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Integration as Making Place

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ABSTRACT

In this paper, we provide a new approach to defining and operationalizing integration as "making place." We distinguish between making place *for* – a process of accommodation – and making place *with* – a process of co-production. We emphasize the potential of making place *with* as an alternative to top-down definitions of integration, and show this in practice through our research with migrants and migrant-supporting organizations in the Republic of Ireland. We conclude that making place *with* offers new insights into integration as processual, relational and practice-based, thus enhancing our understanding of migration and migrant experiences across diverse socio-spatial contexts.

Introduction

In the foreword to the Monitoring Report on Integration 2020, Roderic O'Gorman – the Irish Minister for Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth – wrote that:

> 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. (McGinnity et al., 2020a, p. ii)

The Monitoring Report, one of a series of reports on the topic of integration, aims to "provide a balanced and rigorous assessment of the situation of immigrants in Ireland" (McGinnity et al., 2020a, p. 4) and, based on the findings of this report, the Minister concluded that while there are some persistent challenges to integration, "overall, migrants to Ireland are integrating well across the range of indicators examined" (McGinnity et al., 2020a, p. ii). The report was published in December 2020, the same month that the most recent Migrant Integration Policy Index (MIPEX) was released. MIPEX (2020) concluded that "immigrants to Ireland have enjoyed improved access to health services, citizenship, political opportunities and justice," and ranked Ireland as one of the top 10 countries with a "comprehensive approach to integration" (MIPEX, 2020). Taken together, the improvement in integration policies noted by MIPEX and the positive integration outcomes included in the Monitoring Report offer a snapshot of a country where migrants appear to be integrating well. Yet, the most recent civil society publication on reports of racism in Ireland included the statistic that 42 per cent of people targeted were non-EU (29 per cent) and EU (13 per cent) citizens, and also detailed that many of the Irish citizens targeted were of African descent (Michael, 2020, p. 16). People of migrant background who are targets of racism are likely not participating in life in Ireland in the ways they want to.

These different assessments of integration provide a snapshot of the difficulties with the concept. While integration policies may be comprehensive, and measurable outcomes broadly positive, this does not necessarily translate into people's lived experiences. For this reason, our paper provides an alternative approach to integration, drawing inspiration from the concept of place. Using insights from critical geographers in particular, we propose that integration can be more usefully understood as "making place": both making place *for* and making place *with*. This emphasis on "making place" emphasizes the relational, processual and practice-based nature of integration, and highlights how the meaning and experience of integration varies across space and time. In the next section, we discuss how integration is defined. We highlight the different domains for definition, including integration as policy, as practice and as outcome, as well as the recent critiques of the concept and the work that it does to problematize immigrants. Following this, we provide an alternative approach to defining integration understood as "making place." We next show how we actively engaged in making place as part of a broader research project on integration in Ireland. The paper concludes with a short reflection on how our project offers a different, more inclusive approach to integration that may address some of the concerns that have been identified with the concept.

Defining integration

There is an extensive body of work that seeks to define, assess and promote integration. This work includes supranational, national and local policy documents; the use of quantitative measures of a range of economic, social, and political criteria; and a range of integration-supporting initiatives, particularly at local and national scales. The proliferation of work on integration has not helped to provide a clear definition of the concept. Instead, definitions of integration range from general and aspirational to specific and measurable, with little evidence of agreement. A good example of a general and aspirational definition is "the process of becoming an accepted part of society" (Penninx & Garcés-Mascareñas, 2016, p. 14). This definition frames integration as both a process and an outcome, where the outcome is becoming accepted and included in society. An elaborated definition is provided by the UK Home Office, which defines an integrated community as follows: "where people, whatever their background, live, work, learn and socialise together, based on shared rights, responsibilities and opportunities" (Ndofor-Tah et al., 2019, p. 11). From a European perspective, policy is framed by the Common Basic Principles, agreed in 2004. The first principle states that "integration is a dynamic, two-way process of mutual accommodation by all immigrants and residents of Member States" (European Commission, 2004): this identification of a "two-way process" underpins many normative statements about integration across European countries. In practice, though, the emphasis is on "immigrant integration," stressing the actions of immigrants rather than enhancing the process of mutual accommodation. This emphasis on immigrants is also present in quantitative measures of integration, and in integration-supporting initiatives that are mostly targeted at immigrants, for example in the form of language support, cultural training, or encouragement to gain employment. A good example of a specific and measurable definition is provided by the OECD in their 2018 report, which asserts that integration is "the ability of immigrants to achieve the same social and economic outcomes as natives taking into account their characteristics" (OECD/EU, 2018, p. 17). In this approach to defining integration, the outcomes of natives set the quantifiable standard that it is hoped immigrants will reach. The OECD reports, building on the Zaragoza indicators (European Commission, 2010; Huddleston et al., 2013), measure a range of outcomes that include work, living conditions, education and civic engagement, and highlight a range of areas where immigrant outcomes have or, more usually, have not converged with those of non-immigrants.

The proliferation of different approaches reflects the competing arenas where the concept is defined and applied, from integration policy and governance, to processes of integration, to integration outcomes. Many academics have sought to address the "fuzziness" of the concept by articulating alternative, and more synthetic, approaches. Penninx and Garcés-Mascareñas, for

example, seek to develop an analytical framework for the study of integration policies and processes (Penninx & Garcés-Mascareñas, 2016). Their framework for studying integration policies insists on considering policy frames, concrete policy measures, and the practice of policymaking; while their framework for studying integration processes emphasizes the interrelations between different dimensions, parties and levels. They suggest that both processes and policies should be assessed through comparison: between different immigrant groups in one country; between one immigrant group across a range of countries; and between policy development and implementation in different countries and regions. Their approach is ambitious and often insightful, but the complexity of their framework ends up illustrating the difficulties with the term. As Rytter concludes, integration is "an open signifier with fuzzy qualities" (Rytter, 2019, p. 682), meaning that efforts to define the term will remain incomplete and contested.

The most useful account of the varying approaches to integration, and their fundamental incompatibility, is provided by Meissner and Heil (2020). They identify three ways in which integration is discussed. The first is a focus on integration as policy, where integration policies are reviewed, parsed, and assessed as to their effectiveness. Thus, integration policy becomes the focus of analysis. Examples include Scholten et al. (2017), who discuss the extent to which migrant integration policy in the EU has been mainstreamed; and Geddes and Scholten (2015), who consider the Europeanization of migrant integration policies, paying particular attention to research-policy infrastructures. The second approach discussed by Meissner and Heil is the quantitative measurement of immigrant integration, exemplified by the cross-national comparisons contained in the OECD/EU reports, and by a range of national-level articulations of how integration is or could be measured. As an example, the UK Home Office Indicators of Integration details 14 different areas where levels of integration could be measured, using over 170 different indicators (Ndofor-Tah et al., 2019). Finally, Meissner and Heil identify the emphasis on integration as discourse, with particular implications for how we see and make sense of immigration and its impacts. This particular set of approaches is often highly critical of the concept of integration and its uses. Critiques center on the ways in which the concept of integration serves to problematize immigration and, specifically, immigrants; on what, exactly, immigrants are being asked to integrate *into*; and on the work that integration does to separate immigrants from "the 'real' population of the nation" (Korteweg, 2017, p. 429). Difficulties with the concept of integration thus take many forms. The first is definitional: what exactly does integration mean? The second is empirical: what does integration look like? The third is political: what work does the concept of integration do? Often, as we have indicated in this section, these three elements can be entangled or omitted within a single definition confusing the way in which integration is then understood, measured and managed.

Rethinking integration

An uncomfortable reality lies at the heart of difficulties with the concept of integration, which is that states and societies consistently seek to manage difference. While difference takes a variety of forms, there is a particular contemporary interest in those who are marked as different on the basis of migrant status and/or nationality, additionally mediated by race, ethnicity, language, religious beliefs or other characteristics. The management of migration-related difference has taken a variety of forms, including assimilation, interculturalism, marginalization and expulsion. Integration is a recent iteration, but the practice of management of difference has a much longer history.

We argue that the desire to manage migration-related difference is unlikely to subside in the immediate future. While integration as a form of management is problematic, each of the three approaches outlined by Meissner and Heil (2020) offers ways in which the place of migrants might be reimagined in a more inclusive and just way. Integration policy acknowledges the legitimate presence of migrants in a particular state, and can be used to draw attention to practices that unjustly challenge or undermine that presence. Integration measurement is

potentially useful for illuminating *structural* inequalities in particular states and societies. However, we also acknowledge that both policy and measurement are often used in a top-down manner, imposed on and used to distinguish between "good" and "bad" migrants. Given this, we propose an alternative approach to how we define, measure and use the concept of integration, which is influenced by what Meissner and Heil identify as the "integration as discourse" approach. This alternative approach draws from the work of critical geographers and their conceptualization of place. We suggest that integration can be more usefully framed as "making place": both making place *for* migrants, and making place *with* migrants. This framing presents integration, like place, as processual and relational, and as a site of negotiation where meaning is constantly being made and remade.

The concept of place has a long and contested history. Cresswell summarizes the key understanding of place as "spaces which people have made meaningful" (Cresswell, 2015, p. 12). However, Cresswell continues by commenting that place "is also a way of seeing, knowing, and understanding the world" (2015, p. 18). Cresswell's account of how places are made is wide-ranging, dealing with both materiality and meaning across scales that include the local, the regional, the national and the global. Throughout, Cresswell insists that places "are never finished but always the result of processes and practices" (2015, p. 68). This insistence on places as sites of ongoing effort is also a key theme in the work of Doreen Massey, who described the "event of place" (Massey, 2005, p. 140). Massey elaborates on the event of place as follows: "There can be no assumption of pre-given coherence, or of community or collective identity. Rather the throwntogetherness of place demands negotiation" (2005, p. 141). She continues by asserting that "we come to each place with the necessity, the responsibility, to examine anew and to invent" (2005, p. 169). Yet, these open approaches to the concept of place are rarely operationalized in migration studies. There are hints at the possibilities offered by place, for example in Phillips and Robinson's assertion that place "is created and re-created by its users and their interactions" (2015, p. 410), but too often this translates into studies of how migrant experiences differ in different places. As an example, Platts-Fowler and Robinson considered the integration experiences of Iraqi refugees in the cities of Hull and Sheffield in England, and show the importance of the urban and local context for positive assessments of integration and belonging (Platts-Fowler & Robinson, 2015); their approach is similar to that of Nelson and Hiemstra (2008), who compare experiences of immigrant incorporation in two small towns in the US (Woodburn, Oregon, and Leadville, Colorado). While this work is important for showing the significance of (local) places in processes of integration, it is less effective in thinking through how place is invented, to use Massey's term. More recently, in their detailed account of a "migrant enclave" in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, Parsons and Lawreniuk (2017) aim to develop our understanding of the relationship between place and migration, with a focus on "migrant co-constitution of their context" (2017, pp. 3–4). In a wide-ranging paper, which pays particular attention to the experiences of young people and to temporal shifts, they conclude that:

> The co-production of place in migrant enclaves is not simply enacted dyadically, between migrants and their destination. Rather, it is dynamically negotiated between the sender community, the economic and non-migrant environment at destination, and the cultural norms and practices developed by existing migrants. (Parsons & Lawreniuk, 2017, p. 15)

While this insistence on co-production is significant and welcome, the evidence presented to reach this conclusion is weighted more toward the experiences of migrants. If the concept of place is to be used to expand our understanding of migrant experiences, we argue that we also have a responsibility to examine our understanding of the experiences and understandings of non-migrants. This is where our conceptualization of making place comes in.

By *making place*, we are inspired by the work of theorists such as Massey and Cresswell and their conceptualization of place as ongoing, negotiated and constantly (re)invented. This has particular salience for migrants, whose relationship with the places they move to is often

characterized negatively by non-migrants. Indeed, opposition to migrants is often framed in terms of unease with the changes to place that are associated with migration: concern, for example, with changing religious practices (see, for example, Dunn, 2001; Öcal, 2020); changing linguistic practices (Musolff, 2019); or the association of migration with increased levels of crime (Boateng et al., 2021) or job losses and economic deterioration (Pryce, 2018). As evident in academic literature, the negative perception of changes to place is often not supported by evidence, but it has a powerful hold. Instead of seeking to describe and judge changes to place, our approach focuses on the act of influencing change. We argue that the first dimension of making place involves acknowledging the legitimate presence of migrants in a given context. Making place *for* migrants means those who are not migrants move over to accommodate new or recent arrivals. A focus on integration policy is one dimension of how this might happen. The second dimension – making place *with* migrants – requires migrants and non-migrants to work together to co-produce place, whether materially, discursively or both. Inventing the meaning and measurement of integration, together, is one of the ways in which place can be made. As Friedmann comments, "making places is everyone's job" (2010, p. 161). In the next section, we describe how we actively engaged in making place as part of a broader research project on migrant integration in Ireland. We begin by providing the context for the study: we describe policy and academic efforts in the Republic of Ireland to define and measure immigrant integration. We then outline our study, and detail the steps we took toward making place through the co-production of a contextual definition of integration.

The co-production of integration

The Irish context and the context for the study

The Republic of Ireland is a relatively new country of immigration. Indeed, for well over a century, Ireland was framed as an emigrant country. There were significant levels of net emigration that began in the 1840s and continued up until the 1990s, with periodic increases in response to economic crises in the 1920s, the 1950s and the 1980s. Since the mid-1990s, with the exception of the period from 2010 to 2014, Ireland has experienced net immigration on an annual basis (CSO, 2016a). The proportion of the population of Ireland born outside the country increased from from 7 per cent in 1996 to 17.3 per cent in 2016, with a majority born in other EU countries such as the UK, Poland, Lithuania, Romania and Latvia. Other common places of birth for Irish residents in 2016 include the United States, India, Nigeria, Brazil and the Philippines. While data on people of immigrant backgrounds (e.g., second generation) is not systematically collected in Ireland, a growing number identify as dual Irish nationality: 105,000 people, or 2.2 per cent of the total population in 2016, compared to 56,000 (1.2 per cent of the total population) in 2011 (CSO, 2016b).

As the new reality of Ireland as an immigrant-receiving country began to be accepted, there were early efforts to address the experiences of immigrants. The government created a ministerial post with responsibility for integration in 2007. State-sponsored events were organized and brought together policy makers, academics and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to discuss the challenges of immigration and, relatedly, immigrant integration. These events often involved international experts from smaller European countries with a longer experience of immigration such as Denmark and the Netherlands. One high-profile example was a conference held in December 2007, called "Towards an Integrated Society – the chance to get it right." A newspaper report highlighted the conference's key message as follows:

> The chairman of yesterday's opening session, John Haskins of the Office of Integration, said that getting integration right was "a challenge for all" and "not simply a matter for the State." He noted that other countries were still trying to get it right after 40 to 50 years. Yesterday's consultation was about "exploring the idea of getting it right," he said. (McGarry, 2007)

Following this activity, the first government strategy document on integration, *Migration Nation*, was published in May 2008 (Office of the Minister for Integration, 2008). However, early efforts to engage with the impacts of immigration and the challenge of integration were not sustained. The recession in Ireland, which began in 2008, resulted in a prolonged period of austerity, and diverted attention away from immigration and integration. Organizations with a focus on equality and integration experienced significant budget cuts, forced mergers or were closed (Gilmartin, 2015). While four annual reports that measured immigrant integration outcomes were published from 2011 to 2014 (McGinnity et al., 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014), they ceased when the non-governmental organization overseeing their publication, the Integration Centre, merged with another non-governmental organization in 2014. Significantly, the post of Minister for Integration was abolished in January 2011 (Gilmartin, 2015). There was an assumption that, with the recession and the related rise in unemployment, immigrants living in Ireland would leave and no new immigrants would arrive. Instead, attention turned to the significant increase in the numbers of Irish nationals emigrating each year: a number that increased from 12,900 in 2007 to 49,700 in 2012 (CSO [Central Statistics Office], 2012, CSO, 2017).

While policy attention was diverted from immigration and integration in the period of austerity, others continued to highlight the experiences of immigrants and the process of integration. A number of academic publications discussed integration, often from the perspective of lived experience. In their study of African migrants living in the east of Ireland, Maguire and Murphy explicitly challenged "efforts to measure and compare integration," focusing instead on "what integration means for the people involved" (Maguire & Murphy, 2012, p. 3). Their ethnographic approach homed in on specific aspects of everyday life, with chapters on taxi driving and racism, political involvement, religious beliefs and activities, schools and storytelling and beauty pageants. The research was carried out between 2009 and 2011, as the full extent of the recession and austerity unfolded, and they concluded that "integration was never seen as a priority in Ireland, except by immigrants and those most closely associated with immigrants' lives" (2012, p. 139). In the introduction to a book on migrant activism and integration from below, also published in 2012, Lentin insisted "that it is not the Irish state or Irish society but rather migrants themselves who enact their own integration" (Lentin, 2012, p. 6). In order to demonstrate this, the book included chapters on a wide range of migrant-led organizations, such as groups organized by specific national or regional groups or by/for women, and on the role of churches in the process of integration (Lentin & Moreo, 2012). Fanning (2011) approached the question of integration through a focus on social cohesion. In a wide-ranging text, he considered a variety of aspects of the lives of immigrants and non-immigrants, including their experiences of work, education, politics, religion, poverty and neighborhoods. Both theoretically and empirically, Fanning insisted on the need to link integration and social inclusion. As he commented, "much of what works to socially include citizens is likely to further the integration of migrants" (Fanning, 2011, p. 38). And, like Lentin, Fanning concluded that "much of what might be described as integration occurs through the efforts of immigrants themselves to build lives in Ireland" (2011, p. 184). Civil society organizations also engaged – directly and indirectly – with questions of immigrant integration, again often through a focus on everyday experiences. A report commissioned by the Immigrant Council of Ireland considered the experiences of integration of four different nationality groups: Chinese, Indian, Lithuanian and Nigerian (Migration and Citizenship Research Initiative (MCRI), 2008). Using and adapting indicators of integration developed by Ager and Strang (2004), it identified good, though variable, levels of integration across four key indicators: political, economic, social and cultural. This research also concluded that while migrants had:

> achieved noteworthy levels of integration in a relatively short period of time …this is as much a result of their own personal initiative, endeavour and capabilities as it is the result of Irish policy and practice. (MCRI, 2008, p. 22)

Other civil society publications continued to highlight the everyday experiences of immigrants, with a particular focus on work (see, for example, Migrant Rights Centre of Ireland (MRCI), 2006, 2007, 2008, 2012).

Academic and civil society attention to the topic of integration reflected the reality that, contrary to government expectations, many immigrants remained in Ireland and immigration to Ireland continued. Annual levels of immigration increased from a low of 41,800 in 2010 (43 per cent of whom were Irish nationals) to an estimated high of 90,300 in 2018 (31 per cent of whom were Irish nationals) (CSO, 2012, 2020). In the 5-year period from 2015 to 2020, an estimated average of 86,200 people immigrated to Ireland each year. Of this total, 67.6 per cent had a nationality other than Irish, with the majority (33.6 per cent in total) holding a non-EU nationality (CSO, 2020). In response, the post of Minister for Integration was reestablished in 2016, and the second policy document on integration, *The Migrant Integration Strategy*, was published in 2017 (Department of Justice & Equality, 2017). The new Minister announced a range of short-term funding schemes to support integration-related projects, and provided funding to the Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI) to produce a range of reports on immigrant integration. These reports began again in 2016 and, including that year, the ESRI has since published three monitoring reports and four supplementary reports on integration. The monitoring reports emphasize a limited number of measurable integration outcomes, informed by the Zaragoza indicators. Table 1 shows the key measures included across all three reports. In addition, two of the monitoring reports focused on a special topic: immigrant skills and competencies in 2016, and Muslims in Ireland in 2018. The supplementary reports published under this scheme focus on other issues, including an analysis of data availability and gaps (Fahey et al., 2019a); residential distribution of immigrants (Fahey et al., 2019b); the relationship between origin and levels of integration (McGinnity et al., 2020b); and naturalization policies (Groarke et al., 2020).

The monitoring and other reports published by the ESRI, in collaboration with the Department of Justice and Equality, play an important role in the official framing and measurement of immigrant integration in Ireland. The measures that are selected for inclusion represent just four of the five categories proposed by the Zaragoza indicators: the fifth, "Welcoming Society," is not included. Of the four included, many are incomplete versions of the Zaragoza indicators. For example, there are no measures of over-qualification or self-employment in the "Employment" category; there is no consistent measure of highest educational attainment, low achievers or language skills in the "Education" category; and no consistent measure of voter turnout or share

Table 1. Key integration outcomes highlighted in annual monitoring report on integration, 2016, 2018, 2020.

Integration outcome	2016	2018	2020
1. Employment			
Employment rate	✓	✓	✓
Unemployment rate	✓	✓	✓
Activity rate	✓	✓	✓
2. Education			
Share of 25-34 year olds with tertiary education	✓	✓	✓
Share of early leavers from education (20-24)	✓	✓	✓
Mean English reading and mathematics scores for 15 year olds	✓	✓	✓
3. Social Inclusion			
Median net income	✓	✓	✓
At risk of poverty rate	✓	✓	✓
Consistent poverty rate	✓	✓	✓
Population share with self-perceived good or very good health	✓	✓	✓
Proportion of property owners	✓	✓	✓
4. Active Citizenship			
Annual citizenship acquisition rate (non-EEA adults)	✓	✓	✓
Ratio of non-EEA nationals who have acquired citizenship to all non-EEA immigrants	✓	✓	✓
Share of non-EEA immigrants with long-term residence permits	✓	✓	X
Share of immigrants among elected local representatives	✓	✓	✓

Sources: Barrett et al., 2017; McGinnity et al., 2018, 2020a.

of long-term residence in the "Active Citizenship" category. Additionally, none of the proposed new indicators of integration in any of these categories – indicators such as quality of employment, participation in life-long learning, life expectancy, housing cost over-burden or overcrowding, volunteering or trade union membership – are measured. While the included indicators provide a general overview of some key measures of integration, the overall effect of the inclusions and exclusions is to minimize the structural dimensions of immigrant experiences, and to minimize the extent to which integration is a societal rather than an individual responsibility. The *Migrant Integration Strategy* expressly states that integration is "a two-way process [that] involves change for Irish society and institutions" (Department of Justice & Equality, 2017, p. 11), but the measurement of integration outcomes, as reflected in the monitoring reports, does not adequately support this statement or position.

Working together to redefine integration

What would it mean to imagine integration differently? How might we work together to make place through the collaborative redefinition of integration. Between 2017 and 2018, we worked together on a research project funded by the Irish Research Council under their Research for Policy and Society Programme.[1] The aim of the programme is to foster research capacity to address societal challenges, and it funds both projects that are devised by government departments and agencies as well as investigator-devised projects that focus on national challenges. Our research project was investigator-devised, which means that it was not shaped by a government department or agency. However, one of the key criteria under which the project was assessed and ultimately funded was its potential to inform policy and/or practice, so the policy usefulness of the project was a key consideration (Irish Research Council, 2016)

The research project had a number of components. We used existing large-scale data sets – for example the Census – to see if we could measure immigrant integration at scales other than the national. Specifically, we looked at the differences in immigrant integration outcomes for different regions in Ireland and for different immigrant groups, because we felt that existing measures of immigrant integration were not sufficiently nuanced (Gilmartin & Dagg, 2021a). We also investigated the relationship between immigrant integration outcomes and integration processes. In particular, we were interested in uncovering the kinds of settlement services that were offered to immigrants, and whether or not these services addressed aspects of immigrant integration that the measures highlighted as problematic (Gilmartin & Dagg, 2021b). Both of these components of the research explicitly addressed issues of policy and practice. However, our project had two further dimensions. We aimed to work with immigrants and NGOs – in particular, migrant-led and migrant-supporting organizations – to assess the extent to which existing immigrant integration indicators captured the issues that people felt were important in their everyday lives and to develop alternative indicators using existing data sets. And we also wanted to provide immigrants and NGOs with training in how to access, use and analyze existing data sets in order to strengthen their capacity to influence policy and practice.

In this paper, we report on our efforts to co-produce alternative indicators of integration. In order to do this, we organized four workshops: one each on employment, housing, health and civic engagement. We chose these four topics because of their significance to broader quantitative assessments of immigrant integration (employment, housing, health); because of their particular relevance in the Irish context (housing); and because of their potential to expand the representation of immigrant integration (civic engagement). We advertised the workshops widely through personal contacts, organizations, and social media, asking interested people to register in advance. Attendance at the workshops was free, and we provided refreshments to participants. The workshops included the research team (staff and undergraduates), representatives of organizations, researchers and interested members of the public. Organizations represented included migrant-supporting and migrant-led NGOs; public bodies; and NGOs with a general remit (e.g., in relation to young people, education or employment). The migrant-supporting NGOs included

some with a general remit, and some with a specific remit (e.g., refugees), while the migrant-led NGOs included some groups that were ethnically-based, some that were local, and some that were national. The people who took part included non-migrants and migrants with a range of backgrounds, including refugees, asylum seekers, EU migrants, labor migrants, and settled Irish nationals. In this way, the participants in the workshops provided a clear example of making place *with*, as migrants and non-migrants with diverse experiences collaborated to develop a better understanding of what immigrant integration might mean in the Irish context.

To prepare for the workshop, we identified a number of existing large-scale data sets with the potential to provide useful information on these four topics. Details of the data sets are provided in Table 2. The four workshops each maintained a similar format. The participants were split into two groups, each including migrants and non-migrants, and then given three tasks. First, they were asked to identify gaps between the Zaragoza indicators and the national integration indicators used by the ESRI. Second, after discussion of the importance of these gaps, and what issues they thought should be included, key issues were agreed. Third, using these summary key issues, groups were given details of relevant questions from the large datasets listed in Table 2. They were then asked to identify gaps in the survey questions, or to highlight questions that fulfilled the scope of the agreed key issues in relation to the overall workshop topic. The breadth of backgrounds of participants and the workshop format meant that a wide range of issues was considered as the groups sought consensus.

In the employment workshop, there was agreement that the current indicators of integration used in Ireland are limited, and do not adequately capture the specific struggles many migrants face in accessing, maintaining and progressing in decent work. As a consequence, participants decided that key issues for employment indicators in Ireland included understanding the job search experience; assessing the levels of overqualification; the quality of work, which includes opportunities for training and experiences of discrimination; and reasons for leaving employment. Participants in the workshop also highlighted volunteer/non-paid work as an important issue for investigation. Some of these issues have already been highlighted by the Zaragoza indicators,

Table 2. Existing large-scale data sets in Ireland[1].

Data set	Coverage	How immigrant status is/could be identified	Scale for identification of results	Topics covered
Census 2016	Resident population of Ireland	Nationality Place of birth Lived outside Ireland for a year Ethnic/cultural identity	Range of scales from Small Areas to NUTS 3 regions and provinces	Employment Housing Health Civic Engagement
Labor Force Survey (LFS) (previously Quarterly National Household Survey (QNHS))	32,500 households	Nationality Place of birth Lived outside Ireland for a year	Aggregated to NUTS 2 and NUTS 3 regions	Employment Housing
Survey on Income and Living Conditions (SILC)	9,800 households	Nationality Dual citizenship Place of birth	Urban/rural Aggregated to NUTS 3 regions	Employment Housing Health
European Social Survey (ESS)	2,390 approved interviews (response rate 60.7%)	Citizenship Place of birth Parent(s)' country of birth Minority ethnic identity group	Aggregated to NUTS 3 regions	Employment Health Civic Engagement
Healthy Ireland Survey	Wave 1: 13,720 households (response rate 61.2%) Wave 2: 13,720 households (response rate 59.9%)	Ethnic/cultural identity Country of birth	Small Areas aggregated on the basis of levels of deprivation	Employment Health Civic Engagement

[1]Further details are available at www.cso.ie (Census, LFS (QNHS), SILC); https://www.europeansocialsurvey.org/about/country/ireland/ess_ireland.html (ESS in Ireland); and https://www.gov.ie/en/collection/231c02-healthyireland-survey-wave/ (Healthy Ireland Survey) [Accessed 6 February 2020]

but are not yet included in official monitoring in Ireland. In regard to these key issues, the groups highlighted multiple relevant questions across the large data sets that provided information, as well as drawing attention to questions that would require further elaboration for relevance. For example, in relation to assessing the levels of overqualification, groups identified 17 questions across four data sets that already provide information on this issue, and 6 questions that, with further elaboration, could also add to knowledge of levels of overqualification. A question in the Quarterly National Household Survey provides an excellent illustration of existing data on this issue. If respondents indicate that they are looking for a different job, they are asked why; potential responses include "feel your skills/talents are under-utilised at present" (Question 153). Given the extent of existing data on employment from large-scale data sets, it is clearly possible to provide broader insights into the experiences of immigrants in employment in Ireland. The issues and questions identified by participants would provide a more nuanced account of immigrant integration in employment in Ireland, and would highlight the structural barriers to decent work that many immigrants face.

In the health workshop, groups first discussed the limited measures that are included in official monitoring in Ireland. The Zaragoza indicators provide two broad categories of health statistics: self-reported health status (e.g., perceptions of health, activity rate, health-related restrictions) and access to healthcare. Just one topic is included in the annual reports in Ireland: perceptions of health. In contrast, groups identified a wide range of potential issues that could provide insights into health and wellbeing. These included mental health and wellbeing; physical health (including nutrition); environment; access to healthcare (including language); cost of healthcare; social inclusion/exclusion; gender and culture; and discrimination. For example, in relation to the status of a respondent's mental health and wellbeing, participants identified multiple relevant questions across the datasets. The 25 questions identified were concentrated within the Healthy Ireland Survey and the QNHS data, including, for instance, questions about how limited participants feel by their mental health, and about their level of engagement with social groups. Data relating to physical health, nutrition and lifestyle was widely reported throughout the Healthy Ireland Survey, while access to healthcare was primarily addressed within the SILC data. However, some of the issues identified by participants were not adequately captured by existing data sets. Few if any questions directly addressed the experience of discrimination, gender and culture, language accessibility, or the impact of social inclusion/exclusion on a person's health status. Working with participants in this manner thus highlighted ways in which migrant health and healthcare experiences can be better represented using existing data, but also highlighted a range of specific health-related challenges that are experienced by migrants but not always more broadly evident.

The ongoing housing crisis in Ireland framed our third workshop. A wide range of publications highlights the specific difficulties with housing in Ireland, including the decline in the provision of social and affordable housing, the growing reliance on a private rental sector that is lightly regulated, and increased levels of homelessness (see, for example, Byrne & Norris, 2018; Byrne, 2020; Hearne, 2020; Lima, 2020). However, despite this growing attention, the specific experiences of migrants, who are disproportionately housed in the insecure private rental sector, are rarely addressed in this literature (Gilmartin, 2014). The housing indicators captured by both Zaragoza and the ESRI do address some of the specific issues migrants face in Ireland, and include data on housing tenure, overcrowding, and housing conditions. However, participants felt that a range of other issues should also be addressed. These included access to housing, including experiences of discrimination; the cost of housing; the quality of housing; and the location of housing and the consequences of related spatial concentration. Additionally, participants identified a number of other issues of potential significance for migrants in Ireland. These included: homelessness; the relationship between employment and housing tenure; and the relationship between the need for housing assistance payments and access to/quality of available housing. Participants identified a significant number of questions across the data sets that would provide more detailed information on access, quality and cost of housing. However,

data on homelessness, discrimination, the relationship between tenure and employment, and the consequences of spatial concentration was not captured, and workshop participants highlighted these topics as important for understanding the specific obstacles to immigrant integration in Ireland.

The fourth workshop on civic engagement was well attended and included three groups. While discussions of employment, health and housing often focused on identifying and quantifying difficulties, this discussion focused more on the different way immigrants engaged with and contributed to Irish society. When we planned the workshop, we used the term "civic engagement" to capture this, rather than the term "active citizenship," which may have been understood to have a narrower focus on voting. The term civic engagement also touches on issues raised under the "Welcoming Society" indicators. The initial Zaragoza active citizenship indicators included naturalization rate, share of long-term residence, share of elected representatives and voter turnout. The ESRI reports generally include three of these measures, but do not include voter participation. None of the additional indicators, for example participation in voluntary organizations, membership of trade unions or political parties, or political activity, are included in the ESRI reports. The groups discussed at length the importance of key themes that could be included, and produced a long list of indicators that pointed toward a greater understanding of participation in the social, economic, creative and community spheres in which their lives are embedded. For example, this list included many of the additional indicators, such as trade union membership and volunteering. They also identified other indicators that captured the richness of engagement and participation, such as involvement in arts, culture and sport; intercultural activities; religion; education and leadership, to name a few. Similar to the previous workshops, the participants were asked to examine the large datasets to identify questions that could provide data on these key issues. The European Social Survey in particular provided information on many of the issues highlighted; there was less relevant information in the datasets designed in Ireland such as the Census, SILC or the Healthy Ireland Survey. Considering the number of key issues identified in this workshop, the groups were asked to contribute their top questions. The priority questions identified were access and representation within the political system and membership of organizations including trade union membership and community organizations, both of which emphasized engagement and participation. However, participants also highlighted priority questions that identified barriers to civic engagement and participation, which included discrimination, racial attacks and the safety of neighborhoods.

The exercise to co-produce alternative indicators of integration with migrant-led and migrant supporting organizations highlighted the importance of expanding existing immigrant integration indicators to capture the issues that people felt were important in their everyday lives. Across the four workshops shared themes occurred that consider the issue of integration from the perspective and experiences of immigrants. Thematically, these were *access*, *discrimination*, and *representation*. For example, the employment workshop highlighted the barriers immigrants face to access employment that acknowledges their qualification level, while the health workshop illustrated barriers to accessing healthcare relating to language proficiency and accessible information. Similarly, access to quality and affordable housing was of importance, while access to the political system and having an active role in political issues was crucial to those who participated in the civic engagement workshop. Discrimination was discussed as a key theme in each workshop. The participants in all the workshops highlighted the neglect of explicitly addressing this theme within the large datasets. Representation emerged as a key theme across the workshops in relation to indicators that were not included yet data was prevalent within the large datasets. This included, for instance, data on volunteering, gender and culture, the impact of socio-spatial exclusion, and membership of trade unions or community organizations. Discussing integration in this way highlighted barriers to participation that were not adequately captured in existing measures, but also insisted on broadening how integration is understood in the Irish context.

Conclusion

The extensive and growing body of literature on immigrant integration provides some insights into the experiences of immigrants, but is also subject to significant critique. That critique often focuses on how immigrant experiences are treated as in some way separate from the places where immigrants live, with the consequence that immigrants are framed as responsible for their own integration. In this paper, we propose an alternative approach to understanding integration, which focuses on the concept of making place. While many of the current initiatives emphasize making place *for* migrants, whether by developing more inclusive policy approaches, modifying service provision, or inserting a migrant category into broader data collection strategies, we report on a process of making place *with* migrants. We showed how working with migrants and non-migrants to co-produce integration indicators provided new insights into how integration is understood, experienced, and resisted. Our process of co-production shows the act of making place in practice: together, we began to articulate what participation in life in Ireland might mean, and how this in turn might reshape life in Ireland for all residents. Our workshops offer one possible approach to making place discursively, by redefining integration based on lived experience. Other possible approaches could involve local workshops; issue-based workshops; training; or collaborative projects and/or discussions involving migrants and non-migrants – derived from or adapted for different local, regional or national contexts.[2]

Despite the positive experience of the workshops, it has been more difficult to get broader support for a context-specific approach to assessing integration in Ireland. We have shared our findings widely with participants and with public bodies, and sought to influence further policy and practice developments. To date, though, official reports on immigrant integration continue to highlight a limited number of indicators, and pay little attention to a broader understanding of civic engagement or the significance of broader societal attitudes in enabling or limiting migrant participation. However, we are mindful of Doreen Massey's observation that "the challenge of the negotiation of place is shockingly unequal" (2005, p. 165), and argue that we need to continue to negotiate through the act of making place *with*, a process that must be attended to in national as well as local contexts. Making place *with* is an ongoing process of negotiation. As such, rather than resulting in measurable outcomes, it instead creates the conditions where the meaning and measurement of integration can be interrogated and reframed. In this way, attention to the process of making place offers a new perspective on integration, with the potential to invent, again, our understanding of migration and migrant experiences in a broader socio-spatial context.

Notes

1. The project, entitled 'Mapping processes of integration and settlement in contemporary Ireland', received ethical approval from Maynooth University Research Ethics Committee in May 2017 (Reference number SRESC-2017-041). Workshop participants were given an information sheet prior to the workshop. They were not required to sign a consent form, as participation in the workshop was taken as consent. No identifying details about workshop participants are provided.
2. As part of our research project, we also trained NGOs and service providers in using large-scale data sets and visualizing findings. This training offers another approach to making place (see Gilmartin & Dagg, 2018).

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