularly disadvantaged and has grown considerably in recent years. To the extent that non-Irish nationals are disproportionately excluded from survey (for example we know some migrant groups are over-represented in the homeless population, see e.g. Grotti et al., 2018), and residents of direct provision centres are all non-Irish; their disadvantage may be underestimated. Other groups, while not excluded from the data by the design of the survey, may be under-represented in the surveys due to language issues, frequent mobility or fear of state agencies (Font and Mendez, 2013).

In the short term, it is important that efforts be continued to encourage the participation of non-Irish nationals in the SILC and the LFS, the major sources of information on income, poverty and the labour market in Ireland. Immigrant or ethnic minority boost samples; common practice in some other European countries – Germany and the UK being prominent examples – could address the problem of small sample sizes in these ongoing large-scale surveys (Fahey et al., 2019a). Small sample size is a particular problem for SILC. Chapter 4 showed high rates of deprivation and poverty among non-EU nationals, yet we know this is a very diverse group. As we know that employment rates vary considerably in the non-EU group (Chapter 2), it would be of considerable benefit to the monitoring of integration in Ireland to know which national groups are most at risk of poverty and deprivation, the depth of that poverty, and poverty among migrant children. Is the fall in consistent poverty among non-EU nationals due to a shifting balance of nationalities within the group, or a fall in poverty for certain groups? Ireland needs a survey that allows us to track poverty and deprivation more accurately among migrant groups.

The census of the population plays an important role in our understanding of migration and integration, though due to expense it is only carried out every five years. The census allows the CSO to adjust ongoing surveys and create valid estimates of the migrant population, given that Ireland lacks a population register. The census microdata also have excellent potential for measuring the outcomes of



smaller population groups. McGinnity et al. (2020) shed new light on integration patterns by showing the diversity within the regional groups used in this Monitor, and by also examining the role of language in labour market outcomes and estimating the potential effect of having come to Ireland seeking international protection. Gilmartin and Dagg (2020) use census data to report on variations in the integration of non-Irish nationals in particular regions of Ireland. In this Monitor the census microdata were used to check the accuracy of previous estimates of the proportion of non-EEA who naturalised and stayed in Ireland (Chapter 5; see also Appendix 4 Table A4.a for estimates of EEA born and non-EEA born who are Irish citizens in 2016 using census microdata).

Of course, some indicators are specific to the migrant population and will never be collected on national surveys. Migrants' feeling of belonging in Ireland, their intentions to stay, motives for migration, migration history, the nature of social contacts and social networks, and efforts to acquire English language skills could only be collected in a dedicated survey of migrants. Qualitative studies can enhance our understanding of many aspects of integration but are typically limited to a small number from one particular group. Some smaller scale surveys of immigrants have been collected – for example a longitudinal survey of new Polish immigrants in 2011 and 2013 (Diehl et al., 2015) and a survey of migrant remittances (Batista and Narciso, 2018) – but very few, particularly compared to other European countries.<sup>124</sup> Ireland still lacks a large representative survey of the migrant population.

The fact that a significant group of immigrants are now Irish citizens presents a challenge for monitoring integration, as measuring integration on the basis of nationality is likely to miss an increasing number of naturalised citizens (see Appendix 4 Table A4.a). Analysis by McGinnity et al. (2020) suggests that labour market outcomes may be better for naturalised migrants of non-EEA origin, an estimated 37 per cent of whom may have become Irish citizens by the end of 2019. To partly address this issue, Chapter 2 examines outcomes of foreign-born Irish nationals. This is useful, yet many of these were born in the UK and came to Ireland many years ago. Their profile is likely to be rather different to more recent migrants who naturalised in the past 15 years.

What are the alternatives to monitoring based on nationality and/or place of birth? An exciting development planned for 2021 is to include a question on standard social surveys (LFS, SILC) about the country of birth of the respondents' parents. This will allow us to distinguish and compare both first- and second-generation

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<sup>124</sup> A database of approximately 800 surveys of immigrants and ethnic minorities in Europe since 2000 is currently under construction. For more information see: <https://ethmigsurveydatahub.eu/emmregistry>.

migrants, increasingly important as the second-generation grows in Ireland. Some commentators argue it is the integration of the second generation that is the 'litmus test' for integration (OECD, 2018a). Motives for migration will also be added to these surveys, allowing us to distinguish those who came to Ireland to work, to study, to seek international protection or other reasons, such as joining family members. This too will considerably enhance our understanding of the integration process.

Yet with evidence of discrimination against some minority ethnic groups, particularly the Black ethnic group in various areas of life (McGinnity et al., 2017; 2018; 2020), and renewed focus in public and policy debate on racism and discrimination; collecting data on ethnicity becomes increasingly urgent. Information on ethnicity must be collected separately from nationality or country of birth because people in ethnic minorities may be Irish nationals (McGinnity et al., 2018), and/or may be born in Ireland (second-generation). The fact is we know relatively little about differences between ethnic groups because ethnicity is very rarely collected from survey or administrative data (Fahey et al., 2019a; IHREC, 2019). Changing this situation is now more urgent than ever.

Administrative data have the potential to form an important complement to survey data in measuring integration outcomes. The big advantage is that administrative data record all recipients of a given training course, medical treatment, or examination outcome, for example, and if some measure like nationality, country of birth or ethnicity is recorded, this allows monitoring of both participation and outcomes. This assumes the data are usable and accessible for the purpose, which may not be the case. Under Action 8 of the Migrant Integration Strategy a data gaps working group was set up to identify both shortcomings in data collection and under-use of existing data, and the resulting report highlighted a wide range of datasets held both by the Department of Justice and Equality and other government departments, such as the Department of Education and the Department of Employment and Social Protection (Fahey et al., 2019a). Another important initiative is the ongoing equality data audit being conducted by the Central Statistics Office as part of the equality budgeting process. The focus here is data relevant to all the equality groups listed under Irish equality legislation, but non-Irish nationals and minority ethnic groups are included, and this exercise covers an impressive range of administrative data, in addition to survey data.<sup>125</sup> The ability to analyse and potentially link administrative datasets with survey data offers tremendous potential for research in the area.

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<sup>125</sup> See <https://www.cso.ie/en/methods/methodologicalresearch/rp-eda/equalitydataaudit2020/> for the report on the equality data audit. See also Equality Data Audit July 2020 Audit File (XLS 416KB) for the data audit itself.

With the exception of data gathered on residence permissions (see Chapter 1), refugees are not identified in national survey or general administrative data in Ireland. Recent migration debates in Europe were dominated by the refugee crisis, and Ireland has increased its intake of resettled and relocated refugees (see Box 1.1). Although efforts are underway to monitor outcomes of new arrivals under e.g. the Community Sponsorship Programme there is currently no way of tracking how well refugees are integrating into Irish society, aside from occasional ad hoc studies, such as the Refugee Integration Capacity and Evaluation (RICE) report (UNHCR, 2014). This is true whether they have come here as part of a refugee programme with status already granted, or seeking international protection, later determined to be Geneva Convention refugees. Ahad et al. (2020) stress the importance of monitoring and evaluating measures to integrate refugees in Europe. This gap in data and knowledge is all the more problematic given that international and Irish research shows that refugees face greater challenges when compared to other groups of migrants, for example in the labour market, due to lower language proficiency, trauma and lack of support from social and other networks (Connor, 2010; Bevelander, 2011; for Ireland see Ní Raghallaigh et al., 2016; McGinnity et al., 2020).

The accurate tracking of racist incidents is crucial and NGOs such as ENAR Ireland, the Immigrant Council of Ireland and NASC Ireland have expressed concern about the under-reporting of racism. Crimes with a discriminatory motive – hate crimes – are recorded on the Gardaí's PULSE system (Fahey et al., 2019a). However due to reliability concerns, Fahey et al. note that these are no longer published by the CSO, and Haynes and Schweppe (2017) in a detailed study document consistent under-reporting of hate crime in Ireland. A public consultation on hate speech was launched in October 2019, and the Department of Justice and Equality has stated new legislation on hate speech and hate crime is currently being developed. These will be important issues for the new anti-racism strategy to consider.

## 6.2 POLICY ISSUES

The Migrant Integration Strategy covers a very broad range of policy areas from employment, education, health and political participation to intercultural awareness. This discussion is a more focused reflection on some issues arising from outcomes presented in this Integration Monitor.

In terms of employment, Chapter 2 assesses the extent to which migrants had shared in the ongoing recovery in the Irish labour market. Overall, the picture is positive: there is not a significant gap in unemployment rates between Irish and non-Irish nationals overall in 2019. In fact, in 2019 we find slightly higher employment and participation rates among non-Irish nationals than Irish nationals. To maintain this trend, it is important that the jobseeker engagement and labour

market activation policies described in Actions 39, 40 and 41 of the Migrant Integration Strategy are appropriate to the needs of migrants and are effectively implemented.

However, not all groups of non-Irish nationals are faring so well. Chapter 2 finds that in general non-EU nationals have higher unemployment rates and lower employment rates than Irish nationals. In particular, we find high unemployment and a very low employment rate among African nationals in 2019, as was found in earlier Monitoring reports on Integration in Ireland. This is also consistent with research using administrative data on jobseekers, which shows longer unemployment durations, and fewer exits to employment among African jobseekers (Cronin et al., 2018). A much higher proportion of African jobseekers have never worked (38 per cent compared to 14 per cent of Irish jobseekers) (*ibid.*). Investigating the factors underlying this disadvantage is beyond the scope of a report like this, but McGinnity et al. (2020) find that in 2016 migrants from countries with high rates of international protection have higher unemployment rates, as do migrants of Black ethnicity. This suggests that part of the explanation may be coming to Ireland as an asylum seeker and spending time out of the labour market for those who were seeking protection, and potentially also the experience of racism and discrimination in the Irish labour market (see McGinnity et al., 2018).

For those who have come through the protection system, the fact that many are struggling to find a foothold in the Irish labour market suggest that these refugees may need targeted support (UNHCR, 2013; McGinnity et al., 2020). Currently supports differ for the resettled and spontaneous refugees in Ireland, with more targeted support for resettled refugees (Arnold et al., 2019b).

The recently published report from the Expert Group *Report Of The Advisory Group On The Provision Of Support Including Accommodation To Persons In The International Protection Process* recommends promoting the integration of those seeking international protection from the earliest stage of the process (Government of Ireland, 2020). This is a positive recommendation, which if adopted is likely to facilitate the integration of those granted protection or an alternative status and may help enhance the capabilities of those who return. If this approach is adopted, it follows that consideration should be given to including this group within the remit of the successor to the Migrant Integration Strategy 2017-2020, as those seeking international protection awaiting a decision are not included in the current strategy. Any change in policy here would usefully be accompanied by initiatives to track integration outcomes of protection applicants and refugees in Ireland as this is not currently possible, a point that has been raised in a number of previous Monitoring reports (Barrett et al., 2017; McGinnity et al., 2018).

In terms of ethnic discrimination, the establishment of a new anti-racism committee with the task of developing an anti-racism strategy is a positive development. Specific measures to combat racism and discrimination may be required (IHREC, 2019), potentially as part of a new Migrant Integration Strategy.

A more general issue is recognition of foreign qualifications. Arnold et al. (2019a) highlighted that the recognition of non-EU nationals' qualifications is a challenge to implementing labour market integration policies. Stakeholders in this study called for further efforts from Irish professional bodies, and increased promotion of Quality and Qualifications Ireland, as part of Action 43 (*ibid.*). In some instances, where qualification requirements in Ireland for a given profession differ from those in other countries, re-training or bridging programmes may be required. For example, Marino Institute of Education has initiated a bridging programme for foreign-qualified teachers to engage more migrant teachers into the teaching profession (see Box 3.1).

Chapter 4 also documents falling poverty rates in Ireland, particularly among the non-Irish population. However, while rates of income poverty have fallen, they are still high for the non-EU population. Deprivation and consistent poverty among the non-EU group have fallen further than income poverty since the 2018 Monitor, though in the 2017-2018 period consistent poverty among non-EU nationals (at 11.6 per cent) was still higher than that of the Irish population (6.2 per cent). (Consistent poverty measures those who are income poor and deprived on two or more items). Some of this disadvantage is accounted for by the high proportion of students in the non-EU group. In addition, previous research in Ireland has shown clearly the link between low employment rates and income poverty and deprivation for working-age adults and children (Watson et al., 2012). This suggests that consistent poverty might be high among the African group, but further detailed research on African migrants would allow us to investigate their outcomes in more depth and point at some potential policy responses. The shift in composition away from Africans towards Asians and 'Rest of the World' (see Table A1.1) between 2016 and 2017/2018 may also explain the fall in consistent poverty for non-EU nationals. Unfortunately, the SILC data used for the analysis of poverty and deprivation in Ireland contain very small numbers in the African group, and other non-EU groups, that do not permit them to be identified separately.

Learning the host country language is the key skill for facilitating integration (OECD, 2020). English language skills and labour market outcomes are not included in this report as they are not available in the ongoing Labour Force Survey. However, McGinnity et al. (2020), using census microdata, find that migrants with better self-reported English language skills are more likely to be employed, and when they are

employed to have a better job. This is hardly surprising but set against a backdrop of uncoordinated policy/lack of awareness of measures that do exist, it does suggest that this requires more policy effort. This lack of a coordinated approach to English language provision for adult learners in Ireland has been raised as a policy issue in Monitoring Reports on Integration since 2012 (McGinnity et al., 2012). It is also recognised as being a policy priority in the Migrant Integration Strategy going forward (Department of Justice and Equality, 2019a), but implementing and coordinating this may prove difficult. A shift to online (e-learning) for adult learning, particularly of language skills, potentially offering classes via Zoom or an online platform may offer potential in Ireland: this is already happening in some other OECD countries (OECD, 2020).

Housing and homelessness are not identified as issues in the Migrant Integration Strategy. Yet findings from this Integration Monitor suggest that migrants (Chapter 4) are much more likely to be in private rented accommodation than Irish nationals, which is a potential problem in the current housing market, where private renting is often linked to high and fluctuating rents and insecurity of housing tenure. The current housing problem is particularly acute in cities, where around half of migrants live (Fahey et al., 2019b). A study of housing discrimination finds non-EU nationals to be at greater risk of overcrowding compared to others on the same income and with the same characteristics (Grotti et al., 2018). These authors also find higher rates of homelessness among African migrants than among the Irish population. This is consistent with a recent labour market experiment in the private rented market, which showed particularly high rates of discrimination among Africans seeking rented accommodation (Gusciute, 2019). Finding suitable and affordable accommodation is particularly challenging for those moving out of direct provision centres who have been granted international protection status. AIDA (2019) finds that 11 per cent of all residents of direct provision accommodation centres in Ireland have actually been granted protection status already but have yet to transition to independent living. Taken together these findings suggest any future Migrant Integration Strategy could and should usefully include a number of actions specifically on housing.

One important finding in Chapter 3 is that the educational achievement of non-Irish adults is similar to or even slightly better than Irish nationals. To answer the question of where the highest qualification was achieved, Chapter 3 compares educational qualifications for non-Irish adults who received their qualifications in Ireland (22 per cent) compared to those educated abroad (78 per cent). Generally, for EU and Asian nationals the proportion with third-level qualifications are similar, regardless of where their education was completed. The large 'Rest of the World' group (including Africa, the US, South America and non-EU Eastern Europe) educated in Ireland have lower rates of third-level education than nationals from this group educated abroad, and this may require further analysis with a larger

dataset. In the 2018 Monitor the rate of early school leaving among young East European adults was twice as high as the national average, though this rate has fallen since then and is no longer significantly different from the rate among Irish nationals, which itself was very low in 2018/2019 (less than 5 per cent of the age cohort).

As so many non-Irish adults in Ireland were educated abroad, the performance of young people may give a better indication of how well the Irish education system is integrating migrants. The proportion of 15-year olds of migrant origin is now 18 per cent in the 2018 PISA data, compared to 8 per cent reported in the first Integration Monitor (based on PISA 2006 data). Chapter 3 finds that, as before, there are gaps in reading proficiency between Irish students and both first- and second-generation children of migrant origin who do not speak English as their first language. Mathematics and Science scores did not differ between migrant-origin and Irish young people at age 15.

The findings on English reading suggest maintaining language support for migrant students is very important. In order to plan effectively, policymakers need to know what proportion of students at primary and secondary level require English language tuition, what the budget requirement is and how effective English language tuition is (see Actions 29 and 33 in the Migrant Integration Strategy). To supplement PISA data more differentiation of education statistics would be very useful. Are there differences in achievement between Irish students and those from a migrant background in State examinations? This could potentially be achieved by merging data from the State Examinations Commission on results with the post-primary online database (P-POD) which contains data on nationality and mother tongue, with due consideration to data quality and data protection issues (Fahey et al., 2019a). Research could usefully build on the case study by Faas et al. (2019) on post-school transitions of students from a migrant background.

Chapter 5 shows that although the annual naturalisation rate has now declined from the 2012 peak, there has been a rapid rise in the size of the naturalised population in the last decade. This is due to increased applications, as more migrants became eligible to apply, as well as improvements in the processing of applications. Just under 110,000 non-EEA nationals acquired Irish citizenship between 2005 and 2019, resulting in improved opportunities for integration. It is important to note that we cannot say for certain whether citizenship leads to improved integration outcomes or whether those who are more integrated tend to apply for citizenship. McGinnity et al. (2020) show that non-EEA migrants who are Irish citizens have better labour market outcomes than non-EEA migrants who are not. Recent years have also seen a rise in naturalisation of EEA migrants, from



5 per cent of those naturalised in 2012 to around 50 per cent in 2019, though the overall proportion of EEA migrants living in Ireland who became Irish citizens is low.

The Migrant Integration Strategy 2017-2020 aims to ensure all migrants can actively participate in Irish communities, workplaces and politics. While the Strategy Progress Report showed positive developments in some areas, others are slower to progress. Action 12 states that the introduction of both civics and language tests for those seeking citizenship will be examined. Groarke et al. (forthcoming) will explore international practices in this regard. Actions to introduce the registration of non-EEA migrant children and a statutory long-term residency scheme are among those facing 'major difficulties' (Department of Justice and Equality, 2019a). These delays underscore the importance of a timely follow-up strategy, and the importance of prioritising these issues.

Given generous voting rights, the political participation of migrants in Ireland is, in principle, favourable. Actions under the Migrant Integration Strategy designed to increase political participation, for example encouraging migrants to register to vote and become involved in politics, have been progressed by both a range of events and improved dissemination of information (Department of Justice and Equality, 2019a). The research presented in Chapter 5 highlights that although there were significant increases in migrant involvement in local elections between 2014 and 2019, much remains to be done. Migrants are much less engaged with politics than the native population and were substantially under-represented among voters, candidates and councillors in the recent local government elections. The recurrent topic in the analyses of political engagement is the importance of knowledge and experiences which go beyond politics – local involvement and activity in non-political bodies such as sports clubs.

Many studies have stressed that integration takes place at local level and understanding neighbourhoods and their composition plays an important role (Casey, 2016; OECD, 2018c). A recent investigation of how migrant groups are distributed across neighbourhoods in Ireland using census data showed that in general migrants are not heavily concentrated in particular areas in Ireland, though migrants are much more likely to live in urban areas (Fahey et al., 2019b). In general, migrants are not more concentrated in disadvantaged areas, with the exception of those with poor English language skills (*ibid.*). That said, the characteristics of migrants, and the communities they live in, certainly differ across the country (Fahey et al., 2019b). The role of integration at local level is acknowledged in the Migrant Integration Strategy as an area where efforts need to intensify (Department of Justice and Equality, 2019a). OECD (2018c) recognises that it can be difficult to integrate local integration policy and practice with national-level policy, while recognising that different local areas will have different



needs. Consultation with local authorities in devising local-level initiatives and targets for the follow-up to the Migrant Integration Strategy might be one way of helping to address this issue. Forging links between community and voluntary sector initiatives, education centres and local businesses with local government efforts may also be promising here. At both national and local level, it is important to keep in mind that integrating migrants is not simply a task for government, either at national or local level, but of employers, schools, communities, sports and social clubs. As OECD (2020) argues, integration requires a ‘whole of society approach’.

The Migrant Integration Strategy in early 2017 showed a renewed commitment to integration policy, though as noted in the interim review, some actions were more successful than others (Department of Justice and Equality, 2019a). Of course, as noted by the interim review, with a mainstreamed approach to integration in Ireland, implementing the strategy is not just the responsibility of the Department responsible for Integration and Equality (formerly the Department of Justice and Equality), but of all relevant government departments and agencies who interact with migrants, including Local Authorities. The policy gaps and areas of concern highlighted here underscore the importance of renewing the Migrant Integration Strategy to keep up the momentum built by the current one. The COVID-19 pandemic and associated job losses may prove even more challenging for migrants than others, and it is particularly important then that their needs are kept in focus by the new government. Enright et al. (2020) considers the early impact of the pandemic and associated restrictions on work and life in Ireland, particularly in the labour market, and to what extent non-Irish nationals are disproportionately affected.



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## Appendix 1

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### Common Basic Principles for Immigrant Integration Policy in the European Union

1. Integration is a dynamic, two-way process of mutual accommodation by all immigrants and residents of Member States.
2. Integration implies respect for the basic values of the European Union.
3. Employment is a key part of the integration process and is central to the participation of immigrants, to the contributions immigrants make to the host society, and to making such contributions visible.
4. Basic knowledge of the host society's language, history, and institutions is indispensable to integration; enabling immigrants to acquire this basic knowledge is essential to successful integration.
5. Efforts in education are critical to preparing immigrants, and particularly their descendants, to be more successful and more active participants in society.
6. Access for immigrants to institutions, as well as to public and private goods and services, on a basis equal to national citizens and in a non-discriminatory way is a critical foundation for better integration.
7. Frequent interaction between immigrants and Member State citizens is a fundamental mechanism for integration. Shared forums, inter-cultural dialogue, education about immigrants and immigrant cultures, and stimulating living conditions in urban environments enhance the interactions between immigrants and Member State citizens.
8. The practice of diverse cultures and religions is guaranteed under the Charter of Fundamental Rights and must be safeguarded unless practices conflict with other inviolable European rights or with national law.
9. The participation of immigrants in the democratic process and in the formulation of integration policies and measures, especially at the local level, supports their integration.
10. Mainstreaming integration policies and measures in all relevant policy portfolios and levels of government and public services is an important consideration in public policy formation and implementation.
11. Developing clear goals, indicators and evaluation mechanisms are necessary to adjust policy, evaluate progress on integration and to make the exchange of information more effective.



## Appendix 2

### Definition of Indicators

| Indicator   | Definition  | Data Source               |
|---|---|---------------------------|
| <b>1. Employment</b>  |   |                           |
| Employment rate   | Proportion of population of working age (15-64) who are employed.   | Labour Force Survey (LFS) |
| Unemployment rate   | Proportion of labour force (employed plus unemployed) of working age (15-64) who are unemployed.  | Labour Force Survey (LFS) |
| Activity rate   | Proportion of adults of working age (15-64) who are in the labour force (employed and unemployed).  | Labour Force Survey (LFS) |
| Self-employment rate  | Proportion of employed population who are self-employed (that is working in his or her own business, professional practice or farm for the purpose of making a profit). | Labour Force Survey (LFS) |
| <b>2. Education</b>   |   |                           |
| Highest educational attainment  | Share of population aged 15 to 64 with third-level, Post-Leaving Certificate, upper secondary and no formal/lower secondary education.                                  | Labour Force Survey (LFS) |
| Share of 25- to 34-year-olds with third-level educational attainment*                           | Share of 25- to 34-year-olds with third-level education.  | Labour Force Survey (LFS) |
| Country where education was completed*  | Share of migrants and Irish nationals who were educated in Ireland and educated abroad  | Labour Force Survey (LFS) |
| Share of migrants and Irish nationals educated in Ireland or abroad with third-level education* | Share of migrants and Irish nationals educated in Ireland or abroad with third-level education  | Labour Force Survey (LFS) |
| Share of early leavers from education and training*   | Share of population aged 20 to 24 with no more than lower secondary education and not currently in education.   | Labour Force Survey (LFS) |
| Mean achievement scores for 15-year-olds in reading and Mathematics and Science*                | Mean achievement scores in English reading, Mathematics and Science at age 15 by English language ability and generational status                                       | PISA 2018                 |
| <b>3. Social inclusion</b>  |   |                           |
| Median net income   | Median net income – median net (household and equivalised) income of the immigrant population and the Irish population.   | EU-SILC                   |
| At risk of poverty rate   | At risk of poverty rate – share of population with net disposable income of less than 60 per cent of national median.   | EU-SILC                   |

*Contd.*

## CONTD.

| Indicator   | Definition  | Data Source                        |
|---|---|------------------------------------|
| Consistent poverty rates  | Proportion of population both (1) at risk of poverty and (2) living in households that lack two or more basic items such as food, clothing or heat. | EU-SILC                            |
| Share of population perceiving their health status as good or very good                   | Share of population aged 16+ perceiving their health status as good or very good.   | EU-SILC                            |
| Ratio of property owners to non-property owners among immigrants and the total population | Percentage of property owners, private renters and local authority renters among immigrant and Irish household respondents.                         | EU-SILC                            |
| <b>4. Active citizenship</b>  |   |                                    |
| Share of immigrants that have acquired citizenship (best estimate)                        | Share of estimated non-EEA immigrant population who have acquired citizenship (best estimate).  | Department of Justice and Equality |
| Share of immigrants holding permanent or long-term residence permits                      | Share of estimated non-EEA immigrant population granted long-term residence (best estimate).  | Department of Justice and Equality |
| Share of immigrants among elected representatives   | Share of immigrants among elected local representatives.  | Immigrant Council of Ireland       |

**Notes:** Employment and unemployment are defined in this table and elsewhere in this report using the standard International Labour Organization's (ILO) definitions. People are defined as employed if they have worked for pay in the week preceding the survey interview for one hour or more, or who were not at work due to temporary absence (i.e. sickness or training). Unemployed persons are those who did not work in the week preceding the interview but were available to start work in the next two weeks and had actively sought work in the previous four weeks. ILO unemployment estimates differ from both the Live Register of unemployment and from the individual's own self-assignment of his or her principal economic status. \* indicates where definitions of the indicators differ slightly from those proposed at Zaragoza, based on data constraints. Share of 25- to 34-year-olds with third-level educational attainment instead of the share of 30- to 34-year-olds with third-level educational achievement; share of early leavers from education and training aged 20 to 24 instead of 18 to 24; mean achievement scores for 15-year-olds in reading and Mathematics instead of the proportion of 15-year-olds achieving Level 1 or under in the PISA assessment tests.



## Appendix 3

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### CSO Statistical Disclosure Rules

This appendix provides a brief discussion of the rules by the Central Statistics Office regarding statistical disclosure and cell counts. These rules apply to both the LFS and SILC results presented in this Monitor.

In order to produce reliable statistics and prevent disclosure, the CSO recommends not to publish any cell results based on less than 30 cases, in cases such as these the result is replaced with two asterisks (\*\*). In cells where the result is based on 30 to 49 cases, LFS results are presented with parentheses ([ ]) as they are 'considered to have a wider margin of error and should be treated with caution'.<sup>126</sup>

There are two types of statistical disclosure referenced by the CSO, primary disclosure and secondary disclosure. Primary disclosure is 'when an unsafe cell is published' for example, a cell which has less than 30 cases. To prevent primary disclosure, we remove unsafe cells and replace with two asterisks as mentioned above. Secondary disclosure is when 'an unsafe cell is removed but its value can be deduced from the aggregate totals and non-suppressed values'. In order to prevent this type of disclosure the unsafe cell and an additional cell would need to be removed.<sup>127</sup>

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<sup>126</sup> Central Statistics Office (n.d.). *Labour Force Survey (LFS) Guidelines*. [https://www.cso.ie/en/media/csoie/aboutus-new/dataforresearchers/Instructions\\_on\\_the\\_use\\_of\\_LFS\\_data\\_for\\_Researchers.pdf](https://www.cso.ie/en/media/csoie/aboutus-new/dataforresearchers/Instructions_on_the_use_of_LFS_data_for_Researchers.pdf) [Accessed 29 June 2020].

<sup>127</sup> Linehan, T. and K. Dineen (n.d.). *CSO Best Practice for Statistical Disclosure Control of Tabular Data*. <https://www.cso.ie/en/aboutus/lgdp/csodatapolicies/dataforresearchers/resourcesforresearchers/> [Accessed 29 June 2020].



## Appendix 4

### Country of Birth by Nationality

**TABLE A4.A COUNTRY OF BIRTH BY NATIONALITY, 2016 CENSUS**

|                  | Non-Irish |         | Irish |           | Total |           |
|------------------|-----------|---------|-------|-----------|-------|-----------|
| Country of Birth | %         | Count   | %     | Count     | %     | Count     |
| Ireland          | 1.0       | 39,416  | 99.0  | 3,781,921 | 100   | 3,821,337 |
| EEA              | 66.7      | 401,983 | 33.3  | 200,561   | 100   | 602,544   |
| Non-EEA          | 54.6      | 131,681 | 45.4  | 109,387   | 100   | 241,068   |
| Total            | 12.3      | 573,080 | 87.7  | 4,091,869 | 100   | 4,664,949 |

Source: 2016 Census.

Notes: Own calculations from Census microdata. Includes all individuals resident in Ireland in April 2016. N= 96,611 missing cases for country of birth and/or nationality are excluded. Irish nationals includes Irish citizens with dual nationality, where one of these is Irish.

**TABLE A4.B COUNTRY OF BIRTH BY NATIONALITY, AGED 15 OR OVER, 2016 CENSUS**

|                  | Non-Irish |         | Irish |           | Total |           |
|------------------|-----------|---------|-------|-----------|-------|-----------|
| Country of Birth | %         | Count   | %     | Count     | %     | Count     |
| Ireland          | 0.6       | 15,755  | 99.4  | 2,652,659 | 100   | 2,668,414 |
| EEA              | 67.2      | 349,810 | 32.8  | 170,582   | 100   | 520,392   |
| Non-EEA          | 57.5      | 113,699 | 42.5  | 84,049    | 100   | 197,748   |
| Total            | 14.2      | 479,264 | 85.8  | 2,907,290 | 100   | 3,386,554 |

Source: 2016 Census.

Notes: Own calculations from Census microdata. Analysis restricted to those aged 15 or over. N= 65,763 missing cases for country of birth and/or nationality are excluded from the analysis. Irish nationals includes Irish citizens with dual nationality, where one of these is Irish.

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