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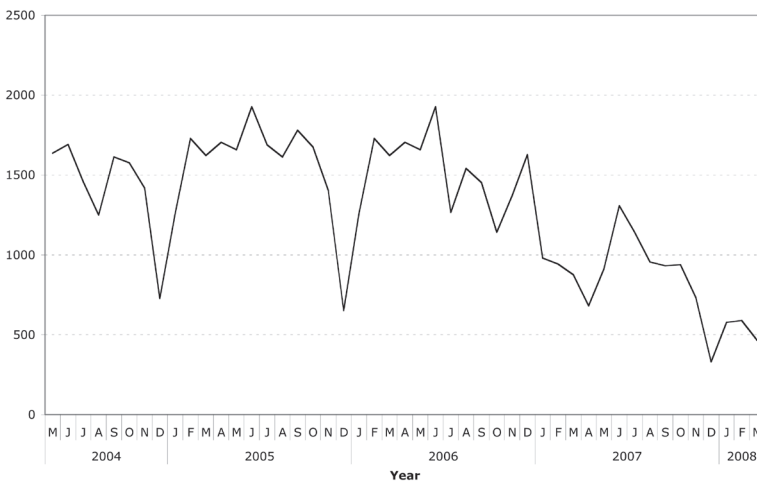
# Lithuanians in Ireland

## Introduction

In April 2006, according to the national Census, there were 24,434 people of Lithuanian nationality living in the Republic of Ireland; of these, 13,644 (55.8%) were male (CSO 2006). Lithuanians were thus the third largest immigrant community in Ireland in 2006, following those from the UK and Poland. While this is the official count, there is

much disagreement over the accuracy of the Census figures. The Minister for Integration, Conor Lenihan, claims that Census 2006 has significantly undercounted migration to Ireland (MacCormaic 2007). In support of this claim, over 58,400 PPS<sup>1</sup> numbers were issued to Lithuanian nationals in the period from 1 May 2004 to 31 March 2008 (see Figure 1 (Department of Social and Family Affairs 2008)).

**Figure 1:** Number of PPSNs issued monthly to Lithuanian nationals, May 2004 – March 2008 (Source: Department of Family and Social Affairs 2008)



Though commentators are unlikely to agree over the extent of the Lithuanian presence in Ireland, they certainly agree that the Lithuanian community has increased exponentially in recent years. Even using the undercounted Census figures, the number of Lithuanian nationals has increased by over 1,000% in four years; from 2,104 in 2002 to 24,638 in 2006. Ireland was one of just three countries to allow Lithuanian citizens unrestricted access to its labour market following EU accession in May 2004 (the others were the UK and Sweden). However, Lithuanian migration to Ireland had started prior to May 2004: over 4,500 new work permits were issued to Lithuanian nationals between January 2002 and December 2003.<sup>2</sup>

In a very short period of time, therefore, Ireland has become one of the most important destinations for migrants from Lithuania. Though the extent of recent Lithuanian migration to the UK is greater, the relative sizes of the UK and Ireland mean that Ireland is a more significant destination for Lithuanian migrants. In the three year period from 2004/5 to 2006/7, around 70,000 Lithuanians applied for National Insurance Numbers (NiNo) in the UK: of those, over 2,000 were based in Northern Ireland (DWP 2007; NISRA 2007).

What do we know about Lithuanian nationals in Ireland? From Census 2006, we can say that Lithuanians in Ireland are young and relatively well educated. The majority are Roman Catholic. Around a third of Lithuanian migrants in Ireland are married, and over 50 per cent are single. The majority of Lithuanians in Ireland live in Dublin, but there are significant numbers in Meath, Cork, Monaghan, Kildare and Louth. However, the highest concentration of Lithuanians in Ireland is in the county of Monaghan: over 3.4 per cent of the population of that county is Lithuanian (see Figure 2). From the Census, it is also possible to identify significant dif-

ferences between Lithuanians in Ireland and the general Irish population. The first significant difference is age profile (see Table 1). 80 per cent of Lithuanians in Ireland are aged between 15 and 44, compared to 43.9 per cent of the Irish population. While 8.7 per cent of the Lithuanian population in Ireland is aged 45 years or older, the corresponding figure for the Irish population is 34.6 per cent.

Table 1: Age distribution of Lithuanian and Irish populations (source: Census 2006)

| Age Category      | Lithuanians in Ireland % | Irish population % |
|-------------------|--------------------------|--------------------|
| 0-14 years        | 11.3                     | 21.5               |
| 15-24 years       | 27.3                     | 14.5               |
| 25-44 years       | 52.7                     | 29.4               |
| 45-64 years       | 8.4                      | 22.8               |
| 65 years or older | 0.3                      | 11.8               |

The second significant difference is occupation (see Table 2). In general, over 80 per cent of Lithuanians in Ireland are in the labour force, compared to around 47 per cent of the Irish population. However, there are important differences in their occupational categories. Lithuanians in Ireland are more likely to be employed in manufacturing, construction, services and other categories, and less likely to be employed in clerical, management and government, as well as professional, technical and health categories, than their Irish counterparts.

While Census 2006 provides interesting insights into Lithuanian migrants in Ireland in April 2006, it is limited. It gives little information about the lives of migrants before moving to Ireland, their experiences of living in Ireland, and their future plans. Aware of the dearth of information on new migrants to Ireland, the Immigrant Council of Ireland commissioned a report on the experiences of four migrant communities: Chinese, Indian,

Figure 2: Lithuanian Nationals Settlement Map (Source: Census 2006)

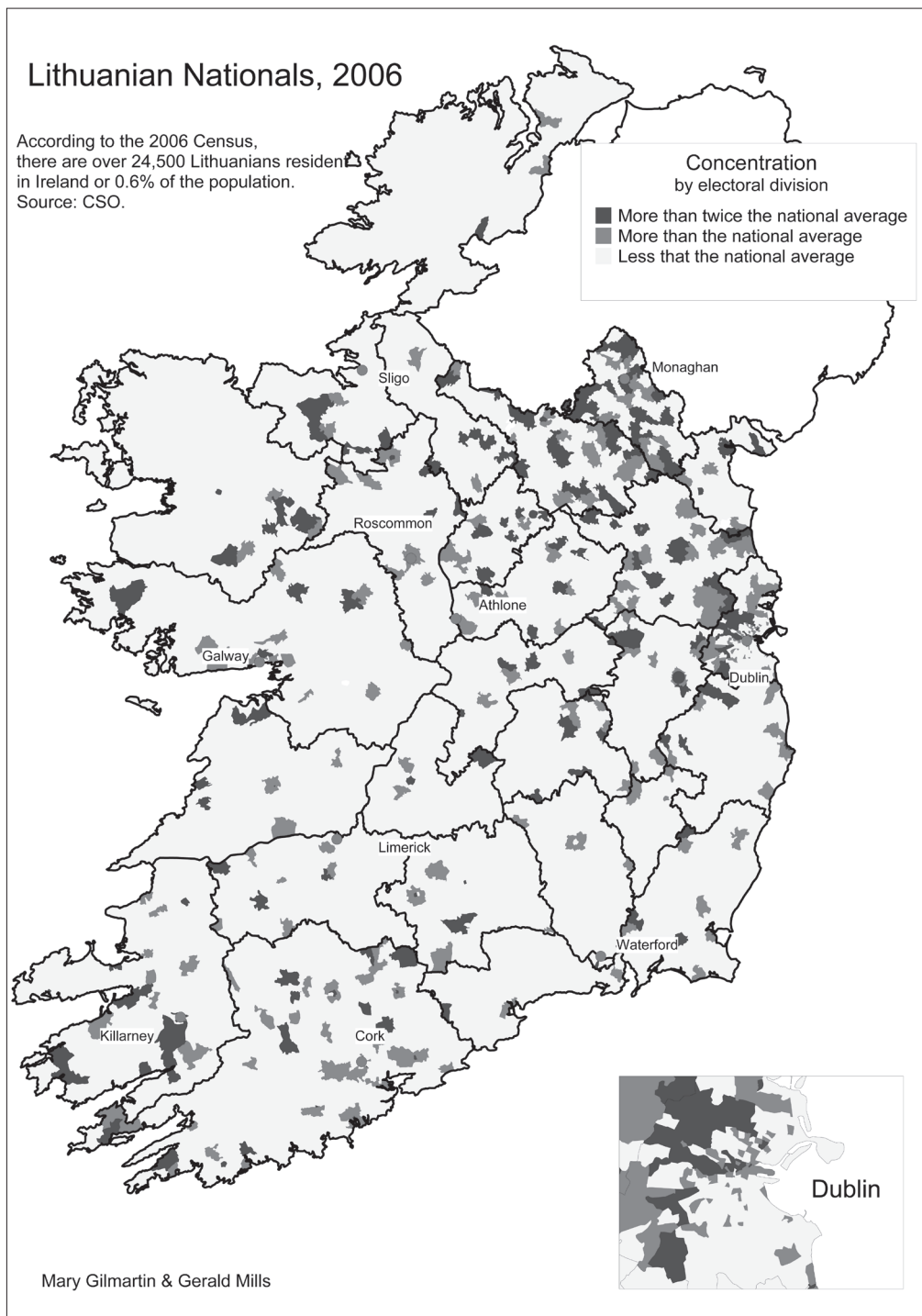


Table 2: Occupational classification of Lithuanian and Irish populations (source: Census 2006)

| Occupational classification            | Lithuanians in Ireland<br>% | Irish population<br>% |
|--|-----------------------------|-----------------------|
| Farming, fishing and forestry          | 3.7                         | 4.6                   |
| Manufacturing                          | 18.8                        | 11.6                  |
| Building/construction                  | 19.5                        | 8.4                   |
| Clerical, managing, government workers | 3.3                         | 18.6                  |
| Communication and transport            | 5.6                         | 5.7                   |
| Sales and commerce                     | 9.1                         | 14.0                  |
| Professional, technical and health     | 1.7                         | 16.6                  |
| Services                               | 13.5                        | 10.1                  |
| Others                                 | 20.8                        | 9.5                   |
| Looking for first job                  | 4.0                         | 1.0                   |

Lithuanian and Nigerian. This paper is based on our research with Lithuanian migrants to Ireland as part of the project, and reports on the results of detailed questionnaire surveys, in-depth interviews and focus groups that took place in 2007 (see MCRI 2008 for more information).

## Leaving Lithuania and moving to Ireland

The majority of migrants moved to Ireland directly from Lithuania, from a number of cities and towns including Kaunas, Vilnius and Klaipeda, as well as Siauliai, Telsiai, Druskininkai and Marijampole. The small number who had moved from other countries had previously lived in the UK, the US, Germany, and the Middle East. While around half had travelled to Ireland alone, around 30 per cent had travelled with family members and around 20 per cent with friends. However, male migrants were considerably more likely than female migrants to travel on their own to Ireland. Contemporary migration from Lithuania to Ireland is often explained in terms of push and pull factors: economic recession or difficulties in Lithuania, leading to unemployment or low

wages, act as an impetus to migration, while the economic boom in Ireland makes the country an attractive destination (Barrett et al 2005; Barrett and Bergin 2007; Dorigo and Tobler 1983; MacÉinrí and White 2008). In our research, around 27 per cent of survey respondents were not in paid employment before migrating to Ireland, either because they were full-time students, unemployed, or involved in unpaid work. While this could suggest that lack of employment opportunities was the motivation for migration, this is not the only reason. Over 40 per cent of survey respondents said they moved to Ireland for the experience of living in another country. Meanwhile, less than half the survey respondents had a definite job offer before leaving Lithuania, suggesting that the promise of Ireland was sufficient reason for moving.

These complex motivations behind migration were also expressed by interviewees. Many said that one of their reasons for leaving Lithuania was economic. For example, one interviewee who could not afford to study in Lithuania chose “to go somewhere else to make money” (L9), with the intention of returning home at a later stage to study. Another left because he could not find a job in Lithuania (L8). However, many interviewees also described their reasons for migration in

terms of personal development. Quite a number saw their move from Lithuania as an opportunity to learn more about the world and themselves. "I wanted to travel and see the world" (L1), one said, while another wanted "to get [his] life together" (L10). Others wanted to stop being a burden on their parents and attain a level of independence. These complex personal motivations were summed up by the interviewee who wanted to find "a different way to live" (L6).

Reasons for migrating to Ireland were similarly complex. Some interviewees had arranged jobs in Ireland before moving to the country, while some followed family members – for example, parents or partners – to Ireland. Others were encouraged to move by friends already living in Ireland. As one interviewee said, "A couple of my friends were in Ireland in 2002/03, so they said it was a good country, people are friendly, things are good" (L5). In a few cases, interviewees spoke of their sense of connection to Ireland: "it is closer to Lithuania, more similar to Lithuania than other countries" (L6), one said, while another commented that "a lot of Lithuanians consider Ireland as kind of a sister country" (L2). An interviewee who had previously worked in London, and who was convinced to move to Ireland by a friend, compared Ireland favourably to the UK: "I feel more comfortable here ... London is huge and that made me feel uncomfortable" (L1). However, others admitted to having little or no knowledge of Ireland prior to their move. As one interviewee confessed, "I had no clue about Ireland at all. The majority of Lithuanians used to think even five years ago that Ireland is the same as Northern Ireland. So my mother was saying 'there is so much shooting going on there. ... Why are you going there?'" (L12).

Among Lithuanian survey respondents and interviewees, there was considerable uncertainty in relation to future plans. When we asked Lithuanian survey respondents how

long they intended to stay in Ireland, around 40 per cent said they did not know. This is in contrast to the 8 per cent who said they intended to stay in Ireland permanently. Over a quarter of female respondents said they intended to stay in Ireland for 1 to 2 years only. This is in contrast to research participants from Nigeria, India and China, who differed from Lithuanian respondents in their lack of freedom to travel and work in the EU<sup>3</sup>. Many interviewees were similarly ambivalent. When asked about his future plans and where he saw himself in five years, one interviewee said "I see myself in Lithuania, probably because I bought an apartment there... My family probably will be in Lithuania as well. Probably [but there] could be a lot of change if I meet an Irish woman. You know, life is full of surprises" (L9). Another was similarly ambivalent. "I still don't think about me settling here for good", she said, "but that might change" (L1). Many expressed strong connections to Lithuania, such as the interviewee who said "I am Lithuanian and I will stay Lithuanian all my life ... because I can't forget my roots" (L4). Others mentioned family ties and responsibilities – for example, elderly or ill parents – as a motivation for eventually returning to Lithuania. As one interviewee said, "my grandmother, my mammy, my three brothers, they all live [in Lithuania] and when I am back in Lithuania all they say [is] come back" (L8).

The experiences of survey respondents and interviewees point to the complicated nature of the decision to migrate, the choice of destination, and the ongoing tension between personal desire and social obligations (Lawson 2000). These issues are negotiated and re-negotiated by migrants as their personal circumstances change. Migration from Lithuania to Ireland is still at a relatively early stage, but already migrants are beginning to establish connections to Ireland that complicate their original understanding of mi-

gration as a short-term event. This may in turn also change, particularly in relation to significant personal events such as having children, relationship breakdown, or family illness or death (Ní Laoire 2008). It is clear, however, that any attempt to classify migration from Lithuania to Ireland in terms of economic differentials alone both simplifies and misrepresents the complex decision-making processes of migrants.

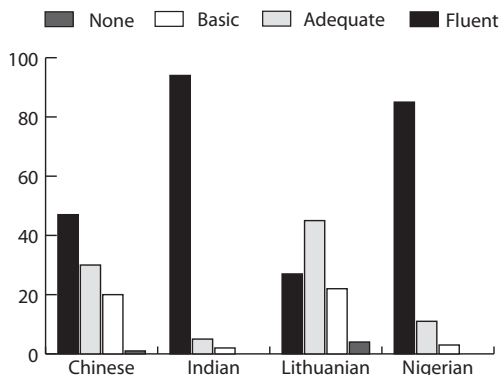
## Life in Ireland

Census 2006 also gives little information about the everyday life of Lithuanian migrants in Ireland. The research project aimed to capture some of these experiences, through a series of survey and interview questions on people’s cultural, economic, social and political activities in Ireland. In this section of the paper, we report on some key findings of the research. We examine questions of language use, employment and social interaction in order to provide an insight into the everyday lives of Lithuanians in Ireland. We also focus on issues of transnational behaviour, showing the ways in which Lithuanians in Ireland remain connected, both to Lithuania and elsewhere.

## Language

Language use and language proficiency was raised as an important issue in both surveys and interviews. Lithuanians, among the four national groups studied in this research project, reported the lowest levels of proficiency in speaking, reading, writing and understanding English. For example, only 25 per cent of survey respondents believed they were fluent in speaking English (see Figure 3). This is in contrast to significantly higher percentages in the other three national groups who participated in the research.

Figure 3: Proficiency in speaking English, by migrant group



While many respondents spoke English at work, over 20 per cent predominantly used Lithuanian in their workplace, which suggests employment clustering among some Lithuanians in Ireland. Lithuanian respondents were also significantly more likely to speak Lithuanian with family members, friends and children.

Within Ireland, language proficiency is regularly highlighted as a barrier to integration for migrants (Healy 2007; Office of the Minister for Integration 2008). Policy makers, non-governmental organisations and academics in Ireland have all highlighted the need for improved language skills for immigrants. Their focus is often on English language acquisition, an area where many Lithuanian migrants face considerable challenges. Similar concerns were raised by interviewees<sup>4</sup>, many of whom were fluent in English but who were aware of difficulties faced by other Lithuanians with less fluency. As one interviewee said, “the main problem is language, the language barrier” (L6). This point was echoed by another interviewee, who said “for me it’s easier because I have the language. Without the language it’s harder” (L7). The importance of language proficiency was foregrounded by an interviewee who warned friends and fami-

ly members to stay away from Ireland if they could not speak English. As he said, “when I’m home, I just tell them if you don’t have English you can forget it” (L9). Similarly, the ways in which language proficiency provided opportunities and enhanced well-being in Ireland was emphasised by an interviewee who said “every day is getting better, because now I can speak in English” (L3). Despite the general recognition of the importance of communicating in English, interviewees identified a number of barriers and obstacles. The first is a lack of desire among some migrants to learn English. As one interviewee observed: “I know people who are ... in Ireland three or four years and have no English ... They are going to work with some Eastern Europeans, speaking the same language, coming back home, living with five or ten people in the same house, using the same language, buying a satellite dish with native channels... [T]hey have no idea about Ireland, about the culture, about people” (L5). Such migrants often see their stay in Ireland as temporary, and may be unwilling to invest time and effort into acquiring a skill that appears to be of no use to them. The second is a lack of opportunity, as evidenced in another interviewee’s description of his Lithuanian housemates who “say that they have problems with the language but they have no time to learn” (L6). Indeed, taking formal English classes in Ireland is expensive and time-consuming. Employers are not mandated to provide English lessons or time to attend English classes to their employees, and thus English classes generally have to be taken outside work hours. In many instances, English classes are provided by private language schools, and are often expensive. Free classes are often only made available to asylum seekers or refugees.

The question of language and communication takes on another dimension in the context of changing family relationships. One interviewee expressed her surprise at the ease with

which her daughter picked up English in school, saying “I thought that school would be very difficult for her ... because she didn’t speak English...[Now] even when she plays at home with her toys, she speaks in English” (L4). This mother spoke about now needing a dictionary to understand her small daughter. As the children of Lithuanian migrants learn English, there is concern that they will lose touch with Lithuanian language and culture. To address this, many migrants are active in weekend schools across Ireland that provide instruction in Lithuanian language and culture (ALB 2008). However, the need to communicate in English leads to difficulties for family members of those living in Ireland. One interviewee described how his father wanted to learn English but felt it was too hard (L6). Another spoke of her mother, who visited Ireland to see and look after family members, but who felt unhappy in Ireland “because she can’t easily speak with neighbours” (L4). One interviewee predicted problems for children brought up in Ireland: “kindergarten in English, home in Lithuanian, it’s just too messed up for kids” (L11).

## Work

Lithuanians living in Ireland find it relatively easy to get employment. Almost 87% of the people we surveyed were currently in paid employment, in jobs ranging from personal services (for example, domestic work, childcare or security) to construction, agriculture and sales occupations. Family and friends are an important source of information about job opportunities: over 60 per cent of the people who were currently employed found their job in this way. It was clear, however, from both surveys and interviews that in many instances, people worked in jobs that were not their first choice of employment – close to 43% of survey respondents said that their qualifications were not fully recognised in their current job. Simi-

larly, while almost 90% of Lithuanians surveyed thought their financial situation had improved since coming to Ireland, just over 60% thought their professional and personal situation had improved. In general, Lithuanian respondents were less likely to experience difficulties at work than other respondents. Only around 5 per cent of survey participants reported experiences of bullying or harassment at work, from either managers or co-workers. However, over 10 per cent reported that they had experienced racism at work, particularly from Irish people (see also NCCRI 2007). One interviewee, who worked in a petrol station, described the abuse she experienced. "If the Irish person is not against immigrants, he's fine", she said. "But if he doesn't like other people coming to the country ... he won't say a word to you, or [might] call you names ... and give out about the quality of the sandwich ... and the quality of the service" (L11). However, the biggest difficulties at work, according to survey respondents, were working conditions and inadequate pay. Almost 25 per cent of survey respondents said that they had experienced poor working conditions. One interviewee told us of the perception that "in the unskilled sector ... we are not paid as much as Irish [people]" (L2). This perception was supported by survey findings, where over 20 per cent of respondents said that they had received inadequate pay. These experiences were encapsulated in the experiences of one interviewee, who left a job because of a variety of problems: "no taxes, small salary, conflict with workers" and no overtime pay (L8)

Interviews provided more information on how people rationalized their employment situation. Some people were willing to forego professional advancement for short-term economic gain. For example, a trained engineer with limited English described how he got his first job in Ireland: "Outside, there were new houses and a small digger, a couple of Irish guys with yellow jackets. I asked for a job and

they said 'oh yes'" (L8). He took the job, he said, "for money, because life is expensive here" (L8). Others explained their current job as a stepping stone to something better. Though it was not their first choice, they could tolerate it in the short term. One interviewee, recently divorced and with two young children, was working as a cashier in a local shop. A trained teacher in Lithuania, she took the job because it was convenient and flexible, saying "I don't want to work ... all my life in [shop], it's not my dream. Just for this moment it's good" (L4). Another, currently working in an office, said "I won't do this job for longer than a year because that's not what I want to do. I don't want to sit in an office for the rest of my life" (L11). However, many pointed to the opportunities they had experienced in Ireland and to the progress they had made since arriving in the country. The office worker commented that "I would never have got a job in the office without showing them a diploma and if you want to have a good job, you have to spend at least six years in university, which costs a lot" (L11). One interviewee, who had arrived in Ireland six years earlier with three friends to work in a fast food restaurant, said that all four now worked in management positions, in a variety of different companies (L12). In this way, moving to Ireland provided new opportunities for many migrants, and allowed them to develop new skills. However, the difficulties faced by many migrants were highlighted by one interviewee, who commented that "I think my experience would be a little different if I arrived here, and ... all my life never did any physical work, and I had to work in some mushroom farm or a factory" (L7).

## Social interaction

A variety of factors facilitate or inhibit social interaction, including language, work, place of residence and level of income. Social



interaction, in turn, is seen as important in enabling communication and understanding to develop between migrants and the indigenous population. The survey included a number of questions on patterns and types of social interaction of migrants. Lithuanian respondents were most likely to spend time with other Lithuanians, followed by family and then Irish citizens. However, Lithuanians were least likely to spend time with other migrants. Just over a third of Lithuanian respondents reported spending time with other migrants, in contrast to almost 90 per cent of Nigerian respondents and over half the Indian respondents. Two types of social activities with other Lithuanians – both family members and friends – stood out as being particularly important. These were visiting each other's homes, and activities based around food. As one interviewee described, "on weekends we just meet up with friends, for barbecues or whatever, all Lithuanians" (L11). Another said "I have friends, Lithuanian friends, ... we're together in work [and] after work" (L4). Many interviewees commented on the limited forms of social interaction experienced by other Lithuanians. "It's all about partying in ... close communities in houses ... and they don't have other sorts of entertainment than drinking" (L1), one interviewee said, while another described a category of people "getting their wages, coming back home, buying a bottle of alcohol, drinking it, that's it" (L5).

Just over 40 per cent of Lithuanian survey respondents reported that they had social interaction with Irish citizens. This was again the lowest of the four migrant communities. While some social interaction with Irish citizens happened in each other's homes or around food, these sites of interaction were not the most important - two thirds of Lithuanian respondents who socialised with Irish people did so in pubs. Many interviewees also found it difficult to socialise with Irish people. For some, it was due to a lack of free

time because of the pressures of work. Another man described his difficulty meeting Irish women – he felt that they lost interest in him when they heard his accent (L8). However, a number of interviewees highlighted the importance of the pub as a place to meet Irish people: "it's a pub culture", as one commented (L10c), while another said "I don't think we like pubs as much as Irish people do" (L4). The place of the pub in Irish society in turn creates difficulties. One woman observed "it's not my personality or my character ... to meet people in pubs" (L1) – this limits her possibilities for interaction with many Irish people. Another interviewee said, "I don't get a chance to socialise with the Irish". He explained that "the only socialising here goes when you are interested in sports [or] you go to a pub; both are not for me" (L7). Despite these difficulties, many interviewees told us about their efforts to meet and socialise with people from outside Lithuania. One Dublin-based interviewee said "I think Irish people are really nice and ... the more into the countryside I go, the further I go, the nicer they seem to me" (L1). And many interviewees told us about Irish people who had helped them out and who had become good friends in the process. This included employers, landlords, and work colleagues. "It's easier in Lithuania to make friends" (L12), another interviewee told us, but "if you have a friend, an Irish friend, it's for life" (L12).

However, social interaction is not just about socialising, but it also involves experiences with institutions in Ireland (Brehony and Clancy 2006; Fanning et al 2004; MacÉinrí et al 2006; NCCRI 2002). In the survey, we focused particularly on state services, and found that many Lithuanian respondents learned about these services only when they needed them, and often from friends. As one interviewee commented, "the biggest problem is information" (L11). He talked about the need to translate material into Lithuanian for those who had difficulties with English. As a conse-

quence, many of the survey respondents had not used a variety of state supports, such as information, legal and health services. In addition, only 14 per cent of survey respondents were registered to vote in Ireland, with many saying they did not know they were entitled to do so. This suggests that social interaction with the institutions of the state has been limited for many Lithuanians in Ireland. This was evident in relation to health services, with many interviewees telling us that they returned to Lithuania for medical treatment. One interviewee said “the worst thing in Ireland is the health service” (L12), saying that if anyone goes to Lithuania, the first thing they do is go to the hospital and dentist. This was confirmed by another interviewee, who said, “usually we check our health at home on holidays, all the blood [tests] and x-rays and everything” (L11). This is one form of transnational behaviour, but it emanates from a failure of the Irish state to fully address the needs of Lithuanians in Ireland.

## Transnationalism

Though the migrants we spoke to as part of our research live and work in Ireland, they remain highly connected to Lithuania and elsewhere. Those connections take a variety of forms; from regular communication and visits, to remittances and other forms of financial help. Many of the people we surveyed had close family members still living in Lithuania. For example, almost a third of survey respondents had children living in Lithuania, many of whom were being cared for by their grandparents. In addition, around 15 per cent of respondents had partners who lived outside Ireland. Many interviewees mentioned their parents and the strain of being so far away from them and from other family members. For example, one woman spoke of her parents: “they’re getting older ... and I think they feel very lonely and unsafe,

insecure” (L3). She felt that she would need to move back to Lithuania to help them, saying “it would be very selfish to stay here” (L3). Over 50 per cent of the people we surveyed had visited family and friends in Lithuania three or more times since moving to Ireland, and just 9 per cent had not visited Lithuania at all in that time. This is facilitated by the rapid growth of air routes between Ireland and Lithuania, with Aer Lingus, Air Baltic, Fly LAL and Ryanair all operating direct routes between the two countries.

Around 40 per cent of survey respondents reported that they sent remittances to Lithuania. These were used for a variety of purposes: most frequently towards family living expenses, but also for savings and to purchase property, to repay debts and for the education of family members. Others provided financial support in other ways. For example, some interviewees arranged for brothers and sisters to come to Ireland for short periods, such as the interviewee who said “I bring three of [my siblings] here for the summer” (L9). Many of the people we interviewed had travelled to Ireland because of the efforts of friends and family members already living in the country, and this pattern of assisted migration continues. Contact between Lithuanians in Ireland and friends and family in Lithuania takes a variety of forms. Survey respondents made regular phonecalls, send text messages and emails – though not letters – to keep in touch. Around a third of respondents watch Lithuanian television on a daily basis, and around a half check Lithuanian webpages daily. Interviewees also told us about using Skype to keep in touch.

However, transnationalism involves more than connections and contacts with the place of origin, but also involves a sense of belonging in more than one place. We asked survey respondents if they felt there was a Lithuanian community in Ireland. Just over 50 per cent agreed that there was a Lithuanian commu-

nity in Ireland, and around two thirds of them believed that they belonged to it. Some of the people we interviewed were actively involved in community activities. Others were less engaged. For example, one interviewee said of the Lithuanian community, “I get internet updates about what we are doing, but I don’t think I’m very interested in it .... If you want anything Lithuanian you can go home very quickly. But maybe for people who have children it is important” (L7). Another, while aware of the existence of a Lithuanian Association in Ireland, said “I don’t attend their meetings or anything. ... I’m not too interested to be honest with you, because I’d rather experience Irish life here rather than Lithuanian” (L1). However, the same interviewee spoke positively of a traditional St. Casimir’s fair in Dublin city centre, organised by the Lithuanian Association in March 2007 (see Figure 4).

Figure 4: Logo of Lithuanian Association in Ireland, on display in Dublin, March 2007.



## Conclusion: The challenges of migration

Levels of new migration from Lithuania to Ireland have declined in recent years, yet Ireland remains an important destination for Lithuanian migrants. These migrants, in common with migrants from other countries, are in general young, well-educated and skilled, and their presence in Ireland contributes greatly to Irish society and the Irish economy (Fanning 2007; King-O’Riain 2008; Komolafe 2008; Kropiwiec 2006; Wang 2006). However, their departure from Lithuania

also has consequences, as their families and friends struggle to cope with their absence. This was the situation in Ireland as recently as the 1980s, when thousands of young people emigrated on an annual basis (King 1991).

Our research complicates simplistic understandings of the reasons for migration, and highlights some of the issues faced by Lithuanian migrants to Ireland. In doing so, we identified difficulties in communicating, particularly in English. We also identified migrants who were not able to make use of their training and qualifications at work, as well as those who were able to avail of opportunities to develop their skills and experience. Lithuanian migrants are developing new social networks and friendships in Ireland, while maintaining strong emotional and material links to Lithuania and to their families and friends (Ley 2004; McKay 2007; Mitchell 2003). Underpinning these findings are the difficulties many migrants faced on moving from Lithuania to Ireland. One interviewee spoke of the early days in Ireland: “It took me quite a while to find a job so I was a bit desperate at the beginning” (L1). Another talked of the loneliness of life in Ireland, saying “the first two months were fine, but after two months I started realising that I’m still not going home, and I won’t be going home for a long time, so that’s when it hit me” (L11).

Migrants are diverse, and it is important to study this diversity in more detail. One interviewee described three types of migrants from Lithuania to Ireland. The first “live here and enjoy [their] life and time”. The second “make a lot of money and go back to Lithuania”, while the third are always “under pressure and all the time dreaming about Lithuania” (L3). These motivations, contexts and experiences shape migrants and the experiences of migration. In order to better understand migration from Lithuania and to Ireland, it will be important to further develop research that highlights this complexity (King 2002).

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## Endnotes

1. The PPS number is the Personal Public Services Number, used in transactions between individuals and public bodies, for example for taxation payments, drivers' licenses, social welfare and health services. Not everyone living in Ireland has a PPS number, and many people may have received a PPS number and subsequently left Ireland.
2. An earlier wave of Lithuanian migration to Ireland occurred in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, composed of Lithuanian Jews (Litvaks) (Ó Gráda 2006).
3. The majority of Nigerian respondents were asylum seekers and refugees. The majority of Chinese respondents held student visas. The majority of Indian respondents were labour migrants, holding either working visas or work permits. All needed specific permission to migrate to and stay in Ireland, unlike Lithuanian respondents.
4. While many of the surveys were conducted with the aid of a translator, all interviews were conducted in English.

## LIETUVIAI AIRIJOJE

Šiame straipsnyje nagrinėjama jau prieš 2004 m. prasidėjusi Lietuvos žmonių migracija į Airiją. Kas skatino juos pasirinkti būtent Airiją? Iš apklausų aiškėja, kad motyvacija labai įvairi, susijusi su noru ne tik geriau gyventi Lietuvoje, bet ir pamatyti pasaulio. Su kokiais sunkumais lietuviai susiduria atvykę į Airiją? Jų apžvalgai ir skiriama pagrindinė darbo dalis. Ar lietuviai lengvai išmoksta darbui ir gyvenimui reikalingą

anglų kalbą? Kaip jie suvokia ir priima savo darbo Airijoje sąlygas? Su kuo ir kaip Airijoje bendrauja migrantai iš Lietuvos? Kaip kėlimasis į Airiją paveikė santykius ir komunikaciją šeimoje? Ar Airijoje gyvenantys lietuviai savo tėvyne laiko labiau Lietuvą, ar Airiją? Į šiuos klausimus straipsnyje bandoma atsakyti remiantis jau esamais tyrimais ir autorių atliktomis migrantų apklausomis.