Immigrant Council of Ireland
Independent Law Centre

GETTING ON:

FROM MIGRATION
TO INTEGRATION
CHINESE, INDIAN, LITHUANIAN, AND
NIGERIAN MIGRANTS' EXPERIENCES
IN IRELAND

About the Authors

Alice Feldman is a lecturer in the School of Sociology and co-director of the Migration and Citizenship Research Initiative at University College Dublin (UCD). Over the past 15 years, her research has addressed the social and policy dynamics of ethnic diversity, migration and social change in local, national and international contexts. She serves in a variety of research and advisory capacities with a number of NGOs and agencies in Ireland involved in interculturalism and integration.

Mary Gilmartin is a lecturer in geography at NUI Maynooth. Since graduating with a PhD in geography from the University of Kentucky, she has taught at universities in the UK and Ireland. Her teaching interests centre on cultural and political geography. Her recent research and publications focus on the geographies of migration, with a particular focus on Ireland.

Steven Loyal is a senior lecturer in the School of Sociology, UCD. His research interests include the sociology of migration; ethno-racial domination; class, stratification and inequality; sociological theory; and the sociology of knowledge.

Bettina Migge received her PhD at Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio, USA in 1998. She is senior lecturer in linguistics in the School of Irish, Celtic Studies, Irish Folklore and Linguistics at UCD. She does research and teaches in the area of sociolinguistics. She has published widely on language contact, language and gender, language and migration, language and education, language description, on the Creoles of Suriname and French Guiana, and on the languages of West Africa.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

FOREWORD

Until very recently, debate about immigration policies in Ireland has focussed on questions of who, how many and what kinds of migrants can come. In Ireland, we are now seeing a shift in the discussion to concerns about how people can 'integrate' into an increasingly diverse Irish society. We are beginning to consider what our integration policies and framework should focus on. We are starting to realise that, when immigrants settle in a country, they have to find opportunities to 'belong' and participate in that country. We realise that this is as true in the practical sense (for example, in relation to employment) as in the social, political, and cultural sense.

The Immigrant Council of Ireland (ICI) has been working directly with migrants in accessing their social and legal rights since our inception. Through our work, we see the barriers that migrants face in relation to economic, social, political and cultural integration in Ireland. We see on a daily basis how our immigration system can assist or prevent a migrant's capacity to integrate or participate in Irish society at varying levels. Last year, 10,000 migrants sought information and support from the ICI. They shared experiences of problems and challenges, arising through navigating Ireland's immigration system. Their experiences show how access to secure residency, access to family life, adequate healthcare, housing, education and employment are so often linked to one's immigration status. Their stories demonstrate how all of these factors can act as barriers or facilitators of integration.

The Irish Government is presently developing an 'integration strategy' for immigrants. It is in this context that the ICI wanted to further explore issues that arise through our services and work in supporting migrant communities. The ICI commissioned this study to further document the immigration and integration experiences of four nationalities, working with members of the Chinese, Indian, Lithuanian and Nigerian communities. We wanted to explore how the immigration experience of the research participants influenced their integration experience. We wanted to look at key indicators for measuring integration internationally and how these could be adapted to the Irish context. We wanted to investigate how these proposed indicators could be measured against the experiences of these key migrant communities living and contributing to Irish society.

In this report, Chinese, Indian, Lithuanian and Nigerian nationals tell their migration stories. We see clearly how their migration experiences and outcomes influence their integration experiences in Irish society. Whilst the stories are different, there are common threads throughout, highlighting key considerations for us in this work in the future. For all of us, the test of the success of Ireland's developing migration system and integration framework will be our cohesiveness as a society, with opportunity for full participation and equal outcomes for all its members. This is the right moment for Ireland to develop comprehensive integration policies and procedures to ensure that the positive migration experience is sustained. Although as a society we are new to the migration

experience, we can benefit from promising practices in countries with a history of migration. To be successful in our integration policies, we must ensure that we take a holistic approach and consider the impact of related immigration and social policies.

The ICI would like to thank the Migration and Citizenship Research Initiative's researchers, the postgraduate researchers, and the community researchers for their work, and the participants who shared their experiences. In conclusion, we invite the Minister for Integration and the Office of the Minister for Integration to consider the findings and recommendations as they develop an integration framework for Ireland.

Denise Charlton   Sr. Stanislaus Kennedy
Chief Executive   Founder and Board Member

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background, Rationale, and Context of Study

This research was commissioned by the Immigrant Council of Ireland (ICI) following a competitive tendering process. The aim of the research was to obtain baseline quantitative information about migrants living in Ireland, to acquire qualitative information about migrant integration and identity formation, and to provide a basis for comparative analysis of migrants' experiences that will inform future policy recommendations.

The ICI selected four migrant groups – Chinese, Indian, Lithuanian, and Nigerian – as a focus for the study. These groups were chosen to provide a broad picture of the diverse nature of migration to Ireland. They generally have different entry routes into Ireland, different legal status, different civic and political entitlements in Ireland, different socio-cultural characteristics, and are differently racialised (Loyal 2003; Joppke 2005). To achieve the research aim, a variety of methods was used, including questionnaire surveys, interviews and focus groups. The research was conducted by an interdisciplinary team of researchers from University College Dublin (UCD), in collaboration with graduate students and community researchers.

Defining the Terms

For the purpose of our study, which is not concerned with internal migration, we use the terms 'migrant' and 'immigrant' interchangeably. A migrant is a person who moves from one country to another, on either a temporary or a permanent basis. An immigrant is more narrowly defined as a person who moves into a specific country, on either a temporary or a permanent basis. In this report, an immigrant is a person who moves to Ireland from another country.

The second key term is 'community'. Broadly speaking, a community is a group of people who share one or more features, such as nationality, religion, language, or place of birth, and tend to interact on the basis of these features (Bell and Newby 1971). One of the aims of the study is to investigate whether or not there are national communities in Ireland. When we use the term 'community', it generally refers to the representatives of the national group, as in 'community representatives'. However, in contrast to popular usage of the term, we were reluctant to use the term 'community' because it implies a level of similarity and unity that may not exist and presupposes what we are investigating. Instead, we generally use the term 'national group' to refer to people with shared nationality.

A third key concept is 'identity formation'. We use this concept to refer to the ways in which migrants in Ireland understand their identity as a consequence of migration, both as individuals and as migrants in Ireland. This concept is central to the notion of integration, which is the key focus of this study.

The fourth key concept is integration. Like all the other terms, integration is a contested concept, open to various conflicting interpretations (Baubock 1994; Loyal 2007). Integration is sometimes used in contrast to assimilation and multiculturalism. At other times, it is used as a generic concept where the latter terms are considered to be variations in the overall process of integration. Within Ireland, two Government reports – *Integration: A Two-Way Process* (1999) and *Planning for Diversity: National Action Plan Against Racism* (2005)–sought to define the term for the Irish context. The first insisted on integration as a two-way

process that involves rights and responsibilities for newcomers as well as the host population. The second defined integration as 'a two way process that places duties and obligations on both cultural and ethnic minorities and the State to create a more inclusive society' (DJELR 2005: 38).

The simplicity of these definitions belies the complex debates about the meaning of the term and its uses in a variety of other national contexts. The meaning of integration can vary between countries, alter over time, and is frequently based on the interests, values, assumptions and perspectives of specific groups involved in the migration process (Favell 1998; Castles *et al* 2002: 112). Thus, many discussions of integration assume that the host society consists of a set of shared and static core values while failing to outline precisely into what migrants are meant to be integrated.

Integration is often described as a process contained within the borders of a state. The goals of the state in relation to integration may include the creation of a society within state borders based on agreed common values, social cohesion and social integration. However, migrants may have a different sense of the meaning of integration, which involves complex transnational links and networks, and may vary over time. Despite claims that integration is a two-way process, there are asymmetric power relations between migrants and the host society that often result in the onus for integration being placed solely on migrants.

Despite these concerns, it is clear that the concept of integration is here to stay. However, in discussing the use of language and concepts, it should be remembered that it is not the term itself which is in question, but what is included within its definition and who gets to define it.

Measuring Integration

Given its complexity, how can integration be best understood and measured? For the purposes of this study, we take the position that integration is best understood and measured at the level of individual experience. In making this assertion, we draw on the work of Castles *et al* (2002: 112-3), who argued that 'a discussion of integration can start with the very general question: how do newcomers to a country become part of society?' By posing this question, Castles highlights the practical issues raised. This includes asking how migrants come to participate in political processes at various levels, how they gain access to employment and education, how they negotiate all the services they need in their new home, and how they build up social and cultural relationships with others in the country (both migrants and the indigenous population).

In posing these questions, it is also important to consider any barriers to full participation based on migrant status, national origins, race, ethnicity, or social and cultural background.

While studies of integration have to begin at the level of individual experience, the process of integration is framed by broader societal structures, beliefs, and barriers that have an impact on the ability of the individual to become part of the host society.

This report focuses on the experiences and attitudes of migrants to Ireland. This is just one aspect to integration. Future research needs to address the experiences and attitudes of the host society. While this report focuses on adults

– a reflection of the relative newness of large-scale migration to Ireland – it is important to also acknowledge the different experiences of children, both first- and second-generation migrants (see Children's Rights Alliance 2006; Irish Refugee Council 2006). Ongoing research at University College Cork focuses primarily on children, and will provide important contributions to this debate (for more information, see ‹http://www.ucc.ie/academic/geography/ pages/migrant_children.htm›, and MacÉinrí and White, forthcoming).

Integration into a new society means talking about access to numerous overlapping spheres, including political, economic, social, and cultural spheres. It also means talking about migrants' interaction with numerous 'significant' sectors in society that will affect their quality of life, such as the labour market, housing, education, health, and social services. It means negotiating relationships with native Irish citizens as well as members of other ethnic backgrounds and taking account that members of the host society are also changing. Finally, it involves a significant subjective dimension – a sense of belonging to a given area of society and of being recognised by others as contributing to society.

In recent years, there have been several attempts to identify and develop indicators that can be used to measure integration, particularly at European level (Ager and Strang 2003, 2004; Entzinger and Biezeveld 2003; Council of Europe 1996; British Council 2007; Spencer and Cooper 2006). While dimensions such as economic, cultural, social, political, legal, and attitudinal are frequently named as key areas, they are often combined in different ways (e.g. 'socio-economic', or 'legal/political' as opposed to just 'political') and involve different combinations of indicators for each area.

Policy researchers agree that there is no 'one' form of measurement, and the links among and between indicators are complex and overlapping. As such, the framework of indicators must be flexible, rather than an attempt to develop a hierarchy of indicators or a 'causal' or linear relationship between specific indicators and integration outcomes. With these issues in mind, we have focused on integration as a process that occurs in the **political, economic, social,** and **cultural** spheres of everyday life.

For the purpose of this study, **political indicators** begin with status upon entry and subsequently. The mode of entry into Ireland constitutes the foundation of the migrant's relationship with Ireland. It shapes the rights and obligations of the migrant, and structures their access to services, resources, and opportunities. The level and type of rights and obligations has an impact on all the other indicators of integration. Since the rights and obligations of migrants often differ significantly from those of the host society, this has implications for the understanding of integration within Irish society. Political indicators also include practical access to services, and political and civic participation.

People's perceptions of their place in the host society are crucially structured by their opportunities for economic participation. This is measured through **economic indicators** of integration. These include migrants' education and employment, prior to and upon arriving in Ireland; experiences finding jobs; recognition of qualifications; income levels; and adequacy. It also includes the extent to which participants felt their personal, professional, and financial status had changed as a result of their employment experiences, as well as their experiences at work, including barriers to full participation and recognition in the workplace.

The development and quality of social relationships has received increasing attention in the integration literature. As such, **social indicators** address questions of 'social bridges' (connections to different communities comprised of other national, ethnic, or religious members), 'social bonds' (the development of a sense of belonging and identification within a particular group or community), and 'social links' (connections with various institutions). These terms are often employed to capture the diversity and complexity of relations within and across migrant and host communities. In particular, social indicators address the nature of relationships that occur in everyday life, and in key spaces of interaction and engagement, such as work, education, housing, and neighbourhoods. Issues of personal safety, experiences of racism and discrimination, and migrants' reflections on the quality of their relationships with Irish people are also addressed.

Cultural indicators focus on national and transnational social networks, and the means to construct and maintain them. This includes the nature of the migrant family in Ireland and beyond, the facilitation of transnational networks, and the role of language and social values in these networks. It also includes reflections on the migrants' place in Ireland, their future plans, and their views on the meaning and nature of Irish society, often constructed as the object of integration.

Finally, it is important to have an end result or 'outcome' of integration towards which to evaluate the measurement of integration indicators. Within the context of a society with a longer experience of substantial migration, the British Home Office has asserted that an individual or group is integrated within a society when they:

1. Achieve public outcomes within employment, housing, education, health, and so on that are equivalent to those achieved within the wider host communities

2. Are socially connected with members of a (national, ethnic, cultural, religious, or other) community with which they identify, with members of other communities, and with relevant functions and services of the state

3. Have sufficient linguistic competence and cultural knowledge, and a sufficient sense of security and stability, to confidently engage with that society in a manner consistent with shared notions of nationhood and citizenship (Ager and Strang 2004: 5)

For the purposes of this study, we focus on points two and three as indicators of integration that emanate from the everyday experiences of migrants in Ireland. While we consider point one to be important, it requires information that is not always available, since data collection processes are struggling to keep pace with the extent of change in migration patterns to and from Ireland. Where available, we have highlighted comparable data on the host population. We have also highlighted barriers to achieving similar outcomes.

In contrast to other studies, this research has combined survey data (to obtain baseline information and explore broad patterns and trends within and across the four migrant groups) with interview and focus group data to examine the ways in which these dimensions play out in migrants' everyday lives. The comparison of this information across the four migrant groups illuminates the complex dynamics of integration in order to inform the development of

integration principles, policies, and practices that address the wide range of diversity among migrant groups.

Methodology

The methodology was underpinned by a strong commitment to participatory research. This recognises that different stakeholders have different contributions to make to the research process and has become an increasingly central issue in migration-related research in Ireland (Feldman 2006a, 2003). To facilitate the contributions of different individuals who possess a variety of skills and expertise, we developed teams for each of the four communities. They were comprised of one lead, one postgraduate, and one community researcher.

We recruited the community researchers from within the national groups and they were the first point of contact with the groups. They were centrally involved in getting people engaged with and supportive of the project and meeting potential informants. They received formal training and practical experience in social research, and worked in collaboration with the postgraduate researchers in administering the surveys and conducting the interviews, under the guidance of the lead researchers.

Throughout the process, a variety of community representatives provided input and guidance into the conduct of the research. Research results were presented to community representatives and groups prior to publication of the report and their comments were incorporated. The researchers and postgraduate students, who carried out the bulk of the fieldwork, were actively involved in the ongoing re-articulation of research processes and goals.

Survey

The aim of the survey was to provide baseline data on political, economic, social, and cultural indicators of integration, and on migration. The survey was framed by a similar survey carried out in the UK and by a range of literature on integration. However, it was considerably altered to reflect the nuances of the Irish context. The survey was designed by the UCD researchers, with assistance and input from other researchers, graduate students, and community researchers.

Following pilot surveys of approximately five people from each national group, the questionnaire was finalised. It took around 45 minutes to administer and consisted of 78 questions, which covered a variety of different topics. A range of question types was used. Graduate students and community researchers received several hours of training in questionnaire design and administration.

The intention was to administer the survey to 100 members from each national group. In the absence of reliable data on the social and economic composition of the four groups, we used purposive sampling to ensure that the surveys represented a diversity of national experiences. In this regard, we paid particular attention to age, gender, length of stay in Ireland, educational qualifications, occupation, and geographical location.

For each of the four groups, roughly half of the surveys were administered in the Dublin area, where these migrants appear to be concentrated. The remaining surveys were administered in urban and rural areas with a significant migrant presence. In the case of Indian nationals, surveys were administered in Donegal and Cork. In the case of Lithuanian nationals, surveys were administered in Cork and Monaghan. For Nigerian nationals, surveys were administered in Waterford

and Cork, while Chinese nationals living in Cork, Galway, Limerick, Wicklow, and Sligo completed the survey.

Interviews

In addition to the focus on obtaining baseline quantitative data on the indicators, the aim of the interviews was to explore the ways in which integration – and the impact of policy and practices – plays out in peoples' everyday lives and personal experiences of migration to Ireland.

In total, 78 in-depth interviews were conducted across the four groups, in addition to numerous informal interviews. All of the interviews were conducted in English. In many cases, there were two interviewers: a researcher from the national group and a graduate or university researcher.

In advance of the interviews, training was provided to the researchers over a number of weeks. Pilot interviews were conducted in conjunction with the university researchers and the conduct of the interviews were analysed by the group. A 'semi-structured' approach was used for the interviews, whereby all participants were asked the same broad questions but the interviewer was able to follow up on stories or events that were unique to a particular interviewee.

Approximately 20 interviews were conducted with members of each national group in a place of the interviewee's choosing. Each interview lasted, on average, one-and-a-half hours.

Participants were recruited through their involvement in the survey and through 'snowball' sampling, whereby researchers identify a range of participants representing as broad a cross-section of the available population as possible. Working through representatives of community organisations and other service providers, personal contacts made during the course of the research, and referrals from survey and interview participants, researchers developed a wide network through which to recruit potential interviewees. From this pool of participants, researchers selected individuals who reflected as diverse a sample as possible in terms of age, circumstances, length of stay in Ireland, and so on. In addition to participants located in Dublin, interviews were conducted with Chinese in Bray, Indians in Donegal, Lithuanians in Cork, and Nigerians in Navan, Drogheda and Kildare.

Focus Groups

Focus groups were organised by the ICI in conjunction with community representatives from the four national groups. The purpose of the focus groups was to gain responses and feedback on preliminary findings, and to explore in further detail any important themes, contradictions or gaps resulting from the analysis of the survey and interview data. Four focus groups were held in November 2007.

Each focus group began with a presentation of key research findings by the university researchers and continued with a discussion of those findings. While there was general agreement with the key findings, relevant points of clarification and contention have been incorporated into the report.

Ethical Considerations

The researchers and research activities are bound by UCD's ethical guidelines ‹http://www.ucd.ie/ofrss/› as well as those underpinning work in the researchers'

individual disciplines (e.g. the guidelines published by the Sociological Association of Ireland). These parameters demand safeguards such as anonymity and confidentiality for research participants, the use of accepted research procedures and methodologies, and the accountability of the researchers in undertaking work that does not 'harm' those participating in it. This included the commitment that the research would not include individuals who were considered vulnerable, such as children or people with language difficulties.

Increasingly, researchers, and the communities that are often involved in their work, have determined that these minimum standards, while important, are not sufficient. They are increasingly demanding the use of more participative and capacity-building focused methodologies, and the development of codes of research practice for use across sectors. This includes a wide range of approaches from including research participants in advisory roles to actively training and employing them, and establishing ongoing organisations or community development structures as part of the research process. This research project provided training and employment for community researchers, actively incorporated community perspectives in the research design and in the final report, and developed strong links with community organisations.

Integration in Ireland: A Summary of Key Findings

Whilst noting that integration is ultimately a two-way process, we have focused on the ways in which migrants have access to and engage with relevant functions and services of the State, achieve necessary economic and material security, are socially connected with members of a community they identify with and others, and have sufficient linguistic and cultural competence and security to confidently engage in the host society in a manner consistent with shared notions of nationhood and citizenship (Ager and Strang 2004)[1]. Four key factors are central to this process (Loyal 2007).

1. The mode of entry and legal status of the migrant (for example, the difference between asylum seekers, labour migrants or EU nationals)

2. The characteristics of the migrant (for example, gender, age, race, education, and language proficiency)

3. The broad conditions of reception in a country (for example, attitudes towards migrants, the extent to which migrants are welcomed, and discrimination)

4. The shape of government policies towards migrants and towards the resident population as a whole (for example, socio-economic and physical infrastructure)

Through examination and analysis of political, economic, social, and cultural indicators of integration, our findings illustrate the ways in which these four areas are linked together through the everyday practices and experiences of migrants. We discuss each of these in turn.

---

1   The Home Office report also suggests that migrants are integrated within a society when they achieve outcomes equivalent to those achieved within the wider host communities. This was not an explicit focus of our research, but is referred to in various places where comparable data are available. This should, however, be the focus of future research

Political Integration

Citizenship is a legal and social status that provides rights and entitlements to individuals and access to a number of resources, as well as demanding obligations from them. Despite increasing talk about globalisation, citizenship as it is conferred through the nation-state continues to be a major determinant in shaping peoples' lives in various societies, including Ireland (Loyal 2003). These rights and resources include: access to social welfare, education, and social services (including the health service); fair treatment in the labour market and workplace; and the right of individuals to vote, have family members live with them and be treated equally and free from discrimination generally. We also noted that, in practice, there is no clear-cut dichotomy between citizens and non-citizens in Western migrant states. Instead, a number of different legal statuses conferring different rights have been assigned to migrants. In investigating political indicators of integration, we paid particular attention to questions of differential rights allotted to migrants and the selective access to resources that ensued from this. The research found that the type of legal status a migrant acquired was crucial for shaping his/her experience of living in Ireland and subsequent level of integration.

Many survey respondents and interviewees indicated their lack of use of State services in Ireland, despite their significant monetary contributions to those services in the form of direct and indirect taxation. This suggests that the view that migrants are a drain on social services is a false one and that, in common with migration processes elsewhere, migrants contribute more than they take in social welfare (Stalker 2001). Many migrants, because of their legal status, are not permitted to claim social welfare. Therefore, a significant safety net that exists for taxpaying Irish citizens, and in a restricted form to EU workers here longer than two years, is unavailable to some EU workers and the majority of migrants, despite the fact that they are all regular tax contributors. When this policy is combined with the work permit/visa system, it means migrants become especially vulnerable to exploitation in the workplace and to falling into poverty.

The issues relating to family and family reunification pose particular and complex problems. Whether this involved bringing parents or a non-EU partner to Ireland on a temporary or permanent basis, family reunification was a recurring concern in the interviews. Bringing one's parents not only offers a network of support within a context where a migrant may feel lonely and isolated, it also functions as a replacement for crèche and childcare facilities that many migrants found unaffordable or difficult to secure. For many, the presence and visits of family are important elements in their lives and play an important role in their perceptions of integration and influence their future plans.

In examining the political and civic participation and activities of migrants, our research found that a large number of migrants displayed a lack of awareness of their right to vote in local and some in European elections in Ireland, again suggesting information failures in this regard. While some migrants are very active in civic and other activities, others report low levels of participation. This reflects broader trends in Irish society, often attributed to the pressures of everyday life (Taskforce on Active Citizenship 2007). Social and cultural background and migration status, as well as the pressure to meet material and family needs, play a significant role in determining the level and intensity of civic and political participation. Nevertheless, some political activities tied to mobilising and creating national communities and representing their interests

have started to emerge. This was noted in the election of two Nigerian nationals to council positions. Moreover, civic participation was also increasing.

All four of the national groups have seen the emergence of national associations involved in social, cultural, political, or religious activities. Many of these organisations provide information in various languages, and some even social support, to their national constituency as a response to Government failure to do so. Most of the organisations mentioned during the course of the research serve as critical links to Irish society through their activities, which promote exchange and opportunities for socialising, celebrating, and learning. These organisations, which depend on high levels of voluntary activity, need funding and a physical infrastructure to operate in order to develop more responsively to the needs of various migrants and on a long-term basis.

A migrant's legal and political status is important because it determines their rights and entitlements, and shapes their subsequent access to resources and services. This manifests itself in their everyday interaction with and dependence on various services including the health service, legal services, and childcare services.

Liberal democratic societies depend on citizens who participate in political and civic activities, including voting in local and European elections, as well as having membership of political parties, trade unions, and migrant-led organisations. We noted that, although the various national groups differed in terms of their political activity and trade union participation, these were, on the whole, quite low. By contrast, civic and community activity, again different according to national origin, has generally been more vibrant and significant for migrants.

Thus, while the mode of entry and legal status of the migrant is crucial in their subsequent integration, these are not the only important explanatory processes that are shaping integration. The broader conditions of reception, such as being made welcome, having access to vital services and benefits, having access to appropriate information services, and guaranteed civic rights are also crucial.

Economic Integration

The majority of migrants coming to Ireland come for economic reasons. Economic factors play an important role in integration and social inclusion. Migrants often move to improve their financial situation and qualifications. Employment provides not only a living income but also a social status, and a means for making social connections and learning about Irish society. Therefore, it provides a central node in facilitating integration and social inclusion.

In relation to economic indicators of integration, we examined educational and employment background, current employment, recognition of qualifications, job satisfaction and treatment at work, income, and living costs. Our research found that many of our survey respondents and interviewees were highly educated and worked in skilled positions before arriving in Ireland. On a positive note, this indicates a significant transfer of human capital resources to Ireland. These migrants may work as employees in Ireland, or they may work as entrepreneurs who create employment opportunities for the host society as well as for other migrants. However, it also points to broader questions of 'brain drain' from other countries.

The routes to Ireland seem to be varied, but many in skilled professions came through employment agencies. Others found jobs though the internet or

newspapers, and still others through word of mouth from family and friends. It is important to note that many were actively encouraged to come by the Irish Government and by employers based in Ireland, often through job or education fairs involving FÁS, large companies, and educational institutions. As such, interviews revealed a range of different treatment and reception strategies, with high-skilled professionals typically benefiting from substantial support from their employers with respect to relocating. This often meant that such migrants could by-pass direct contact with immigration services, which in turn often led to more positive perceptions of Ireland. People who came on their own had limited support in dealing with migration and other services and with Irish society, which often created stress and anxiety. This implies the more structured and helpful the welcome, the more positive the consequent experience.

Employment levels of the migrants were generally very high, although there was some variation between the national groups. Patterns of labour market segmentation were evident with different nationals becoming filtered into certain types of job, such as the growing personal services sector, where wages are relatively low. This can lead to the emergence of stereotypes about migrants and their associations with certain occupations, and may lead to limited contact with Irish workers. It can also contribute to the economic marginalisation of certain migrants (Harris 1995; Stalker 2001; Waldinger 2003). Our research also provided evidence of deskilling and downward occupational mobility for respondents and interviewees within all four national groups – this was particularly acute for Nigerians who came as asylum seekers. Some migrants saw their under-employment as temporary, either as a means to financial or personal improvement, or as a stage to future promotion. However, their willingness to accept their current situation is predicated on an assumption of future mobility.

The future mobility of migrants may not occur for a variety of reasons, but particularly because of workplace practices that are not favourable or inclusive to migrants. For instance, members of all four national groups experienced negative treatment in the workplace, such as discrimination, underpayment, bullying, harassment, and the blocking of promotions. This was particularly raised in relation to migrants whose work permits were held by their employers. In addition, some interviewees suggested that a process by which migrants were being placed in a racial hierarchy seemed to be emerging. Other obstacles included inconsistencies in recognition of qualifications and skills, and the slow pace of promotion for many migrant workers, particularly those in skilled occupations.

Future mobility may also be inhibited by restrictions on the employment opportunities for certain categories of migrants. We also found that many migrants were retraining or obtaining further qualifications in Ireland to enhance their employment prospects. This option may not be available to all migrants because of the prohibitive cost of education and training for non-EU citizens.

Although most migrants commented that their financial situation had improved since arriving in Ireland, living costs were widely identified as a problem. In this way, migrants faced similar pressures and challenges as the local population. Migrants used a range of coping strategies, such as shared accommodation, additional jobs, and restrictions on their spending. However, the difficulty in making ends meet has short- and long-term consequences for integration. In the short term, limited economic means can lead to limited social interaction, thus

restricting the possibility for developing social relationships. In the long term, economic insecurity makes it difficult for people to achieve social stability and personal satisfaction.

There are restrictions on the employment opportunities of migrants. The first restriction relates to status. While EU citizens (other than from Bulgaria and Romania) are free to work in Ireland, this does not apply to other citizens. In this instance, they have to apply for permission to work in Ireland, either through the work permit or green card systems. Student visa holders (with Stamp Two) are permitted to work, but only for 20 hours a week during term time.

The second restriction relates to the recognition of prior learning and qualifications. This is more nebulous, since there are few clear guidelines, and the levels of discretion exercised often lead to unfair or unequal treatment of migrants. This leads to deskilling, as migrants are unable to take up employment in the areas in which they are trained. For many migrants, this means that they have to retrain or obtain further educational qualifications. This is often at high personal and financial cost, particularly for migrants from outside the EU or whose status is uncertain.

There are considerable differences between migrants who are recruited for specific posts and those who travel to Ireland without job offers. On one level, skilled labour migrants are more likely to work in jobs that recognise their qualifications and are given considerably more assistance in moving to Ireland. However, on arrival, many of these skilled labour migrants are hampered in their career progression, which leads to considerable frustration. Those who are not skilled labour migrants face different challenges, particularly in relation to finding work and receiving recognition of experiences. They often take longer to reach a satisfactory career path, but many describe this as a valuable learning experience. The unsatisfactory nature of employment is rationalised as being temporary, or as a means to an end, whether that end is financial or personal. However, there are very real obstacles to full participation in employment for migrants across a range of different social indicators.

Treatment in the workplace also differs according to legal status, occupational sector, national origin, and gender. Many migrants, however, report experiences of discrimination at work, including bullying and harassment, pay and conditions, and promotion opportunities. Those on the work permit system were particularly vulnerable compared to EU and working visa holders, although experiences of discrimination were reported across all status categories.

The cost of living in Ireland is widely perceived as prohibitive, especially for students and households with one income or with irregular sources of income. Migrants use a range of strategies to cope with this, both short term – such as sharing housing or extra jobs – and longer term, such as education. In the most extreme circumstances, migrants leave Ireland because they find it too difficult to live in the State.

Social Integration

In relation to social indicators of integration, we investigated patterns of interaction of migrants with different groups, including family, people from their own country, other migrants, and Irish people, as well as possible barriers to such interaction. In relation to social interaction, research in other contexts has suggested that some migrant groups are socially exclusive, only spending time

with family members and migrants from similar national and social backgrounds. This has often been construed as problematic because of the barriers it may create to full participation in the host society. In addition, a failure to interact on a broad cross-community basis can lead to social exclusion, marginalisation and, when combined with poverty, to the formation of ghettoes.

However, our research found that survey respondents and interviewees interact to a significant extent with family members and people of their own nationality, but not to the exclusion of interacting with others such as migrants from other countries and Irish nationals. Of particular relevance is the high desire that survey respondents and interviewees expressed for more interaction with Irish nationals, although many highlighted the difficulties in getting to know Irish nationals well. In terms of activities, we found that interaction with family members and friends tended to be centred on the more private space of the home, but there was a greater tendency to interact with Irish nationals and work colleagues in more public spaces, such as public houses.

Survey respondents and interviewees highlighted similar obstacles to social interaction to those experienced in the wider society. Interviewees across all four national groups emphasised that the lack of time outside of work, study and family, and often the lack of resources, posed formidable obstacles in developing their social lives. The lack of time referred to by many interviewees may help to explain the high levels of social interaction with people who lived close by. Interviewees with young children faced additional obstacles because of the lack of affordable childcare facilities, often exacerbated by the lack of family support networks. However, issues of language were also important. Most participants recognise that English language skills are essential, not only for being able to effectively engage in interaction with Irish people but also for having the confidence to do so.

Places of work and education emerged as important sites of social interaction and have been highlighted in other contexts as important places for integration. In many ways, our research suggested that these are more significant sites than neighbourhoods and civic organisations, partly because of the limited time people can devote to activities outside work, education, and family. Therefore, it is important to recognise the workplace as a primary place for social interaction and for the development of social bridges. However, not all migrants have access to work (and some experienced discrimination in the workplace) or education, and needed access to other spaces and other forms of interaction.

Social interaction, and thus integration, is enabled in contexts where people feel safe and secure. Our research found that most survey respondents and interviewees felt physically safe where they live, despite their knowledge and experience of threatening acts. However, it is important to note that physical and verbal racism create obstacles to social interaction.

Questions of safety and security relate not just to physical safety but also to household stability. Since most migrants are tenants, they have insecure tenure. This can be socially destabilising and has broader implications for the process of integration into Irish society.

Most importantly, migrants experience the same problems as the wider society in relation to establishing close relationships with their neighbours, either due to having busy lives or the lack of spaces where they live that promote everyday interaction.

As is the case in most receiving societies, the research findings suggest that migrants are most likely to spend time with people in similar situations, namely other migrants from their home country and elsewhere. However, the research also suggests a high level of interaction with the local Irish population and a very high level of desire to increase that interaction. There are obstacles to this interaction, as suggested by research respondents. These include the construction through popular discourses of migrants as temporary, and socially or culturally different. Yet, this research suggests that this is not the case. Migrants participate in the same kinds of social activities as the Irish population and have the same kinds of pressures in their everyday lives.

Work and education are important places of social interaction for migrants, as is the local neighbourhood and community. The workplace is an important place for forming networks of belonging and many migrants are appreciative of the efforts made by their colleagues to include them in social and other activities. However, a variety of obstacles exist. Negative attitudes about migrants, whether expressed openly or covertly, create barriers and make it difficult for people to feel fully accepted. The lack of positive action in the workplace to include migrants, whether structurally or socially, also limits their capacity for integration.

The issue of housing for migrants needs to be urgently addressed. A striking proportion of migrants rent accommodation. This means that migrants are disproportionately affected by the limited legal protection offered to tenants. This also has implications for belonging, for the development of local networks and communities, and for the social cohesion of neighbourhoods where the bulk of housing stock is private rented. Tenants in general have short tenure, with leases frequently covering no more than a year. In the current economic climate, with a predicted downturn in the housing market, the implications for tenants include the sale of the property they live in and unregulated rent increases.

It appears from this research that migrants, particularly visible minorities, in public spaces are experiencing harassment, which is often racially based. This is often the case at night and the perpetrators are often young people. It is important to tackle this issue through education, community and other policing, and clear messages that abusive behaviour cannot be tolerated. Politicians, community leaders, and the Garda must take an urgent lead in this regard.

Overall, there is a clear desire among migrants for social interaction with fellow residents. It is important to facilitate this through the provision of safe public spaces for interaction, such as community centres and playgrounds, and by supporting local festivals and other activities that do not necessarily revolve around the consumption of alcohol. It is also important to realise that broader questions of work-life balance, planning, transport, and housing affect migrants as well as Irish and are crucial in establishing links between them.

Cultural Integration

In relation to cultural indicators of integration, we investigated language use and proficiency, and common values. We looked at the impact that migration has on family structures and networks. We also addressed the question of diversity in Ireland, considering the formation of new communities and issues of acceptance, belonging, and long-term plans. Research in other contexts has suggested that often public debates about migrants focus on cultural differences rather than similarities. In some instances, this is framed in terms of audible or visible

minority status. In other instances, it is focused on the extent to which children of migrants are encouraged to participate in the host society and adopt its norms.

Our research found that there are many cultural similarities between migrants and the host society. The first relates to the importance of family networks. It is clear from our research that separation from family is a source of unhappiness in many cases, but that migrants have found creative ways of overcoming separation by using modern technology to keep in regular contact. This is particularly important in instances where travelling is a problem, for example because of status or because of limited resources. To cope with separation, many migrants are actively involved in creating new support networks in Ireland, through the development of national communities, and work and friendship networks with Irish people and with other migrants, and through the contacts migrant parents make through their children.

The second cultural similarity relates to language. In Ireland, State policy and popular opinion encourages and facilitates bilingualism. Migrants similarly value the ability to communicate in a variety of languages. However, there is no evidence that adult migrants are being encouraged to see the Irish language as a means of communication and integration in Ireland, despite the fact that many of their children are learning it in school.

A third area relates to cultural norms and values. Our research suggested that many migrants have access to learning about Irish cultural norms and values, suggesting a level of integration. However, migrants, in common with many Irish people, express reservations about some of these norms and values. Moreover, while migrants may identify the same values that are also important to Irish people, it is often the differences in cultural practices and attitudes that create the impression that these values differ. For example, while many interviewees enjoy socialising and seek greater interaction with Irish people, they prefer or feel more comfortable doing so in contexts other than those typically associated with Irish life. Others felt that they differed from Irish people in relation to values and norms concerning the family and the raising of children in particular, but often this was due to the fact that many experienced most racial harassment and abuse from youth and teenagers.

There is a level of uncertainty about the future plans of migrants, many of whom find it difficult to imagine Ireland as their permanent home. This is common among migrants in general, and it is also common among highly skilled workers across the world, who increasingly think in terms of global rather than national belonging (see, for example, Ley and Kobayashi 2005).

However, this level of uncertainty should not be understood as a definite plan to return to the country of origin. Research in a variety of contexts has pointed to the inevitability of 'temporary' migration becoming more permanent, as migrants develop a strong attachment to the people and places of the host society. Research has also highlighted the 'myth of return', which functions in many migrant discussions (Sayad, 2004). In an increasingly globalised world, research also points to the need for and necessity of labour mobility, as well as a recognition that migration patterns and behaviour are diverse and complex. However, plans to stay in Ireland also depended on migrants' perceptions of the opportunity to cultivate all the necessities for a full life. Here, constraints in relation to family reunification or more flexibility in terms of visits by family,

the potential for career and economic progression, and acceptance by Irish society all figured prominently in their views of their future here.

Survey respondents and interviewees emphasised the importance of language for interaction and integration. Several highlighted the difficulties encountered in developing language proficiency in Ireland, such as pressures of work, lack of appropriate facilities, age, and difficulties in adapting to Irish-English. At the same time, it needs to be recognised that the desire for integration differs, and many migrants wish to retain a sense of national identity in Ireland, often expressed through language or national community formation. This was a common experience for Irish emigrants in the past and should not be understood as a lack of desire for integration, but rather a recognition of the complexity of relationships of transnational belonging.

Two further points in relation to the issue of belonging emerged as important. First, it is clear that migrant 'communities' in Ireland are evolving; however, it is not at all clear as to what this means on the ground. It is often assumed that national 'communities' are a reality because of the existence of 'community' organisations that target specific national groups. The research reflects the important role these organisations are playing in the integration process overall, but it is important to note that, even though the participants in this study were from the same countries of origin, they are extremely diverse groups, differing across age, ethnicity, language, religion, class, and personal interests. Given these differences, it is not surprising that many migrants have yet to identify strongly with one particular group or may prefer to engage in contexts that are not specific to their national group.

Finally, the ways and extent to which migrants feel a sense of belonging and integration in Ireland is fundamentally linked to their perceptions of Irish attitudes towards them. Thus, while overall views concerning their lives in Ireland are positive, and while many feel that Irish people make them feel welcome, levels of perception regarding the extent to which Irish society is accepting of migrants or of diversity are comparatively low.

It is important to recognise that concepts such as family, transnationalism, culture, and belonging are contested. The nuclear families of migrants are relatively similar to Irish families. Most live in long-term partnerships or marriage and have one to three children, with the possible exception of the Chinese, many of whom are younger people studying in Ireland. However, the level of extended family is relatively low, which creates a range of difficulties. These include the lack of proximate family support and networks, which is particularly problematic for those with young children and/or older parents. This also creates difficulties for those from outside the EU who would like family members to visit for long periods. In many instances, migrants have redefined family to include friends.

The rules for family reunification and temporary visits have a significant impact on the quality of life for the migrant family (including issues relating to the ability to manage childcare needs, the importance of having both parents here for the children, and fulfilling obligations to elderly parents) and, as a result, migrants' capacity to participate fully in Irish life as well as the viability of their plans to stay in Ireland. These basic family needs are seen as being thwarted by a migration system that marks 'the family' as problematic.

However, despite the distances, migrants keep in regular contact with family and

friends through modern technology and visits home. Many, as a consequence, see themselves as belonging to at least two places and feel connected to their home countries as well as Ireland. However, this sense of dual belonging can create tensions as well as opportunities.

New community formation in Ireland appears to be taking place, but this is not at the expense of participation in Irish society. Migrants straddle both, and do so practically and linguistically on a daily basis. The level of multilingualism among migrants is noteworthy, although this does not detract from difficulties faced by some migrants with more a limited proficiency in English. While migrants place a high value on learning English, they also value proficiency in other languages, including those from their home country. It is important that language policy facilitates and celebrates linguistic diversity.

Overall, migrants expressed a high degree of belonging to Irish society. They do not necessarily share the values they identify in Irish society and highlighted a number of differences in the treatment of children, elders, wealth, and consumption. However, many expressed a sense of acceptance by Irish society. Migrants are not necessarily certain about their future plans. Those who are least clear are those with greater mobility, such as highly skilled workers and EU citizens. This is not necessarily specific to Ireland in the contemporary 'age of migration' (Castles and Miller 2003). However, what is specific is the extent to which status affects people's ability to make longer-term plans about where they live.

Migration Status: A Key Factor in Integration in Ireland

These indices of integration provide important insights into the relationship between a variety of factors affecting migrants' lives and their ability to participate in Irish society. Interviewees were at pains to point out that integration is a two-way process. On the one hand, interviewees acknowledged that migration involves hardships and were adamant that it is up to the individual to make integration successful, insisting that migrants have a duty and responsibility to learn about and adapt to Irish society. On the other hand, interviewees also pointed out that the receiving society needs to understand the nature of migration, be aware of its challenges, and accepting of its outcomes. One interviewee pointed out 'That's what it has to be, because integration is a two-way process: you learn from me and I learn from you' (N1).

Our findings indicate that migration status plays a fundamental role in this process. This is in line with recent work where analysts are increasingly identifying legal status as the key determinant of integration (Dayton-Johnson *et al* 2007; Penninx and Martiniello 2004). Status creates a variety of restrictions on decision-making, self-sufficiency, and the capacity of migrants to benefit from basic economic, political, social, and cultural opportunities and services, creating a 'horizon of insecurity and risk' (Breckner 2002: 225). Moreover, the 'systematic prolongation of legal differences between citizens of a state and migrants reinforces social discrimination against the latter' (Hofinger 1996: 23). As such, problems arising from racism and the negative stereotypes, misinformation, and misconceptions regarding migrants, and the practical realities of migration for destination countries – which have also been equally identified as a central factor in the integration process – are directly linked to migration status (Institute for Public Policy Research 2007; Hofinger 1996; Dayton-Johnson *et al* 2007; Penninx and Martiniello 2004).

This dynamic was a recurrent theme throughout the interviews. It is reflected in the fact that even long-term residents felt the level of acceptance of migrants among the wider society is decreasing. Many interviewees identified the growth of a general anti-migrant or anti-foreigner sentiment that does not differentiate between national, ethnic, and cultural differences. One interviewee pointed out the challenges to integration posed by a society that construes migrants in a negative light.

> *'How can you integrate into a society that looks at you with hatred? How can you integrate into a society that looks at you with all kinds of contempt? The Irish would… integrate with us better when they know we're not users'* (N9)

Most interviewees acknowledged that migration results in dilemmas and burdens on the receiving society and are grateful for the many opportunities and quality of life that living in Ireland provides them. Even those who experienced incidents of severe racism and abuse emphasised that migration in Ireland is recent and it will take time for Irish society to adapt. However, many pointed to a fundamental lack of understanding and acceptance of the realities of contemporary migration, which creates the foundation for the racism and xenophobia that many have described during this research.

> *'They don't understand that we are the generation of immigrants here… [T]hey have failed to realise that people have to migrate at some point in time; it's a natural phenomenon… Their way of behaviour depends on their understanding of immigrants'* (N3)

In this respect, many interviewees highlighted the responsibility of the media and the State in encouraging and facilitating integration.

> *'The media and the Government and [their] influence are the big things for the citizens… if the Government gives a negative sign, the citizens will think "no this is not good, foreigners are coming in taking our jobs and then companies pay them less, and then we're losing our jobs". But if Government can give better explanations and education… and explain more, the situation will change'* (C11)

As suggested by one Nigerian interviewee 'The key is Irish society offering reasonable opportunities for integration and employment; if Nigerians are given opportunities, I can see them establishing a respectful community' (N5).

Another interviewee commended the recent appointment of a junior Minister for Integration. 'The new Minister is good for foreigners. Now they realise it's important; foreigners are helping the economy – doctors, professionals – they should tap into it. Like America – foreigners developed the country' (N8). Many hope this appointment signals a wider recognition and valuing of the contribution of migrants to Irish society, upon which a two-way process of integration can be achieved and from which all parties – migrants and the receiving society – are sure to benefit.

Developing an Integration Policy in Ireland

Contemporary Irish society is highly dependent on migrants and benefits considerably from their presence in Ireland. First of all, the Irish economy has expanded considerably in recent years and that expansion has been facilitated by the contribution of migrant labour. Our research supports the findings of many studies that show, without migrant labour, certain sections of the Irish economy

would not function (NESC 2006; Expert Group on Future Skills Needs 2005). In addition to labour, migrants contribute to Irish society through direct and indirect taxation, but make limited demands on the services provided by the Irish State. In general, migrants are young, willing to work hard, highly educated, and skilled. They also contribute significantly to the social and cultural diversity of the country, and add vitality to the places where they live and work. Their presence in Ireland enriches Irish society in financial terms, and in social and cultural terms, particularly through their involvement in activities that are categorised as active citizenship.

Despite the obvious contribution of migrants to Irish society, there are few provisions for their further integration. Too often, migrants are understood as temporary economic units and Irish migration policy has helped to support this view. The implications of an understanding of migration as temporary and of migrants as solely economic actors are highly problematic. Our research shows the complex nature of the interaction between economic, political, social, and cultural aspects of migration and integration, while research in other contexts points out that the notion of temporary migration is often an illusion or 'myth', what Sayad (2004) calls the 'temporary that lasts'.

Integration policy in Ireland, despite claims to the contrary, fails to address the reality of migration to Ireland and of migrants' experiences through concrete measures that would facilitate integration. While there are some provisions made for migrants from outside the EU, migration within the EU receives little or no attention. However, our research shows that EU nationals face similar difficulties to migrants from outside the EU.

In important ways, our research supports the analyses and recommendations made in a number of other reports, particularly the recent NESC (2007) study on migration. It argues that Ireland needs to define its migration policy more broadly and clarify its migration policy in relation to economic and social development, the development of the rule of law, and the promotion of integration. It also argues that Ireland needs a 'whole-of-Government' approach, where social policy responds to the needs of migrants in the context of broader policy goals for society overall. Our study – an examination of the experiences and circumstances promoting and obstructing the process of integration across several national groups – provides an important foundation for developing informed policies and practices necessary for achieving the goals of integration. It creates the basis for identifying:

1. The barriers and obstacles to integration, and means of addressing them

2. Clear and fundamental principles that should underpin and guide the development and implementation of migration and integration policy and practice, which include minimum levels of rights and entitlements for all migrants, while responding to the diversity of migrant circumstances and experiences

3. Strategies for both mainstreaming and equality-proofing, as well as targeting policy responses in relation to integration

In the context of this study, three key principles underpinning the development of integration policy in Ireland emerge. First is the need to understand and respond to the ways in which all four areas of integration – economic, political,

social, and cultural – are linked, along with the inter-relationships between policy and everyday life. For example, as reflected in the findings, the effective recognition of qualifications has an impact on more than just economic levels of integration. It not only has consequences for migrants' capacity to progress their careers but also for access to employment and networking among their peers. It also provides greater financial certainty and security, which in turn affords migrants more time for social activities outside the work and home. Similarly, family reunification not only increases the health and well-being of the family unit. It can provide essential social and economic support for migrant parents to engage fully in work or educational opportunities, social engagements, achieve self-sufficiency, and avoid the poverty or welfare trap.

Second, while recognising that different migrants have different needs and challenges, it is also important to highlight the high levels of similarity between migrants and members of the host society. Both groups face similar challenges in the context of a rapidly changing society: economic pressures, constraints on time, coping with poorly developed infrastructure, and dealing with changing values. Addressing broader questions of social inclusion and exclusion will have positive implications for the whole society, of which migrants are an integral part. Social inclusion requires equality-proofing and mainstreaming services, as well as targeting those groups that are most vulnerable to exclusion in society. However, such policies will remain redundant without a considerable investment of resources to build a solid infrastructure through which they can operate and be implemented. Such social inclusion policies do not only affect migrants but have implications for improving the quality of life and service provision across all segments of society. Moreover, if Ireland is to become a well-functioning, integrated society, resource allocation for these policies needs to take place as a matter of priority, particularly in the context of an imminent economic downturn.

Third, the recognition that migration and integration are linked must underpin efforts to develop integration policy and principles, particularly in terms of the consequences of the multi-tiered system of rights and entitlements linked to differential types of migration status. Policymakers must acknowledge and respond to the realities and outcomes of this situation, particularly as this cuts across all experiences, opportunities, measurements, and outcomes of the integration process as examined in this study. As such, in line with most analysts, we agree that the design and implementation of migration and integration policies must be inter-related. The simplification of status, the clear expression of rights and entitlements linked to status and to residency in Ireland, the issue of family reunification, defined in its broadest sense, along with greater clarity in relation to qualifications and permanent residency criteria are essential steps in this regard.

Migration, in all of its diverse forms, is and will continue to be, a permanent feature of Irish society. Although wide-ranging, complex, and contentious, it is only one of many rapid and profound social and economic changes that are affecting all aspects of Irish society. While often discussed in economic terms and outcomes, migration involves more than labourers and workers. It also includes students, asylum seekers, children, and other family members. These are not simply arbitrary movements and relocations of people.

Migration to Ireland has evolved through long-standing links between Ireland and

other countries, as well as the strategic sourcing of international investment and active recruitment of migrants by the Irish State. Responding to the varied patterns and consequences of contemporary migration is also part of Ireland's responsibility as a new 'global leader'. Importantly, many migrants have made Ireland their homes and have established strong connections to local people and places. Regardless of their plans and circumstances, well-informed and resourced integration policies and practices are essential to ensure the development of a well-integrated, democratic, and diverse society.

The year 2007 has seen the establishment of a junior ministry with responsibility for integration policy and the development of an Irish integration policy is on the agenda. While these are important and positive steps, concerns have been raised that this office lacks adequate funding, administrative standing, and is divorced from more broadly conceived migration policy. Moreover, evermore restrictive migration policies and measures threaten to significantly undermine these advances. Legislation such as the *Employment Permits Bill 2006* and the forthcoming *Immigration and Residence Bill* have proposed surveillance measures for migrants, restrictions on marriage, and have increased funding to monitor migration and border control. This, along with a circumscribed view of migrants solely in terms of the economic skills they can supply, militates against the factors that will promote integration, as highlighted by this research. Such policies will not only actively and explicitly obstruct social integration but, through the omission of policies such as those involving family reunification, have also missed a valuable chance to facilitate the process of integration.

Ireland, with its long history of emigration, has a unique vantage point on migration issues. Irish policymakers could take the route of least resistance and follow established models in EU partner countries. Alternatively, Irish policymakers could draw on the Irish experience and develop an innovative approach to migration and integration that could serve as a model for other countries.

Our research has illustrated that, despite the fact that mass in-migration to Ireland is a comparatively recent phenomenon, migrants have achieved noteworthy levels of integration in a relatively short time. It could be argued, however, that this is as much a result of their own personal initiative, endeavour, and capabilities as it is the result of Irish policy and practice. And, while migrants have demonstrated their willingness to integrate, the research has also shown that integration is not simply a result of migrants' initiatives or 'a matter of time'. For integration to occur, the Irish State and society must also play a central role.

There is now a crucial need for the political vision and resource investment to positively and effectively support this process that is already in motion. Without this, many of the achievements towards integration will be lost, leading to the social exclusion, marginalisation, and political disenfranchisement that has been the fate of other European countries. Our research provides clear signposts to such an innovative approach. We hope that the Irish State and society will respond to this challenge.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

The recommendations that follow draw on extensive research into integration undertaken over a number of years by the ICI. Of particular relevance is the major

study published concurrently with these recommendations, commissioned by the ICI and carried out by an interdisciplinary academic team at UCD, into the experiences of members of four significant migrant communities (Lithuanian, Indian, Chinese, and Nigerian) in Ireland. The ICI also acknowledges the valuable research undertaken by a number of sister organisations and other researchers working with migrants, asylum seekers and refugees.

The ICI welcomes the progress made in Ireland in recent years in addressing the challenges of migration and long-term integration. The ICI's research shows that, for many migrants, the experience of arrival and settlement in Ireland can be very positive. It also suggests, however, that the legal status and experience of the migrant *at the moment of arrival* can often define that individual's subsequent progress in Irish society. Moreover, the experiences of some migrants, including but not confined to those who arrive in difficult legal circumstances, show that there are still considerable shortcomings in legislation, policies, services, and sometimes attitudes.

Looking to the longer term, the ICI is concerned that, as yet, Ireland does not have a robust and comprehensive approach to integration which, while giving due weight to economic and security considerations, above all seeks to manage Ireland's multi-ethnic society in a way that is welcoming and respectful of the rights and entitlements of all, whether newcomer or native-born, while acknowledging the duties and responsibilities of everyone in a shared society.

The recommendations that follow begin with:

- Observations concerning essential preconditions to integration (section two)

- Observations concerning the defining principles of integration (section three)

- Observations concerning the measurement of integration (section four)

- Observations on governance issues (section five)

- General observations concerning the detailed sectoral recommendations (section six)

- Sectoral recommendations, based on the four major domains – the political, economic, social, and cultural – considered in *Getting On* (sections seven to ten). These latter proposals arise, in particular, from detailed fieldwork, which has enabled a more complex and detailed appreciation than heretofore of the lives and needs of migrants in Ireland

- Conclusions (section 11)

Preconditions to Integration

Long-term integration necessarily addresses many policy areas that fall outside the purview of the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform (DJELR). Nevertheless migration (which *is* solely a matter for that Department) and integration cannot be totally separated. Moreover, as has already been pointed out, the circumstances in which migrants and their families migrate into Ireland have a major and, in some respects, determining role in their ultimate integration or marginalisation.

The ICI, in its submission to the Oireachtas Committee on Justice, Equality, Defence and Women's Rights, in relation to the *Immigration, Residence and Protection Bill 2008*, highlights its belief that the rights and entitlements of migrants and their family members to family reunification should be covered in primary legislation, rather that fall under secondary legislation. The ICI argues that family reunification is one of the key markers of integration.

The ICI recommends that:

- there should be transparent, consistent, non-discriminatory, and fair admission procedures. This is not incompatible with a well-managed migration process, an overall cap on numbers, or a planned approach based on labour demand, points-related, or hybrid systems

- pathways to permanence, including permanence for foreign citizens, should be clear, non-discretionary (except in extremely exceptional circumstances) and non-discriminatory. People cannot be expected to commit to a new life in a new country in a whole-hearted, long-term way unless they know such a commitment will be reciprocated by the receiving state and society

- for the same reasons, family reunification arrangements should be clear, non-discretionary and non-discriminatory

Defining Integration

Since its inception, the ICI has been calling for a Ministry of State in the Office of the Taoiseach to oversee the work on issues pertaining to migration and integration. The appointment in 2007 of a Minister of State with Special Responsibility for Integration Policy was a welcome and innovative step. However, much remains to be done in promoting public debate and understanding, and in putting in place the policies and infrastructure needed to build a genuinely integrated society in which rights and responsibilities are defined and protected, respect for diversity is recognised and encouraged, and all members of society feel welcome and accepted on an equal basis.

Integration implies both an over-arching definition and a set of practical measures. The ICI notes that, as yet, there has not been a comprehensive public debate on how integration should be defined, although it welcomes the commitment by the Office of the Minister of State to publish integration principles and to establish a task force, advisory council and, ultimately, a permanent standing structure.

Integration is not to be confused with assimilation, but equally the notion of separate communities, not communicating with or understanding one another, is undesirable. One frequently cited definition of integration in the Irish context is that originally adopted for refugees in the report of *the Interdepartmental Working Group on the Integration of Refugees in Ireland* (1999):

> *'Integration means the ability to participate to the extent that a person needs and wishes in all of the major components of society, without having to relinquish his or her own cultural identity'*

The ICI concurs with the findings in the Getting On report and submits that this definition no longer constitutes an adequate template for the definition of integration. It does not recognise the central roles of government, the statutory

sector and civil society. Moreover, it could be taken to mean that migrants are the only ones who need to make adjustments and that 'society' is a static concept. The ICI believes that integration is ultimately about shared, active citizenship within an extended landscape of civil identity, allowing for the active expression and general acceptance of diversity. While the role of the State is crucial, other actors also play a vital part.

Measures to combat racism and discrimination, as set out, for instance, in the *National Action Plan against Racism* are necessary but not sufficient conditions for the achievement of integration. It is not enough to combat the negative; there is also a need to identify and promote the positive, in an effort to create a society where all may feel 'at home'. In addition to the need for a more effective legislative framework, there is a need for investment to ensure these positive measures are developed and implemented.

Measuring Integration

In measuring integration in practical terms, the ICI broadly endorses the indicators used by the UK Home Office and cited in *Getting On*, to the effect that members of new communities may be said to be integrated when they:

1. Can achieve public outcomes within employment, housing, education, health, and so on that are equivalent to those achieved within the wider host communities

2. Are socially connected with members of a (national, ethnic, cultural, religious, or other) community with which they identify, with members of other communities, and with relevant functions and services of the state

3. Have sufficient linguistic competence and cultural knowledge, and a sufficient sense of security and stability, to confidently engage in that society in a manner consistent with shared notions of nationhood and citizenship (Ager and Strang 2004: 5).

The ICI notes that the development of new and more comprehensive indicators will be necessary if these outcomes are to be measured and monitored accurately and if policy lacunae are to be identified and rectified.

Governance Issues:
Promoting a Process of Integration and Inclusion

The challenge is not just to develop policies with a high level of public acceptability and cross-party support. It also requires the creation of a *process* of consultation that will be widespread, representative, inclusive, and co-owned by civil society. The ICI believes that, necessarily, this process will need to transcend the usual party-political system and address indigenous society as well as new migrants. NGOs have a major role to play but so have other actors – statutory bodies, faith-based organisations, politicians, experts, employers, trade unions, community groups, artists and cultural producers, and the media.

Integration will require better *horizontal* cooperation at national level: in other words, joined-up government. It will also require effective *vertical* cooperation, such as local partnerships based on consultative processes and delivery platforms, which are broadly based and co-owned. Again, the civil society actors already mentioned will be vital.

At a macro level, there is a need for a mechanism, via the taskforce already mentioned or some other means, to manage the process and to build a degree of public participation. The commitment of the Minister to put such a process in place has already been noted. There are a number of precedents to consider. In Ireland, the *Forum on Europe* is an obvious example – a high-profile public chair, secretariat, and travelling road show with key speakers, debates, reports, and website.

The ICI believes that politicians and the political process, in particular, must embrace these debates. It notes that, while there is no ideal model in another state, there are lessons to be learned from the experiences of other countries.

In Britain, the *Report on the Future of Multi-Ethnic Britain* (the so-called 'Parekh Report', after its chairman) was drafted by a group of 23 experts after widespread consultation. It was published by a specialist private foundation, the Runnymede Trust. However, it was subsequently ridiculed by anti-migrant elements of the British media, which chose to see it as 'anti-British' or in some way opposed to 'core' British values. It may be significant that it was not seen to have sufficient high-level political support and that the process was accordingly (mis)represented as controlled by a self-interested liberal clique. There are lessons here for an equivalent Irish process.

In France there is a statutory *Haut Conseil à l'Intégration* (High Council for Integration), composed of not more than 20 eminent persons drawn from various relevant walks of life (such as politics, culture, sport, anti-racism, education, the NGO sector, the public service, and the media). It has a strong and independent secretariat with its own internal experts (usually seconded from other places), a rolling programme of public meetings, a series of annual reports and special reports, and the right to make proposals and observations on legislation and policy.

As in the case of the French *Haut Conseil à l'Intégration* and its Portuguese equivalent *Alto Commissariado para a imigração e Minorias Étnicas- ACIDI* (High Commission for Immigration and Ethnic Minorities), the ICI recommends that an appropriate organisation should ultimately be established on a statutory basis, with independent status and staff, and defined powers, such as those set out for the Irish Human Rights Commission. The ICI is involved in a transnational initiative looking at the concept of delivery of public services to migrants in a one-stop-shop setting. The set up of ACIDI in Portugal highlights the benefits of developing a partnership between the statutory agencies and civil society in delivering services to migrants in a culturally appropriate environment.

Detailed Sectoral Recommendations – Preliminary Remarks

In developing a set of specific recommendations concerning integration, the ICI endorses the views of *Getting On*, which identifies four factors particularly relevant to migrant integration. These are:

1. The mode of entry and legal status of the migrant (for example, the difference between asylum seekers, labour migrants, or EU nationals)

2. The characteristics of the migrant (for example, gender, age, race, education, language proficiency, and length of time in a country)

3. The broad conditions of reception in a country (for example, attitudes

towards migrants, the extent to which migrants are welcomed, and discrimination)

4. The shape of government policies towards migrants and towards the resident population as a whole (for example, socio-economic and physical infrastructure)

The ICI also believes that, in formulating appropriate recommendations, it is important not to view migrants as a separate category from the rest of society. As has been seen, the term 'integration' is a difficult one, and the goals, principles, and practices associated with it are also applicable in certain respects to socially excluded non-migrants (for instance, the low paid, women, Travellers, and persons with disabilities).

Migrants share a great deal in common with Irish citizens. Therefore, policies aimed at integrating them should be linked to general policies of social inclusion and equality affecting the population as a whole. Thus, a well-resourced health service, affordable housing, well-resourced schools, affordable childcare and crèche facilities, and inclusive training and employment policies are issues that not only affect migrants and their integration but the population as a whole.

Nevertheless, as the study shows, migrants also have a number of specific needs in addition to those of other marginalised persons within the general population. These must also be recognised. Services in sectors such as health and education need to be delivered in a culturally appropriate way. Issues of racism and discrimination, which cut across these services – in housing, the workplace, State services, and in public space generally – need to be addressed. Integration policy must also address specific issues, such as language provision and the recognition of qualifications, which we know from the research can pose significant barriers to integration.

The challenge is to adopt integration goals and mechanisms that combine existing mainstream policy regimes and infrastructures, such as social inclusion, community development, and anti-poverty action programmes, with effective targeted initiatives aimed specifically at migrants.

The ICI recognises that integration is indeed a two-way process. Moreover, membership of a society, provided it is offered on an inclusive and egalitarian basis, entails an active commitment on both sides, with responsibilities as well as rights falling on all parties.

Political and Legal Rights and Entitlements
Recommendation 1
Implement clear, consistent, rights-based, long-term migration and integration policies.

The ongoing reality of migration means that the formulation of Irish migration and integration policy must be consistent, long-term and rights based, instead of being excessively complex, sometimes contradictory, short-term, ad hoc, and disproportionately influenced by security and economic concerns. The ICI proposes a comprehensive long-term migration policy that, above all, sees an enlightened and welcoming approach as an investment in the future of Irish society, while striking an appropriate balance between migrant rights, economic considerations, and security concerns.

Recommendation 2

Enhance the rights of all non-EU migrants.

The ICI supports the general principle that non-EU nationals should be given similar rights to EU workers within a reasonable period of time. A non-exhaustive list of such rights includes access to education and training at all levels, welfare allowances, housing, health, and pension and other State benefits.

The ICI notes that, in common with the UK, Ireland has not adopted Council Directive 2003/86/EC on the right to family reunification and Council Directive 2003/109/EC of 25 November 2003 concerning the status of third-country nationals who are long-term residents. While it recognises that both directives are weak in terms of the rights and entitlements for which they provide, it is nonetheless to be regretted that Ireland continues to avail of its Treaty of Amsterdam derogation to opt out of developing EU policy in those domains where such policy endeavours to adopt a rights-based and non-discretionary approach. The ICI believes that Ireland should be to the forefront in proposing a forward-looking and progressive approach. As an emigrant nation for centuries, it behoves Ireland to be particularly sensitive to the challenges facing migrants in new societies.

Recommendation 3

Establish a clear set of core rights and entitlements for both green card permit holders and employment permit holders.

Getting On has demonstrated how migration policy, especially in the manner in which it confers differential legal and political statuses and social and political entitlements, determines and shapes the subsequent level and degree of a migrant's integration: access to social welfare, education, fair treatment in the labour market and workplace, and social services including the health service, as well as the right of individuals to vote, have family members live with them, and to be treated equally, free from racism and discrimination.

The ICI accepts that Ireland is in competition with other states to attract people with certain types of skills in high demand. In such cases, additional incentives may be appropriate to attract people who might otherwise go to countries offering more attractive terms and conditions. However, the ICI proposes that there should be a clear policy concerning core rights, entitlements, and protections that should be available to all non-EU migrants irrespective of status.

Recommendation 4

Fund and democratise integration policy.

The appointment of a new Minister of State with Special Responsibility for Integration Policy is a useful and welcome step. However, for the work of this office to be effective in the development and implementation of an integration policy, the ICI believes that (a) adequate funding must now be made available; (b) a new process of inclusive consultation is needed, including co-ownership by migrant representative organisations, NGOs active in this sector (including those representing marginalised members of the host society), and other significant actors within civil society; and (c) the Minister with responsibility for this area must have a coordinating role with all relevant departments and should ideally have a seat at cabinet.

Recommendation 5

Ensure that integration policy, equality-proofing, and social inclusion take place at all levels.

Integration is local as well as national. The ICI advocates an 'integration-proofing' strategy to ensure that Government departments, local authorities, other statutory agencies, and the community and voluntary sectors are all aware of the need to address integration issues at every level. Several models of good practice have already been developed in related policy areas, notably the equality-proofing and gender-proofing strategies of the Equality Authority and the Gender Proofing Initiative Advisory Group of the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform.

The ICI advocates an all-island approach, where experience and expertise from both jurisdictions can be used to develop mainstream initiatives. The ICI argues that provisions similar to the provisions under section *75 Northern Ireland Act 1998* should be introduced in the Republic of Ireland. Such provisions would set up benchmarks that could be used in assessing the success of migrants' integration in the society.

Recommendation 6

Provide comprehensive anti-racism training and continuing information training for frontline service providers and improve frontline service provision.

The first encounter of migrants with State services should be a positive one. The report highlights the encounters of many migrants, who experience frustration, prejudice, and sometimes discrimination. This occasionally results from contradictory information and inadequate or unhelpful information provision. Therefore, it is important to provide frontline service providers with anti-racism training and clear policy guidelines.

Getting On highlights the cost of the administration of immigration services. Most migrants have to take a full day off work to get a visa stamp. This results in loss of earnings and stress. In addition, a charge of €100 for a Garda National Immigration Bureau stamp, introduced in 2005, is extremely high. In particular, it is inordinately costly for a family of non-EU migrants to have to pay this every year. In the case of a person on a two-year work visa, there is no reason why a once-off payment instead of an annual one could not be made.

The ICI notes that, while information provision using new technologies, especially the internet, has improved considerably in recent years, such information is not always provided in a user-friendly way. Moreover, a better level of person-to-person service to complement the use of such technologies would be helpful. Information provision by telephone is particularly poor, with certain offices taking unacceptably long periods of time to contact.

Recommendation 7

Provide for a clearly outlined system of residency-based rights that allows access to State services.

Migrants pay more in taxes then they receive in welfare. While the ICI welcomes changes introduced in the operation of the habitual residence clause, situations can still arise where migrant workers, through no fault of their own, find themselves suffering hardship. Moreover, even in those cases that are well

founded, many migrants have experienced unwarranted delays of several weeks before receiving any benefit. One reason for this may be the very centralised way in which such claims are processed. The ICI recommends a decentralised approach and a maximum turnaround time for dealing with claims.

Recommendation 8

Make health services diversity-friendly and take account of migrant needs.

In Section 6(2) of the *Immigration, Residence and Protection Bill, 2008*, certain exceptions from the limitation of access to benefits and services are provided for, for example to allow access to 'essential medical treatment'. The ICI is concerned that medical personnel working within the HSE will be forced to assume the role of migration officer before agreeing to provide treatment to migrants. The ICI calls on the Government to respect all migrants' rights to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health in accordance with Article 12.1 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESC) irrespective of their migration status. It is the view of the ICI that the legislation needs to specify what constitutes 'essential medical treatment' and recommends, at the very least, that the term be defined to include: *preventive, curative, rehabilitative health services, essential drugs, and appropriate mental health treatments.*

The ICI welcomes the HSE's Intercultural Health Strategy, which was launched in February 2008. It calls for adequate funding to enable the detailed proposals in the strategy to be rolled out as a matter of urgency. The ICI welcomes the consultation process used in the development of the strategy and hopes that other statutory agencies will follow suit in developing their strategies in the future.

Recommendation 9

Ensure migrants are able to participate in representative democracy.

The ICI commends Ireland's liberal arrangements concerning the right of foreigners to vote in, and stand for, local elections. Evidence from other countries suggests that political participation is a powerful means of promoting integration and a sense of belonging in society.

The level of awareness of their political rights at local level (and at European election level for EU migrants) is not high among migrants. The ICI advocates the provision of the necessary resources for information campaigns and voter registration drives. Much of this work might be most effectively carried out by the community and voluntary sector, notably by migrant-led media and organisations, that know how to target their audiences.

Recommendation 10

Provide information on trade unions to enhance worker protection.

Getting On shows that trade union membership for migrants is generally low. Social and community organisations, the Government (in the context of its social partnership programme), NGOs, and especially trades unions themselves need to make migrants aware of trade unions and their activities in order to provide a means of enhancing their protection in the workplace. The ICI notes that the trade unions in Ireland have established links with trade unions in sending countries and some have recruited organisers from migrant backgrounds. The ICI

commends these developments and encourages the continuation and enhancement of these efforts by trade unions in reaching out to migrant workers through community-based channels and through the appointment of staff reflecting a range of ethnic and linguistic backgrounds.

Recommendation 11
Encourage active citizenship.

The ICI notes that the work of the Task Force on Active Citizenship does address the role of migrants in society, notably in a section entitled 'Ethnic and Cultural Diversity and the Challenge of Engaging Newcomers' in its most recent annual report, as well as in such initiatives as the research commissioned on faith-based communities. However, the ICI would like to see a greater emphasis on targeted initiatives aimed at the specific inclusion of migrants in its programmes and activities. It also notes that the task force membership does not include any migrant representatives or organisations working with migrants.

The ICI believes that initiatives to encourage active citizenship at local level (for example through community policing fora, area-based partnerships, community development projects, and boards such as RAPID) should encourage active local involvement of persons from a migrant background.

The ICI also recognises that the community and voluntary sector has a major role to play in reaching out to new members of society, and in facilitating and encouraging their participation. The ICI notes that most of the services run voluntarily by the community and aimed at facilitating migrants' integration are not properly resourced and have yet to attract mainstream funding. Successful integration requires active participation of all stakeholders; civil society is one of the key stakeholders and all efforts should be made to support and facilitate the active engagement of the civil society.

Recommendation 12
Provide support to migrant-led organisations to build community support structures.

The NGO sector working with migrants is relatively new and severely under-resourced. Particular difficulties are experienced by migrant and ethnic-led organisations (MELOs). Moreover, while a small number of national level NGOs have emerged, local networks are scattered and fragmented, and frequently have no resources. Many migrant workers and their families, notably those working in low-wage jobs away from major urban centres, have no access to such organisations, compounding feelings of isolation.

The ICI does not believe that a strategy of integration is in any way compromised by better support for MELOs. Providing spaces for people to express their cultural needs is one way of fostering a more general feeling of belonging in a society that wants to welcome them while respecting and facilitating those needs.

Grants providing core funding aimed at facilitating the formation of migrant-led and migrant support organisations should be introduced, while innovative ways of facilitating the establishment of such organisations, including the sharing of physical infrastructure and administrative expertise, should be explored.

Recommendation 13

Address the situation of undocumented migrants.

Some migrant workers have become undocumented because of exploitation, which has left them in a vulnerable position. Now, under the proposed *Immigration, Residence and Protection Bill,* their situation could become immeasurably more difficult as anyone without appropriate valid documentation may be liable to be regarded as automatically committing a criminal offence and subject to summary detention and removal.

The ICI is concerned that the abolition of the Section Three process (established in the *Immigration Act, 1999* as amended) and the introduction of summary deportations (The *Immigration, Residence and Protection Bill, 2008* – as currently drafted) will prevent migrants in an irregular migration situation from being able to access voluntary return programmes carried out by organisations such as the International Organisation for Migration (IOM). Without adequate time to consider voluntary return and for the IOM to make the relevant arrangements, the State will find itself in a situation where more and more deportations will be carried out unnecessarily, at a high cost to the Exchequer.

Recommendation 14

Paths to citizenship and long-term residence should be made easier.

There can be few more fundamental indicators of a commitment to integration and a desire for a permanent engagement with Irish society than a decision to apply for Irish citizenship. Citizenship is currently granted at the discretion of the Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform. Moreover, inordinate delays of two or more years have become the norm. This is in addition to the required five years of residence to meet the criteria to apply for naturalisation. The ICI calls for a streamlined procedure, which should, in all but the most exceptional circumstances, be non-discretionary.

There will always be those for whom citizenship is not an option (e.g. where their country of origin forbids dual citizenship and/or where the loss of the original citizenship may entail the loss of significant rights in the country of origin). Again, the system put in place should be based on the simple recognition that the State cannot expect a migrant to commit to a future in Irish society unless, in turn, it is prepared to make a commensurate commitment on its side. This must include the option of permanence, not a limited and contingent presence.

The ICI is disappointed that the Government does not intend to introduce a right to truly permanent residence after five years in the *Immigration, Residence and Protection Bill, 2008,* a commonly accepted practice in other EU member states (Ireland has not opted into the Council Directive 2003/109/EC of 25 November 2003 concerning the status of third-country nationals who are long-term residents). Instead, a person who has been granted long-term residence status, which will be valid for five years only, will have to apply for the renewal of his/her permit and will have that permit renewed 'on conditions'.

Economic

Recommendation 15

Allow all migrants and legal residents access to employment support services such as FÁS.

Research aimed at exploring the experiences of migrants in the workplace, including *Getting On,* consistently shows that many migrants are doing work that is not commensurate with their qualifications and previous experience. This is likely to have many negative effects, as families continue to be caught in a poverty trap and experience greater difficulties integrating into mainstream society. It is also likely to compound workplace dissatisfaction and high job turnover, as well as generating inherent economic inefficiencies in failing to maximise the human talent in the workforce.

The ICI calls for a series of targeted initiatives in support of those experiencing such difficulties. In particular, FÁS may need to expand its service to include support programmes more specifically designed for migrants who have been in the country for some time and who are in difficulty because of a lack of recognition of qualifications, contract positions that have been terminated, and other similar situations. Such services could also target the families of migrant workers who may wish to enter the Irish labour market.

Finally, although the work of the National Qualifications Authority of Ireland (NQAI) is progressing on the recognition of qualifications, the ICI believes that NQAI should be better resourced and that its work should be speeded up. The ICI argues that education providers should endeavour to put in place refresher courses to help migrants adjust their skills to the Irish labour market.

Recommendation 16

Equalise employment rights and entitlements for spouses of green card permit workers.

The *Getting On* report highlights the difficulties experienced by spouses in their effort to acquire the spousal work permit. Although the spousal visa scheme is welcome, there is evidence to suggest that it is overly bureaucratic. Spouses of green card permit holders need to be able to work immediately and not wait two months for their application for a work permit to be processed.

Spouses of ordinary employment permit holders should also have a non-discretionary right to seek work on the Irish labour market within a reasonable time period. The ICI proposes a maximum waiting period of three months, except in the case of non-renewable employment permits.

Recommendation 17

Enhance the protection of migrants by providing them with comprehensive information on their legal and social rights, working rights, entitlements, and services.

Migrants, as demonstrated by the *Feminisation of Migration Report* (ICI 2007), as well as feeling structurally vulnerable because of their precarious social position in the workplace and their migrant status, can also lack information about the minimum wage or agreed rates of pay for jobs, as well as other rights and entitlements, notably mechanisms for seeking redress in the event of

exploitation or ill-treatment. These should be supplied, wherever possible, in all the requisite languages. Migrants should be able to access information about their rights, entitlements, and obligations, before they leave their country and when they arrive. Schemes such as the FAS booklet *Know before you Go* are illustrative of this.

The ICI also recommends that coordinated approaches to ensure comprehensive information provision on workplace access, rights, entitlements, and services be provided at local level through more effective cooperation between the statutory and voluntary sectors. Such information provision should be resourced as part of a comprehensive local integration strategy. It should be complemented by comprehensive translation and interpretation facilities.

The ICI notes the need to explore learning from the Portuguese model of one-stop-shops, which is underpinned by a partnership between the public sector and civil society. The socio-cultural mediators play a key role in helping the migrants to access public services. The ICI firmly believes that access to information in an accessible format, language, and culturally appropriate environment is pivotal in migrants' integration in a new society. The ICI urges policy makers to explore the possibilities of developing an Irish version of the one-stop-shop.

The ICI welcomes the establishment of the National Employment Rights Authority (NERA) as a significant step forward in protecting the rights of all workers, including migrant workers. It calls for effective action against rogue employers and notes that, to date, few charges have been brought, even in cases of blatant exploitation and abuse. The ICI notes that migrant workers are particularly vulnerable to exploitation because of a fear that their employment and residence rights in Ireland may be affected if they come forward or contact a union. The ICI argues that migrant workers should have access to information about their rights and obligations in an accessible language at the earliest opportunity. Information provision should be ongoing and NERA and other services should ensure that all the stakeholders abide by the provision of the employment legislation.

Recommendation 18
Monitor the employment uptake of migrant women.

International trends in the feminisation of migration, combined with the increasingly marginal workplace conditions experienced by women (notably in certain less-skilled occupations and sectors such as domestic service and care assistance), can give rise to situations of systematic and chronic structural discrimination. Such women are in a particularly vulnerable position. The ICI calls for specific monitoring mechanisms for those in the most marginal sectors to ensure that they are treated according to principles of equality and fairness. The ICI also calls for the extension of the full range of workplace protection legislation to all migrant workers, irrespective of their place of work.

Recommendation 19
Provide easier access to education.

Schools are in the frontline of the integration process. The ICI appreciates the role of faith-based schools in welcoming migrant children from a range of faiths and none. Nonetheless, it is clear that the *Education Act 1998,* which effectively provides schools with derogation from the normal provisions of equality legislation in matters of teacher recruitment, admissions policies and the school

ethos, urgently needs to be re-visited if the groundwork is to be laid for a genuinely inclusive school system.

The ICI acknowledges that faith-based schools and authorities have themselves begun to address this challenge, sometimes in innovative and exciting ways, but it is concerned about the impact of recent poor planning by the State and the implications of this. All too often, issues concerning integration have been left almost wholly (with the exception of the provision of limited support for pupils whose first language is not English) to the schools themselves and to their teachers and parents.

Evidence from other countries strongly suggests that, if the children of migrants are not enabled to participate fully and on equal terms with other children in schools that offer a curriculum respectful of diversity as well as an egalitarian and dynamic environment, there must be a risk of subsequent social exclusion and marginalisation. The ICI calls for dialogue on this question with a view to developing a new and more flexible approach to governance, access, curriculum, and intercultural issues in primary schools, secondary schools and third-level education, as a major path to facilitating migrant integration.

At third level, there are specific additional issues to be addressed, notably the recognition of prior qualifications and prior learning. There is also an urgent need for a review of the fee structures for non-EEA students, which are preventing many from entering third-level education to enhance their skills and contribute to the Irish economy. Finally, universities and other third-level institutions should be required to introduce comprehensive diversity awareness programmes.

Social

Recommendation 20

Support and resource local integration plans.

The ICI calls for adequate funding for community-based initiatives that encourage interaction at a local level and mainstreaming of issues relating to integration and social inclusion in planning and development at local level.

Recommendation 21

Improve anti-racist legislation.

It has been noted that legal status has a strong influence on integration. However, even those with full civil rights can be excluded if racism exists, as the case of Travellers living in Ireland shows. There is an urgent need to enhance efforts to combat racism, and to accommodate and actively promote cultural diversity in Ireland.

Although the Government's *National Action Plan Against Racism* has been under way for some time, and the *Prohibition of Incitement to Racial Hatred Act* has been in place since 1989, there is a stronger need to make racism a legal offence and socially unacceptable. The ICI notes that, although the 1989 Act has proved in practice to be extremely ineffectual, a promised reform of the legislation has not taken place. The ICI calls for a review of the *Prohibition of Incitement to Racial Hatred Act, 1989* without delay.

The ICI also calls for the development of ethical standards for reporting on migrants and their activities. Biased or inappropriately negative reporting can

lead to negative feelings among the host society: an appropriate code of standards would go some way towards addressing this situation.

Recommendation 22
Provide information on migrants and their contribution to Irish society.

More resources are needed to mount effective information campaigns about migrants, challenging myths of misinformation, and recognising and celebrating their contribution to Irish society. There is also a need for leadership from politicians, schools, churches, and community leaders in this regard.

The ICI has been calling for the establishment of reliable mechanisms to collate data on migration flows. In the opinion of the ICI, the establishment of an observatory to monitor the migration flows and carry out or commission ongoing research on the settlement patterns of the migrants would be a first step in developing mechanisms to collate migration data. Availability of reliable data would, in the ICI's opinion, help raise awareness on migration and diversity in Ireland.

Recommendation 23
Improve access to low-cost housing and the regulation of the private housing sector.

Housing waiting lists continue to be very long in all Irish local authorities. In view of the overall shortage of public, social, and affordable housing, there is a danger of increasing social tensions as socially excluded Irish, and migrant individuals and families, experience increasing difficulties in securing accommodation. The ICI calls for an effective, strategic, housing policy, using a mix of public and affordable housing, combined with stricter regulation of the private rented sector and greater tenant protection than that offered by current legislation. It notes than many private landlords have still not registered their properties, although required by law to do so, and calls for a more streamlined system and effective enforcement.

The ICI notes the anecdotal evidence of the emergence of migrant clusters. While this may be reasonable in the short term, all the stakeholders have to make an effort to ensure that the clusters don't turn into future ghettos.

Culture
Recommendation 24
Provide inexpensive and accessible language classes.

Getting On clearly bears out the central importance to migrants of a knowledge of English, the daily vernacular of most parts of Ireland. The ICI has already noted in On Speaking Terms (ICI 2007) that, despite some excellent provision, facilities to enable adults to acquire a knowledge of English are seriously inadequate. The ICI believes that incentives, rather than compulsion, should be the preferred route. Moreover, it is in the interest of society as a whole, as well as that of migrants and their employers, to encourage the learning of English so that migrants do not become marginalised and ghettoised over time, as has happened in other countries.

There is an urgent need for the development of modularised training that is culturally appropriate, standards based and offered on several levels:

1. Integration and citizenship
2. Written and oral language skills
3. English for job seekers

The ICI believes the Government should establish a central agency to tender out course provision so that a wide range of needs can be met from courses for people with little or no English through to introductory courses for people who have English language skills but would benefit from learning more about Irish society. Such programmes should be delivered through a variety of platforms, using the VEC system, private service providers, broadcast and online media, and other channels.

Recommendation 25
Recognise and support Ireland's multilingual society.

The ICI believes it is time to initiate a debate on linguistic diversity and on the positive effects of such diversity if it is well managed. Language is a core element in the expression and preservation of cultural identity. The ICI welcomes and supports a policy of encouraging migrants to learn English as the *lingua franca* and second official language of the country, provided the means for acquiring an adequate knowledge of the language are made available. However, there also needs to be a recognition and positive validation of multilingualism, including the special place of the Irish language, in all sectors of life including the workplace and the community.

The position of the Irish language is unusual in international terms as it is not widely spoken as a daily vernacular but is a compulsory subject in the educational system and constitutes an essential entry criterion for a wide range of teaching and public service positions. The ICI supports the principle that the public service and teaching professions should, in general, reflect the diversity of the community they serve. It calls for innovative approaches designed to support the preservation and use of Irish while making it possible to achieve this aim.

Recommendation 26
Improve provision of community childcare services.

The *Getting On* report highlights the gaps in childcare provisions in Ireland; the experiences of the migrants are therefore not unique as such. Greater support for a variety of childcare services and crèche facilities is needed as it functions as a crucial element in a child's integration process and will enable parents to integrate into society by allowing spouses to work and avoid suffering from isolation in the home.

Recommendation 27
Provide statutory, non-discretionary and transparent family reunification for all migrants and legal residents.

The family remains the cornerstone of life for most people in all cultures. Migrants cannot seriously contemplate a long-term commitment to a new society if they are prevented from having family members join them or if such arrangements are the subject of unreasonable delays and an excessive degree of discretion. There also needs to be a simplification of criteria and procedures for temporary and permanent family reunification.

The ICI notes with regret that the Government has not dealt with family reunification in the proposed *Immigration, Residence and Protection Bill, 2008*. Such a key policy area should be dealt with by way of primary legislation.

The ICI also advocates that the definition of the family should be extended to include, in certain circumstances, adult children and parents; in many cultures such family arrangements are the norm rather than the exception. Moreover, other persons in long-term relationships, including same-sex couples, should also be brought within the scope of the legislation.

Concluding Remarks

Predicting migration flows is not an exact science. Already, as conditions in new EU accession states improve, some migrant workers are returning home and fewer people are expected to arrive here. However, even if the overall numbers fall, it is evident that net in-migration to Ireland is likely to continue and that many migrants are here to stay, whether or not they are initially unsure of their long-term plans. As in the experience of other countries, it can be envisaged that family reunification will take on increasing importance as a form of migration and community formation, as will the emergence of second-generation children of migrants, most of whom will be Irish citizens.

The ICI wishes to emphasise, in particular, the inter-generational challenges of integration. Migrant parents may be willing to make sacrifices in a new country and society, if only for the sake of their children. An emerging social divide such as that which occurred in a number of other post-WW2 European countries, with the marginalisation and ghettoisation of the children of those migrants, would unacceptable as well as being a recipe for future conflict.

Finally, migrants make many journeys and live in worlds that can be configured in many ways. A substantial number will wish to integrate and commit to a long-term future in Irish society. It behoves the State and that society to make the same commitment to them as it wishes them to make in their turn. At the same time, others may wish to contemplate a return to their home countries, be uncertain of their futures, or see themselves as members of transnational networks in multiple locations. All of these options should be respected and supported, while leaving open, as far as possible and practicable, the option of permanent residence and integration for those who wish it.

References

Ager, A., and A. Strang. 2003. *The Experience of Integration: A Qualitative Study of Refugee Integration in the Local Communities of Pollokshaws and Islington.* London: Home Office. Online Report 55/04.

Ager, A., and A. Strang. 2004. *Indicators of Integration: The experience of integration final report.* London: Home Office. Available: ‹http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs04/dpr28.pdf›

Baubock, R. 1994. *The Integration of Immigrants.* Strasbourg: Council of Europe.

Bell, C., and H. Newby. 1971 *Community Studies: An Introduction to the Sociology of the Local Community.* London: Allen and Unwin.

Breckner, R. 2002. 'Migrants: A Target Category for Social Policy? Experiences of First-Generation Migration' in P. Chamberlayne, M. Rustin and T. Wengraf (eds.) *Biography and Social Exclusion in Europe.* London: The Policy Press.

Castles, S., and M. J. Miller. 2003. *The age of migration* [third edition]. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Castles, S., M. Korac, E. Vasta, and S. Vertovec. 2002. *Integration: Mapping the Field.* Home Office Online Report 28/03.

Children's Rights Alliance. 2006. *All Our Children: Child Impact Assessment of Irish Children of Migrant Parents.* Dublin: CRA.

Dayton-Johnson, J., L.T. Katseli, G. Maniatis, R. Munz, and D. Papademetriou. 2007. *Gaining from Migration: Towards a New Mobility System.* OECD Development Centre.

Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform (DJELR). 2005. *Planning for Diversity: National Action Plan Against Racism.* Available: ‹http://www.nccri.ie/pdf/ActionPlan.pdf›

Entzinger, H., and R. Biezeveld. 2003. *Benchmarking in Immigration and Integration.* European Commission. Available: ‹http://europa.eu.int/comm/justice_home/doc_centre/immigration/studies/doc_im migration_studies_en.htm›

Expert Group on Future Skills Needs. 2005. Dublin: FÁS.

Favell, A. 1998. *Philosophies of Integration: Immigration and the Idea of Citizenship in France and Britain.* London: Macmillan/New York: St. Martin's Press.

Feldman, A. 2006a. 'Social research and immigration' in B. Fanning and M. Rush (eds) *Care and Social Change in the Irish Welfare Economy.* Dublin: UCD Press.

Feldman, A. 2003. *Developing a Code of Practice for Research and Development Work with Minority Ethnic Communities: Report of a Workshop.* Dublin: Social Science Research Centre.

Feldman, A., C. Frese, and T. Yousif. 2002. *Research, Development and Critical Interculturalism.* Dublin: Social Science Research Centre.

Harris, N. 1995. *The New Untouchables.* London: Penguin.

Hofinger, C. 1996. 'An index to Measure Legal Integration' in *Measurement and Indicators of Integration,* p22-30. Brussels: Council of Europe.

Interdepartmental Working Group on the Integration of Refugees in Ireland. 1999. *Integration: A Two-Way Process*. Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform. Available: <http://www.ria.gov.ie>

Irish Refugee Council. 2006. *Making Separated Children Visible*. Dublin: IRC.

Joppke, C. 2005. *Selecting by Origin*. Harvard: Harvard University Press.

Ley, D. and A. Kobayashi. 2005 Back to Hong Kong: *Return Migration or Transnational Sojourner*. RIIM Working Paper No. 05/09. Available: <http://www.riim.metropolis.net>

Loyal, S. 2003. 'Welcome to the Celtic Tiger, Immigration, Racism and the State' in C. Coulter and S. Coleman (eds) *The End of Irish History?* Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Loyal, S. 2007. *Integration: A Sociogenesis*. Available: <http://www.ucd.ie/sociology/researchclusters.html#work>

NESC. 2006. *Migration Policy*. Dublin: NESC Publications.

NESC. 2006a. *Managing Migration in Ireland: A Social and Economic Analysis*. A report by the International Organization for Migration for the National Economic and Social Council of Ireland. Dublin: NESC Publications.

Penninx, R., and M. Martiniello. 2004. 'Integration Processes and Policies: State of the Art and Lessons' in R. Penninx, K. Kraal, M. Martiniello, and S. Vertovec (eds). *Citizenship in European Cities: Immigrants, Local Politics and Integration Policies*. Aldershot: Ashgate, pp 139-163.

Sayad, A. 2004. *The Suffering of the Immigrant*. Cambridge: Polity.

Spencer, S., and B. Cooper. 2006. *Social Integration of Migrants in Europe: A Review of the European Literature 2000 – 2006*. OECD. Available: <http://www.compas.ox.ac.uk/publications/papers/Spencer%20Literature%20Review.pdf>

Stalker, P. 2001. *The No-Nonsense Guide to International Migration*. London: New Internationalist/Verso.

Taskforce on Active Citizenship. 2007. *Report of the Taskforce on Active Citizenship*. Dublin. Available: <http://www.activecitizen.ie/UPLOADEDFILES/Mar07/Taskforce%20Report%20to%20Government%20(Mar%2007).pdf>

Waldinger, R., and M. Lichter. 2003. *How the Other Half Works*. California: University of California Press.

INTRODUCTION

Background, Rationale, and Context of Study

Defining the Terms

Measuring Integration

Methodology

Ethical Considerations

INTRODUCTION

Background, Rationale, and Context of Study

This research was commissioned by the Immigrant Council of Ireland (ICI) following a competitive tendering process. The aim of the research was to obtain baseline quantitative information about migrants living in Ireland, to acquire qualitative information about migrant integration and identity formation, and to provide a basis for comparative analysis of migrants' experiences that will inform future policy recommendations.

The ICI selected four migrant groups – Chinese, Indian, Lithuanian, and Nigerian – as a focus for the study. These groups were chosen to provide a broad picture of the diverse nature of migration to Ireland. They generally have different entry routes into Ireland, different legal status, different civic and political entitlements in Ireland, different socio-cultural characteristics, and are differently racialised (Loyal 2003; Joppke 2005). To achieve the research aim, a variety of methods was used, including questionnaire surveys, interviews and focus groups. The research was conducted by an interdisciplinary team of researchers from University College Dublin (UCD), in collaboration with graduate students and community researchers.

Defining the Terms

For the purpose of our study, which is not concerned with internal migration, we use the terms 'migrant' and 'immigrant' interchangeably. A migrant is a person who moves from one country to another, on either a temporary or a permanent basis. An immigrant is more narrowly defined as a person who moves into a specific country, on either a temporary or a permanent basis. In this report, an immigrant is a person who moves to Ireland from another country.

The second key term is 'community'. Broadly speaking, a community is a group of people who share one or more features, such as nationality, religion, language, or place of birth, and tend to interact on the basis of these features (Bell and Newby 1971). One of the aims of the study is to investigate whether or not there are national communities in Ireland. When we use the term 'community', it generally refers to the representatives of the national group, as in 'community representatives'. However, in contrast to popular usage of the term, we were reluctant to use the term 'community' because it implies a level of similarity and unity that may not exist and presupposes what we are investigating. Instead, we generally use the term 'national group' to refer to people with shared nationality.

A third key concept is 'identity formation'. We use this concept to refer to the ways in which migrants in Ireland understand their identity as a consequence of migration, both as individuals and as migrants in Ireland. This concept is central to the notion of integration, which is the key focus of this study.

The fourth key concept is integration. Like all the other terms, integration is a contested concept, open to various conflicting interpretations (Baubock 1994; Loyal 2007). Integration is sometimes used in contrast to assimilation and multiculturalism. At other times, it is used as a generic concept where the latter terms are considered to be variations in the overall process of integration. Within Ireland, two Government reports published by the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform – *Integration: A Two-Way Process* (1999) and *Planning for Diversity: National Action Plan Against Racism* (2005) – sought to define the term for the Irish context. The first insisted on integration as a two-way process that

involves rights and responsibilities for newcomers as well as the host population. The second defined integration as 'a two way process that places duties and obligations on both cultural and ethnic minorities and the State to create a more inclusive society' (DJELR 2005: 38).

The simplicity of these definitions belies the complex debates about the meaning of the term and its uses in a variety of other national contexts. The meaning of integration can vary between countries, alter over time, and is frequently based on the interests, values, assumptions and perspectives of specific groups involved in the migration process (Favell 1998; Castles *et al* 2002: 112). Thus, many discussions of integration assume that the host society consists of a set of shared and static core values while failing to outline precisely into what migrants are meant to be integrated.

Integration is often described as a process contained within the borders of a state. The goals of the state in relation to integration may include the creation of a society within state borders based on agreed common values, social cohesion and social integration. However, migrants may have a different sense of the meaning of integration, which involves complex transnational links and networks, and may vary over time. Despite claims that integration is a two-way process, there are asymmetric power relations between migrants and the host society that often result in the onus for integration being placed solely on migrants.

Despite these concerns, it is clear that the concept of integration is here to stay. However, in discussing the use of language and concepts, it should be remembered that it is not the term itself which is in question, but what is included within its definition and who gets to define it.

Measuring Integration

Given its complexity, how can integration be best understood and measured? For the purposes of this study, we take the position that integration is best understood and measured at the level of individual experience. In making this assertion, we draw on the work of Castles *et al* (2002: 112-3), who argued that 'a discussion of integration can start with the very general question: how do newcomers to a country become part of society?' By posing this question, Castles highlights the practical issues raised. This includes asking how migrants come to participate in political processes at various levels, how they gain access to employment and education, how they negotiate all the services they need in their new home, and how they build up social and cultural relationships with others in the country (both migrants and the indigenous population).

In posing these questions, it is also important to consider any barriers to full participation based on migrant status, national origins, race, ethnicity, or social and cultural background. While looking at these issues, we noted four broad processes that shape and account for the integration patterns of various migrant groups (Loyal 2007):

1. The mode of entry and legal status of the migrant (for example, the difference between asylum seekers, labour migrants, or EU nationals)

2. The characteristics of the migrant (for example, gender, age, race, education, language proficiency, expectations, and intentions)

3. The broad conditions of reception in a country (for example, attitudes towards migrants, the extent to which migrants are welcomed, and discrimination)

4. The shape of government policies towards migrants and the resident population as a whole (for example, the socio-economic and physical infrastructure)

In this way, while studies of integration have to begin at the level of individual experience, the process of integration is framed by broader societal structures, beliefs, and barriers that have an impact on the ability of the individual to become part of the host society.

This report focuses on the experiences and attitudes of migrants to Ireland. This is just one aspect to integration. Future research needs to address the experiences and attitudes of the host society. While this report focuses on adults – a reflection of the relative newness of large-scale migration to Ireland – it is important to also acknowledge the different experiences of children, both first- and second-generation migrants (see Children's Rights Alliance 2006; Irish Refugee Council 2006). Ongoing research at University College Cork focuses primarily on children, and will provide important contributions to this debate (for more information, see ‹http://www.ucc.ie/academic/geography/pages/migrant_children.htm› and MacÉinri and White, forthcoming).

Integration into a new society means talking about access to numerous overlapping spheres, including political, economic, social, and cultural spheres. It also means talking about migrants' interaction with numerous ‘significant’ sectors in society that will affect their quality of life, such as the labour market, housing, education, health, and social services. It means negotiating relationships with native Irish citizens as well as members of other ethnic backgrounds and taking account that members of the host society are also changing. Finally, it involves a significant subjective dimension – a sense of belonging to a given area of society and of being recognised by others as contributing to society.

In recent years, there have been several attempts to identify and develop indicators that can be used to measure integration, particularly at European level (Ager and Strang 2003, 2004; Entzinger and Biezeveld 2003; Council of Europe 1996; British Council 2007; Spencer and Cooper 2006). While dimensions such as economic, cultural, social, political, legal, and attitudinal are frequently named as key areas, they are often combined in different ways (e.g. ‘socio-economic’, or ‘legal/political’ as opposed to just ‘political’) and involve different combinations of indicators for each area.

Policy researchers agree that there is no ‘one’ form of measurement, and the links among and between indicators are complex and overlapping. As such, the framework of indicators must be flexible, rather than an attempt to develop a hierarchy of indicators or a ‘causal’ or linear relationship between specific indicators and integration outcomes. With these issues in mind, we have focused on integration as a process that occurs in the **political, economic, social,** and **cultural** spheres of everyday life.

For the purpose of this study, **political indicators** begin with status upon entry and subsequently. The mode of entry into Ireland constitutes the foundation of the migrant's relationship with Ireland. It shapes the rights and obligations of the

migrant, and structures their access to services, resources, and opportunities. The level and type of rights and obligations has an impact on all the other indicators of integration. Since the rights and obligations of migrants often differ significantly from those of the host society, this has implications for the understanding of integration within Irish society. Political indicators also include practical access to services, and political and civic participation.

People's perceptions of their place in the host society are crucially structured by their opportunities for economic participation. This is measured through **economic indicators** of integration. These include migrants' education and employment, prior to and upon arriving in Ireland; experiences finding jobs; recognition of qualifications; income levels; and adequacy. It also includes the extent to which participants felt their personal, professional, and financial status had changed as a result of their employment experiences, as well as their experiences at work, including barriers to full participation and recognition in the workplace.

The development and quality of social relationships has received increasing attention in the integration literature. As such, **social indicators** address questions of 'social bridges' (connections to different communities comprised of other national, ethnic, or religious members), 'social bonds' (the development of a sense of belonging and identification within a particular group or community), and 'social links' (connections with various institutions). These terms are often employed to capture the diversity and complexity of relations within and across migrant and host communities. In particular, social indicators address the nature of relationships that occur in everyday life, and in key spaces of interaction and engagement, such as work, education, housing, and neighbourhoods. Issues of personal safety, experiences of racism and discrimination, and migrants' reflections on the quality of their relationships with Irish people are also addressed.

Cultural indicators focus on national and transnational social networks, and the means to construct and maintain them. This includes the nature of the migrant family in Ireland and beyond, the facilitation of transnational networks, and the role of language and social values in these networks. It also includes reflections on the migrants' place in Ireland, their future plans, and their views on the meaning and nature of Irish society, often constructed as the object of integration.

Finally, it is important to have an end result or 'outcome' of integration towards which to evaluate the measurement of integration indicators. Within the context of a society with a longer experience of substantial migration, the British Home Office has asserted that an individual or group is integrated within a society when they:

1. Achieve public outcomes within employment, housing, education, health, and so on that are equivalent to those achieved within the wider host communities

2. Are socially connected with members of a (national, ethnic, cultural, religious, or other) community with which they identify, with members of other communities, and with relevant functions and services of the state

3. Have sufficient linguistic competence and cultural knowledge, and a sufficient sense of security and stability, to confidently engage with that

society in a manner consistent with shared notions of nationhood and citizenship (Ager and Strang 2004: 5)

For the purposes of this study, we focus on points two and three as indicators of integration that emanate from the everyday experiences of migrants in Ireland. While we consider point one to be important, it requires information that is not always available, since data collection processes are struggling to keep pace with the extent of change in migration patterns to and from Ireland. Where available, we have highlighted comparable data on the host population. We have also highlighted barriers to achieving similar outcomes.

In contrast to other studies, this research has combined survey data (to obtain baseline information and explore broad patterns and trends within and across the four migrant groups) with interview and focus group data to examine the ways in which these dimensions play out in migrants' everyday lives. The comparison of this information across the four migrant groups illuminates the complex dynamics of integration in order to inform the development of integration principles, policies, and practices that address the wide range of diversity among migrant groups.

Methodology

The methodology was underpinned by a strong commitment to participatory research. This recognises that different stakeholders have different contributions to make to the research process and has become an increasingly central issue in migration-related research in Ireland (Feldman 2006a, 2003). To facilitate the contributions of different individuals who possess a variety of skills and expertise, we developed teams for each of the four communities. They were comprised of one lead, one postgraduate, and one community researcher.

We recruited the community researchers from within the national groups and they were the first point of contact with the groups. They were centrally involved in getting people engaged with and supportive of the project and meeting potential informants. They received formal training and practical experience in social research, and worked in collaboration with the postgraduate researchers in administering the surveys and conducting the interviews, under the guidance of the lead researchers.

Throughout the process, a variety of community representatives provided input and guidance into the conduct of the research. Research results were presented to community representatives and groups prior to publication of the report and their comments were incorporated. The researchers and postgraduate students, who carried out the bulk of the fieldwork, were actively involved in the ongoing re-articulation of research processes and goals.

Survey

The aim of the survey was to provide baseline data on political, economic, social, and cultural indicators of integration, and on migration. The survey was framed by a similar survey carried out in the UK and by a range of literature on integration. However, it was considerably altered to reflect the nuances of the Irish context. The survey was designed by the UCD researchers, with assistance and input from other researchers, graduate students, and community researchers.

Following pilot surveys of approximately five people from each national group, the questionnaire was finalised. It took around 45 minutes to administer and consisted of 78 questions, which covered a variety of different topics. A range of question types was used. For example, we used closed questions, where respondents were asked to choose one option from a pre-given set of answers (see question 11 in Figure 1.1).

Figure 1.1: Closed question from survey

11. Are your (educational and vocational) qualifications fully recognized (through appropriate job title/pay) in your current (primary) job?

$\quad\quad\quad$ 1 ☐ Yes $\quad\quad\quad\quad\quad\quad$ 2 ☐ No $\quad\quad\quad\quad\quad\quad$ 3 ☐ Don't know

We also asked questions where respondents could choose any number of a pre-given set of questions, as well as open questions, where respondents could provide additional information (see question 12 in Figure 1.2).

Figure 1.2: Multiple-answer question from survey

12. Have you experienced any of the following problems when working in Ireland? (TICK ALL THAT APPLY)

1 ☐ Bullying or harassment by your manager, specify: _____

2 ☐ Bullying or harassment by your co-worker(s), specify: _____

3 ☐ Inadequate pay

4 ☐ Promotion blocked

5 ☐ Racism or discrimination from Irish people

6 ☐ Racism or discrimination from foreign people, specify nationality: _____

7 ☐ Poor working conditions

8 ☐ Other, specify: _____

9 ☐ None of the above

Graduate students and community researchers received several hours of training in questionnaire design and administration.

The intention was to administer the survey to 100 members from each national group. In the absence of reliable data on the social and economic composition of the four groups, we used purposive sampling to ensure that the surveys represented a diversity of national experiences. In this regard, we paid particular attention to age, gender, length of stay in Ireland, educational qualifications, occupation, and geographical location.

For each of the four groups, roughly half of the surveys were administered in the Dublin area, where these migrants appear to be concentrated. The remaining surveys were administered in urban and rural areas with a significant migrant presence. In the case of Indian nationals, surveys were administered in Donegal and Cork. In the case of Lithuanian nationals, surveys were administered in Cork and Monaghan. For Nigerian nationals, surveys were administered in Waterford and Cork, while Chinese nationals living in Cork, Galway, Limerick, Wicklow, and Sligo completed the survey.

Researchers were advised to administer and fill in the surveys in person, where possible. This was not always the case and, in a minority of instances, surveys were returned by post or in electronic format. While the majority of surveys were completed in English, it was necessary to translate the Chinese survey into Mandarin Chinese. In addition, some of the surveys of Lithuanian nationals were administered with the assistance of a Lithuanian translator, who orally translated the relevant questions. Survey respondents were given information sheets and asked to sign consent forms. In addition, respondents were assured that the information they provided was confidential.

Given the lack of baseline information about the four national groups in Ireland, our aim was to document the experiences of as broad a range of people as possible, paying particular attention to gender, age, migration status, length of time in Ireland, educational attainment, employment status, and English-language proficiency. We identified and selected survey respondents using a variety of methods to ensure that our survey captured the diversity of experiences within and across each national group. Researchers from the national groups were central to this process, using their networks to make contact with respondents through a snowball technique. Community representatives were also important in this regard, highlighting other appropriate networks and contacts. As a starting point, researchers contacted community organisations and embassies. They also used listservs, personal contacts and media outlets (such as radio and newspapers) to access as wide a range of respondents as possible.

Some surveys were administered in group settings (for example in conjunction with Lithuanian language schools). Others were administered individually, at home or place of work. Generally, there was no payment to respondents for participating in the survey, with a few exceptions. As the surveys progressed, the rate of involvement of people from a wide range of backgrounds and perspectives was monitored, and adjustments were made to ensure demographic representation. Data from the questionnaires were processed by the postgraduate researchers and analysed by the university researchers using SPSS software.

A number of difficulties arose. For some migrant groups, it was difficult to find people willing to complete the survey. In these instances, we translated the survey, used other methods of administering the survey, and provided financial incentives. However, this was insufficient to ensure that the survey adequately captures the experiences of all migrants, many of whom are understandably reluctant to participate in this form of information gathering. Another problem arose in relation to the survey length, with respondents across all four groups commenting that the survey was too long and complicated. A third problem arose in relation to data input. Contradictory answers, particularly where surveys were not administered directly by the researchers, could not be resolved at this stage because of confidentiality.

Interviews

In addition to the focus on obtaining baseline quantitative data on the indicators, the aim of the interviews was to explore the ways in which integration – and the impact of policy and practices – plays out in peoples' everyday lives and personal experiences of migration to Ireland. Recent qualitative research on integration has focused on the ways and extent to which migrants come to 'feel settled' in the host society – a sense of 'belonging' and that they are 'accepted', and feel

'safe' and 'secure'. It has emphasised the links between the circumstances surrounding migrants' journeys of migration, the opportunities and obstacles they encounter, and the integration strategies they adopt. Such methods play a key role in illustrating the links between the individual migrant, broader patterns of migration, the wider context of the host society, and the policies and institutions that shape the integration process.

In total, 78 in-depth interviews were conducted across the four groups, in addition to numerous informal interviews. All of the interviews were conducted in English. In many cases, there were two interviewers: a researcher from the national group and a graduate or university researcher. Particularly in the case of interviews with Chinese and Indian participants, where difficulties were experienced by the interviewees in understanding the question or in expressing complex responses, the community researcher provided translation. The majority of interviews were audio-recorded. Others were recorded in writing by the interviewer due to equipment failure or at the request of the participant. Interviewees were provided with information sheets and asked to sign consent forms. They were assured that their contribution would remain anonymous and confidential. Following the interviews, transcripts were prepared by a professional transcriber.

In advance of the interviews, training was provided to the researchers over a number of weeks. Pilot interviews were conducted in conjunction with the university researchers and the conduct of the interviews were analysed by the group. A 'semi-structured' approach was used for the interviews, whereby all participants were asked the same broad questions but the interviewer was able to follow up on stories or events that were unique to a particular interviewee. After being asked to introduce themselves, interviews began with two questions concerning the interviewee's migration experience.

Q1: Can you tell me a little about your life before coming to Ireland?

Q2: Coming to Ireland, what was that like?

These questions were followed by those inquiring about the interviewee's everyday experiences of and reflections about life in Ireland, Irish society and their future plans.

Q3: How have things changed since you arrived? What is your life like now?

Q4: Do you feel you've settled in? Have you adjusted to life in Ireland?

Q5: What about the future? How do you see your life in five years?

Each of these questions included a set of probes or follow-ups that mirrored key survey questions and topic areas. At the end of each interview, participants were asked if there was anything that they would like to add and if they felt that the interview questions failed to cover something important.

Approximately 20 interviews were conducted with members of each national group in a place of the interviewee's choosing. Each interview lasted, on average, one-and-a-half hours.

Participants were recruited through their involvement in the survey and through 'snowball' sampling, whereby researchers identify a range of participants representing as broad a cross-section of the available population as possible. Working through representatives of community organisations and other service

providers, personal contacts made during the course of the research, and referrals from survey and interview participants, researchers developed a wide network through which to recruit potential interviewees. From this pool of participants, researchers selected individuals who reflected as diverse a sample as possible in terms of age, circumstances, length of stay in Ireland, and so on. In addition to participants located in Dublin, interviews were conducted with Chinese in Bray, Indians in Donegal, Lithuanians in Cork, and Nigerians in Navan, Drogheda and Kildare.

To analyse the interviews, postgraduate and university researchers reviewed the interview transcripts separately. They then met collectively to discuss content, similarities and differences within and across national groups, as well as noting shared and uncommon experiences. The interviews were analysed over several such rounds of examination, proceeding from the level of general themes to identification of the more complex inter-relationships between the different indicators as they arose in the context of each interviewee's particular accounts and circumstances. The analysis of the interview data was further enhanced through comparison with the survey findings.

Focus Groups

Focus groups were organised by the ICI in conjunction with community representatives from the four national groups. The purpose of the focus groups was to gain responses and feedback on preliminary findings, and to explore in further detail any important themes, contradictions or gaps resulting from the analysis of the survey and interview data. Four focus groups were held in November 2007.

Each focus group began with a presentation of key research findings by the university researchers and continued with a discussion of those findings. While there was general agreement with the key findings, relevant points of clarification and contention have been incorporated into the report.

Ethical Considerations

The researchers and research activities are bound by UCD's ethical guidelines ‹http://www.ucd.ie/ofrss/› as well as those underpinning work in the researchers' individual disciplines (e.g. the guidelines published by the Sociological Association of Ireland). These parameters demand safeguards such as anonymity and confidentiality for research participants, the use of accepted research procedures and methodologies, and the accountability of the researchers in undertaking work that does not 'harm' those participating in it. This included the commitment that the research would not include individuals who were considered vulnerable, such as children or people with language difficulties.

Increasingly, researchers, and the communities that are often involved in their work, have determined that these minimum standards, while important, are not sufficient. This is particularly so in the case of minority ethnic, 'new community', and other marginalised groups. As a comparatively mono-cultural society that has only recently become a destination for migrants, migration and its many related issues are essentially 'new' areas of policy and provision, around which there is little existing infrastructure or information base. Therefore, there has been a sudden increase in demands for research to fill these gaps.

The downside of this active research environment is that members of migrant/'new' minority ethnic communities are voicing criticisms concerning exploitation, paternalism, and burnout stemming from their participation in this research (Feldman *et al* 2002; Feldman 2003). They are increasingly demanding the use of more participative and capacity-building focused methodologies, and the development of codes of research practice for use across sectors. This includes a wide range of approaches from including research participants in advisory roles to actively training and employing them, and establishing ongoing organisations or community development structures as part of the research process. This research project provided training and employment for community researchers, actively incorporated community perspectives in the research design and in the final report, and developed strong links with community organisations. In addition, the research was guided by an advisory committee established by the ICI, involving academic, sectoral and community representatives.

MIGRATION PROFILES

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, we describe the demographic characteristics of the four migrant groups that are the focus of this study, drawing on statistics from the Central Statistics Office (CSO). We then outline the demographic characteristics of the survey respondents and the interviewees. We provide summaries of interviewees' accounts of the circumstances, goals and preparation underpinning their emigration and their experiences of arriving in Ireland. Because migration status plays a key role in migration and integration, we include an overview of the main requirements, rights, and entitlements associated with the different status of survey respondents and interviewees.

Chinese, Indian, Lithuanian, and Nigerian Migrants in Ireland: Current Census Statistics

According to the Census 2006, there were 11,161 Chinese, 8,460 Indian, 24,638 Lithuanian, and 16,300 Nigerian nationals living in Ireland (see Table 2.1). This represents a significant increase since Census 2002.

In 2006, Lithuanians represented the third-largest migrant group in Ireland (following UK and Polish nationals). Nigerians were the fourth-largest migrant group, Chinese the seventh-largest and Indians the tenth-largest migrant group. All four groups experienced significant increases since 2002. The most significant increase was among Lithuanians, most likely due to EU accession in May 2004.

Many commentators and organisations, including the Minister of Integration, a variety of non-governmental organisations, and individuals from some of our focus groups, have raised concerns about the reliability of the census' figures. In particular, there is general concern that the census under-report the number of migrants living in Ireland. However, this is the only official source available and it provides an indication of the growth of particular national groups and insights into their demographic characteristics.

**Table 2.1: Resident population in Ireland by nationality
(source: Census 2002, 2006)**

Nationality	2006	2002	Increase from 2002 to 2006 (%)
Chinese	11,161	5,842	91
Indian	8,460	2,534	233.9
Lithuanian	24,638	2,104	1,071
Nigerian	16,300	8,969	81.7

Census 2006 also provides details on the marital status and age profile of a variety of nationalities in Ireland. In relation to marital status, the key categories identified were single, married, separated, divorced, and widowed. While Figure 2.1 provides a general picture of the marital characteristics of the population, there are some key points to note. Firstly, there is no identification of people in long-term relationships; they are included in the single population. Secondly, the single population also includes children. Based on Census 2006, 43 per cent of the general population in Ireland over the age of 15 is single (CSO 2006).

Figure 2.1: Marital status by nationality (source: Census 2006)
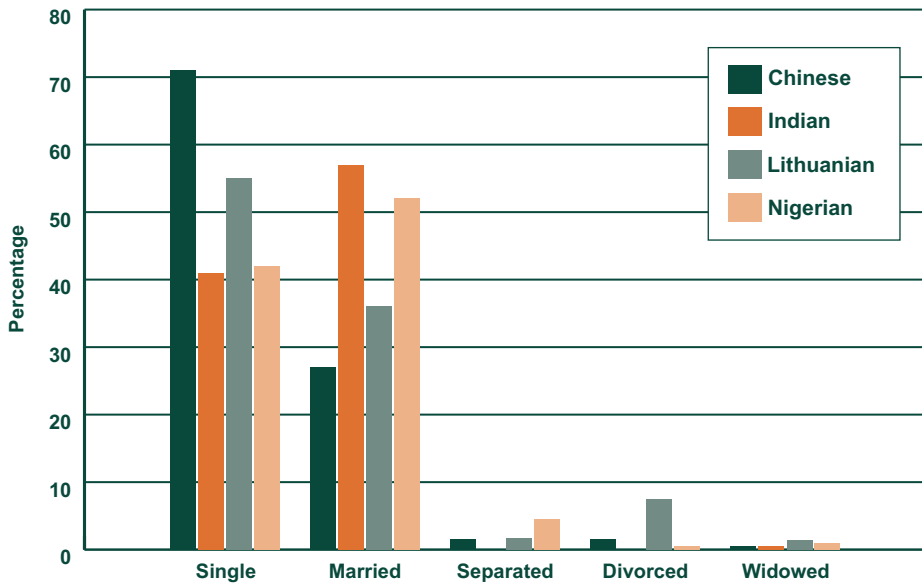
Census 2006 also provides details of the age distribution of a variety of nationalities. Data for Chinese, Indian, Lithuanian, and Nigerians are shown in Figure 2.2. This clearly indicates that the predominant age category for all four groups is between 25 and 44.

Figure 2.2: Age distribution by nationality (source: Census 2006)
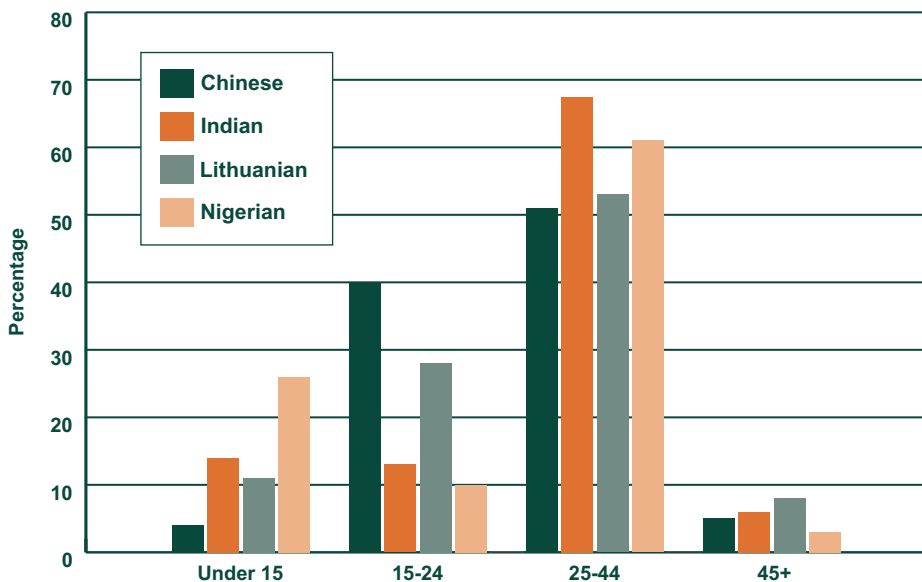
The census also provided details of the highest level of education completed for people over the age of 15. This was disaggregated by place of birth which, in some instances, may not correspond to nationality. Details for the Chinese, Indian, Lithuanian, and Nigerian groups are shown in Figure 2.3. This chart relates only to those who had ceased full-time education and does not provide details of the highest education attainment to date for those who are still studying. According to Census 2006, the numbers of full-time students by place of birth are 6,522 Chinese, 3,309 Indians, 9,375 Lithuanians, and 5,815 Nigerians.

Figure 2.3: Highest level of education completed by place of birth (source: Census 2006)
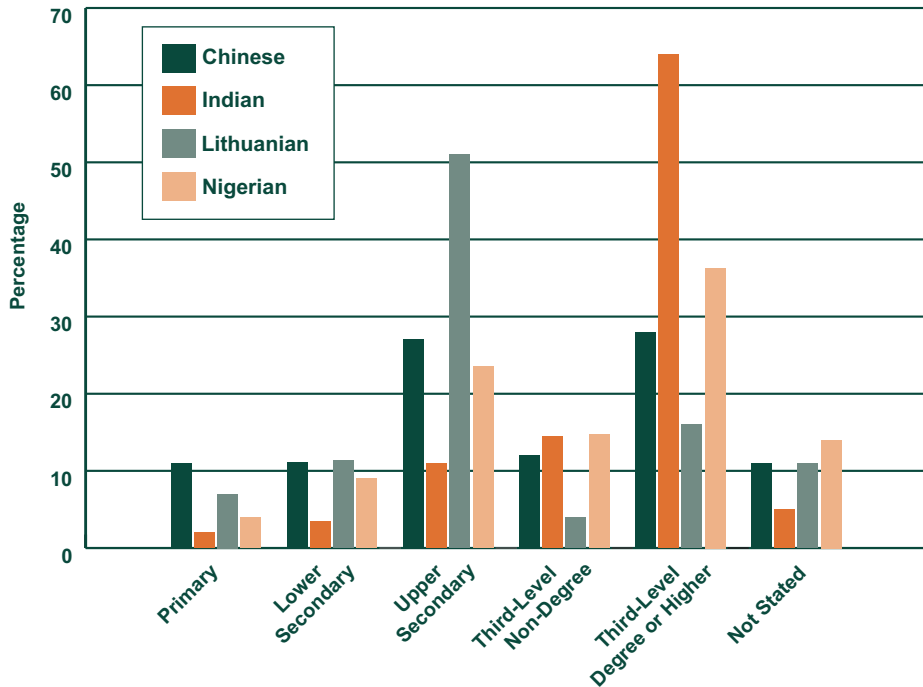
The CSO noted that, 'in 2006, 38.3 per cent of foreign nationals whose full-time education had ceased had a third level qualification compared with 28.2 of Irish nationals'. From the profiles of these four groups, people born in China, India, and Nigeria have even higher levels of third-level qualifications. The CSO did not provide details of respondents whose highest level of education was a professional qualification.

Demographic Description of Survey Respondents and Interviewees

The migrants we surveyed were, in general, relatively recent arrivals in Ireland. This corresponds to the broader patterns of migration to Ireland, with relatively low levels until the early 1990s, but with significant increases since then. Details of dates of arrival are shown in Table 2.2.

Table 2.2: Date of first arrival in Ireland of survey population

Date of first arrival[2]	Percentage
In the past year	15
1-2 years ago	22
2-3 years ago	11
3-5 years ago	26
5-10 years ago	24
More than 10 years ago	2

When this information is disaggregated, Chinese and Nigerian respondents have spent the longest time in Ireland (see Figure 2.4). Just over 40 per cent of Chinese respondents first arrived in Ireland more than five years ago, with more than 35 per cent of Nigerian respondents reporting a similar length of stay. The most recent arrivals were Indian respondents, with almost two-thirds arriving in Ireland in the past two years. Lithuanian respondents were more heterogeneous in terms of arrival date, although 45 per cent had arrived in the past two years. The number of years spent in Ireland by interviewees included ten who had arrived in the past year, 25 in the past two to four years, 40 in the past six to ten years and three who had arrived more than ten years ago (the longest length of stay being 28 years).

Figure 2.4: Date of first arrival in Ireland, by community
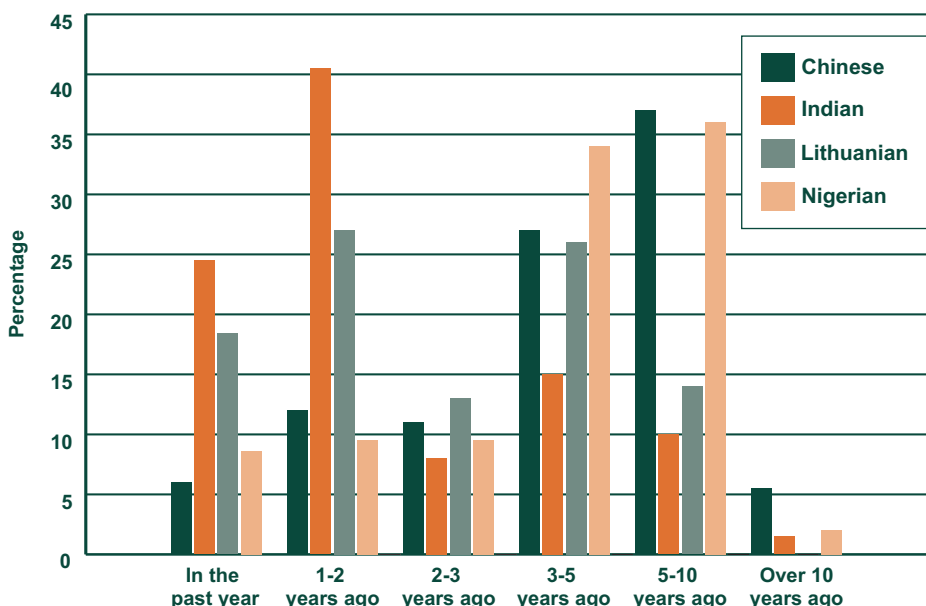
2   Surveys were administered in late 2006 and early 2007. The date of first arrival relates to this period. Therefore, respondents who arrived 'in the past year' arrived since late 2005.

Just over 83 per cent of those who completed the survey were aged between 24 and 44. Just over 10 per cent of respondents were aged between 18 and 23, while just over 6 per cent of respondents were aged 45 or over. As with the surveys, the majority of interviewees were aged between 24 and 44, in addition to a small number of people aged under 24 and a few over the age of 44. For ethical considerations, none of the interviewees was under the age of 18.

In terms of gender, 51.7 per cent of respondents were male, while 48.3 per cent of respondents were female. The marital status of respondents is shown in Table 2.3. The ratio of men to women was roughly equal among interviewees from all countries except for India, where the interviews were predominantly men.[3]

Table 2.3: Marital status of survey population

Marital status	Percentage
Married	60
Single	30
Long-term partner	5
Separated	2
Divorced	2
Widowed	1

In the sample of survey respondents, a significant majority of Nigerian and Indian respondents were married or in long-term relationships. Lower figures were reported by Lithuanian and Chinese respondents. Around two-thirds of Chinese respondents reported that they were single. Not all interviewees gave details of their marital status but, of those who did, the majority was married. Among those who were single, a few interviewees reported having long-term partners or being divorced. This is discussed in more detail in chapter six.

Participants in the Nigerian focus group initially felt that this under-reported the extent of lone parenthood due to problems with family reunification. However, following a discussion, participants observed that this may reflect ongoing change, as migrants who arrived in Ireland on their own may have formed relationships in the meantime.

In relation to religious practices, survey respondents recorded a diversity of answers (see Table 2.4). Nearly two-thirds of respondents belong to a Christian faith, with more than two-thirds of this group being Roman Catholic. However, nearly a quarter of respondents reported that they did not belong to a faith group. This answer was particularly prevalent among Chinese respondents.

---

3   The somewhat skewed ratio of male to female Indian interviewees is due to several reasons such as availability and self-selection, such as when female spouses were present but declined to be interviewed.

Table 2.4: Religious affiliation declared by survey population

Religion	Percentage
Christian	65
Islam	2
Hindu	5
Sikh	1
Buddhist	3
None	23
Other	1

As has been suggested by other reports (NESC 2006), survey respondents recorded high levels of education (see Table 2.5).

Table 2.5: Highest level of education completed by survey respondents

Level of education	Male (%)	Female (%)	Total (%)
Lower secondary	1	2	1
Upper secondary	16	13	15
Third-level non-degree	12	12	12
Third-level degree or higher	37	43	40
Professional	26	26	26
Technical/vocational	8	4	6

There are differences between the four groups in terms of levels of educational qualification. Fifty-three per cent of Chinese, 47 per cent of Lithuanian and 46 per cent of Nigerian respondents have third-level degrees. Of the Indian respondents in our sample, just over 14 per cent had third-level degrees, but 75 per cent had professional qualifications. In general, there were similarities between male and female respondents in their levels of education, with two differences. A higher percentage of female respondents had third-level degrees, while a higher percentage of male respondents had technical or vocational qualifications.

Despite these high educational qualifications, many survey respondents were working in less-skilled positions (see Table 2.6).

Table 2.6: Current employment category for employed survey respondents

Employment category	Percentage employed
Personal service and childcare	19
Health and related workers	18
Sales occupations	13
Other professional workers	8
Computer software	6
Managers and executives	5
Building and construction Clerical and office	4
Other manufacturing	3
Farming, fishery, forestry Scientific and technical	2
Business and commerce occupations Communication, warehouse, transport	2
Engineering and allied trades' workers	1
Food, drink, tobacco production Teachers Social workers and related occupations	1
Electrical trades Chemical, paper, wood, rubber, plastics, printing Central and local government	1
Other	3
Did not answer	6

NOTE: Figures in this table have been rounded to the nearest percentage. For example, 19 per cent of respondents worked in personal service and childcare, which includes security, catering staff, waiting staff, care assistants, and housekeepers. In general, this is the occupational category where migrants are over-represented in the Irish labour force. For example, Census 2006 shows that 30.2 per cent of all those employed in personal service and childcare are foreign nationals. Of this number, 75.3 per cent are from new EU accession countries or from outside the EU (CSO 2006). Similarly, 13 per cent of survey respondents worked in sales occupations. Across the general population, 12 per cent of workers in this area are foreign nationals (CSO 2006). However, other survey respondents are employed in more skilled occupations, the most important being health. This includes, for example, doctors, nurses, dentists, physiotherapists, radiographers and medical technicians. Of our respondents, 18 per cent worked in health-related occupations. Across the general population, 20.8 per cent of workers in this category are foreign nationals and, of these, 71.9 per cent are

from outside the EU (CSO 2006). Interviewees also straddled a range of occupational categories, including health, personal and other professional services, sales and management, IT and commerce, including a few people working in Government and education. In addition, several interviewees were studying in Ireland. We discuss the changing occupational categories for the four national groups in the sample in chapter four.

The geographical spread of respondents spanned the country, from Donegal to Kerry to Dublin. More than 52 per cent of respondents lived in Dublin, while around 18 per cent of respondents lived in Cork (see Figure 2.5). While the survey respondents were concentrated in the greater Dublin region, there is representation from community members living in a variety of urban and rural locations. The concentration of respondents in the greater Dublin region mirrors the general settlement patterns of migrants in Ireland (Gilmartin 2007).

Figure 2.5: Geographical distribution of survey respondents, by county
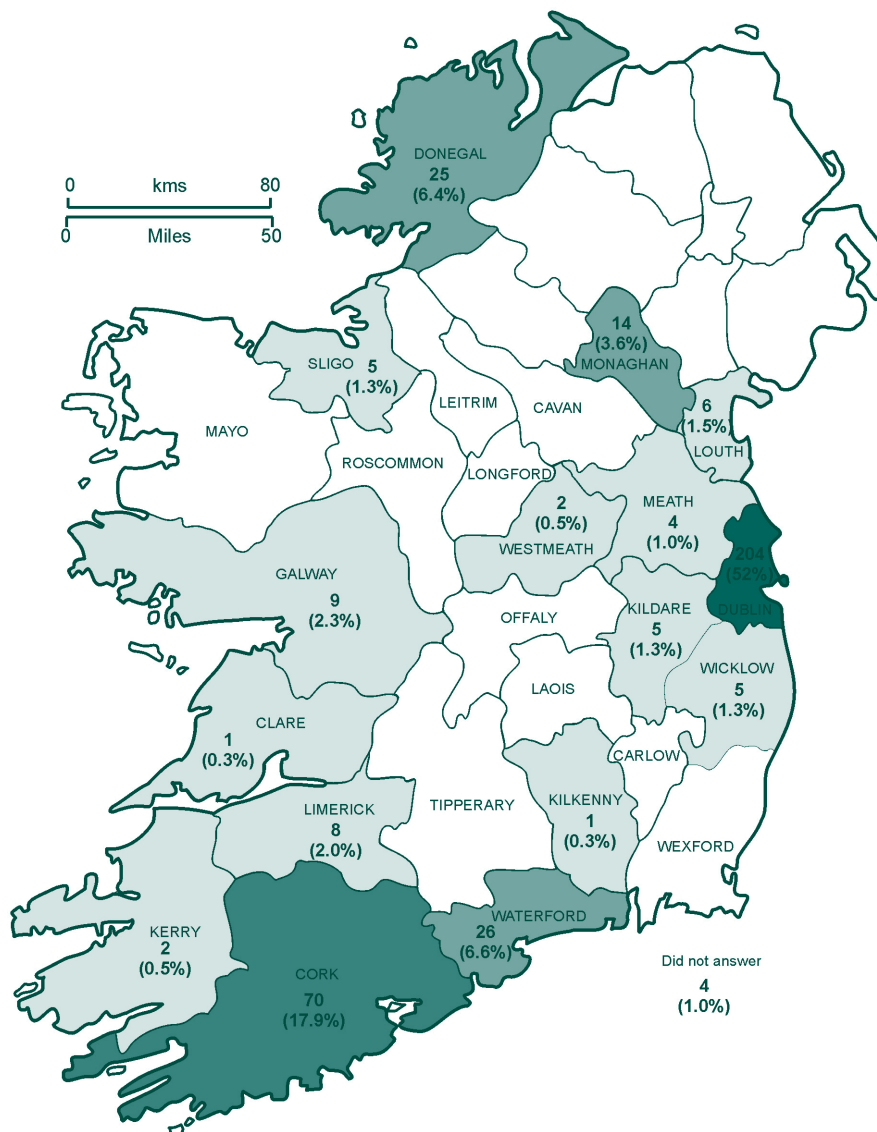
Paths to Ireland

The processes of migration and integration begin before a migrant's arrival in the destination country. International and interstate relations, histories, and politics are as important in the process of migration as wider economic trends, social networks, and transport infrastructure. The circumstances, goals, and expectations surrounding migrants' emigration play key roles, not only in shaping the experience of migration but also migrants' orientations toward integration and the strategies they adopt. The initial arrival of migrants is shaped by status and by the overall reception of the host society, including access to resources and support structures.

We asked survey respondents to tell us why they came to Ireland, giving them the following options: definite job offer; in the hope of getting a job; to join family and/or friends; to apply for asylum; education/training; experience of living in another country; or other reasons. Respondents could indicate any of the reasons that applied in their particular case. Chinese surveyed stated that they came primarily for education and training (83 per cent). The corresponding figure for Nigerian respondents was 22 per cent, and 10 per cent for Indian respondents. Indian respondents mostly stated that they came to Ireland due to a definite job offer (51 per cent) and/or to join family (31 per cent). Of Lithuanian respondents, 36 per cent had a definite job offer, came either in the hope of getting a job (41 per cent) or just for the experience of living in Ireland (also 41 per cent). In comparison, around 22 per cent of Chinese and Indian respondents came to Ireland in search of new experiences. Around 16 per cent of Nigerian respondents indicated that one of their reasons for coming to Ireland was to join family.

Most of those surveyed travelled to Ireland alone, including around 50 per cent of Indians and Lithuanians, nearly 80 per cent of Chinese, and almost 70 per cent of Nigerians. Between one-quarter and one-third of Indians, Lithuanians, and Nigerians moved to Ireland with family, with around 17 per cent of Chinese and Lithuanians and 25 per cent of Indians arriving with friends. At least 50 per cent of the Chinese and 40 per cent of the Nigerians moving to Ireland had no contacts in the country prior to arrival, in comparison to nearly 20 per cent of Indians and Lithuanians.

We asked respondents to detail any contacts they had in Ireland prior to migration, providing a range of options from which they could choose as many as applied. More than half of the Lithuanians had contact with friends already in Ireland at the time of their arrival in contrast to a little more than one-third of Indians and Nigerians, and nearly 40 per cent of Chinese. A small percentage of Indians and Lithuanians had contacts with employers (13 per cent and 8 per cent respectively) with only 3 per cent of Chinese having previous contacts with employers.

Interviews gave us the opportunity to discuss these issues in more detail. We began interviews with a discussion about the reasons for emigrating and moving to Ireland. While the reasons for migration among interviewees mirrored those of survey respondents, interviewees also reflected on their prior knowledge of Ireland, and their prior experiences of the country and its people.

Historical Connections and Choice of Ireland as a Migration Destination

The longest migration relationships are between China/Ireland and Nigeria/Ireland. Cantonese speakers from Hong Kong arrived 50 years ago. They constitute what many refer to as the 'settled' Chinese in Ireland, many of whom have their own businesses. One interviewee noted that, at that time, many people were intending to migrate to the UK, but ended up in Ireland 'by accident' (C13). Over the years, other family members have joined them in Ireland.

Increased recruitment efforts by the Irish Government and educational institutes over the past decade have shifted this trend towards a predominance of migration by Mandarin-speaking students and young professionals from mainland China and Malaysia. In addition to the career opportunities provided by multinationals, Ireland is attractive to students as they have access to part-time work which, despite being typically low-paid, provides them with a means of paying school fees and living expenses. However, there is pressure not only to do well in their studies but also to find employment within six months of graduation. A return to China, according to one interviewee, can often mean that 'you didn't do well; you failed the opportunities provided by your course' (C13).

While the majority of Nigerians migrating to Ireland arrived within the past ten to 15 years, there is a longer history of interaction between the two countries. Many Nigerian interviewees spoke of growing up with a significant presence of Irish missionaries, teachers and NGOs in their lives and involvement with Irish institutions, such as the Catholic Church, religious-run schools and Government aid. Villages were 'founded' by Irish missionaries and their residents were baptised by the clergy. One man recalled 'The first picture I saw of a white man was an Irish man. It made me feel, if I ever travelled, to go to that island, to see that place' (N11).

Knowledge of the civil rights movement in Northern Ireland (one interviewee recounted that, as a boy, the school children would participate in raising funds for the Church to help support their work back in Ireland, which he later realised was linked to the conflict), and the Irish Government's involvement in foreign aid and development, added to Ireland's image as a nation of equality, human rights and freedom of expression. Therefore, Ireland was an obvious choice for those seeking asylum from decades of conflict and political instability, deprivation and human rights violations.

> *'The Irish people who came to Nigeria lived an exemplary life. You couldn't fault them... And they always told us that Ireland was a country of the welcomes. So we always had it at the back of our minds that, if we ever had a cause to live abroad, it was going to be in Ireland, the country that these wonderful people came from. So it was a conscious decision to come here. We worked towards that'* (N1)

In general, migration of Indians is often influenced by employment opportunities and is typically seen as a necessary step in advancing their careers. When one member of a couple gets a job offer in Europe, the other one often follows, even if that results in temporary unemployment. IT personnel can be found in Irish, international and Indian companies, working on a permanent or contract basis. In the case of nurses, leaving India for the USA, the UK or Ireland results in more recognition, better pay and a lower workload. Although people might have a preference for the USA or the UK, the location of the job offer decides where people move. Because Ireland is English-speaking, it is considered a good option.

Lithuanian interviewees typically attributed their migration to Ireland to high unemployment following a recession after 1999. This was made worse by problems with the need for social connections to gain adequate employment. Moreover, despite needing very high levels of qualification to secure basic jobs, pay was often inadequate. For example, one respondent with a higher-level degree and working in government was only earning €320 a month. As such, not only did people 'need good friends to get you a job' (L7), many have to work very long hours to earn enough money to live. 'In Lithuania, some people can have two or three jobs for a salary and work 70-80 hours' (L12). However, some also came to save enough money to start a business back in Lithuania, to get work experience, or simply experience other ways of living.

> *'I just wanted to see different countries… because I was young and I was full of power and could do lots of work, I said I want to try to go to another country, for probably two years and then go to a third country and, after that, come back to the homeland'* (L9)

Others came to improve their English and some, especially students, came for summer jobs to fund future travel or pay for their studies, which can be costly in Lithuania. Finally, a large number came to join family members who were already here.

Preparation and Initial Arrival

Those migrating from China, India, and Lithuania often had limited knowledge of Ireland beyond familiarity with some pop music groups, soccer, tourist information, and the weather. In many cases, because employers and recruitment agencies, educational institutions and parents took care of all the arrangements, little preparation was deemed necessary. Some people prepared for their move to Ireland by reading about the country and the people; others just waited to see what would happen. In some cases, the employer indicated that preparation was not necessary, since everything would be taken care of by the company on arrival.

These support networks played important roles in facilitating arrival in Ireland and migrants'/interviewees' experiences of settling in. For example, Indian interviewees recalled that employers, some of which had specific staff appointed as liaison officers, often handled practical issues such as housing, bank accounts, applying for PPS numbers, and even providing pocket money. The IATR, an Indian organisation working with Nurse on Call to recruit Indian nurses, provides an extensive orientation programme before the nurses move to Ireland. Its proactive attitude (placing ads and giving information at nursing colleges) seems to raise awareness about the possibility for nurses to work abroad. Institutes of technology in Ireland take a similar approach. They organise information sessions at technical colleges in India. In the case of Indian and Chinese employees and students, their organisations often secure accommodation with a host family for a month.

Whilst most interviewees travelled alone, many arrived with others who were going to the same employer or school/university, or met others when they arrived at the airport. By the time they reached Ireland, they had become friends and the initial social circle was created. For interviewees, the people they knew in Ireland or met on their travel to Ireland were very important. These were the people they turned to for help, support, and information, and these were the people who introduced them to their initial social network. Many people, particularly in the

case of Lithuanians, came without jobs. Given the financial investment and risk they had taken, for many 'the hardest part was uncertainty' (L17).

> *'I was very scared. I arrived in Dublin and caught a train at 11 to go from Dublin to Cork. A 50-year-old drunk had asked me for sugar and we had a chat. I didn't understand him and later he said "Why did you come in this country?" And I thought "why did I come?" It was the first night and it was terrible'* (L9)

Another commented 'If someone will drop you into water and you don't know how to swim, you will learn to swim' (L10).

In contrast, those migrating to Ireland to seek asylum typically had little opportunity to prepare or make arrangements for their journey. They also tended to arrive on their own, without the support of an established network. Moreover, although they entered a system of State reception and accommodation, they had little or no ability to change or improve their situations. The contrast between the expectations of welcome that many asylum seekers held and the reality of the asylum system, with its restrictions and lack of opportunity, has shaped the experiences of many Nigerians in Ireland. One Nigerian health professional noted that his experience of arrival and settlement could not have been more different from that of asylum seekers, and commented that settling is almost impossible if one does not arrive as a professional (N16).

These brief narratives suggest that a positive impression on arrival in Ireland, such as efficient access to resources and support, provides a good foundation for integration. However, the migration system creates a two-tier classification of migrants, thus providing differential access to resources and support depending on status.

Migration Status and Entitlements

All countries classify and assign migrants into specific legal and political categories – or differentiated migration statuses. Discussions of integration need to examine how these processes of official classification condition the level of integration for all migrants, as well as the variations within each of the migrant status categories. There is no clear-cut dichotomy between citizens and non-citizens in Western migrant states. Rather, there is a continuum of rights, with different legal statuses conferring different rights to different categories of migrants. Although many migrants do not gain full formal citizenship, many still have access to some (although not all) important social and economic rights.

Given the importance of access to social rights and material resources, the process whereby migrants become participants, and the extent to which they will be integrated into a particular society, will crucially depend on which rights they are legally allocated and how easily they can acquire citizenship or permanent residence status. The allocation of rights fundamentally determines access to education; access and treatment in the labour market, the welfare state, and social services, including the health service; and political participation. It also influences whether or not migrants can have family members living with them.

The migration status of survey respondents on arrival in Ireland is shown in Table 2.7. Within each of the four groups, particular types of migration status dominate. More than 90 per cent of Chinese respondents came to Ireland as students, while over 70 per cent of Nigerian respondents were first classified as asylum seekers.

Around two-thirds of Lithuanian respondents came to Ireland as EU citizens. Close to half of Indian respondents came to Ireland as work visa holders, and another 30 per cent came as spouses of such visa holders.

Participants in the Indian focus group felt that these figures under-represented the number of Indian students in the country and over-represented the number of spouses of visa holders. Participants in the Chinese focus group drew attention to the fact that the figures reflect the proportion of Chinese in Ireland who have arrived more recently from mainland China as students, rather than members of the 'settled' Chinese community. It is important to note that, in fact, the former are beginning to comprise the majority of Chinese people in Ireland. However, the differing needs, views, and circumstances of both groups must ultimately inform policy.

Table 2.7: Status of survey respondents on arrival in Ireland

Status	Chinese (%)	Indian (%)	Lithuanian (%)	Nigerian (%)
Student visa holder	93	11	3	7
Asylum seeker	0	0	2	72
EEA/Swiss citizen	0	0	67	1
Working visa holder	1	46	0	0
Spouse of work visa/permit holder	0	31	3	2
Work permit holder	2	6	15	5
Tourist visa holder	2	0	4	1
Undocumented	0	0	1	4
Not answered	2	6	4	8

We also recorded the current status of survey respondents, many of whom have the same status as on arrival (see Table 2.8). The main changes have taken place among Nigerian respondents and, to a lesser extent, among Indian and Chinese respondents. Only 15 per cent of Nigerian respondents were still asylum seekers. Many had changed status to 'leave to remain' – this included people granted leave to remain on the basis of Irish-born children (IBC). Of the 17,917 applications under IBC 05, 16,693 were granted and 1,119 refused. Those granted residency under IBC 05 included 6,145 Nigerians, 1,074 Chinese, and 479 Indian nationals (IBC Results, INIS). A minority of Nigerian respondents have obtained work permits or visas. Similarly, a number of Chinese respondents who arrived as students have obtained work permits or visas, and a number of Indian respondents who initially came to Ireland as dependents now have work permits in their own right.

Table 2.8: Current status of survey respondents

Status	Chinese (%)	Indian (%)	Lithuanian (%)	Nigerian (%)
Student visa holder	77	6	0	5
Asylum seeker	1	0	0	15
EEA/Swiss citizen	2	0	94	2
Working visa/work permit	11	69	1	6
Spouse of work visa/permit holder	2	15	1	3
Leave to remain	1	2	0	34
Family reunification	0	0	0	1
Undocumented	2	0	0	1
Other	4	8	2	24
Not answered	0	0	2	9

Some of the major migration statuses at the time of carrying out the research, and some of the complex and differentiated rights and entitlements associated with them, are discussed below. Many of the migration status categories are likely to change with the enactment of the Immigration, Residence and Protection Bill 2008.

EU/EEA Citizens

All EU citizens and European Economic Area (EEA)/Swiss nationals are entitled to unrestricted access to live in Ireland for the purpose of employment or self-employment,[4] or if they are financially self-sufficient. Up to May 2004, this meant that citizens from the 15 EU member states (plus Norway, Iceland, Liechtenstein, and Switzerland) could live and work in Ireland. After May 2004, ten new states – including Poland and Lithuania – joined the EU. These are sometimes referred to as the EU ten or accession states. Citizens from these states also have unrestricted access to the Irish labour market. According to the 2006 Census, there are 275,775 people with EU nationality living in Ireland (CSO 2006). In 2004, the Government introduced the Habitual Residence Conditions, which meant that an EU worker had to be in the State for two years before being allowed to access various forms of social welfare.

Non-EU/EEA Citizens

Non-EU/EEA citizens can enter through various migration mechanisms, depending on the intentions of the migrant. For the purposes of our research, the key entry mechanisms were labour migrants or their spouses, students, and asylum seekers.

---

4   This does not apply to citizens of Bulgaria and Romania, the most recent additions to the EU.

Labour Migrants

There are two main avenues of entry to Ireland for migrant workers: work permits and the new 'green card system', which has replaced the former system of granting working visas or work authorisations to highly skilled migrants.

From about 1999 to the end of March 2007, about 120,000 new work permits were issued (DETE 2007). During this period, work permits were issued on a temporary, renewable, yearly basis. They were non-transferable and tied to specific jobs. Through a labour market test, employers had to demonstrate that it had not been possible to fill the vacancy with workers from Ireland or the EEA. Employers had to pay €500 for the permit, which was not meant to be passed to the employee. Work permits were tied to the employer. An employee who wished to change job had to leave the country to apply for a new permit. The work permit system was largely within the purview of the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment (DETE). Work permit holders could only apply for permission for their spouse and minor dependent children to join them in Ireland after they had been working in Ireland for 12 months, but there was no guarantee their application would be successful (ICI 2006: 21).

In order to meet a skills need, in 2000 the Irish Government introduced a work authorisation/visa system, which issued about 12,927 visas between 2000 and 2005 (NESC 2006: 13). These fast-track visas/authorisations were introduced specifically to facilitate the recruitment of workers in specialist categories: professionals in information technology, construction, and medical. Work visas were more flexible than work permits as they allowed the recipient to move jobs within a specified sector. Unlike work permits, visas were renewable on a two-year basis. People with working visas could apply for permission for their spouse and minor dependent children to join them after three months (ICI 2006: 20-21).

The Employment Permits Act 2006 replaced the work authorisation/work visa system with the green card system. Under this scheme, a green card is granted to the employee for an initial period of two years after which it is 'normally renewed indefinitely'. Only those earning €60,000 or more per annum are automatically eligible to apply. Those earning between €30,000 and €59,999 and working in certain eligible occupations may also be allowed to apply for a green card. The applicant pays the applicable fee for the green card, which is €1,000 for a new permit and €1,500 for an indefinite permit, which may be issued after a two-year period.

Pursuant to the Employment Permits Act 2006, work permits will only be issued in rare circumstances. A labour market test is required; a vacancy must be advertised for three days in a local or national paper to ensure that Irish/EEA nationals have an opportunity to apply for the vacancy. A work permit for up to six months will cost €500, whereas a permit for six months to two years will cost €1,000. The renewal of the permit for three years will cost €1,500. If this is the first work permit the employee has received, then s/he is required to stay with the employer for at least 12 months. A new work permit must be obtained in relation to any employment with a new employer. The spouse and dependents of work permit holders may apply for a spousal work permit, which may be granted on the basis of more favourable conditions (e.g. no labour market test is required).

Students

Students from non-EU countries can come to Ireland to study and often enrol in English-language classes or third-level education. In 2005, there were about 28,000 non-EEA students registered in Ireland (DoJ Immigration Bill outline Policy Proposals 2005). Students have to be registered on a recognised full-time course. Most are permitted to work for a maximum of 20 hours per week during term time and up to 40 hours during holidays. A student from China, for example, would apply to the Irish Embassy in Beijing and pay a fee of €60 for an entry visa. S/he will also have to pay for the course before they are allowed in the country. Most third-level institutions charge at least double the tuition fee for foreign students. Student visa holders have no statutory right to family reunification (INIS 2007) but students' family members have, on occasion, been granted permission to enter and/or remain in Ireland on a case-by-case basis.

Asylum seekers

Some non-EEA citizens enter Ireland through the asylum system by applying for refugee status. The Refugee Act (1996) defines a refugee as 'a person who, owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his or her nationality or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself or herself of the protection of that country'.

From 1992 to the end of 2006, there were approximately 73,000 applications for asylum in Ireland (ORAC 2007). Asylum seekers who entered Ireland before April 2000 were usually in receipt of full Supplementary Welfare Assistance (SWA) payments and rent supplement if they were able to secure private, rented accommodation. However, asylum seekers who arrived in the State after April 2000 are provided for through a system of dispersal and direct provision. Those who are successful are granted refugee status, subsidiary protection or sometimes 'humanitarian leave to remain'.

Asylum seekers are now housed at various locations around the country. In contrast to earlier asylum seekers, those arriving after April 2000 receive €19.10 per adult and €9.52 per child per week in addition to the provision of fixed meals and basic accommodation. Asylum seekers, apart from those allowed access to the labour marker under an exceptional measure introduced in 1999 whose applications have not yet been finally determined, are not allowed to work.

Although it was envisaged that asylum applications would be dealt with in six months, some have been waiting 18 months or longer for a decision. Asylum seekers can be given 'humanitarian leave to remain' at the discretion of the Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform if they fail to gain refugee status but have sufficient grounds for remaining in Ireland (for example, due to an illness or because their form of persecution is not covered by the Geneva Convention). Some persons have also been granted 'subsidiary protection' since Ireland's implementation of the so-called Asylum Qualification Directive. Persons granted refugee status, subsidiary protection, or humanitarian leave to remain are normally given a 12-month residence permit, which is renewable.

Those granted refugee status have similar rights and entitlements to Irish citizens but cannot vote in national elections and referenda. They can apply for an Irish passport after three years. Prior to this, they need to register with the Garda National Immigration Bureau (GNIB) but they do not have to pay for the registration card.

Parents of Irish-Citizen Children

In 2005, following the Citizenship Referendum of 2004, the Minister for Justice announced a scheme to grant residency to individuals who were parents of Irish-born children (IBC) born before 1st January 2005.

The residency rights of individuals with IBC status is similar to those on humanitarian leave to remain. However, it is reviewed after two years and, generally, renewed for a further three years. Migrants who have been granted permission to remain in the State on the basis of their parentage to an Irish-citizen child are allowed, and are in fact obliged, to work since they need to become 'economically viable to remain in the State' (ICI 2006: 22).

The status of persons with leave to remain and of parents of Irish-born children is discretionary and uncodified. Therefore, it leaves such people in an uncertain and vulnerable position.

Irregular migrants

Irregular migrants are undocumented and/or unauthorised to live and work in Ireland. It is difficult to ascertain the exact number of irregular migrants in Ireland since they do not appear in official statistics. International Organisation for Migration (IOM) consultants estimate that between 15,000 and 50,000 irregular migrants reside in Ireland, while others point to higher figures (NESC 2006: 18).

Many irregular migrants have become undocumented/unauthorised for a variety of reasons: their work permit, visa or student visa may have expired; they may have left a job because of exploitation; or they may be victims of trafficking. Irregular migrants lack many of the basic social and political rights accorded to citizens and other migrants, and often do not approach information and support services due to a fear of deportation.

GNIB Registration

All non-EU/EEA nationals who are not visiting as tourists must register with the GNIB within three months of their arrival in Ireland. The issuing of residence permits used to be free but, since 2005, the GNIB charges €100 to issue a Certificate of Registration. The GNIB offices are based on Burgh Quay in Dublin and in major Garda stations in areas outside of Dublin. In Dublin, individuals usually take a number (about 200-300 are allocated every day) and are seen in turn. The migrants' papers are photocopied before a stamp is put in their passport.

Stamp One is for work permit holders; Stamp Two is for students who are permitted to work; Stamp Two A is for students who are not allowed to work; Stamp Three is for long-term visitors or spouse dependants; Stamp Four is for those on leave to remain, married to an EU citizen, long-term residency and refugees; Stamp Five is for Irish citizens with dual nationality; and Stamp Six is for those with indefinite leave to remain. These stamps have important implications for a migrant's subsequent access to rights and resources (Loyal 2006).

Summary

It is clear from the CSO, and from our profiles of survey respondents and interviewees, that the migrant population in Ireland is diverse and heterogeneous. Motivations for moving to Ireland vary, but an existing link between Ireland and other countries facilitates the choice of Ireland as a migrant

destination. The diversity of migrant experiences before moving to Ireland and the status of migrants on arrival affect their opportunities for personal and professional development in Ireland. In this regard, status on arrival is central in determining access to resources, services, and support networks. In the following chapters, we investigate how these experiences, as mediated through status, affect different aspects of people's everyday lives in Ireland.

POLITICAL INDICATORS OF INTEGRATION

Introduction

Access to Services

Political and Civic Participation and Activities

Conclusion

INTRODUCTION

In chapter two, we identified the main statuses of survey respondents and interviewees on their arrival in Ireland. These were student visa holders, working visa holders and their spouses, asylum seekers, international students, unauthorised migrants, EU citizens, and working permit holders. We focused on status because it is the link between migration policies and the everyday practices and experiences of migrants. Status is important because it determines the rights and entitlements of migrants, and shapes their access to resources and services, and their capacity to participate in society. As such, we first provide an overview of respondents' and interviewees' use of services, followed by a discussion of data pertaining to their engagement of Irish civic and political structures.

Access to Services

We asked survey respondents about their use of a variety of services. Knowledge of services was generally practical and utilitarian – respondents learned about services as they needed to, often from family and friends. We also asked respondents for their reasons for not using services. In most instances, this was because the service was not needed. However, in a small number of cases, respondents answered that they had no knowledge of how to access the service. This was particularly the case for Chinese respondents.

Many interviewees talked about the lack of available information about Irish institutions and practices. One respondent noted that 'people don't know where to go, it's hard to get information' (L12). This included information on the health service, taxes, registration of cars, social welfare, getting a PPS number, setting up a bank account, where to look for housing, as well as information about cultural differences and practices. The issue of translation services for all State institutions emerged repeatedly. 'Language is the main obstacle. They don't always get translators in State institutions, social welfare and healthcare, and even for Garda stations' (L7).

Health Services

We asked survey respondents if they had used health services in Ireland (see Figure 3.1). Usage varied from 40 per cent of Chinese respondents to more than 90 per cent of Nigerian respondents. In most instances, respondents used GPs, hospitals, community health centres and medical cards, as well as private health insurance providers.

We also asked respondents who had not used health services about their reasons for not doing so. In most cases, respondents who had not used health services had not needed them.

Many of the interviewees mentioned problems with the standard of the health service. These problems did not just have an adverse impact on migrants but on the population as a whole.

'There was a friend who was waiting there, he actually slipped, fell, broke a wine glass into his hand. He had a bottle stuck in his hand and they refused to look at him for two hours. And he was bleeding, and they just tied the whole thing up and said you're in [the] queue. This was around 11/12 midnight. And he had to [have] surgery and everything. Fair enough, they did everything, but for somebody who's got a bottle stuck in his hand, and to

wait for two hours, it's just not acceptable... I've had friends who've been Irish, who have had similar experiences as well, so... I think the general thing is there's just a lack of proper health facilities' (I16)

Figure 3.1: Percentage of survey respondents who have used health services in Ireland, by community
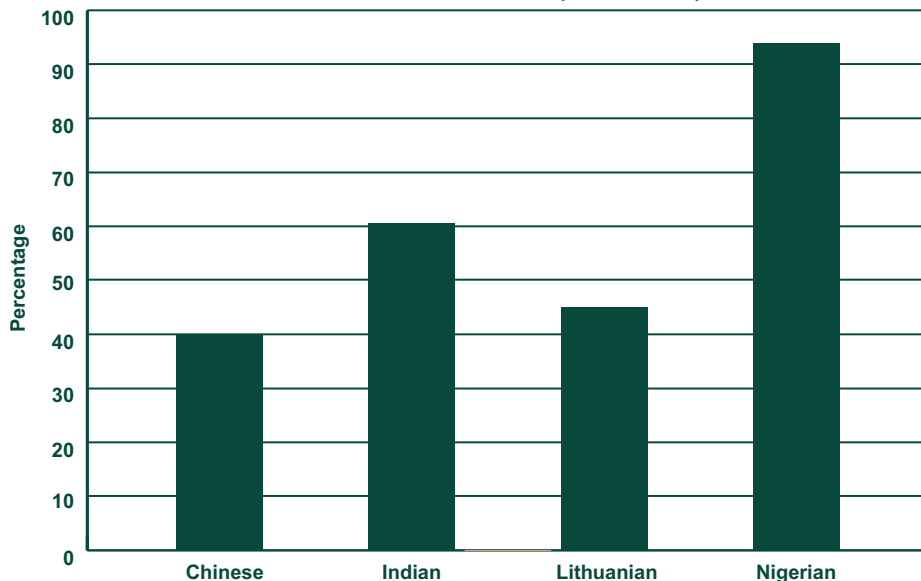
Another interviewee noted how hard the hospital staff worked but they were simply under-funded and short of staff.

'I didn't have any particular problems with the hospitals and I had only one problem with Children's Hospital in [Dublin]. But I think everybody must have gone through it considering they are so busy there. You could always get those kinds of answers. This is nothing to do with discrimination... Everybody is really so busy and doing such a stressful job' (I7)

It should be noted that long waiting lists and very high costs often meant that many migrants self-medicated or travelled back home to be treated. One interviewee took her daughter with her to be treated. 'I went to Lithuania for six weeks, but it's only like we had five days' holiday on the beach. It was all medical stuff, my medical, her medical' (L18). In this way, many migrants – particularly those with ease of travel – prefer to return to their home country for medical treatment rather than wait for treatment in Ireland.

Another mentioned the irony of long waiting lists due to a shortage of labour while foreign workers were restricted from entering the country to do the job.

'There's a long waiting list if you want to get something done... I don't know why. If you want to get an X-ray done you could be waiting for four months. Of course, you could be dead in four months, just because of an X-ray. And yet they're crying because no one will do the X-ray – no qualified person. But if there are so many people willing to do the work from India and Pakistan, who are qualified to do the job, they are stuck with the visa. So if the vacancy is not filled locally, why not open the economy?' (I8)

Childcare

Since many migrants to Ireland have young children, we asked survey respondents and interviewees about the use of childcare services. The percentage of survey respondents who reported that they have children varied from 13 per cent of Chinese to 60 per cent of Indians, 62 per cent of Lithuanians and 90 per cent of Nigerians. However, not all of these children live in Ireland. We asked respondents with children in Ireland what childcare facilities, if any, they used.

For Lithuanians and Nigerians, family and friends were the most important providers of childcare services (see also Pillinger 2007). In the case of Chinese respondents, 25 per cent of respondents used crèches (including private, employer-provided and community crèches), but it is important to note that only eight Chinese respondents reported having children in Ireland. Close to 60 per cent of Indian respondents with children in Ireland reported using no childcare facilities: the corresponding figures for Chinese and Nigerian were 38 per cent and 35 per cent. Just over 20 per cent of Lithuanians reported using no childcare facilities in Ireland.

There were no clear patterns in the weekly cost of childcare facilities, other than respondents in three of the four groups – Indian, Lithuanian and Nigerian – were most likely to reply that they spent nothing on childcare on a weekly basis. Only 5 per cent of Lithuanian and Nigerian respondents paid more than €150 a week on childcare. The corresponding figure for Chinese respondents was 38 per cent, and close to 13 per cent for Indian respondents.

A single parent we interviewed talked about the difficulty of going to work because of a lack of crèche facilities or because of their extremely high cost. She brought her mother over to Ireland to help her with childminding. However, the mother spoke very little English and felt isolated and lonely in the house during the day (L4). This is also experienced by two-parent families, who do not have family networks in Ireland to rely on for assistance with childcare. One interviewee commented that 'the other problem here is family back up, and I've now got a little one so then to manage childcare, all those hassles are not there back home' (I1). With limited social networks, this is further exacerbated by finding someone you can trust.

> 'If you want to go out for a night and to try to organise something, to get someone you need lots of recommendations, you don't know who is going to look after your little ones' (I1)

As discussed in chapter six, the cost of crèches and childcare not only limits access to work but also social life.

> 'I've got friends regularly going to each others houses but... right now it is limited to houses because all of us have kids and, because all our couples have children, it is really difficult to find a babysitter. Sometimes even the cost factor is prohibitive for some of them. So it's hard for all of us to arrange a babysitter and all of us go out so it will usually be at homes rather than going out... In that sense, you're limited by where you could go and what you could do' (I1)

Despite the recent increase in child benefit, it is still a cost that constrains parents' wider activities beyond work and home.

Legal and Advice Services

When we asked respondents about their use of legal and advice services, there were stark differences between the four national groups (see Figure 3.2).

Figure 3.2: Percentage of respondents who have used legal and/or advice services in Ireland, by community
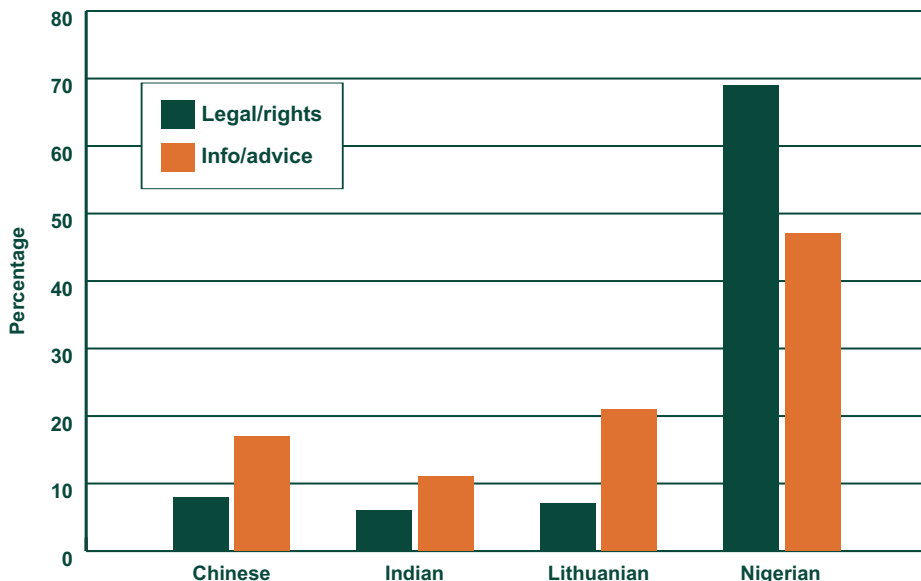
Nigerian respondents had made most use of legal and rights services as well as information and advice services. Close to 70 per cent had used legal/rights services, while almost 50 per cent had used information/advice services. For the other three groups, information/advices services were most used, with 11 per cent of Indians, 17 per cent of Chinese and 21 per cent of Lithuanians reporting that they had used these services since coming to Ireland. For all groups, the Citizens' Information Centres were highlighted as important providers of information and advice. However, the sources of information about these services varied. Chinese and Lithuanian respondents were most likely to receive information from family and friends; Indians from the internet; and Nigerians from the Government.

Political and Civic Participation and Activities

Liberal democratic societies pre-suppose citizens who exercise rights and responsibilities in a balanced way and participate in political and civic activities. Political and civic participation covers a broad range of activities, including voting in local and European elections, membership in political parties, and interaction between migrant-led organisations and the government. The extent to which migrants are involved in political and civic life in Ireland, and thus in shaping policies that affect them, is a crucial issue for the process of integration.

Voting in Ireland

Everyone resident in Ireland is entitled to register to vote in the country. We asked respondents if they were registered to vote in Ireland (see Figure 3.3).

Figure 3.3: Percentage of respondents registered to vote, by community
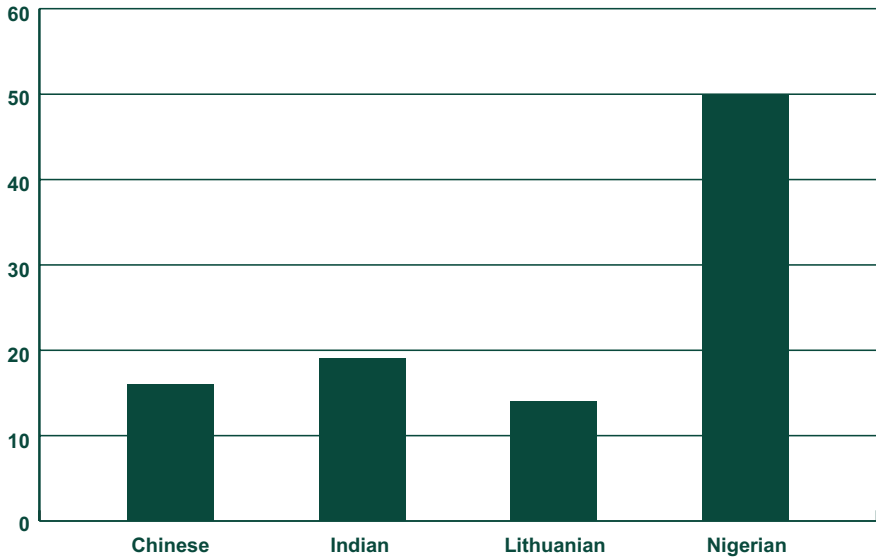
Nigerian respondents were most likely to answer in the affirmative, with just over 50 per cent registered to vote in the country. Levels of voting registration were low among all other national groups, with between 10 and 20 per cent of Chinese, Indian, and Lithuanian respondents registered to vote. When we asked those who were not registered to vote why they had not registered, the answers varied between communities (see Figure 3.4).

Figure 3.4: Reasons for not registering to vote in Ireland, by community
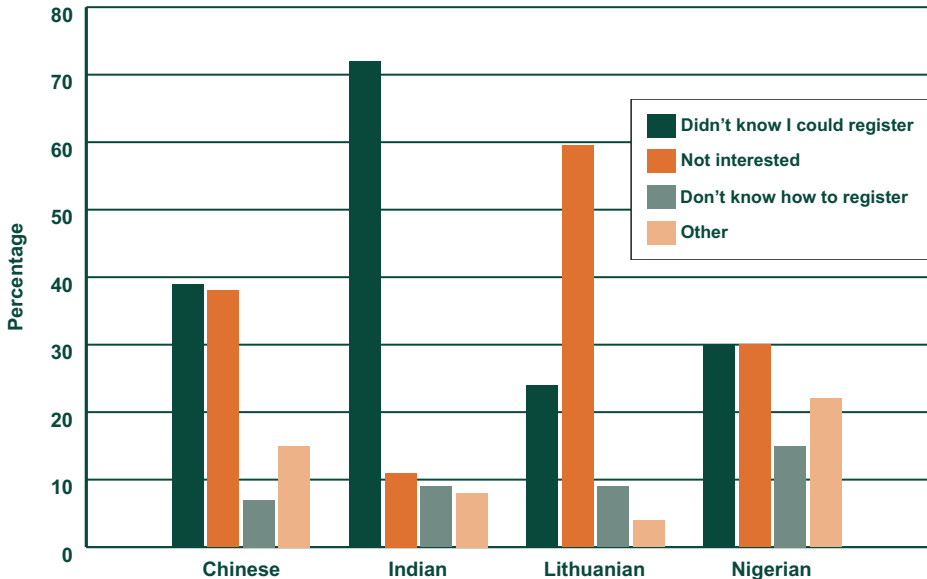
More than 70 per cent of Indian respondents reported that they did not know they could register to vote. In contrast, almost 60 per cent of Lithuanian respondents replied that they were not interested in registering. More than one-third of Chinese and just less than one-third of Nigerians reported that they did not know they could register to vote. Similar figures in both national groups reported that they were not interested in registering to vote in Ireland.

We also asked those who were registered to vote if they had voted in local elections. Of those registered, more than 40 per cent of Nigerians had voted in local elections. Figures for the other three national groups were significantly lower, ranging from 11 per cent of Indians to 21 per cent of Lithuanians. This compares to 53 per cent of Dublin voters and 61 per cent of voters outside Dublin who voted in the 2004 local elections (Kavanagh 2004). This should be interpreted with care, since many respondents may not yet have had an opportunity to vote since arriving in Ireland.

Political and Trade Union Activities

Across all four national groups, there were very low levels of participation in political activities (see Figure 3.5). Between 1 and 2 per cent of respondents replied that they were politically active in Ireland. This is in contrast to trade union activity. Although Chinese respondents had very low rates of participation in trade unions, the figures for all other groups were higher. Seven per cent of Indians, 8 per cent of Lithuanians and 25 per cent of Nigerians were involved in trade unions.

There were gender differences in these figures. For example, Indian and Nigerian women – particularly those in medical occupations – were significantly more likely to be involved in trade unions than their male counterparts. In contrast, Lithuanian men were more likely to be involved in trade unions than Lithuanian women.

The low rates of trade union participation can be compared with national trends. The 2004 Quarterly Household National Survey (QHNS) found that trade union membership had declined from 45 per cent in 1994 to just over one-third in 2004. Hence, although union membership is low generally, it is very low among migrants. There have been attempts by trade union organisations such as SIPTU to recruit more East European workers by employing Polish and Lithuanian shop stewards. Equally, the Irish Nurses Organisation has an overseas section, which contains a number of Filipina/o and Indian nurses.

The low levels of participation in political activity may be explained by a number of factors and may vary according to status, conditions in country of origin, and feeling of security in the country. Working long hours and wanting to spend what little time one has with one's family or pursuing religious or recreational practices seem to play a more important role. Equally, interviewees tended to express little interest in politics generally, although one respondent noted a lack of discussion about migration issues.

> *'Interestingly, this whole election nobody talked about immigration and... 10 per cent of the populous is immigrants. And you know what would be the political reason, because they need people. They need people but they cannot talk because people think how that is wrong... I followed these elections very, very closely... just seeing what are the issues'* (I4)

Figure 3.5: Levels of participation in trade union and political activities, by community
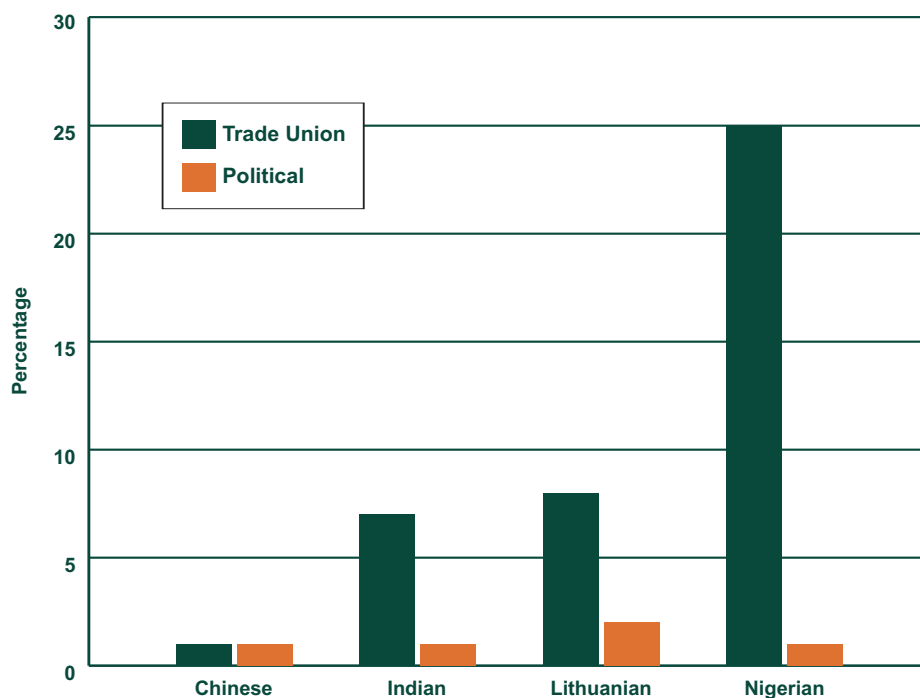
Nonetheless, many felt that opportunities for full political participation are key, both in Ireland and in their country of origin. For example, members of the Chinese focus group felt that political participation stems from a commitment to making a life in Ireland. They pointed out that recent arrivals cannot make that commitment because of their temporary status. They also noted that some migrants do not come from a culture of voting and need to be made aware of its importance.

However, some interviewees were involved in the development of a politically active community in Ireland. They noted that the Government has taken some initiatives to make the integration of migrants in the country possible, such as including members of the migrant community in An Garda Síochána. The creation of opportunities for ethnic minority participation in politics, through the provision of voting rights at local level, was commented on favourably. The election of two members of the Nigerian community to local councils in Portlaoise and Ennis was a source of pride and inspiration.

'This is a very possible thing. And I think immigrants should tap vigorously into that opportunity, even to get our voices heard at the local level, and then we can work our way up. Overall, I think Ireland is a very positive society, but we need to work hard, especially the Government' (N1)

One interviewee suggested that migrants should be allowed to vote in national as well as local elections.

'My taxes do not end in my local government or county. The taxes that we pay go as far as the national level for the Government to do whatever it has to do' (N1)

Civic and Community Activity

We asked survey respondents and interviewees about their involvement in civic and political activities. We were particularly interested in activities based around national origin (such as attempting community mobilisation, service provision, or social and cultural activities). Some of these activities target people of one national origin (for example The Lithuanian Association), while others target people from a variety of national origins, such as Africa Centre. Others focus on specific social sub-groups, such as nurses, or on specific sub-national groups, such as the Irish Malayalee Association.

Migrants have sought to establish their own organisations in the service of their own (sub-) national groups and constituencies. The construction of a community includes the provision of services and new community-focused media resources (particularly radio and newspaper, with a growing use of cable television stations), and the promotion of networking and intercultural engagement. It also responds to the need to develop their own voices and position within the Irish political and policy spheres and structures. These common goals are shaped by the particular migration circumstances and cultures of the people who make up the organisations for which they work and represent, and reflect the nascent dynamism of a diverse Irish civil society.

Within Ireland, there has been an increase in migrant-led civic organisations and attempts to create and mobilise national communities in parallel with the increase in migration to Ireland (Feldman *et al* 2005; Feldman 2006). While there is a notable amount of migrant participation in Irish civic life, as noted in the survey findings, respondents and interviewees reported low levels of participation in civic/community organisations and activities. Reflecting wider trends in Irish society, this is largely because, at an individual level, participants in the study are focused on the everyday struggles of establishing a secure footing in terms of employment, housing, family matters, and so on.

However, several interviewees were very involved in establishing organisations and promoting civic and community involvement. The involvement of migrant organisations and community representatives in the undertaking of this research provided much insight into the dynamics and factors shaping these activities. Participants across all four groups noted the importance of the space created by civic activity for socialising, whether within or across communities, as an essential source of interaction for all who participate.

The settled Chinese in Ireland have long organised weekend gatherings and Chinese schools for educational and cultural activities for children. Following the increase in migration from mainland China, many felt there was a need to provide services and support for Chinese students and young professionals, to increase awareness of their rights, help them negotiate the Irish system, and provide interpretation (along with Chinese language and dance classes that are open to all). The Chinese Information Centre was one of the first such organisations. University-based Chinese student unions have also come to play a key support role. More recently, the Chinese Professional Association was established. It focuses on helping its members to adjust to life in Ireland. It hosts social events to encourage opportunities for cross-cultural networking and cooperation, as well as those that focus on employment issues, business communication training, and new legislation. It often invites members of Government, political parties and service providers to seminars.

In response to the notable growth in the size of the Chinese migrant population in Ireland, information, media, cultural and intercultural activities, and advocacy have become important goals to give a voice to the growing constituency, promote its visibility in Ireland, and strengthen a sense of community for the majority of those whose presence here is ultimately temporary. Although older/Cantonese and newer/Mandarin-speaking associations have typically worked separately from one another, Chinese organisations are working towards promoting exchanges between them, as well as with other migrant communities, and Irish society as a whole. Organisations such as the Chinese Irish Cultural Academy and the Southside Chinese Residents' Association are examples of this. The annual Chinese New Year festival also plays an increasingly important role in creating a public space for these goals and activities.

Indian organisations have been typically characterised by small, locally based organisations, which are organised according to regional, state, or religious criteria. They are involved primarily in social activities, such as food, or celebrating national or religious holidays, and activities organised around monthly screenings of Indian films at the Irish Film Institute. Like other such organisations, these events create a 'home away from home' (I1).

Other organisations, such as the Ireland India Council, typically seek to provide information in Ireland about Indian culture and/or help Indians settle here by providing information via internet sites rather than to influence policy. In many cases, religious organisations such as *gurdwaras* serve as more than just religious centres. They provide information, a place to network around employment, and support for people who encounter racism. The Irish Sikh Council is also involved in a number of educational activities that attempt to give a broader knowledge and understanding of the Sikh way of life.

Civic and community activity among Lithuanian migrants has begun in earnest over the past few years. The Lithuanian Association of Ireland is comprised of six regional community organisations across Ireland, which respond to the social, cultural, and educational needs of Lithuanian migrants. It hosts cultural events, weekend schools for children, and provides information and networking assistance. The Lithuanian Business Association focuses on promoting a better understanding of Ireland-Lithuania economic matters, particularly trade, investment, and entrepreneurship opportunities through seminars, trips to Lithuania, and networking activities. There are plans to establish a one-stop Lithuanian centre to cater for the full range of migrant-related needs. A key factor in the success of these initiatives stems from financial support sourced from Lithuania.

Although many Lithuanians are extremely active within these organisations, others prefer to socialise with people from different countries and to leave the promotion of Lithuanian culture at home. Many lament that, because so many people only socialise within Lithuanian networks, they are missing out on many opportunities and experiences. Some noted that they often felt peer pressure to participate because those who did were seen as 'good' Lithuanians who loved their country.

In many ways, African migrants have been the most active participants in civic and community organisations in Ireland. This is the result of several factors, including the predominance of asylum seekers among these national groups,

previous involvement in political and activist work, and the urgent circumstances surrounding the rapid shift to in-migration in the 1990s. While some of the largest and oldest organisations have been 'pan-African' organisations working at the national level, smaller, nationally based organisations have also emerged in recent years.

For Nigerians, organisations such as the Nigerian Association of Ireland and the Igbo Association of Ireland (which is also a member of the wider New Communities Partnership) exist to sponsor and represent Nigerian interests. Both organisations seek to support a diversity of Nigerian migrants in Ireland, provide a platform that promotes their civic and political participation, and create a positive image of Nigeria and Nigerian people in Ireland through a variety of activities.

This study suggests that, while Nigerians are typically very involved in civic activity during the asylum process, their participation decreases after gaining refugee or other statuses as the often-overwhelming demands of finding accommodation and employment take precedence in terms of time and energy. Moreover, many note that they tend to participate less in such activities as they are seeking to 'move on' from their asylum experience and look ahead to rebuilding a life in Ireland.

However, interviewees also noted the difficulties of balancing their needs and responsibilities as migrants with their needs and responsibilities as residents of Ireland. Some suggested that their lack of involvement with migrant groups and organisations was due to the exclusive national focus of such organisations. They felt that civic activity should centre on other, broader interests and concerns.

Conclusion

As we have noted, a migrant's legal and political status is important because it determines their rights and entitlements, and shapes their subsequent access to resources and services. This manifests itself in their everyday interaction with and dependence on various services including the health service, legal services, and childcare services.

Liberal democratic societies depend on citizens who participate in political and civic activities, including voting in local and European elections, as well as having membership of political parties, trade unions, and migrant-led organisations. We noted that, although the various national groups differed in terms of their political activity and trade union participation, these were, on the whole, quite low. By contrast, civic and community activity, again different according to national origin, has generally been more vibrant and significant for migrants.

Thus, while the mode of entry and legal status of the migrant is crucial in their subsequent integration, these are not the only important explanatory processes that are shaping integration. The broader conditions of reception, such as being made welcome, having access to vital services and benefits, having access to appropriate information services, and guaranteed civic rights are also crucial.

ECONOMIC INDICATORS OF INTEGRATION

Introduction/Overview

*Employment Background, Occupations,
and Finding Work*

Employment in Ireland

Education

*Change in Financial, Professional,
and Personal Situation*

Income and Cost of Living

Conclusion

INTRODUCTION/OVERVIEW

As is the case globally, and Ireland is no exception, many migrants move abroad to find work or to improve their basic standard of living. Employment not only allows for the generation of income for subsistence, it also provides a social status and identity for individuals. Moreover, employment has important implications for experiences in other sectors of society; it is an important means for establishing social connections, and developing language skills and cultural competencies. It has also been recognised that, without a secure material financial basis, it is difficult to participate in society.

This section of the report discusses data pertaining to a broad range of material factors, including migrants' employment prior to and upon arrival in Ireland; their experiences of finding work, having their qualifications recognised, or being promoted; their income levels; and poverty. It also examines their treatment at work.

Employment Background, Occupations, and Finding Work
Occupational Status Before Coming to Ireland

We asked survey respondents about their employment situation before coming to Ireland to ascertain their occupational background, skill levels, and level of occupational mobility. In the vast majority of cases, respondents were either working full time or were full-time students, with 74 per cent of survey respondents in paid employment and 20.9 per cent in full-time education. However, the proportions varied between communities.

Of Indian respondents, 87 per cent were in full-time employment, while 9 per cent were full-time students before coming to Ireland; 86 per cent of Nigerians were employed and 8 per cent were full-time students; just over 70 per cent of Lithuanians were employed, with 14 per cent in full-time education. By contrast, only 40 per cent of Chinese were in full-time employment while 52 per cent were full-time students. There were small numbers of part-time students for all communities (less than 2 per cent).

In general, rates of self-employment prior to migration to Ireland were low, with the exception of Nigerian respondents, 27 per cent of whom were self-employed. Rates of unemployment prior to migration were also low. The exception is among Lithuanian respondents, more than 10 per cent of whom were looking for work or were involved in unpaid work. Participants in the Lithuanian focus group suggested that the level of unemployment has decreased, but that people continue to migrate because pay in Lithuania remains low.

We also asked those who were employed or self-employed to specify the nature of their work prior to migrating to Ireland. When we classified these responses using CSO 2006 Intermediate Level of Occupational Groups, interesting differences emerged between the four national groups. Indian respondents tended to be clustered in high-skilled jobs, with more than half in health-related professions, and close to a quarter in scientific and technical (13 per cent) and computer-related (11 per cent) occupations combined. For Nigerian respondents, more than 25 per cent worked as managers and executives, almost 11 per cent in business and commerce, more than 17 per cent worked in central and local government, and 12 per cent worked in health-related occupations. Just over 5 per cent of Nigerians worked in personal services. The occupational classification

of Lithuanian respondents prior to migration was more diverse. Eighteen per cent worked in sales occupations, and more than 11 per cent in personal services and in building and construction. Slightly over 13 per cent were teachers, and health-related occupations accounted for 6.6 per cent of respondents. For the Chinese respondents who were employed prior to migration to Ireland, almost 24 per cent worked in clerical and office positions, and 21 per cent each worked in personal services and in sales occupations. Almost 8 per cent worked in health-related professions. Managers and executives, teachers, central and local government workers, and communications, warehouse, and transport workers each accounted for 5 per cent.

Job Offer Prior to Arrival

Indian respondents were most likely to have a job offer before arriving in Ireland, with almost 55 per cent reporting a job offer in advance of arrival; this compares to 6 per cent of Chinese respondents and 16 per cent of Nigerian respondents. Roughly half of Lithuanian respondents had a job offer prior to arrival (see Figure 4.1).

Many Indians coming to Ireland were recruited directly through companies or agencies. One noted 'I came through an employment agency... here in Ireland' (I2). Given the high global demand for IT workers, many Indians were recruited and headhunted through proactive employment agencies.

> *'This company was more of like we use a term called "body shoppers". Body shoppers... recruit the people from abroad and put them on a payroll and then supply those people to big companies'* (I4)

Similarly, some Lithuanians who arrived prior to the 2004 EU accession were actively recruited to work in various jobs, including IT and management. One respondent said that an Irish fast-food chain 'was looking for people to employ and came to Lithuania. They took 20 people' (L12).

Figure 4.1: Respondents with a job offer before arriving in Ireland, by community
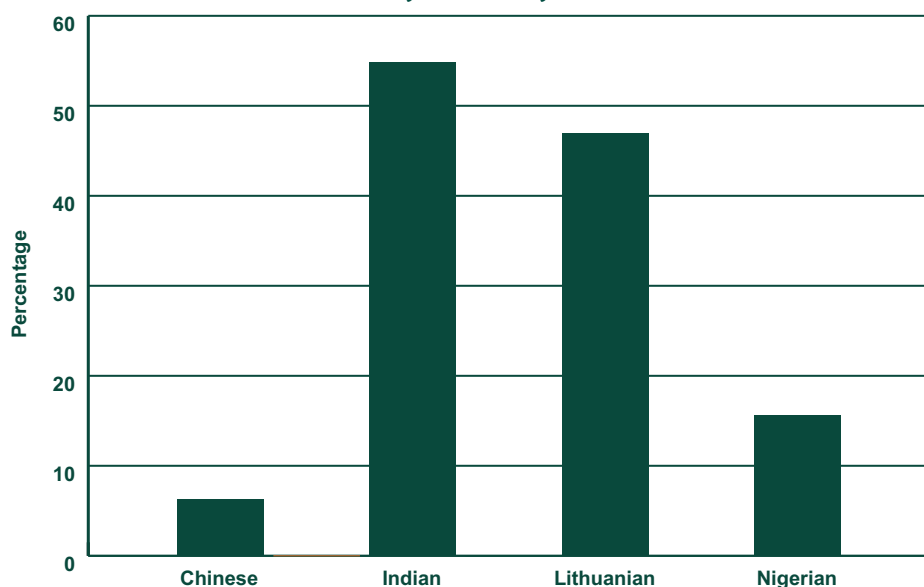
Finding Work

In terms of finding jobs, friends and family play an important role across all four groups. Their importance is particularly high among Lithuanian respondents, with more than 60 per cent reporting that friends and family helped them to find their current job. All communities make use of more traditional sources of information, such as newspapers, public advertisements, and the internet, but there are differences in the usage of media among the national groups. Chinese and Indian respondents were more likely to use the internet; Nigerian respondents were more likely to use newspapers; direct contact with employers was important for all respondents other than Nigerians; and many Indians used recruitment agencies in their home country.

A number of Lithuanians who migrated after 2004 arrived with no job and found out about work through the internet or friends. One respondent had a friend managing a petrol station. '[I] got a phone call from a friend who had been here four years [and was] a manager of a garage' (L11). Three weeks later she was on a plane to Ireland. An Indian interviewee chose to come to Ireland to work as a nurse because her cousin informed her of better working conditions. 'My friends and relatives are in Ireland and they told me that nurses have good job opportunities in Ireland and good recognition so I came' (I2).

This pattern of discovering jobs through word of mouth or from friends employed in low-wage service occupations was identified by a variety of interviewees. 'It happens… usually in those circles where people don't speak English… a friend would go through a friend or they would work in the same factory together' (L13). Another respondent – a spouse of a citizen and therefore eligible to use State job agencies – when asked about whether friends helped him to get a job, retorted 'No, I just put my CV into FÁS' (I8).

The experience of finding a job was not always easy, as explained by an interviewee who was prepared for the reality of job searches and needed determination to succeed.

> *'The key thing… is that I was psychologically very well prepared. It's going to be hard for a Chinese to live in Ireland… before I came here I knew that the job will be the lowest class in the society and even that is hard to find… So, I was prepared. I was ready psychologically, that's very important… I went there every day, every night because my friend told me that, if they say no today, it doesn't necessarily mean they'll say no tomorrow, just try them. So, I tried everything for a month to get a job as lounge staff'* (C5)

Not everyone was so well prepared and many found this experience draining. One interviewee stated that 'for the first month I didn't have a job and I went around submitting my CVs to different agencies'. On being asked 'How did that feel?' he replied 'depressing because I saw so many people… I probably was a bit desperate and wondering if I was going to find a job at all' (L1). The same respondent described how this changed his experience in Ireland.

> *'I think when you have a job you feel more secure and you can explore more and travel around Ireland… initially when I arrived, I didn't go out much or travel outside Dublin or anywhere'* (L1)

Employment in Ireland

Following their arrival in Ireland, there were noticeable differences in the employment rates of the four groups. Lithuanian and Indian respondents recorded very high levels of employment for both men and women. Employment levels for Chinese respondents were lower. A little over half of Nigerian respondents were currently employed, and 13 per cent of Nigerian men and 16 per cent of Nigerian women surveyed were looking for work. Ten per cent of all Chinese respondents, mostly women, were looking for work. This compares with a 63.4 per cent employment participation rate for all persons in Ireland aged 15 and over, and a 4.5 per cent unemployment rate for the general population (CSO 2007).

Differences in levels of employment may be linked to migration status. For example, asylum seekers are not permitted to work and students may not have the time to engage in regular work. However, the noticeable differences in the percentage of people looking for work across the four national groups raises broader questions about hiring practices, recognition of qualifications, and deskilling.

An analysis of the uptake of occupations, using census categories, highlights important differences between migrant communities and the Irish population in general. On the one hand, there is clustering of Nigerian respondents in personal services and childcare, a category that includes care assistants, security, waiters, and hotel staff. On the other hand, close to 50 per cent of Indian respondents work in the healthcare sector, many as highly trained professionals such as nurses and doctors, and just over 15 per cent of Indian respondents work in the computer industry. Lithuanian respondents displayed less evidence of clustering, but there are small concentrations of Lithuanians in personal services and childcare, sales, and building and construction. Lithuanian respondents were the only ones who worked in agriculture. Chinese respondents were most likely to work in sales, other professional services, personal services, and childcare.

Very low numbers reported being self-employed, but those who were often provided services, such as ethnic shops, to other migrants.

Comparing these occupational categories with the sectoral breakdown of occupations provided by the CSO (CSO 2007), we find stark differences with the patterns of occupational stratification characterising the general population in Ireland. According to the latter, 5.5 per cent of the employed population aged over 15 works in agriculture, 13.4 per cent in construction, 14 per cent in wholesale and retail, 6 per cent in hotels and restaurants, 10.2 per cent in health, and 5.8 per cent in other services (CSO 2007).

Changes in Occupational Status and Levels of Occupational Mobility

The extent to which people's occupational categories have changed as a consequence of migration to Ireland is of major interest (see Figures 4.2 to 4.5). This partly indicates whether people's skills, experience, and qualifications are being recognised. In general, a number of Indian respondents were employed in similar occupations in Ireland as in their home country, reflecting their recruitment to work in specific areas (see Figure 4.2).

Figure 4.2: Occupations of Indian respondents before and after migration to Ireland, by CSO occupational categories
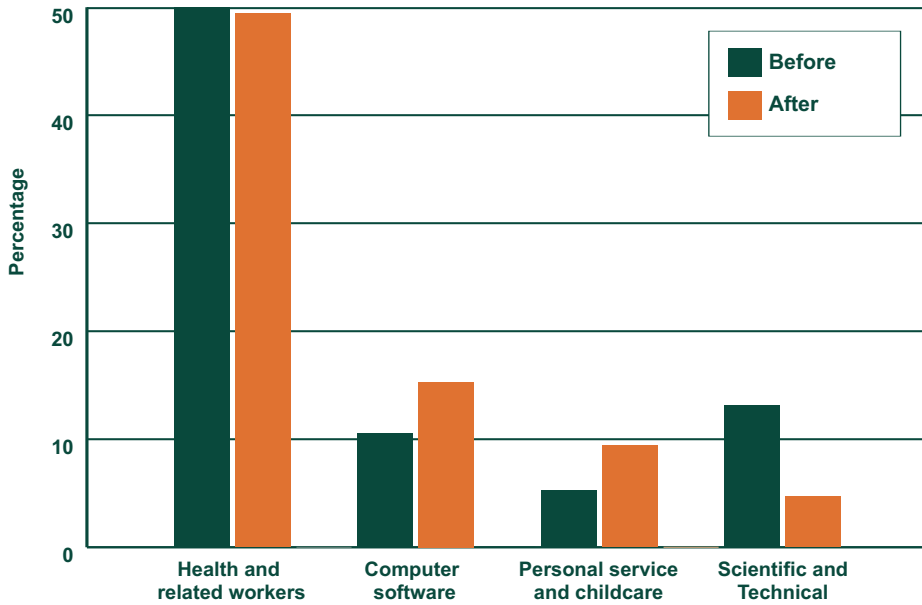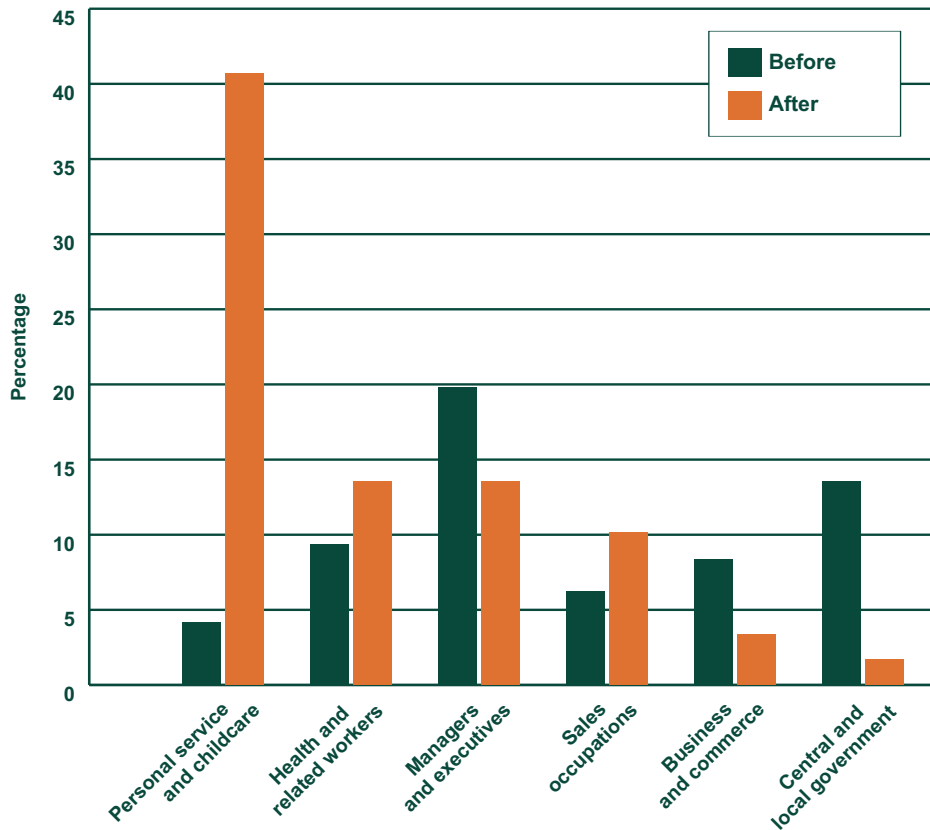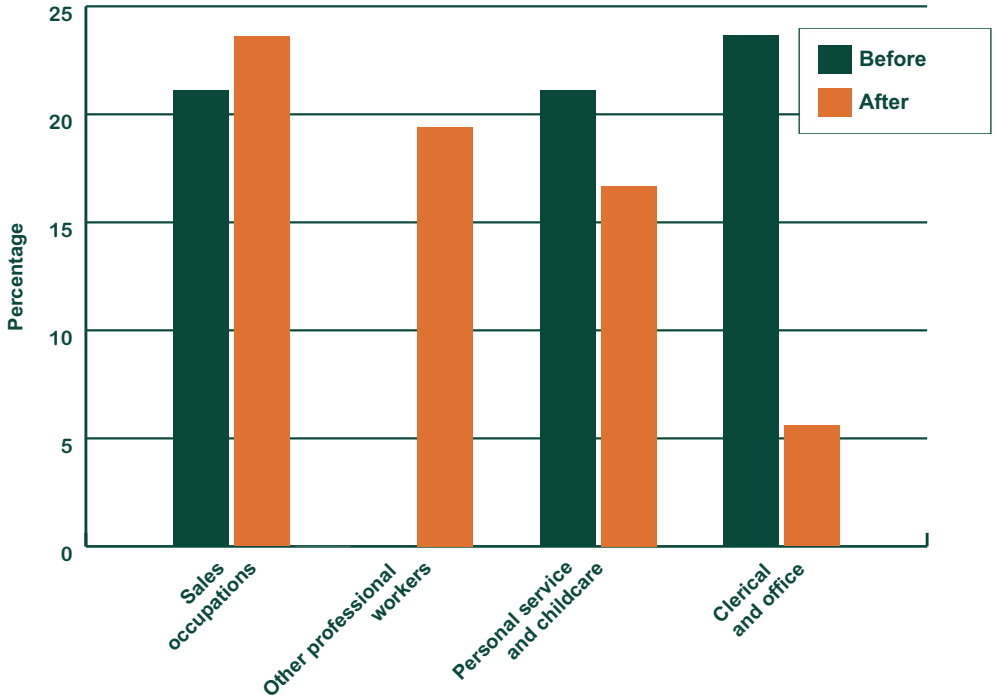

Figure 4.3: Occupations of Nigerian respondents before and after migration to Ireland, by CSO occupational categories

However, Nigerian respondents have experienced a significant change from managerial, business, and government occupations to personal services and childcare (see Figure 4.3).

Many Chinese respondents were full-time students before moving to Ireland. Many are now part-time students in Ireland, working in personal services and sales-related occupations (see Figure 4.4).

Figure 4.4: Occupations of Chinese respondents before and after migration to Ireland, by CSO occupational categories

Lithuanian respondents continued to work in a variety of occupations following migration, but it is interesting to note that Lithuanians working in agriculture were not so employed in their home country (see Figure 4.5).[5]

---

5   This figure represents categories with a significant percentage of workers before and after migration to Ireland and does not include all categories of employment.

Figure 4.5: Occupations of Lithuanian respondents before and after migration to Ireland, by CSO occupational categories
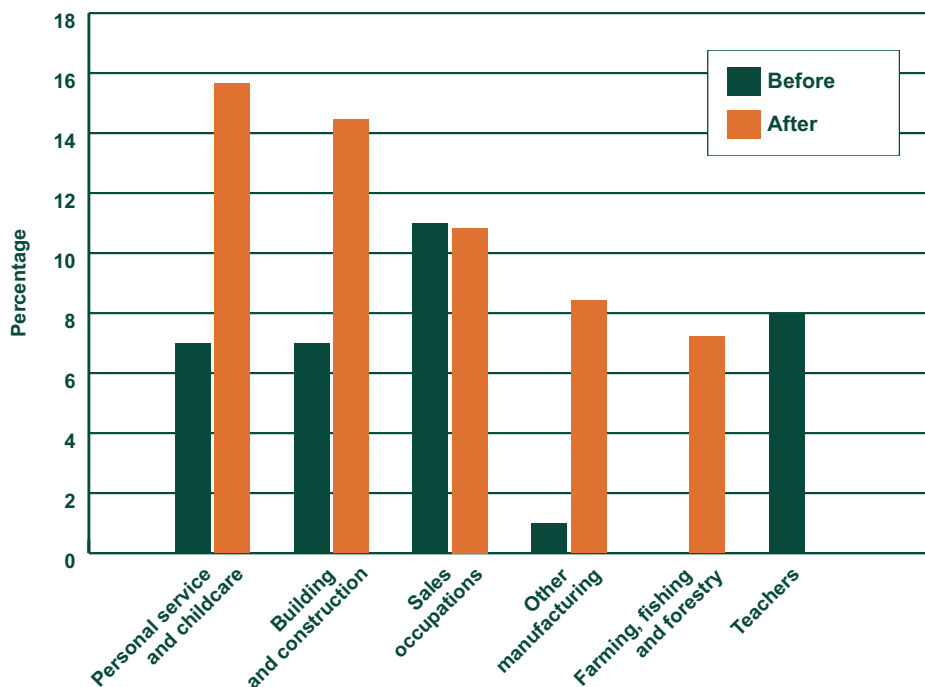
In general, however, there is evidence of deskilling across all four national groups, particularly among Nigerian respondents, and evidence that migrants are occupying the rapidly expanding personal service sector in Ireland.

The majority of interviewees were not specifically hired for their qualifications and reported that they had to work in a variety of low-skilled occupations as a route to job security and satisfaction. Many Nigerians, in particular, pointed out the length of this process and expressed negative feelings. One interviewee reported that the 'kind of jobs I had to do were horrible; menial, cleaning – the kind of job that in my country I would have paid someone else to do… but I'm getting used to it now' (N9) particularly as he had been educated for mental rather than manual work. He has now started his own business, a common experience for Nigerian interviewees. These businesses include shops, a variety of services, and import-export enterprises. Another interviewee said they started out as an au pair and then moved on to a position as floor manager in a bar (L14).

However, some interviewees saw this initial sacrifice as an inevitable outcome of migration and as a means to a better life. One respondent had a Master's degree in information management and had worked in an information centre in Lithuania. On arrival in Dublin, she was employed in a petrol station in Dublin, making sandwiches at its deli counter. She noted

'[It] wasn't so important where to work as long as it's secure, you know wages, you know it won't be illegal, you know these things… if we were going to live there longer, we were going to find something else' (L15)

Other interviewees made strategic decisions about career changes to gain security of residence. One interviewee, who noted that accounting was one of the areas designated for work permits and allowed people to work full time while completing accounting exams, changed her career plans to suit this type of opportunity.

> 'In Ireland, if you happen to work in an area where there is a lack of talent or resources, it's much easier to stay... [if not] even if you make so much contribution to society, it's a bit hard, unfair, to get a proper visa' (C10)

For other interviewees, those experiences were positive and helped them to understand Irish society.

> 'I came here when I was 17/18 so it was a lot of challenge on everything. I... did many [jobs]... building sites, labour work... kitchen porter... cleaners, window cleaners, bar tender, floor staff. So I did a lot of culture jobs and they were fun and they were experience. I think for a lot of immigrants that you come to Ireland, it's not necessary to make money for the first few years. It's how you understand the society and the customs... So you start from very low, you never fail. I mean personal wise, to be a person in Ireland. So I don't regret that I spent two years doing many jobs, not making money... We have a saying in China: family is to build a person first and then build a career. So that's what I did to start off' (C5)

Thus, working involved more than just money. During the early years of his career, one business man recalled working at restaurant and hotels. 'I find that's quite valuable to me because... I learned how to communicate and you get used to the Western way of living and way of thinking' (C10).

Interviewees who had secured skilled jobs prior to their arrival in Ireland are 'absolutely different' (N16) since they are able to maintain their career path.

Treatment at Work

Seventy-eight per cent of Indian respondents and 55 per cent of Lithuanian respondents reported no problems at work. However, Indian focus group participants felt this figure was too high and varied according to whether a migrant was working in a high- or low-skilled job. Moreover, Lithuanian and Indian focus group participants raised the issue of harassment by customers, which was not covered by our survey question.

The experiences of Chinese and Nigerian respondents were much less favourable. Only 14 per cent of Nigerians and 31 per cent of Chinese answered that they had experienced no problems at work. Those who had experienced racism or discrimination at work were significantly more likely to have reported Irish perpetrators. However, 27 per cent of Nigerian respondents also reported racism or discrimination from other nationalities at work. Nigerian focus group participants felt that this may have been under-reported by survey respondents. In most cases, managers were reported as responsible for bullying or harassment at work, with high levels reported by both Chinese and Nigerian respondents (see Figure 4.6). Indian respondents were more likely to experience bullying or harassment from co-workers. However, levels of bullying or harassment by co-workers were highest for Nigerian respondents.

Figure 4.6: Bullying/harassment at work
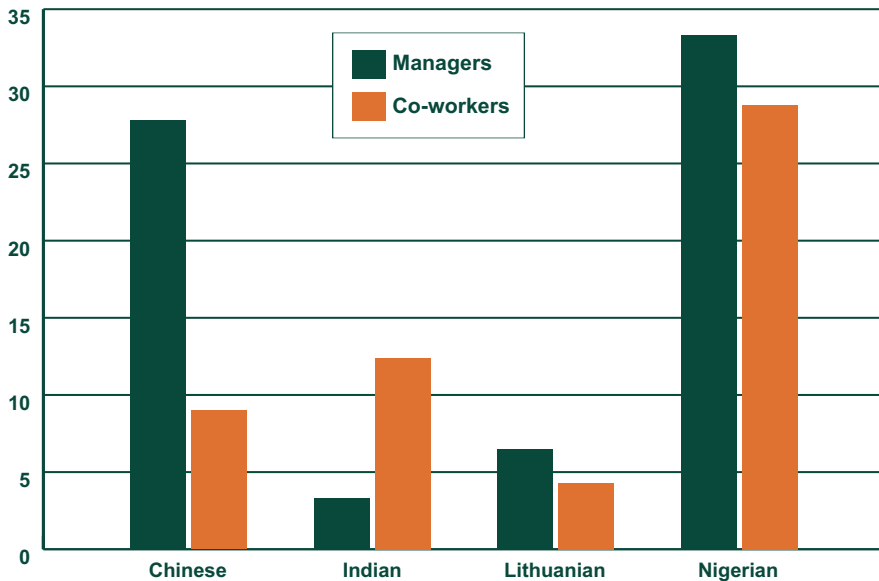
Inadequate pay was an issue for all respondents other than Indians. Lithuanians and Nigerians also reported problems with working conditions. Overall, Chinese respondents experienced the broadest range of problems at work. However, Chinese focus group participants felt that this could be explained by the high proportion of student respondents; they felt students and part-time workers were more likely to be exploited than those in business and professional occupations.

For Chinese newcomers in particular, working life is underpinned by starting with the lowest-paid jobs and slowly working their way up to more appropriate employment. One interviewee who worked in a fast-food restaurant was frustrated that others he worked with did not always pull their weight. Although he recognised that people are tired and sometimes just don't want to work, he emphasised that, 'if you're working, you always want the better partner... you want money but also... you want to work' (C3).

A Lithuanian interviewee remarked 'Sometimes you get the feeling you are a second-, third-rate person just because you come from a poor country. You still get it sometimes, especially at work' (L7).

Another noted that money and wealth was used to look down on Lithuanians. 'Irish people can be arrogant towards Lithuanians, even if you are better qualified than they are. They have money rather than qualifications' (L8).

Interviewees who held work permits also highlighted difficulties at work. One respondent decided to leave his job.

'I personally felt they were paying wages below the industry average and I wasn't happy with that. But the thing is that, because the work permit is so difficult, I saw people from India working in the company because, with a work permit, you're stuck, you can't change. It's a hold on you and they're making it tougher every year and you can't change it' (I8)

Some of those on work permits talked about how they were paid less wages and didn't receive overtime or holiday pay. However, because of the work permit system, they were obliged to stay and were tied to their employer.

Few Chinese interviewees reported significant problems with discrimination as such. However, some highlighted ways in which they get marked as different and problems that may arise from this.

> *'I have some Irish friends and... when we were together as a group, we talk in English. One of my [Chinese] friends passed by so I talked with my friend in Chinese. When... the Chinese friend... was gone and I went back in the group, the Irish girl told me that, until you talk with the Chinese guy, they [didn't] realise you're Chinese. I mean like I am Chinese, I am always Chinese. So this is something underlying you can't see but it is preventing you going further'* (C4)

Feelings of lack of equal treatment, however, could also be the result of visa status rather than prejudice. One interviewee reported that, although he has been training people in his department for three years and has never been promoted, an Irish woman that he trained was promoted within a year. While this point came up in a discussion of race and discrimination issues, ultimately he noted that his inability to get promoted was because his visa prevented him from taking up full-time work.

Whilst Lithuanians have the freedom to work, there is a notable level of uncertainty with regards to their work situations. A number of the Lithuanians who arrived prior to 2004 came through the work permit system. Those on work permits talked about their exploitation and feelings of vulnerability in the workplace.

> *'It's ownership. You get a work permit for a year and its ownership... you have to be good enough so it would be extended. You cannot talk against anyone, you cannot even say what you want sometimes... The work permit only works for that company. If you leave it, you have to struggle... it never stopped anyone coming here getting a job... it left you vulnerable of course'* (L13)

One man who came on a work permit and wanted to change his job noted that his employer 'always said "we will send you back if you do this"... Somehow people thought we were envelopes and they could send us back' (L12).

Prior to 2004, a number of Lithuanians whose work permits had expired or had not been renewed became undocumented. One woman, who was generally very positive about her experiences in Ireland, talked about how, as an au pair, she was paid little money. The father mistreated everyone in the family, not just her. As a result when her permit expired she became undocumented. She then found another job working as a floor manager in a bar but the employers locked up her documents. When she tried to go back to visit Lithuania and needed her passport, they refused to give it to her (L14).

According to Lithuanian 'community' leaders, a number began to work illegally, taking cash-in-hand jobs, often (but by no means only) in the construction sector. One talked about the psychological pressure and vulnerability he felt as an undocumented worker. 'You always feel you are under a little bit of threat when you are illegal' (L14).

All respondents who came prior to 2004 but whose status changed following EU accession stated that the level of workplace exploitation had got better since

work permits were no longer required. Nevertheless, others still talked about difficulties in the workplace. This included not getting the same pay as Irish workers, which was especially the case for those working in the unskilled sector. Others also talked about being treated differently at work. 'Here you are not an employee, you're a foreigner' (L12).

Interviewees also highlighted racially motivated incidents at work, often expressing surprise at being asked the question. One respondent commented 'Oh sure, yeah!'

A failure to understand the background and religious diversity of migrants was also evident. A daughter of a patient who infrequently visited her mother accused an Indian nurse, who she assumed was Hindu, of trying to convert and bully her mother, even though the nurse was Roman Catholic. 'I am Roman Catholic, how can I change someone's religion?' She went on to say how she treated patients like they were her own parents. 'I always see my patients as like my own parents. We look after our parents very well back home' (I3).

Another woman working in a petrol station described how she often received abuse from her customers.

> *'If he doesn't like people coming to the country, he won't say a word to you, or even call you some names… I've been called a bitch about 120 times, but you get used to it and pay no attention.'* (L11)

When she was asked whether this affected her she said 'I used to take it really hard but my boyfriend taught me not to take any of it inside me, just block it off' (L11).

Some tried to understand the discrimination they experienced in terms of a fear of the other or ignorance. 'You hate things you don't understand, you don't know' (L14), but they also spoke from a position of understanding and forgiveness. 'It must be strange for Irish society seeing all these immigrants' (L17).

However, interviewees also provided thoughtful responses to general questions about discrimination at work. On being asked whether lack of promotion represented discrimination, one respondent talked about how it was difficult to be sure with such a nebulous term.

> *'That's a hard thing… you can't put it down to something like discrimination but sometimes I get tempted to say that… it depends on my mood. If I come back from work having a hard day, you ask me this question, yeah why not. That would be my reaction'* (I7)

Other problems identified at work included the blocking of promotion. This was highlighted by many interviewees, especially those in professional occupations. For example, a doctor talked about problems of promotion because of the existence of an exclusive 'big boys' club' in which only Irish were allowed to enter as consultants.

> *'One negative is that… when it comes to consultant jobs, I still find that it's a big boys' club. They limit themselves to the Irish. They're still not open to foreign nationals and I've seen it across the board… If you're foreign, you find it much harder to get a permanent job as a consultant. You may get a locum job, and you may persist for… several years as a locum consultant, but the permanent jobs are not so easy to get. That's across the board in all*

specialties. There is some kind of discrimination at the top... Ireland is allowing you to progress to a point and, beyond that, I think it is hard to break the ice' (I1)

Similarly, a nurse talked about thwarted promotion paths for nurses. 'There are many people who have 20-30 years of experience but they are not promoted as nurse managers' (I3).

Those on work permits also experienced difficulties, where promotion was blocked and contributions to work were not recognised. 'They're doing the job, you could be a better calibre person but still stuck with the same job' (I8). Given their precarious and vulnerable status, they were in less of a position to complain, even more than visa holders and EU nationals.

However, many interviewees had positive or mixed experiences at work, and were keen to highlight these. One interviewee who worked in business reported that working with Irish people was 'interesting, interesting. Irish people are generally… very good. They're friendly, they're ready to help all the time and they're willing to transfer their knowledge to me, to teach me how to do this, how to do that. That's great, great experience' (C4).

Some described how Irish people were more relaxed at work and many made friends with other nationalities through the workplace. One worker talked about how, although Irish people were very friendly and patient, because of language difficulties some customers did get frustrated. 'Sometimes they get mad. "Get me someone who speaks English!"' (L15).

Recognition of Qualifications

Indian respondents, particularly those on work visas, were very positive about the extent to which their qualifications were fully recognised in their main job. Just over 70 per cent agreed that their qualifications were fully recognised, with just 15 per cent responding that their qualifications were not fully recognised.

However, when this is disaggregated by gender, a different picture emerges (see Figure 4.7). Almost all Indian women agreed that their qualifications were fully recognised, but just over half of Indian men believed this. Nigerian respondents were relatively positive, with over half agreeing that their qualifications were fully recognised. Nigerian women were most positive: almost two-thirds of Nigerian women, as opposed to just over 40 per cent of Nigerian men, responded positively to this question. Levels of satisfaction with the recognition of qualifications were significantly lower for Chinese and Lithuanian respondents. Around one-third of both groups felt their qualifications were fully recognised in their current job, while more than 40 per cent of both groups felt that recognition of qualifications was not forthcoming.

However, a number of interviewees highlighted the difficulties in getting recognition for qualifications, with comments such as 'our qualifications are not recognised here' (I6). This leads to a waste of human capital with migrants not necessarily working in areas in which they have trained. For example, one interviewee commented that 'those who come here are all well-qualified, well-educated people so their potential is not being used' (I2). Another, who had a qualification in physical education, discussed how she couldn't use her qualification and was working part-time in a convenience store (L7).

Figure 4.7: Respondents whose qualifications are recognised at work, by community
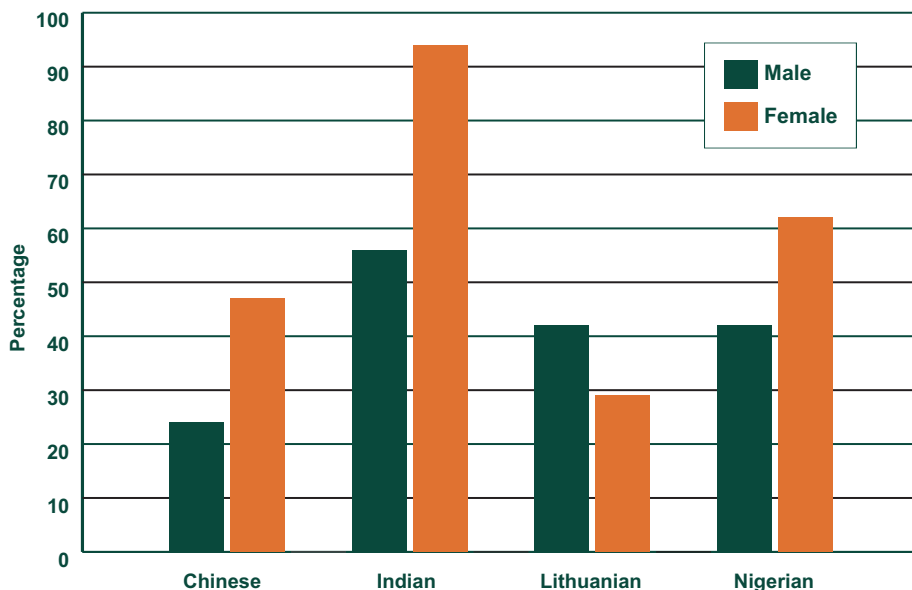
The gap between skills and work can be dramatic, and is well known by migrants through their social networks. 'Those who are working as a professor in India will be coming here working in a hotel doing the porter's job or something like that' (I2), or 'I know an engineer who is working as a kitchen assistant' (I3).

Working below one's skills level was especially pervasive among those who were spouses of visa holders, since they had to apply for work permits. One man noted 'It's very difficult to get a job for a husband spouse – that is the work permit problem' (I6). Although he couldn't find a job at first, he eventually settled for working nights as a security man in a hospital. 'When I came here, for two months I did not get a job… But I have gone for some career course but what I've got is security staff in a hospital' (I6).

Another interviewee spoke of how her husband, formerly a managing partner in a firm, could not register with a high-skills agency because of his migration status. This made it difficult for him to enter a job commensurate with his skills and qualifications.

> '*Now he has to cut down his qualification to get a job here because they think that managing partner is a very high position… so they don't give it. So he's applying to the technical support field but still it's very hard to get a job because of the work visa… he cannot even register with an agency*' (I3)

Another interviewee, who has submitted more than 100 job applications a year for the past few years and has a Master's degree, eventually got a delivery job. He commented that 'the interview seems to go well – sometimes you think you have the job when you leave, but you don't have the job' (N12). He cited favouritism in the community sector and stereotyping in the private sector as significant obstacles to getting a good job.

However, one interviewee noted that experience was recognised in Ireland in addition to qualifications.

'The greatest thing about Ireland is [that] your experience matters. You don't necessarily have to have a particular degree in a particular area you apply for, but you have to have experience in that area. Ireland is great for that' (L13)

Others, although frustrated with their inability to find appropriate work, availed of training and educational options. One woman, who had trained and worked as a science technician, had to face the 'cold shock' that she 'had to start from square one again'.

'As a result, I had to do some short courses in order to get a proper job, to fit in. I did some computer courses. I did my ECDL and Microsoft Office course, and that was what I used in getting the present job that I am doing, and not with my degree qualification. I had to do all these courses here in order to get a proper job' (N3)

Unemployment

Some respondents, whether because of a lack of recognition of qualifications, racism, or migration status, had failed to secure a job, which sometimes led to depression and frustration. One respondent on a working visa talked about how her husband, who had several years experience in IT and management, spent all day looking on the computer for work.

'After coming here, it's very difficult for them to arrange for a job and it's really hard. He sits on the computer from the morning until night; if I go to work, he sits on the computer from 8 o'clock till night' (I3)

Another interviewee described how his wife suffered from boredom and loneliness.

'I think most of the time she will be bored. Busy with the housework but still... she has a couple of hours at least in the day she feels cornered... very bored... dependant on TV and telephone to communicate. Not many friends around apart from that girl in number one... She is a graduate. She tried to find some work... but because of the work permit issue, you know the way you have go to the Department [of Enterprise] if you're applying for a work permit and they would ask you if you have an employment offer. But if you go to the employer, they will ask you if you have a visa to work. You are caught in a loop. I think it's a common problem' (I7).

Obstacles were also identified by interviewees who had completed their studies in Ireland and were searching for employment. Students run into trouble in terms of needing experience to get a job and needing a job to get experience.

*'All of the companies require experience... But if you're a graduate, how can I get experience? That's the problem. They may get work placement in their third year in college. But not everyone gets it and it's just for a few months. It doesn't work for some companies. I think it's too short...'* (C3)

This is particularly difficult for students from outside the EU, who are only given six months to find employment after graduating.

Education

A significant number of survey respondents reported that they were attending educational institutions in Ireland (see Figure 4.8). Almost 75 per cent of Chinese respondents are attending educational institutions, predominantly language schools and third-level colleges, on a full-time basis. Around one-third of Nigerian respondents are in education, mostly third-level colleges, on a part-time or full-time basis. Corresponding figures for Indian respondents (9 per cent) and Lithuanian respondents (11 per cent) are much lower. The majority of Indian respondents attend third-level institutions on a full-time basis, while Lithuanian respondents mostly attend language schools on a part-time basis.

Figure 4.8: Respondents currently attending an educational institution, by community
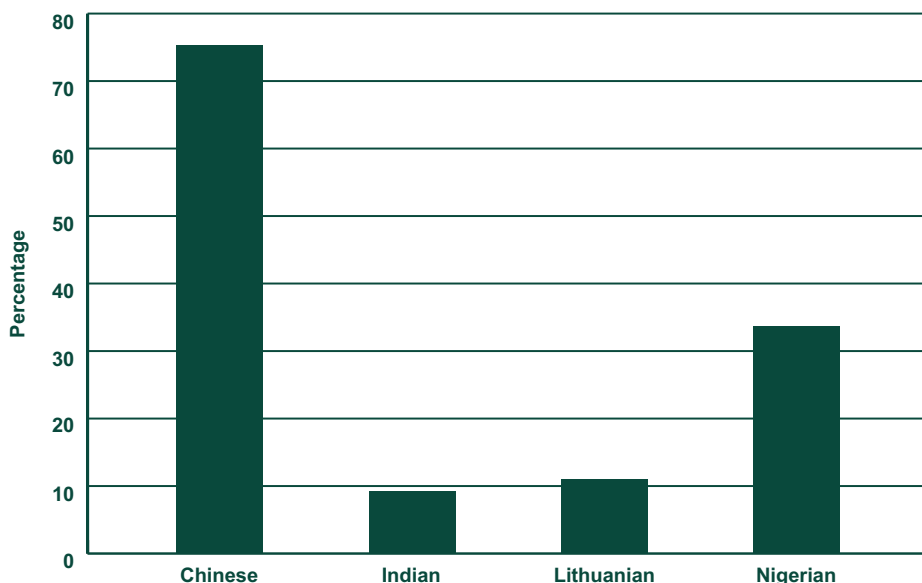
Access to further education and training is recognised as important for integration. One interviewee highlighted the importance of education in the process of settling here.

> *'What really helps is that, to get someone to be properly integrated into the system, they must have the basic education. That is the best way to get into the system. Once you have the education, you can easily integrate into the system – even if it is a FÁS course, it will help one to easily integrate'* (N5)

Studying in Ireland also has other advantages, such as being exposed to different and often more creative modes of learning.

> *'The educational system in China basically is the best, but the disadvantage in China is the students' lack of independent thinking… They just follow the teacher's views. But in Ireland, the students have the ability to have their own thinking, to say the words in their own way, and to use the knowledge from the teacher, and then to interpret for themselves and then solve the problems… Because I study arts/psychology, it's better to study here. But for*

someone who studied engineering and biology, it's better that they can study in China because the basic education system is better' (C4)

There are, however, a number of impediments to access and participation in education, including expense, status, and recognition of prior learning. The issue of expense was raised by survey respondents and interviewees. The main problem that emerged for respondents attending educational establishments was the fees. More detail on this was provided in a variety of interviews. Students from outside the EU generally have to pay significantly higher fees than EU students, even though they will be attending the same course and receiving the same instruction. Details of the differences in fee structures for 2007-08 are shown in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1: Fees for selected degree programmes in UCD, Trinity and UCC in 2007-08

	UCD		Trinity		UCC	
	EU	Non-EU	EU	Non-EU	EU	Non-EU
Undergraduate Arts degree		€14,850		€14,516		€11,800
Undergraduate Science degree		€20,000		€19,020		€17,000
Undergraduate Medicine degree		€27,000		€27,000		€27,000
Master of Arts	€4,800	€9,600	€4,244	€10,844	€4,340	€11,620
Master of Science	€6,930	€13,860	€5,038	€12,911	€4,340	€11,620
PhD	€5,000	€10,000	€4,244	€10,844	€5,155	€10,310

One nurse who worked as a nurse instructor in India and wanted further training talked about how she looked at courses with her husband.

> *'The courses available here for the EU, it is easy to get the course, the course is much cheaper. We were just checking it and we found that a Master's degree is €3,700 or something for EU people and for others €10,000'* (I3)

Problems related to qualifying for EU fees can make university attendance prohibitive. This is particularly the case for people whose status has not been regularised, such as asylum seekers. In order to qualify for EU fees, people need to be employed and paying taxes for three out of the preceding five years. As such, Nigerians in particular are often faced with paying international student fees whether or not their status has been regularised. However, for many, it's more than worth it. 'Coming where I come from – in Nigeria the education system is a mess – I'm so proud of the education system in Ireland… it's amazing' (N7).

Many Irish colleges advertise for students outside the EU, which attracts students to Ireland, but the fees can be very expensive. One student explained 'Colleges come over to market the course in India. That's how we heard about it – through an Irish educational fair' (I8). As he noted, this is because Irish colleges 'want higher fees' (I8). Even the cost of a student visa is expensive for many students when added to higher course fees and living expenses, which mount up over the years.

Other interviewees talked about the limitations of student status, particularly in relation to long-term residency. The years in which one is studying are not taken into account when applying for naturalisation or other forms of long-term residency.

> '*I'm still doing my studies, and then another thing is a big problem for after I complete my PhD, and there's no way I can continue my status. The way it works is strange actually. It's not clear... Some friends went to Australia and, just two weeks ago, from one of the guys I received an email that he got his permanent status. His status changed in Australia. I was like "My God, what the hell am I doing here?" Still, the way it works, largely we want to settle here actually*' (I9)

Given the struggle and disillusionment when trying to find a job after university, some interviewees felt that, compared with other countries, 'the Irish Government... just want the students to pay for school and then they take tax or whatever from the money... and then they do nothing' (C9). Another woman noted 'I feel like, after spending five years here, I still couldn't really belong to this country because I am not allowed to. So, that's a bit frustrating' (C7).

A further impediment was the lack of recognition of prior learning and the lack of clear guidelines for educational institutions and employers. However, the student scheme that allows international students to change status without leaving the country was welcomed.
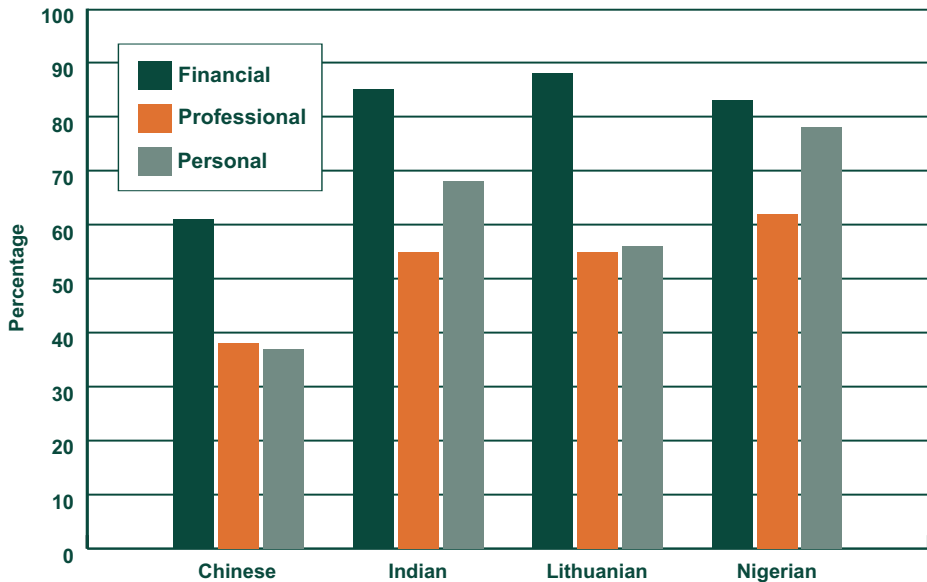
Change in Financial, Professional, and Personal Situation

It was noted above that some migrants had experienced negative occupational mobility and levels of deskilling. They had moved into jobs that were not commensurate with their skills, qualification or experience, or were at a lower social status than that which they had before arriving in Ireland. Nevertheless, when we asked respondents to rate the extent to which their financial, professional, and personal situation had changed as a result of their migration to Ireland, the overall picture was quite positive (see Figure 4.9). A significant majority in each national group believed its financial situation had improved. Similarly, a significant majority believed its professional situation, personal situation, and benefits situation had stayed the same or improved. In each of these three categories, Chinese nationals were least convinced of a positive change, although only a small percentage believed there had been a deterioration in their professional or personal situation.

For all national groups, a majority of survey respondents indicated an improvement in their financial situation since arriving in Ireland, although sometimes at the expense of professional or personal advancement. For example, a respondent who was working in a factory office noted that, despite the lack of job satisfaction, the wages were better in Ireland than in Lithuania. This made up for the job's shortcomings. 'If I compare my wages with a friend in Lithuania working in construction, I can't complain' (L11).

The question of professional improvement was more fraught, and many interviewees highlighted difficulties, particularly in relation to promotion. Some interviewees highlighted the differential treatment of EU and non-EU citizens. One interviewee reported that, while he had been eager to find a permanent job and get a green card or passport to stay, he changed his mind because he 'found that there were fewer opportunities to get promoted in

**Figure 4.9: Respondents whose situations have improved
since arriving in Ireland, by community**

In relation to personal improvement, which was often allied to financial and professional improvement, interviewees highlighted many issues. Some of the respondents emphasised the freedom and opportunity that Ireland provides. 'You can really kick start your life here' (L12), or 'Here people were giving us the opportunity to show what we can do' (L17). This was in contrast to the situation in Lithuania, which was sometimes seen as having fixed social roles. As one former journalist noted, this freedom was not just in terms of permitting financial gain but also intellectual freedom. 'You can say that you think that the war in Iraq is a crime and no one will think you are a KGB agent…[in Lithuania there is] no such thing as free press' (L7).

Personal improvements were also described in terms of how people behaved. One interviewee said 'I used to be this shy, quiet person, but now I assert myself, am fun to be with' (C13). Even those interviewees who had experienced difficulties in employment and in other aspects of their lives noted that Ireland offers many opportunities. 'The system makes it possible for everyone to survive at some level' (N3). Some commented that Ireland is a good place to raise children.

Ireland. I wouldn't say I was treated unfairly but few opportunities' (C4). Another respondent also noted that promotion opportunities had stifled his career, despite making more money in Ireland.

> 'I joined my first company here in Ireland in 2000. After finishing the contract, I was a full-time programmer. And until two years ago, I was a programmer, no promotions. I became a senior programmer only two years ago… it's not just money, it's everything you know, your career prospects. As you get promoted, you get everything else as well; satisfaction and your capacity utilisation. If you're capable of something but if that has to be suppressed because someone else is there to do it, not even asking you for suggestions, that's… not good for you' (I7)

Income and Cost of Living

There were noticeable differences in the responses to the survey question on average gross annual income. Chinese respondents reported the lowest levels of income, with 59 per cent reporting average annual income of less than €14,400. This may well be connected to status, since student visa holders – the majority of Chinese in our sample – may only legally work for 20 hours a week. Indian respondents had the highest levels, with 67 per cent reporting an average annual income of greater than €31,720. The latter figure closely corresponds to the average industrial income for 2006. Nigerian and Lithuanian respondents were intermediate, in that the majority reported incomes between €14,401 and €31,720. However, 24 per cent of Lithuanians and 28 per cent of Nigerians reported average annual incomes of less than €14,400. Almost one-third of Lithuanian women were in this category.

We asked respondents if their income covered their living expenses (see Figure 4.10). A majority of respondents in the Chinese, Indian and Lithuanian groups answered positively, with more than 90 per cent of Indian respondents agreeing. However, only 45 per cent of Nigerians answered positively, with the majority replying that income did not cover living expenses. A variety of factors may contribute to this, including levels of income, part-time or full-time work, family sizes and status, and the numbers of people being fully or partially financially supported by survey respondents.

Figure 4.10: Respondents whose income covers living expenses, by community
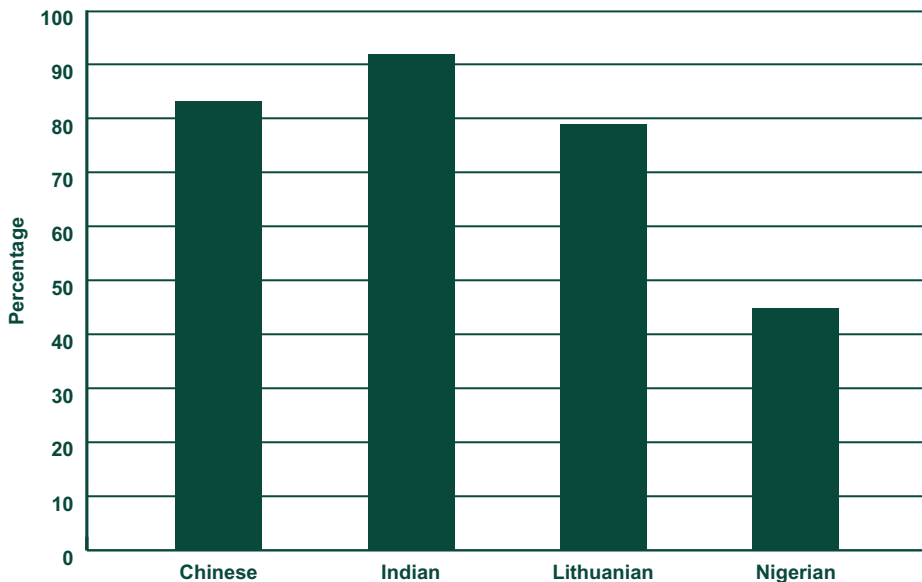
There were considerable differences in the percentages of respondents who provide full or partial financial support to adults or children in Ireland or elsewhere (see Figure 4.11).

Figure 4.11: Respondents who provide financial support to adults and/or children, by community
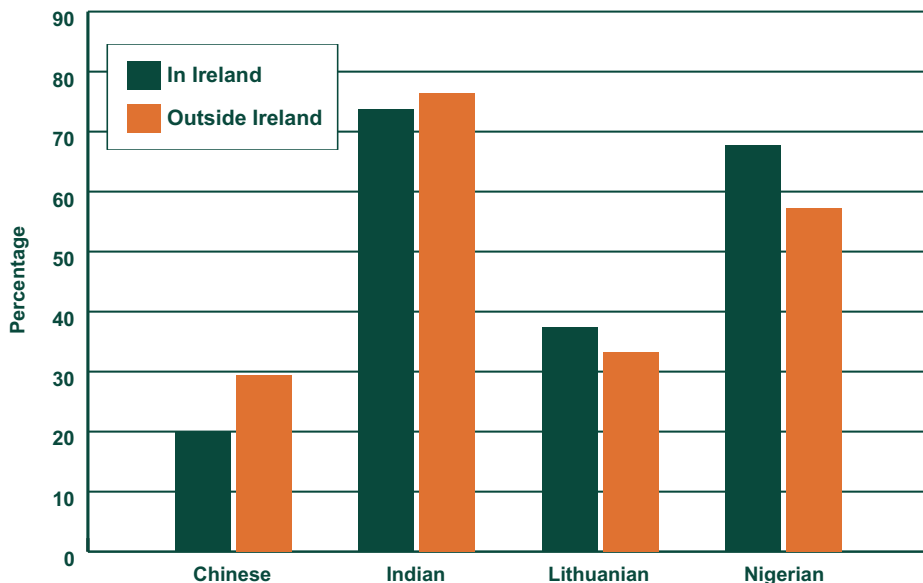
Indian and Nigerian respondents were most likely to provide financial support to adults and children in Ireland and elsewhere. More than 70 per cent of Indians and more than 50 per cent of Nigerians said that they fully or partially support people in Ireland and elsewhere. At least 40 per cent of Nigerian respondents were supporting three or more people in Ireland and elsewhere. A similar percentage of Indian respondents (more than 40 per cent) was supporting three or more people outside Ireland, but around 20 per cent of Indian respondents were supporting three or more people in Ireland. Lithuanian and particularly Chinese respondents were least likely to provide financial support to others. If they did so, the numbers of people they supported financially were significantly smaller. Around 10 per cent of Lithuanians and 4 per cent of Chinese were supporting three or more people in Ireland or elsewhere. Contrary to a common stereotype, the majority of respondents reported that they remitted none of their income to their home country. Participants in the Nigeria and Lithuanian focus group, however, suggested that the sending of remittances might have been under-reported.

Despite the generally positive responses to the question of income covering living expenses, in many instances interviewees commented on the high cost of living in Ireland and on the sacrifices necessary to live within their means. For example, a number of interviewees were students working in low-skilled jobs, who wanted to cover living costs, save money and pay back loans for education fees set at an international level. In some instances, interviewees commented that their wages were not very high.

'I think the payment is the same for everyone. Maybe not only for Chinese people it's low. For Irish people it's higher. I think the payment is not good for living in Dublin because Dublin life is expensive. What I earn at the moment I still think it's poor money' (C4)

Others relied on financial support from families.

'I used to work ten or 15 hours a week and that's only my expenses here so... Another thing is the family... they're working actually; we have land. My brother... has a hardware shop. The younger brother is working as well... Initially I got money from my parents... and even after that, two times because I couldn't get work for five months. And I have to get money from home to fund my expenses over here. But it's very costly anyway. You get way less over here' (I9)

One interviewee decided to leave because his skills were not recognised and he was only offered low-wage jobs.

'I'm leaving because I did not get a job that paid according to my experience and degree... the first thing I look at is how much can I save and what's the cost of living? For me, Ireland does not score very well on the cost of living and the standard of living' (I13)

Although many feel that living in Ireland is expensive, they note that, in many cases, they can make more money, even in low-paid jobs, than they could in their home country. But this also requires sacrifices. One interviewee discussed the problems of having to share accommodation.

'I think I have been able to manage my life because I can give up something to gain something because, if I don't have money, I just share with other people. It's okay, you know, I can give up my personal development' (C4)

An interviewee who is studying described the situation as follows

'Pay rent, school fees, have nothing leftover; survive on what I get from shop [food available for employees for lunch] and bread at home; but I believe when I finish my studies life will be better' (N6)

One Indian community representative, who talked about only one person being allowed to work because of work permit restrictions, noted that it was necessary to have two incomes to survive.

'If a husband and wife will get a job, they will be very satisfied because the house rent and mortgage is very high and other expenses are so high. With just one person's remuneration, we can't move forward' (I6)

Others noted that 'some people do find it hard to exist here' (I8) since one has to 'pay through the nose for your mortgage, for your rent' (I8) and because 'bringing up children is quite expensive' (I8). Such high costs mean that staying in and saving is important. But high costs also cut into the level and amount of remittances one can send back to India. 'Some send, some don't send back money. Mortgages take up most of it' (I8).

Conclusion

As discussed in chapter two, there are restrictions on the employment opportunities of migrants. The first restriction relates to status. While EU citizens (other than from Bulgaria and Romania) are free to work in Ireland, this does not apply to other citizens. In this instance, they have to apply for permission to work in Ireland, either through the work permit or green card systems. Student visa holders (with Stamp Two) are permitted to work, but only for 20 hours a week during term time.

The second restriction relates to the recognition of prior learning and qualifications. This is more nebulous, since there are few clear guidelines, and the levels of discretion exercised often lead to unfair or unequal treatment of migrants. This leads to deskilling, as migrants are unable to take up employment in the areas in which they are trained. For many migrants, this means that they have to retrain or obtain further educational qualifications. This is often at high personal and financial cost, particularly for migrants from outside the EU or whose status is uncertain.

There are considerable differences between migrants who are recruited for specific posts and those who travel to Ireland without job offers. On one level, skilled labour migrants are more likely to work in jobs that recognise their qualifications and are given considerably more assistance in moving to Ireland. However, on arrival, many of these skilled labour migrants are hampered in their career progression, which leads to considerable frustration. Those who are not skilled labour migrants face different challenges, particularly in relation to finding work and receiving recognition of experiences. They often take longer to reach a satisfactory career path, but many describe this as a valuable learning experience. The unsatisfactory nature of employment is rationalised as being temporary, or as a means to an end, whether that end is financial or personal. However, there are very real obstacles to full participation in employment for migrants across a range of different social indicators.

Treatment in the workplace also differs according to legal status, occupational sector, national origin, and gender. Many migrants, however, report experiences of discrimination at work, including bullying and harassment, pay and conditions, and promotion opportunities. Those on the work permit system were particularly vulnerable compared to EU and working visa holders, although experiences of discrimination were reported across all status categories.

The cost of living in Ireland is widely perceived as prohibitive, especially for students and households with one income or with irregular sources of income. Migrants use a range of strategies to cope with this, both short term – such as sharing housing or extra jobs – and longer term, such as education. In the most extreme circumstances, migrants leave Ireland because they find it too difficult to live in the State.

SOCIAL INDICATORS OF INTEGRATION

Introduction

Who People Spend Time With and How Much

Attitudes to Irish People

Interactions at Work and in Education

*Housing, Home, and Neighbourhood*

Conclusion

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, social indicators of integration refer to social bridges, social bonds, and social links. We focus on who migrants spend time with and how they spend that time. In relation to the host community, we investigated the attitudes of migrants towards Irish people and possible barriers to social interaction. We examined these relations as they occur in everyday life and in key spaces of interaction and engagement such as work, education, housing, and neighbourhoods.

Social interaction is important for the process of integration, since it provides one of the means by which migrants and the host community may become familiar with each other (Houston et al 2005). As such, the type and extent of social interaction, as well as the barriers to further interaction, are crucial for understanding how migrants negotiate their space in society and how society makes a place for them.

Who People Spend Time With and How Much

We asked survey respondents who they usually spent time with, how often, and what kinds of activities they engaged in. The purpose of these questions was to identify the types of spaces and activities that form the basis of social life within and across different communities. In this chapter, we focus specifically on social interactions with family, other migrants, and Irish citizens (see Figure 5.1).

Figure 5.1: Survey respondents who spend time with family, friends from own country, other migrants and Irish citizens, by community
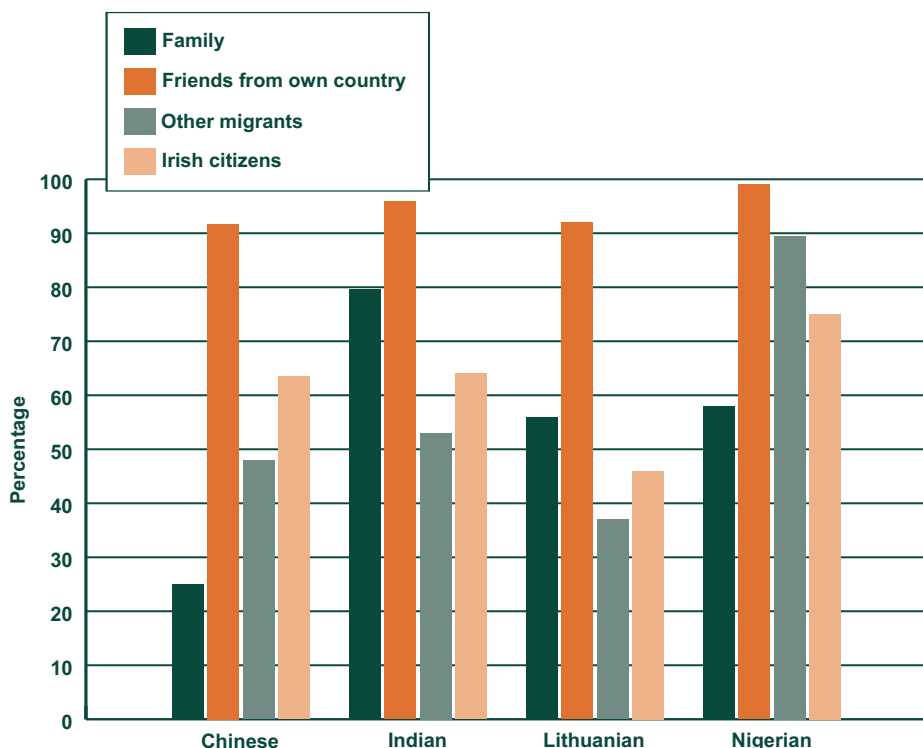
In general, respondents reported very high levels of interaction with friends from their own countries, with responses of more than 90 per cent for all four national groups. There were interesting differences in terms of time spent with family. Only 25 per cent of Chinese respondents spend time with family, in contrast to 80 per cent of Indian respondents. More than half of Lithuanian and Nigerian respondents spend time with family. This may well be connected to differences in marital status, numbers of children, the age of respondents, and the presence in Ireland of family members other than partners and children. This was most prevalent in relation to the Nigerian and Lithuanian national groups. Some of these respondents reported parents, sisters, brothers, nieces, nephews, and cousins living in Ireland. Responses were less uniform in relation to other migrants and Irish citizens. Overall, respondents were more likely to spend time with Irish citizens than with other migrants (see Figure 5.1). This was the case for all groups other than Nigerians. Almost 90 per cent of Nigerian respondents stated that they spent time with other migrants, in contrast to less than 40 per cent of Lithuanians.

When we examine frequency of interaction, there are interesting differences between national groups. For example, there were differences in the frequency of interaction with family and with friends from respondents' home countries. Lithuanians and Indians have a higher rate of interaction with family on a daily basis, with rates of interaction of 70 per cent and 85 per cent respectively. However, at least half of Chinese and Nigerian respondents interacted with family on a daily basis.

With friends from the home country, interaction was regular but less frequent, with people mainly seeing each other on a weekly basis. At least three-quarters of respondents from all four national groups reported seeing friends from their home country at least once a week. Most of the family and friends appear to live within walking distance, which suggests residential clustering.

Most Nigerian respondents reported having at least weekly social interaction with other migrants and Irish citizens. This is in stark contrast to the other national groups, particularly Indian. More than half the Indian respondents reported less than monthly interaction with other migrants and Irish citizens. Lithuanian respondents were more likely to have frequent social interaction (i.e. daily or weekly) with other migrants. In contrast, Chinese respondents were more likely to regularly spend time with Irish citizens. Around 20 per cent of Indian respondents regularly spend time with other migrants or Irish citizens. However, Indians were also the most likely to have very infrequent contact with other migrants and Irish citizens.

The importance of friends and friendship networks was emphasised by many interviewees, particularly involving family and fellow nationals. Friends are not only involved in persuading a fellow national to come to Ireland, but also offer psychological support within a context of arriving in an unfamiliar country and environment. This social support and solidarity is important since, without it, new arrivals may feel socially and culturally isolated, especially if they do not have a job.

'When I first arrived, it was probably because I only knew this one friend of mine, I didn't have any acquaintances or anyone else or any Irish people that I knew, so it was a bit… I don't know, I felt lonely really when I arrived. And it took me a while to find a job, so I was a bit desperate at the beginning' (L1)

However, making friends can take time. One student reported that he went out only about 20 times per year for the first two years he was in Ireland. By the third year, he had met more Chinese. 'I've more friends so it increased the number of times I... went to other places, to their house to have a dinner, a chat' (C6).

Types of Activities

We asked respondents about the types of activities they engaged in with family members, other migrants and Irish citizens. In our survey, we provided eight options: religious, sport, cultural, visiting each other's homes, pub or other social outings, parks and play areas, food, and other.

Activities with Family Members

In general, two categories of social activity with family stand out as being important for respondents: visiting each other's homes and activities around food (see Figure 5.2).

**Figure 5.2: Social activities with family, by community**
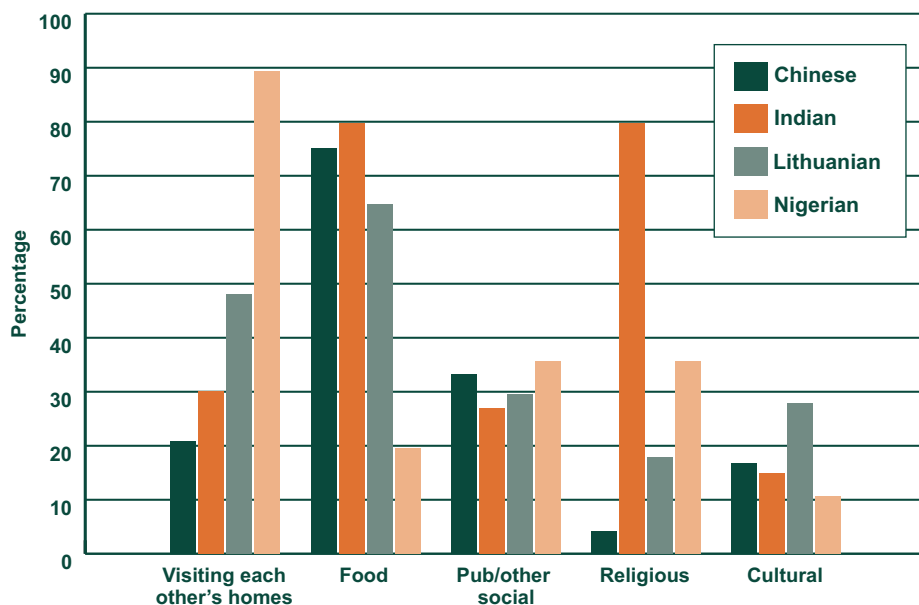
The first two categories in the graph may overlap to some extent, with respondents sharing food in each other's homes. More than 60 per cent of Chinese, Indian and Lithuanian respondents who report social activities with family indicate that these are based on food, in contrast to just under 20 per cent of Nigerians. However, Nigerians seem to visit each other's homes much more, with almost 90 per cent reporting social activities with families that are based on home visits.

Religion presents an interesting point of contrast. Close to 80 per cent of Indians who are socially active with family members do so through religious activities, in contrast to 4 per cent of Chinese. For all groups, pubs are similarly important venues for socialising with family. Cultural activities are of relatively low significance.

Activities with Friends from Home Countries

The pattern of social activities with friends from the home country has some similarities and some differences across the countries of origin (see Figure 5.3).

Figure 5.3: Social activities with friends from own country, by community
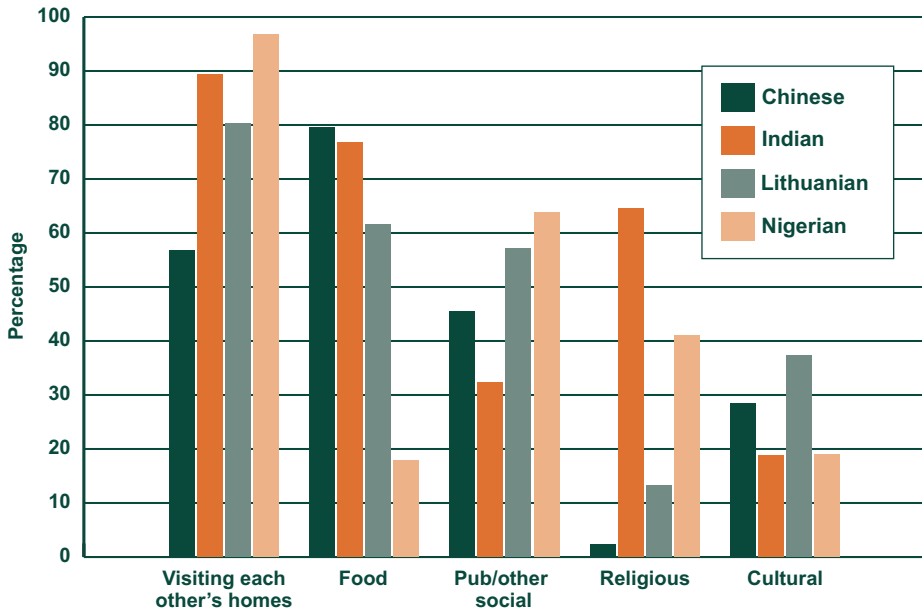
Home visits are particularly important, with a majority of respondents across all four groups reporting that social activities with friends from their home country take place in this location. Again, food-related activities emerge as least important for Nigerian respondents, but are important for all other groups. The pub is significantly more important for socialising with friends than with family. Well over half of Nigerian and Lithuanian respondents reported social activities based around pubs. This was much lower for Indian respondents, at just over 30 per cent. Religious activities with friends from the home country were most important for Indians and Nigerians, and of limited significance for Chinese respondents. In many ways, the social activities of migrants do not differ significantly from those of the wider society in the sense that they involve a wide and diverse range of activities.

Nigerian interviewees reported getting together with other Nigerian families and friends for special occasions and parties, such as holidays and the celebration of births. Another interviewee told us that 'on our off days, we go out to town, meet friends. We go fishing in the summer. We just go out to have some meals' (C17).

Next to home visits, other important forms of socialising involved 'dance and food and going out for regular food and movies. These are kind of big entertainment' (L1). One interviewee described that, on weekends, many friends also arranged trips outside Dublin. 'If it's going to be a free weekend for me and my friend, we plan trips outside Dublin' (L1). Leaving the house at weekends,

especially if one is working long hours, was very important: 'Not staying at home, going shopping, going walking, I love Brittas Bay or Portmarnock, I love the sea' (L3).

Several Nigerian interviewees noted that they enjoy outdoor sports, but that the weather often intervenes. However, going to Phoenix Park and playing cricket were mentioned, along with going to the gym. Others are not so involved in sports or outdoor activities.

> *'I am a very indoor person. So, if I don't feel like going out, I will just stay indoors and watch a movie or something and do laundry and do grocery shopping if I can. Otherwise I would just meet up with my friends for dinners or lunch or coffee. But not really often'* (C16)

One woman remarked that she has 'a close circle of friends in the black community – we see each other as family, where family is close knit'. However, another commented 'I don't really go visiting… Our [Nigerians] backgrounds are different… it's not that easy to meet the people you can relate to… I keep mostly to myself' (N18).

An Indian interviewee, working in a health profession, explained why his spare time was spent with other Indians.

> *'It's more that we spend so much time at work here, that, to find time for interaction later on is purely with whom you have made contacts, so you know, it's been basically the Indian community'* (I1)

Many of his friends were working in IT and he meets them occasionally at Indian festivals. 'If there's some Indian festivals or that kind of stuff then we'd make an effort to go out' (I1). Indian festivals function as places that bring renewed contact with Indian culture and practices. 'It's home away from home. Reminds you of home if nothing else' (I1). However, work pressure and spending time with Indian countrymen did not prevent him from meeting Irish friends through playing cricket.

> *'I play cricket for a civil service club so you have your Irish group of colleagues playing cricket. Other than that, it's very hard to go out and… meet other people. It's all work in your Indian community'* (I1)

Activities with Other Migrants

There were stark contrasts in the types of activities with other migrants (see Figure 5.4).

The most important activity with other migrants, for all groups other than Chinese, was visiting each other's homes. There are some gender differences in this pattern. While both Indian men and women are equally likely to visit other homes, Lithuanian and Chinese women are significantly more likely to visit homes than Lithuanian and Chinese men.

Chinese respondents were unique in indicating pubs or other social venues as the most important type of social activity with other migrants. However, pubs were also important spaces of social interaction with other migrants for Lithuanian and Nigerian respondents. This may be connected to marital status or living conditions, or to different understandings of the space of the home.

Activities with other migrants that are based around food played an important role for Chinese, Indian and Lithuanian respondents. However, it is important to

Figure 5.4: Social activities with other migrants, by community
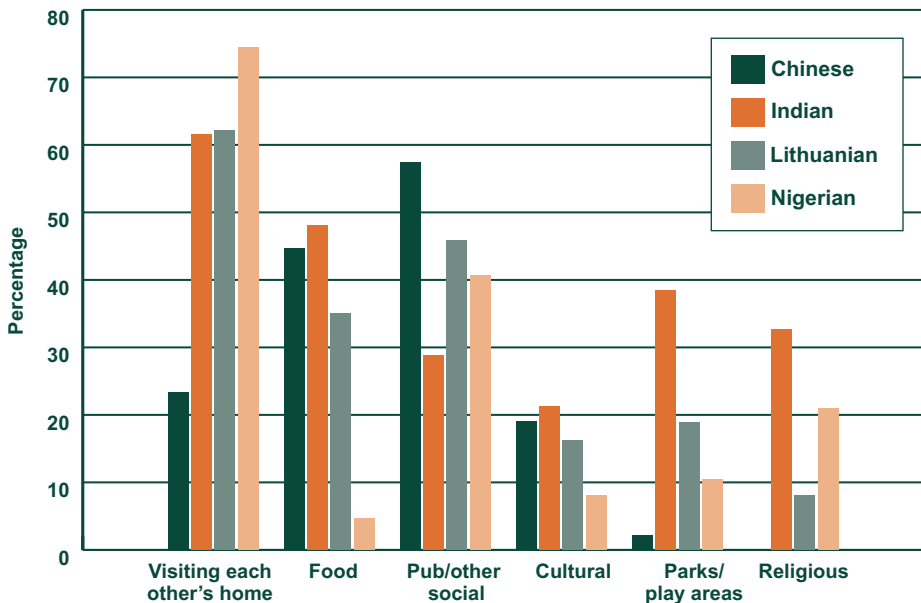
point to cultural issues here, in that the act of visiting homes and food consumption may be related, but one may have been given priority in responses.

Religious activities were important for some national groups, most notably Indians, in interacting with other migrants. More than 30 per cent of Indian respondents reported that religious activities involved other migrants, but the corresponding figure for Chinese respondents was 0 per cent.

One respondent noted that a large city such as Dublin contained more diversity and more fellow nationals with which to interact than smaller cities and rural areas. Such diversity also allowed migrants who come from relatively homogenous countries to experience diversity for the first time. One respondent noted 'A lot of Lithuanians in Ireland are changing their perception of other nations... they have more chance to meet other nationalities' (L2). One student reported that she has 'one Chinese friend... the course I was doing... there was only me in the course... But I do have three or four Chinese friends who I know... not really well' (C16). She has become close friends with her Irish and British housemates, and with other Europeans in college. One interviewee commented 'I wouldn't say that my friends here are mainly Lithuanians. I only know as many Lithuanian people as I work with... and this one [Lithuanian] friend who initially invited me to Ireland' (L1). However, he acknowledged that speaking English and having a job played an important role in allowing him to maintain such a cosmopolitan circle.

> 'Obviously the knowledge of the language helps but also other factors like you're feeling insecure because you don't have a job and if you don't have enough money to live by you kind of feel pressure to get a job. And the longer you can't find a job the more depressed or the more insecure you get. But it's also probably about finding friends, finding at least acquaintances, it doesn't mean that you have to find people from your home country or something but just people who will support you and you can talk to' (L1)

Activities with Irish Citizens

Social interactions with indigenous Irish are crucial in facilitating integration into the host society. Where and in what context migrants meet the latter are important sources of information for fostering and developing these ties. In terms of social activities with Irish citizens, activities based around pubs or other social venues were clearly very important for Chinese and Lithuanian respondents, but less important for Indian and particularly Nigerian respondents (see Figure 5.5).

Figure 5.5: Social activities with Irish citizens, by community
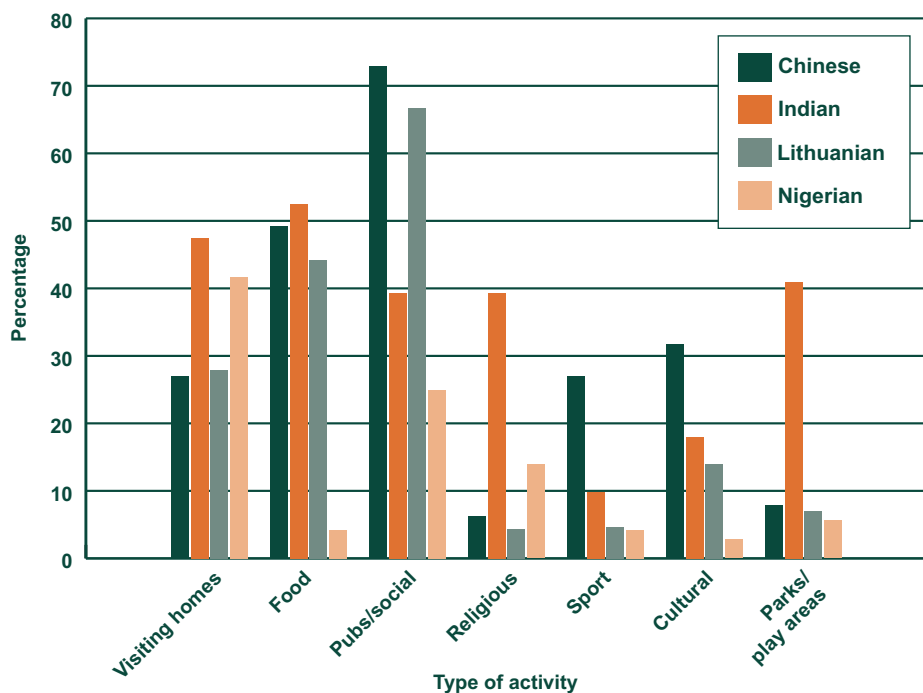
Many of these activities take place with work colleagues who are Irish citizens. Indian respondents were more likely to socially interact with Irish citizens around food, visiting each other's homes, and parks and play areas. Religious activities were also important. Activities based around food were also important for Chinese and Lithuanian respondents, but not for Nigerian respondents. Chinese respondents were most likely to meet Irish citizens through sport and cultural activities. Nigerian respondents had a low rate of involvement with Irish citizens in sport, cultural, religious, and food-based activities. Only Indian respondents made significant use of parks and play areas to interact with Irish citizens.

The importance of the pub as a site of social activity was commented on by a number of interviewees. While drinking is also a pastime in Lithuania, respondents mentioned there is a difference in the pub routine; Irish people go to pubs every day rather than just on the weekends. 'I think it's very like bustling, I'd say. It's really like the pubs are crowded every single evening' (L1).

Pubs are not always comfortable places, however. One Nigerian interviewee suggested that 'we would prefer a community centre, somewhere to go to rather

than the pub', which is especially problematic for him as a Muslim (N4). The difficulties with the pub as a site of social interaction were also highlighted by another interviewee.

> *'Socialising over here is going out Friday evenings; finishing off early, off to the pub. Socialising in India is… maybe somebody is having a birthday party, a meal will be served at home with no booze. That's how families socialise or for some it's a holy ritual and there is food and everybody is invited so that is family socialising… rarely you'll find families going out and having a meal and forget about the booze'* (I8)

For several Nigerians (although not many discussed religion during their interviews), going to church was also an important activity. African churches played a key role and, for many, provided the central context for socialising with others in their national group. For Nigerian Catholics, while some attended churches with mostly Irish members, they didn't necessarily associate with them outside of mass (N18). Others, as described by one interviewee, attended Catholic churches that were very mixed, including people from Polish and Filipino communities for example, whom he often meets with and visits at their homes. Another noted that when one goes to the church 'they love, respect you. They know there is something you share.' He has many Irish friends in church. 'Outside of church, it's very difficult. Maybe those people don't attend at all, their behaviour is different' (N3).

However, our categories of social activities were not sufficient to capture the richness of social interaction with other migrants. For example, one respondent who had many Indian friends from IT – 'All my friends have come down and worked in IT' – also made many non-Indian friends while living in a house with French, Spanish, and Dutch people. He talked about how he spent time with them.

> *'Not sports. Maybe sometimes I go out for a night or an evening or to house parties. Or I like going for a day trip somewhere. That is what we usually do. A few of my friends moved away. So, what we are trying to do is just to see each other. I was in France last year and we organised one big trip to London. We went from there and my French friend came from France and there was an Italian guy who came from Italy. So, it was a big gathering. And the French friend came over here last weekend and… now we are planning all of us to go to India in September'* (I4)

Constraints on social activities are similar to those experienced in the wider society. Interviewees across all four national groups emphasised that the lack of time outside of work, study, and family, and often a lack of resources, posed formidable obstacles in developing their social lives. Many interviewees commented on their limited free time.

> *'I wake up and go to work. I get home and have dinner at 8pm. I might watch a movie and then go to sleep. My husband also works late – he gets home around 1am. I might get up and chit chat and then I go back to sleep'* (C17)

This was also emphasised by another interviewee.

> *'I would love to play badminton but work keeps me busy the whole day… three hours to and fro. [There's] nothing left in the day. The weekend is dedicated for family, so when else? I don't have time'* (I7)

Another pointed out that they found it hard to mix and participate with other people simply because they are so busy working.

> *'Practically I have no spare time because I work 24/7. With my job of languages, you are kept quite busy. I don't socialise because it involves sport or going to the pub. I don't get a chance to socialise'* (L7)

Other constraints included family obligations, childminder and monetary factors, and lifestyle or religious preferences, such as vegetarianism. One interviewee highlighted the ways in which having children, particularly without family members living nearby, affected social interaction. Another commented that she would only have opportunities to meet other parents if she wasn't working full time. When she's not at work, she has little time between helping her extended family and taking care of her own family (C16). This proved an even greater hardship for single parents, women in particular, who are unable to secure family reunification. Struggling to financially support themselves and their children leaves little or no ability to pay childminders. One woman reported that, in seven years, she has not gone out to socialise: 'I've never gone to a club, a pub, out; I joke with people at work but that's about it' (N18). Another said that, 'if friendships stop at work, you can't really call that integration' (N19).

Saving money was also a factor in interviewees' participation in social activities.

> *'Some people do find it difficult to exist here... they don't mix with the local people. I'm sure they have their reasons... Maybe they're not willing to spend money, go out and just have a few drinks, things like that... maybe, where people come from, I suppose they have their own priorities, practical reasons. Cost wise, if you go out and spend 50 quid, maybe that could be one of the practical reasons'* (L8)

The participants in the Chinese focus group emphasised that, because of their financial situation, they have to focus on helping each other. Therefore, they spend most of their time together rather than with others.

Attitudes to Irish People

We asked respondents if they felt that Irish people were difficult to get to know (see Figure 5.6).

In general, there were relatively high levels of disagreement with the statement across all four national groups. Nigerians were most likely to agree that Irish people were difficult to get to know, although the most common answer was to neither agree nor disagree with this statement. However, around one-quarter of Nigerians disagreed with this statement.

In response to the statement 'Irish people want to spend time with me' (see Figure 5.7), only the Indian respondents were somewhat positive. Both Chinese and Lithuanian respondents were relatively ambivalent in response to the statement. Nigerians responded somewhat negatively, with more than 40 per cent of men and women disagreeing with the statement.

Figure 5.6: Response to the statement 'Irish people are difficult to get to know', by community
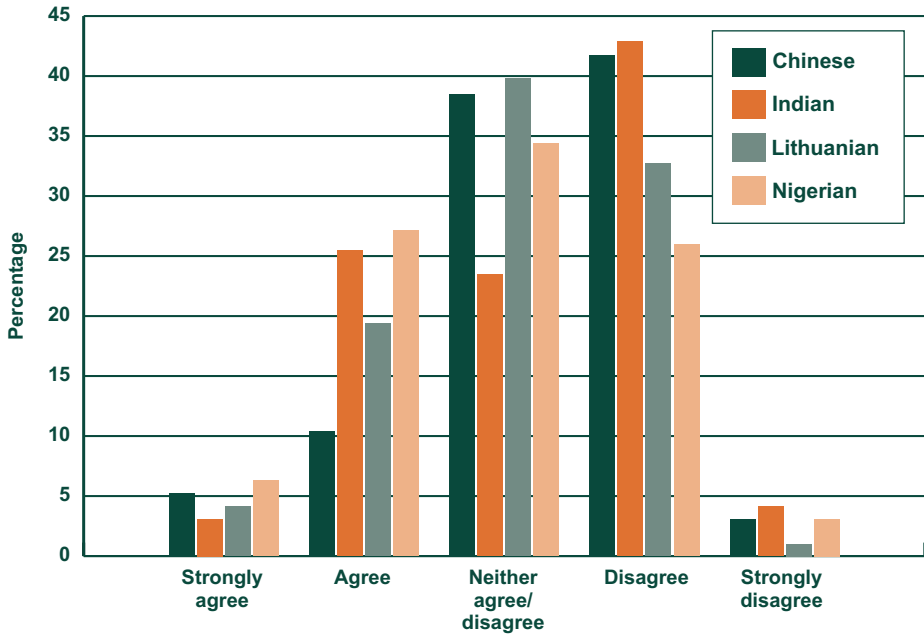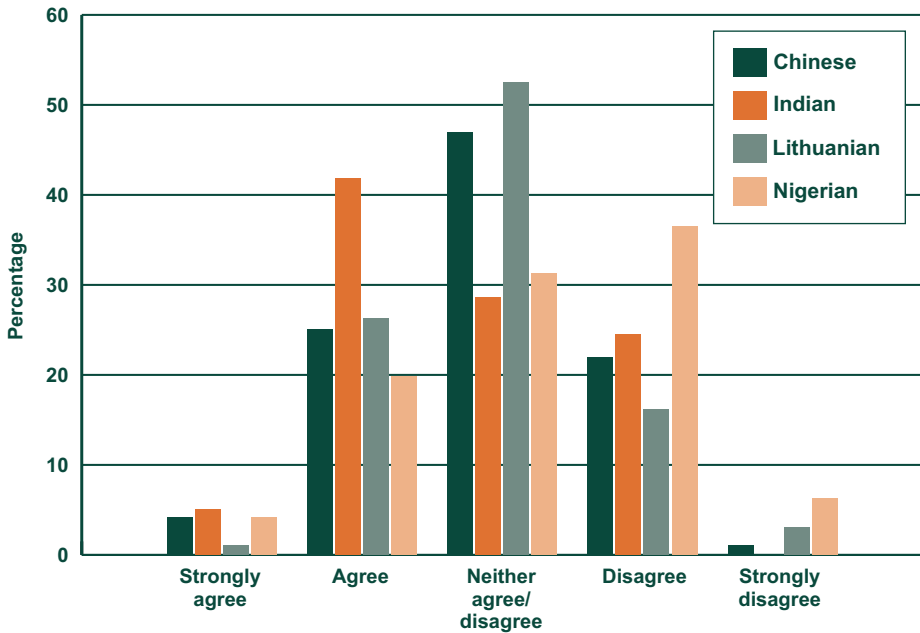

Figure 5.7: Response to the statement 'Irish people want to spend time with me', by community

Attitudes towards Irish people were often elaborated on during interviews. Nearly all the Lithuanian respondents talked about how friendly and helpful Irish people were compared to Lithuanians. 'People greet you in the street. It never happens in Lithuania' (L7). This was often quite startling. 'People say hi to you even if they don't know you. It was strange for me. Why do you say hi to me if I don't know you' (L10). Others were particularly enthusiastic about the friendliness they received in small villages. 'I always try to avoid putting labels on nations but, being in a small village, I felt really welcome' (L17) or 'people in small towns are nicer' (L12).

Rather than talking about Irish people in general, many respondents talked of specific people they had encountered. One respondent talked about how helpful an Irish neighbour had been, particularly since his wife was living alone in the house while he was away at work.

'One of the neighbours, she didn't work for most of the time we know her. She used to be a nurse and she stopped working because she was pregnant. But she went back to her nursing again. She keeps in touch with my wife, if she needs anything from the shop something like that. She is very nice. [She] comes into the house for a cup of tea and it's very good that way. It feels as though you know somebody close' (I7)

People in Ireland were also compared favourably to the British.

'In terms of country, they're very friendly people. They're very easy people to get along with compared to Britain. I worked in Britain too, but found it harder to break [the] ice with the British as opposed to the Irish. The Irish are much more friendly. They're always with a smile, they're much more easy going with life generally' (I1)

This was contrasted to life in India by one interviewee.

'Here people are so friendly. In India, if you ask someone for help, sometimes they won't help that sincerely but, in Ireland, if you ask someone "can you tell me where this place is?" they'll come and tell you where it is. In India it's very rare we have such experiences' (I2)

One interviewee who has lived in Ireland for a long period pointed out the changes in attitudes to migrants over that period. She said that it is much harder for new Chinese migrants to get on well in Ireland because of increased anti-migrant sentiments. When she arrived a few decades ago, it was easy for her to become just another member of the local community, but nowadays it is much harder to be accepted.

Some Lithuanians felt they were looked down on by the Irish population generally or discussed issues involving discrimination. It was claimed that Lithuanians were sometimes seen by the Irish as coming from a poor, undeveloped country or had chosen to come to an 'advanced' country for monetary reasons. 'One bad thing about Irish people, they think everyone comes for money' (L3). 'Some Irish, especially lower classes, look at Lithuanians as if they come from a very undeveloped country' (L4).

Yet another long-term resident felt that, given the make up of more recent students and professionals, along with wider global changes, being Chinese may actually be an 'advantage' rather than being a negative. He and other

interviewees felt that Irish people are more interested in China, more likely to ask questions and engage Chinese people, and more inclined to listen to them in a different way (C6, C10).

Many interviewees reported that, although Irish people were friendly, it was very difficult to make friends. 'The first impression you get about Ireland is friendly people. Very friendly but to know somebody you have to live with them. Deep inside, it's not that friendly' (I7). This perspective was echoed by interviewees who expressed the contradiction between the Irish being friendly and making friends in Ireland. 'We have good relations with Irish but not very good friends' (L15). Another noted 'I only have about two Irish friends. We're close enough – I've known them for a few years. We meet up once in a blue moon, but my friends are usually from Malaysia or Hong Kong'. This interviewee would like more association with Irish people but sometimes finds 'it's nice to have Irish friends to talk to but I wouldn't tell my problems to them. It's okay to go for a drink – just for drinks' (C17).

Many interviewees highlighted the quality of friendship with Irish people once it had been established. One man occasionally meets with his former Irish classmates to share experiences. He believes that the Irish can interact with someone if they are familiar with them and trust them. Although it was difficult to make friends, once you did, it was worth it. 'If you have an Irish friend it's for life but you have to earn it' (L12). Interviewees also realised that the importance of such relationships went beyond just friendship. 'Ireland is a friends' country. In Ireland you have to know someone in order to get something' (L13).

Racism in Ireland

Young people were highlighted as a source of anti-migrant sentiment. Some interviewees reported that young people had thrown stones or eggs at them. Others had friends or knew people who had also been physically assaulted.

> *'One of my housemates… was attacked by a bunch of teenage children, girls and boys on the street just behind Trinity College. She got beaten pretty badly. It was awful'* (C6)

Two interviewees (C3, C9) recalled problems with teenagers who had learned swear words in Chinese that they would yell at them. 'For me it's… not terrible… not horrible but it's annoying… I don't want to shout it back… but just uncomfortable.'

> *'Every country has got bad people. Some people live without education you know. And they're poor maybe… If I walk in O'Connell Street in the middle of the night, maybe some drunk man will shout at you "Chinese b******d". But I don't think it's just for foreign people. If they saw an Irish man walk there, he may still say "b******d"… I think somehow the Chinese react too much for that. Because they think, they shout at me or attack me just because I'm Chinese. But I don't think so, because sometimes you're just a common thing you know. It's not just for foreign people'* (C3)

Another interviewee drew attention to the paradox whereby he was harassed by a drunk, yet an Irish woman came to his aid.

> *'It's not too bad… the overall experience is quite pleasant I would say. If you ask me "do I feel Ireland is a racist country?" I definitely would say no. But there are some incidents'* (C10)

Incidents of harassment, swearing and being told to 'go home' are also common.

'If they could find a means of hijacking you and sending you back to your country, they would have done it. Just imagine when we go for shopping, they will come and meet you. "You f**king black stupid thing, get out of this place, you go back your f**king country"' (N3)

Interviewees reported that Nigerians experience additional problems because of stereotypes associated with being asylum seekers and criminal.

'Bad memories come to me. But when I look at the fact that, three years down the line, I have not had any negative experiences like that, it gives me hope. I'm positive that things would definitely improve. I'm totally against a situation whereby people use the same brush to paint everybody. Like when a Nigerian commits an offence, some people say that all Nigerians are fraudsters. It's very very painful. The population of Nigeria is about 150 million and you won't expect that we have no criminals amongst us. I mean, in every society there are bad people. The fact that there are a few racist people in Ireland does not give me the right to say that the Irish are racist, because they are not' (N1)

'Racism is a problem for everyone, not just Chinese people. All countries have problems with racism... everybody needs to [make an] effort to learn from each other and to understand each other. That's how to tackle the problem... if everybody understands why they did that and what's the custom, why you shouldn't talk like that... there would be a huge decrease on problems and it probably would be resolved' (C5)

Nevertheless, making friends is somewhat a struggle given that, as one woman noted earlier, there are few opportunities for relationships and friendships to develop beyond casual exchanges. One man noted that his children have Irish godparents, which provides a connection that brings the families together occasionally. One interviewee recalled a chance meeting that led to a lifelong friendship with an Irish woman.

'Later I became friendly with her, a very nice person indeed... She was exceptional. She was the only friend I knew at the time. It was a very fearful period, one of isolation... It took me nine months to regularise my status here, and those nine months that I was at home doing nothing were the worst period of my life' (N1)

Given the difficulty of developing friendships but the premium that migrants placed on it, the most overwhelmingly positive response was to the statement, 'I would like to spend more time with Irish people' (see Figure 5.8). A significant majority of Chinese, Indian and Nigerian respondents agreed with this statement, although Lithuanian respondents were more ambivalent. These figures represent a strong desire for social interaction with Irish people among all four migrant communities. However, this desire may be thwarted by the factors noted above, including pressures on people's daily lives, the limited number of spaces of social interaction, and the difficulties of forming close friendships with Irish people.

Figure 5.8: Response to the statement 'I would like to interact more with Irish people', by community
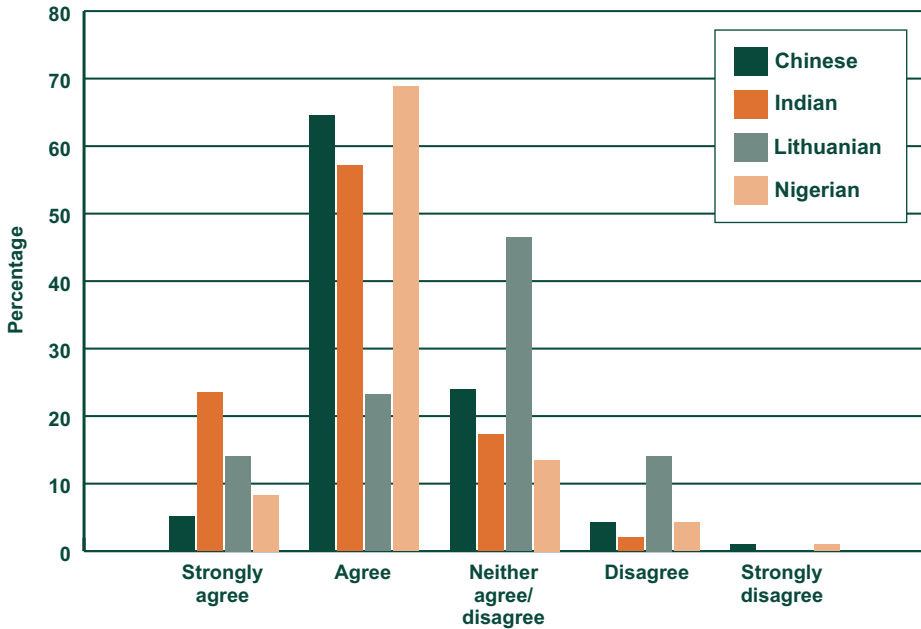

Interactions at Work and in Education

The majority of survey respondents across all national groups work in and around the standard working week. However, there are some exceptions. More than half of Chinese respondents work less than 30 hours a week on average, although this could be linked to status, particularly those with student status. More than one-third of Nigerian and over one-quarter of Lithuanian respondents work, on average, more than 40 hours a week. The highest recorded average working week is 80 hours.

In response to a question on the composition of the workforce in respondents' main job, there were considerable differences in the extent to which people worked with predominantly Irish colleagues. While more than 80 per cent of Indian respondents worked in an environment that was predominantly Irish, less than 2 per cent of Nigerians reported working in such an environment. However, more than 70 per cent of Nigerians worked in jobs where roughly half their co-workers were Irish. Over 60 per cent of Lithuanians and Chinese worked in environments where at least half their co-workers were Irish. However, at least 10 per cent of Lithuanians and Chinese had no Irish co-workers.

Figure 5.9 shows the extent to which people socialise with work colleagues. Most often, these social activities involved trips to the pub or activities organised around food. Respondents were less likely to visit the homes of work colleagues than of other migrants.

Figure 5.9: Percentage of respondents who spend time with work colleagues
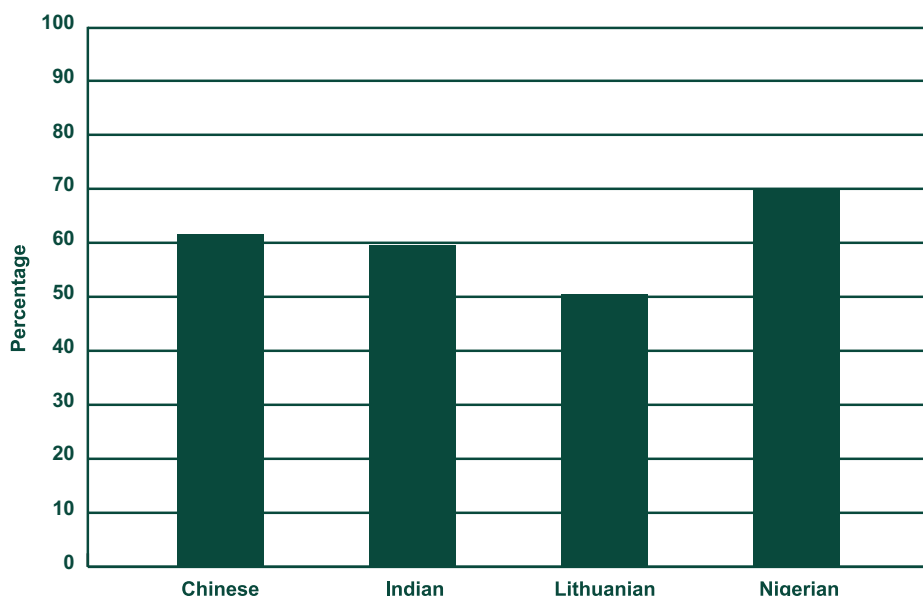
Not surprisingly, the attitude of co-workers plays a key role in forging friendships and ties. One interviewee described one of her colleagues as being 'open-minded, nice. He goes out of his way to talk to me. I can relate to him because he seems open to me. Others keep their distance. I'm able to socialise and have some laughs with him' (N3).

This is in contrast to another interviewee who talked about not being asked out by Irish colleagues. 'At my workplace, I never went out with any of them. They organised within themselves. And they are doing it quite often. But they did not even bother to ask me' (I4).

Two interviewees emphasised a central problem that arises due to the fact that Nigerians are working in jobs below their qualifications. As they are not working with people who would be their natural peers, colleagues, or friends, they do not have the opportunity to make real friendships. One professional remarked 'I have tea with my colleagues, I dine with them' (N17).

One health professional noted that, initially, there had been some misunderstandings but felt that the problems surrounding them were more a matter of different personalities rather than poor work relations or racism. However, this was not always the case for others. One woman reported that she is the only black person in her department.

> *'I don't feel as free in the workplace. Decisions are taken that affect you but you don't say much because you're a minority... I sense that they feel I should be grateful I have a job'* (N3)

One interviewee felt that, even in the civic context, other volunteers became cliquish towards him because he was an asylum seeker (N5).

Some interviewees attributed problems in the workplace to a growing hostility to migrants. For example, one respondent was asked whether he thought the Irish felt there were too many migrants.

> *'Six years back I would say I think people were more interested in you because there were very few foreigners here. So maybe people would take more interest in you and they wouldn't mind seeing you around. But yeah, I think now [there are] lots of outsiders here so maybe a little bit you can see the change... I wouldn't say anybody is extreme or anybody goes in your face and says anything. But yeah, you can see the difference'* (L4)

The workplace was seen as an important space, not just for career progression but also for meeting and mixing with others – colleagues as well as regular customers. Both men and women reported that spouses that were unemployed or at home taking care of the children were at a significant disadvantage in developing networks and typically took longer to settle in due to their isolation. Initially some found it difficult to adapt. One woman recalled that she changed her accent and how she spoke so others could understand her better. The work environment has become better over time for her, but 'I wouldn't say we're friends; I would say we get by' (N3). There are some work-related social gatherings and holiday parties that she has to go to, but she does not see this as socialising.

While the majority of survey respondents were working or looking for work, a substantial minority (just over 20 per cent) were in full-time education. In this instance, we asked respondents if they had experienced any of a range of problems, including bullying, racism, unfair marking, or difficulties paying fees. The most pressing issue for many respondents, other than Lithuanians, related to paying fees. The high fees charged by Irish third-level institutions to non-EU students undoubtedly create financial difficulties and often hardship for such students.

Survey respondents were less likely to highlight issues of racism or bullying, but often the interview narratives focused on such experiences. For example, two women described their discomfort at being the only African or Nigerian student in their postgraduate courses. 'I just felt I stuck out like a sore thumb' (N19). Both attributed this to the lack of experience, among staff and other students, with ethnic minorities. Another student reported that she did not meet many Chinese students because she was the only Asian in the programme.

More generally, spaces of education are important sites of social interaction for migrants to Ireland. This is particularly the case for Chinese migrants, many of whom are students. However, the lack of premises and facilities necessary to effectively support interaction and friendship building is a problem.

> *'People enter into the class and finish a two-hour lecture and then leave. So there's not any group... there's only a ten-minute break. So, no, even for the Irish, there's not much contact'* (C6)

He reported that an Irish friend was equally disparaging of this environment. However, he emphasised that 'social life in college – it's very hard'. He recalled the struggles of one of his Chinese classmates whose confidence was shaken and he was afraid to go to college. 'And later his emotions were extremely flat and he worked about eight hours a day for two months. So basically, physically

and psychologically, his health is affected.' Later, when they finished college, his friend felt better as he had become more social.

Research in a variety of national contexts has suggested that spaces of work and education are very significant for forging social relationships between migrants and indigenous populations. For Chinese students in particular, everyday life revolves almost completely around work and college. One student commented that it is not a matter of having a 'social life'.

> *'For me, the definition of social life is to enjoy when you are working because you spend about 30/40 hours per week. So, if you can enjoy that, that's your social life'* (C6)

From our research, it is clear that some forms of social relations are being established in the workplace, but that these are often confined to the workplace or work-related social activities. At this stage, it is important to identify the constraints on interaction and friendships in the workplace. These include lack of understanding, practices of exclusion, hostility, lack of time and space for interactions, bullying, and harassment, as well as the lack of recognition of migrants' qualifications. The uncertain status of many migrants also creates barriers to developing social relationships at work. However, it is important to note the desire among many migrants to forge these relationships and their appreciation of efforts made to incorporate them into social networks.

Housing, Home, and Neighbourhood

All the respondents reported very different housing patterns to the general Irish population (see Figure 5.10). Migrants overwhelmingly live in rented accommodation. House ownership is highest among Indian respondents, with 25 per cent reporting that they owned their own homes, followed by 17 per cent of Nigerians. Only 6 per cent of Chinese and 5 per cent of Lithuanians owned their own homes. Nineteen per cent of Nigerians lived in accommodation that was neither owned nor rented, mostly in hostels.

A recent working paper on housing tenure, published by the Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI), suggested similar patterns. It noted that 'immigrant households have a much lower owner-occupancy rate than native households' (Duffy 2007: 18). In terms of shared accommodation, we found that Chinese and Indian respondents were most likely to live in high-density shared accommodation, with more than two people per bedroom. Lithuanian respondents on average live in accommodation where two people share a bedroom, although focus group participants suggested that this changes over time.

Despite some crowding, the majority of respondents across all four national groups are satisfied with their living conditions. All Lithuanians report that their accommodation is at least satisfactory, with more than 70 per cent reporting that their accommodation is good or very good. However, participants in the Lithuanian focus group urged caution in interpreting this. They suggested that, rather than seeing this as general satisfaction with the standards of accommodation, it should be seen as temporary acceptance of a situation that may be less than perfect. In contrast, 20 per cent of Nigerians rate their accommodation as poor or very poor. Less than 10 per cent of Chinese and less than 5 per cent of Indians describe their accommodation as poor or very poor.

Figure 5.10: Housing tenure, by community
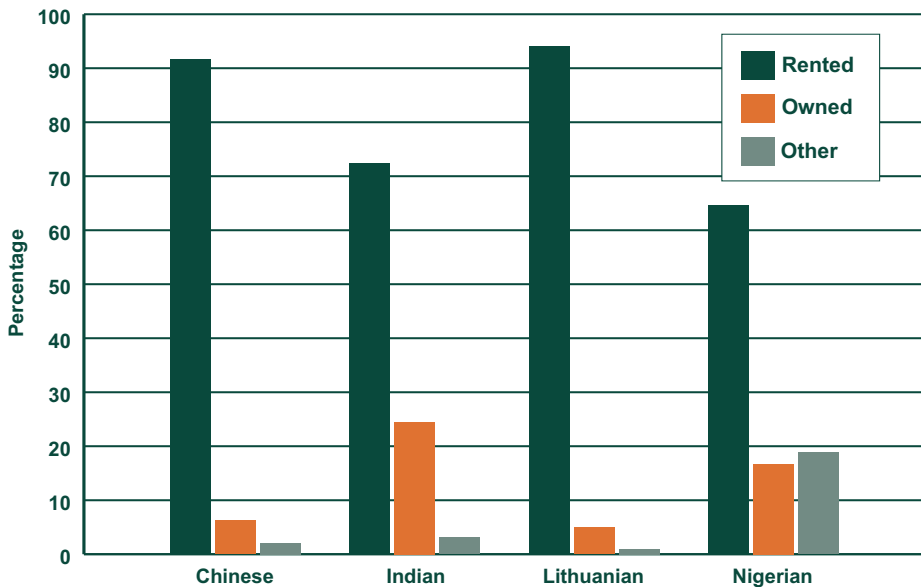
However, some interviewees expressed their frustration with apartment living in particular. An interviewee who lives in a very mixed location said. 'It's an apartment… so you don't get to know too many neighbours. And again, I work a lot in the office so I will be just there to sleep'. Moreover, there are not many activities taking place in the local community (C5). Others also commented on the lack of more meaningful interaction with their neighbours apart from occasional or casual greetings.

> *'I've lived in my apartment for two years and we still only say hello. You couldn't live in a place for six months in Africa without knowing your neighbours well'* (N3)

However, interviewees with children commented that they got to know their neighbours when their children played together.

Given the typical situation of shared accommodation, a lack of space can also be a problem.

> *'It's very hard to get the right place to live… I want cheap accommodation and a single room and a good environment and a friendly person. That is very hard to balance… you have to give up some factors to gain what's most important'* (C4)

Frequent accommodation changes are often due to finances, but also reasons of 'personal development'.

> *'If you are young, you need some kind of private time – a private space to make you feel like you have a power to control at least your room. You don't want to share a house, you don't want to share a room with others because it might make you feel you have no power to control'* (C4)

Of the four national groups, Chinese were most mobile in terms of changing accommodation. More than 70 per cent of Chinese respondents have moved three or more times since coming to Ireland. Indians and Lithuanians are least mobile, with 39 per cent of Indians and 30 per cent of Lithuanians reporting that they have not moved home since arriving in Ireland. The majority of Nigerians are relatively stable, with around three-quarters reporting no more than two moves in Ireland. Reasons for moving are varied and there are no clear patterns, but they include better-quality accommodation, changes in tenure, moves to facilitate access to work or education, financial reasons, and difficulties with landlords.

The varied reasons for changing accommodation were often discussed at length by interviewees. For example, many Chinese students are housed with an Irish host family for a month, which is organised through the agency or educational facility they are attending. While this is helpful initially, the pressure to find accommodation within a few weeks leads to students taking the first option they can find. This accommodation is often in shared rooms and flats, and in neighbourhoods where they do not feel comfortable.

Many of the students interviewed reported that they have moved at least once or twice, sometimes more, each year they have lived in Ireland, in search of cheaper accommodation and better flatmates. This has followed both the increase in financial means as well as in contacts and familiarity with local neighbourhoods. In many cases, students had good experiences – host families were welcoming and friendly – but others experienced problems, such as not being allowed to cook their own food. One woman reported the benefits of continuing to live in an Irish household following her host family.

> *'I speak to them a lot and they know the area pretty well because they have been there since they were born. So...I was in contact with the neighbours and them and their friends as well'* (C7)

Some interviewees spoke of very positive experiences with landlords. 'I've changed accommodation several times and all of the landlords were Irish. I never had any problems... they always kept to whatever agreement we had' (L1).

Others talked of some problems. One respondent mentioned the different interpretations involved in securing accommodation.

> *'It was really strange for me looking for accommodation. I learnt that, for example, when you have not received a key or not received a signed paper, your verbal agreement is simply non-existent... Generally in Lithuania, if you verbally agree, then it's agreed'* (L2)

Interviewees who had come through the asylum process often reported frequent moves due to the expense and trouble they experienced in the private rented sector. One man reported moving from Dublin city centre, where he shared one room with his wife and children after they joined him in Ireland, to Tallaght, and then to Mullingar, where he could afford proper accommodation. Eventually he had to move back to Dublin to secure work.

Many feel that discrimination on the part of landlords, towards Africans in general and Nigerians in particular, continues to be a problem. One woman recalled an instance when a friend was looking for accommodation. When they enquired about a particular place, the landlord said it was taken. She subsequently asked her neighbour to pose as a Ghanaian national looking for accommodation, who was told the apartment was still available and encouraged to view it.

Similarly, many Lithuanian interviewees reported difficulties in finding places to live. 'Finding a place to live is difficult' (L7). Many used DAFT to find a property, others used Lithuanian newspapers or websites, while others looked at notices in East European shops or in the Evening Herald. Some chose areas such as Blanchardstown because friends lived there. 'I heard it was new and a lot of other Lithuanians live there' (L6); others because suburbs offered cheap affordable family housing. Others lived in the city centre for convenience.

> *'I think it's more convenient to live in the centre... maybe I'm not a suburban kind of person. Everything is so close when you're living in this area, shops and if you need to go out somewhere'* (L1)

The difficulties in changing tenure were highlighted by many interviewees. One interviewee commented that 'real estate is very expensive here' (L5). The cost of purchasing property means that those who buy property do so in less-expensive areas.

> *'I wanted to buy a house. We kept renting until we could afford this house. All of my friends, including the friend I was sharing the house with, also bought a house. I tried my best to get a mortgage. For the salary level, I wouldn't get a house or a mortgage I'd be looking for in Blanchardstown. So, I guess I just go to the outskirts and look for something cheaper. That's when I started exploring Balbriggan'* (I7)

The majority of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that 'I feel safe where I live' (see Figure 5.11). Of the four groups, Chinese respondents were least likely to agree with this statement. However, only 17 per cent of Chinese disagreed with the statement.

Many interviewees reported positive experiences in their neighbourhoods.

Figure 5.11: Response to the statement 'I feel safe where I live', by community
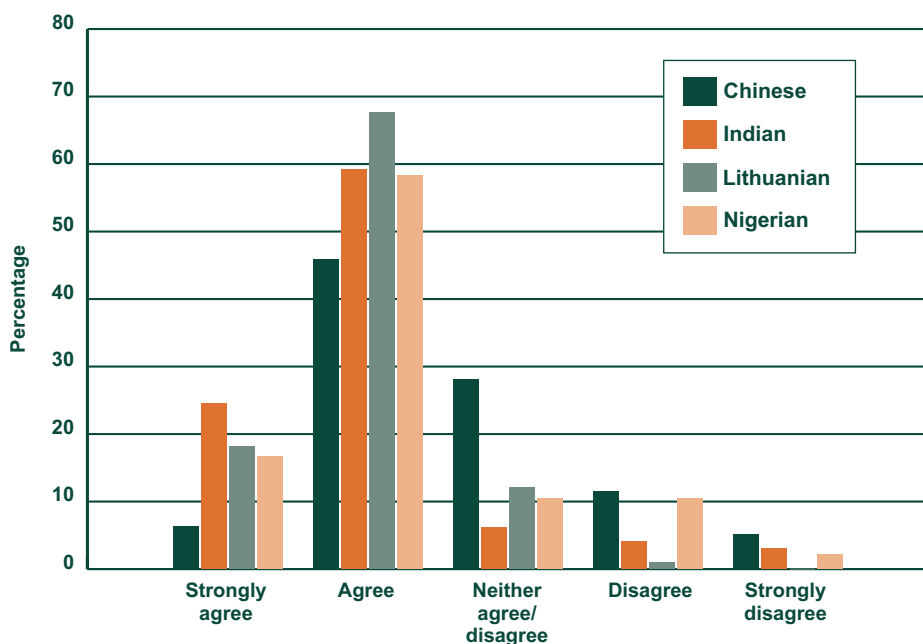
One woman, who lives in a very multicultural neighbourhood, gets on very well with her neighbours and they are trying to set up a residents' association (N1). Another interviewee who lives in Lucan describes it as 'paradise'. 'There are no problems or misunderstandings. We have a neighbourhood association, which gets together to clean up. It's fantastic' (N14). Even though he is the only Nigerian in the community, he feels there is a mutual sense of belonging. Another talked about a young neighbour who she thinks is lovely and who always offers to mind the children so she can go out, but she doesn't want to saddle her with her problems (N18). Another interviewee expressed his content by saying

> '[The] neighbourhood is very, very impressive; very friendly. Wherever we go in Ireland we seem to be very lucky in terms of neighbourhood. Other friends of mine have little problems... but our neighbours are very good' (L7)

A professional who noted that he does not necessarily feel secure in Ireland as a whole was quite happy where he lived. 'My little neighbourhood is good – friendly, lovely – you can make a good life' (N16). Another agreed, noting that 'it's the kind of place you'd want to raise a family' (N17). One man noted that, having moved recently to a new development, 'a lot of people are saying that it's new and in time it will develop' (N14).

People who had lived in small towns generally had positive things to say. 'It was very small and the people were very friendly, they were very good. I didn't actually feel I'm any different from any aspect from them' (C11).

This was unlike the interviewee's experiences in large cities such as London which, although more diverse, were also more impersonal, and the general treatment of people was more distant, impolite, cooler, or just very official.

One woman who lives in south Dublin commented that 'because of the neighbourhood, they are very friendly... people say hi to you on the street. They are very friendly... It makes your day, especially in the morning. You feel welcomed' (C11). She also said that the local councillor and the council were quite good at taking care of the local community and environment.

Some interviewees expressed a sense of fear and threat, particularly at night. Often interviewees reported that they were generally happy where they lived and felt safe. However, this was usually followed by a qualification that this was not the case at night. Some only made the journey through the neighbourhood directly to and from home without stopping. In Dublin, those living in the inner city and north inner city were more inclined to say that they 'don't come out at night... It's better if you stay home. If you just go out there, lots of kids throw stones on you, eggs.'

Despite his and a neighbour's experience of being broken into, one student didn't feel the place was too dangerous. However, he was conscious that problems could always spill over from an adjacent estate that was considered rough. Most felt that teenagers were the main problem group. Another replied she felt very safe in general.

> 'But I am always a bit wary of those drunken kids and those homeless people. Not that I don't like them or anything, it's just I know they might cause trouble. And they tend to target foreigners especially, so I tend to stay away as much as I can' (C7)

One respondent who lived in Waterford remarked how he never felt safe after dark. 'People go out to the pub and you just don't go to places you don't know. Obviously you just don't know what is going to come next' (I8). Equally, on being asked if he felt safe in Bray, one respondent remarked 'I don't know, anything can happen, you just have to be careful what you are doing' (I8). A similar sense of uncertainty was expressed by a woman who said that, although her neighbourhood is 'relatively' safe and she has not met with any harm, one cannot be safe '100 per cent in a place where you have people who don't really like you because you're a foreigner. It's hard to feel 100 per cent safe' (N15).

We also asked respondents if they had been a victim of crime since arriving in Ireland (see Figure 5.12). There were striking differences in answers to questions about experiences of crime and the reporting of those crimes. Chinese respondents were disproportionately affected by crime, with 30 per cent reporting that they had been victims of crime since arriving in Ireland. However, Chinese were also among the least likely to report crime to the Garda. Only two-thirds of Chinese reported crimes. This is in stark contrast to Nigerian respondents, all of whom reported crimes they experienced. Lithuanian respondents were least likely to be victims of crime (8 per cent), and least likely to report crime (42 per cent). Indians also reported relatively low levels of crime (9 per cent), but 85 per cent of Indians reported these crimes to the Garda.

Figure 5.12: Victims of crime since arriving in Ireland, by community
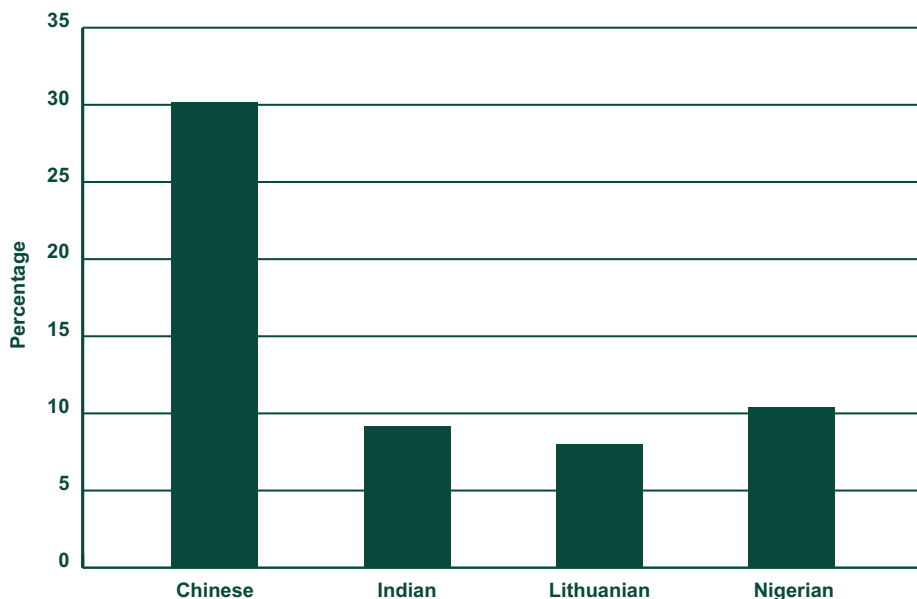
Conclusion

This chapter focuses on the social interactions of migrants in Ireland. As is the case in most receiving societies, the research findings suggest that migrants are most likely to spend time with people in similar situations, namely other migrants from their home country and elsewhere. However, the research also suggests a high level of interaction with the local Irish population and a very high level of desire to increase that interaction. There are obstacles to this interaction, as suggested by research respondents. These include the construction through popular discourses of migrants as temporary, and socially or culturally different. Yet, this research suggests that this is not the case. Migrants participate in the same kinds of social activities as the Irish population and have the same kinds of pressures in their everyday lives.

Work and education are important places of social interaction for migrants, as is the local neighbourhood and community. The workplace is an important place for forming networks of belonging and many migrants are appreciative of the efforts made by their colleagues to include them in social and other activities. However, a variety of obstacles exist. Negative attitudes about migrants, whether expressed openly or covertly, create barriers and make it difficult for people to feel fully accepted. The lack of positive action in the workplace to include migrants, whether structurally or socially, also limits their capacity for integration.

The issue of housing for migrants needs to be urgently addressed. A striking proportion of migrants rent accommodation. This means that migrants are disproportionately affected by the limited legal protection offered to tenants. This also has implications for belonging, for the development of local networks and communities, and for the social cohesion of neighbourhoods where the bulk of housing stock is private rented. Tenants in general have short tenure, with leases frequently covering no more than a year. In the current economic climate, with a predicted downturn in the housing market, the implications for tenants include the sale of the property they live in and unregulated rent increases.

It appears from this research that migrants, particularly visible minorities, in public spaces are experiencing harassment, which is often racially based. This is often the case at night and the perpetrators are often young people. It is important to tackle this issue through education, community and other policing, and clear messages that abusive behaviour cannot be tolerated. Politicians, community leaders, and the Garda must take an urgent lead in this regard.

Overall, there is a clear desire among migrants for social interaction with fellow residents. It is important to facilitate this through the provision of safe public spaces for interaction, such as community centres and playgrounds, and by supporting local festivals and other activities that do not necessarily revolve around the consumption of alcohol. It is also important to realise that broader questions of work-life balance, planning, transport, and housing affect migrants as well as Irish and are crucial in establishing links between them.

CULTURAL INDICATORS OF INTEGRATION

INTRODUCTION

Culture is one of the most difficult words to define in the English language (Williams 1976). Raymond Williams has suggested that culture is a way of life. For the purpose of this study, we investigated the impact migration has on ways of life. In particular, we considered how cultural beliefs and practices from the country of origin get adapted in Ireland and in response to Irish ways of life. This involved an investigation into language practices, values, and subjective responses to Irish ways of life. We also focus on the ways in which migration affects the make-up of the family unit and the links between its members. Finally, we raised the question of belonging in an Irish context through the examination of the development of new networks and future plans.

Language and Culture in the Irish Context

The question of language practices and proficiency in English of migrants is widely raised in connection with broader processes of integration and belonging (Healy 2007). We addressed questions of language use in a variety of ways: by identifying the languages that survey respondents speak in various contexts; by attempting to ascertain their level of proficiency in English; and by eliciting their views on language issues. We also raised the question of common values and culture, and investigated the extent to which migrants understand and accept the cultural values they recognise in Ireland.
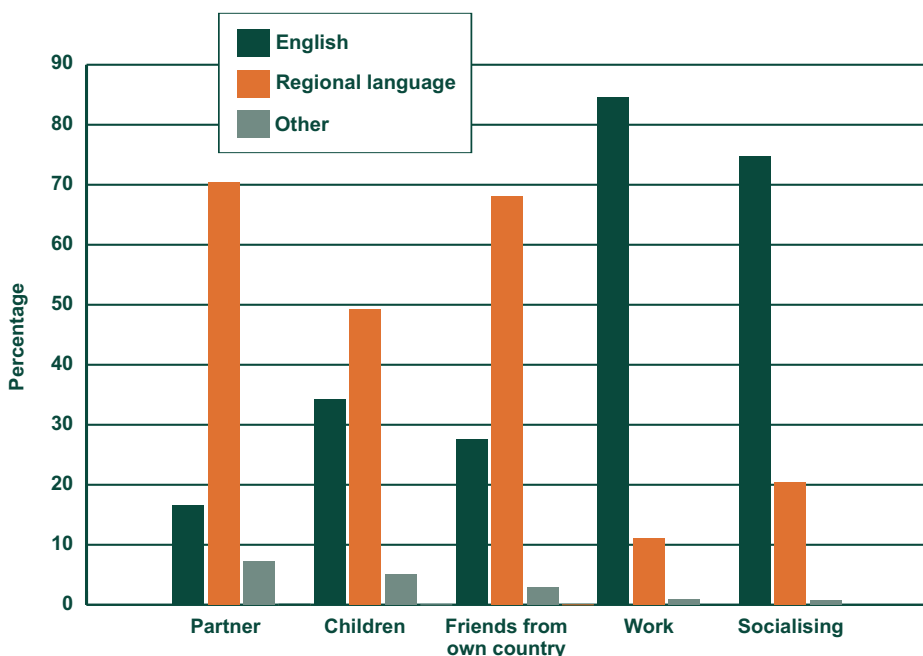
Language Use

We asked survey respondents about the languages they spoke in a variety of contexts, such as with partners, children, friends, at work, and when socialising (see Figure 6.1). Respondents gave details about the languages that they speak, and we aggregated the great number of languages mentioned into three broad categories: English, national and regional languages, and other. National and regional languages, in this context, refers to the different languages that are spoken in the countries of origin of survey respondents, such as Chinese (e.g. Cantonese and Mandarin); a variety of Indian languages (such as Hindi, Malayalam, and Urdu); Lithuanian and Russian; and a variety of Nigerian languages (such as Igbo, Yoruba, Nigerian Pidgin, and Hausa).

Interviewees also highlighted linguistic diversity in their home countries. For example, the older generation of Lithuanians learnt and spoke Russian at school. The younger generation can choose other languages, such as English, German, or French.

All national groups report high levels of *de facto* bilingualism, but there are interesting differences in the languages used by respondents in a variety of different contexts. For Chinese respondents, Chinese varieties are commonly used in the private domain, such as with partners and children. In the public domain, by contrast, English is the main medium of communication – at work and with friends from other countries. Difficulties in communicating were outlined by one Chinese interviewee, who spoke Cantonese but could only communicate with Mandarin-speaking Chinese nationals through English.

'I speak Cantonese so I speak English with them [Mandarin speakers]. Some have been here long enough that they speak Cantonese, but most now speak Mandarin. I didn't meet friends from China because I couldn't speak Mandarin' (C17)

Figure 6.1: Languages spoken by survey respondents in different contexts

For Indian respondents, Indian languages (e.g. Hindi, Malayalam, Urdu, and Punjabi) are also important in the private domain, particularly with partners and children. However, with friends from India, respondents are as likely to speak English as Indian languages. At work, and with friends from other countries, Indian respondents reported speaking only English.

Lithuanian dominates Lithuanian respondents' communication with friends from their own country, and was highly significant in the private domain with partners and with children. English is mainly used as a means of intercultural communication at work and with other friends. It is notable, however, that close to 20 per cent of Lithuanians reported speaking Lithuanian at work. This may be due to the fact that Lithuanian respondents were least likely to work in jobs where the majority of the workforce was Irish. Other than Lithuanian and English, Russian is the next most common language of communication for Lithuanian respondents.

By contrast to all other groups, Nigerians reported a very high use of English in both private and public domains. English is the dominant language of communication with children, at work, with friends from Nigeria, and with other friends. It is only with partners that Nigerian languages account for 46 per cent.

The need to be bilingual and multilingual was often positively highlighted by interviewees, particularly when they spoke about their children. Some saw this as positive and enriching their children's lives. One interviewee said 'I would like my baby to grow up with two cultures, like Chinese and Irish' (C2). Another commented 'With another language they have more options when they get older, like whether or not they want to go back to Hong Kong' (C17). Others were attempting to raise their children using a variety of languages. One mother is

raising her small daughter through Chinese but makes a conscious effort to teach her English.

'I try to talk to her in English but she won't answer in English; maybe wait. I want her to learn culture but see what she wants. I'm not forcing her. If she wants to know; I'm not going to push her' (C16)

Another commented that when her children were at home 'they speak English because I think they can handle English better but, if I insist, they will speak Cantonese' (C1).

Many children make creative use of their linguistic skills. 'When they want to say something in secret, they will actually talk in Irish because I don't know anything then' (C1).

Some stressed the importance of maintaining language use. 'About three years ago, I invited somebody to do special lessons for my kids to learn how to speak Mandarin. I think it's important to know the official language of China' (C1).

Two respondents who worked voluntarily in a Lithuanian Saturday school remarked 'It's important to teach children Lithuanian. We don't want it to die here' (L16). However, this also posed difficulties and challenges. One interviewee commented that 'our kids don't know how to write our language… They can speak, but they can't write' (I6).

'Many children don't want to learn Chinese because they think it is no use… I hope that if [my daughter] goes back to Hong Kong or an Asian country for a holiday, she could maybe be able to just read an underground sign or something. Just something simple, I'm not expecting her to write a novel' (C17)

Language Proficiency

We also asked respondents to rate their proficiency in speaking (see Figure 6.2), writing (see Figure 6.3), reading, and understanding English, since this is an important factor in facilitating integration into Irish society. The importance and benefits of proficiency in English was highlighted by one interviewee.

'What really helps is that, to get someone to be properly integrated into the system, they must have the basic education. That is the best way to get into the system. Once you have the education, you can easily integrate into the system, even if it is a FÁS course, it will help one to easily integrate. Language is also very important for smooth communication between the individual and other members of society' (L13)

Indian respondents were most likely to highly rate their proficiency across all four categories, followed by Nigerians. In stark contrast, Chinese and Lithuanian respondents were significantly less likely to rate their proficiency as fluent, although a majority claimed at least adequate knowledge of English to speak, read, write, and understand. Chinese focus group participants pointed out that, while knowledge of English might be adequate, this was not always sufficient for communication, since communication also involves body language and different senses of humour.

Figure 6.2: Proficiency in speaking English
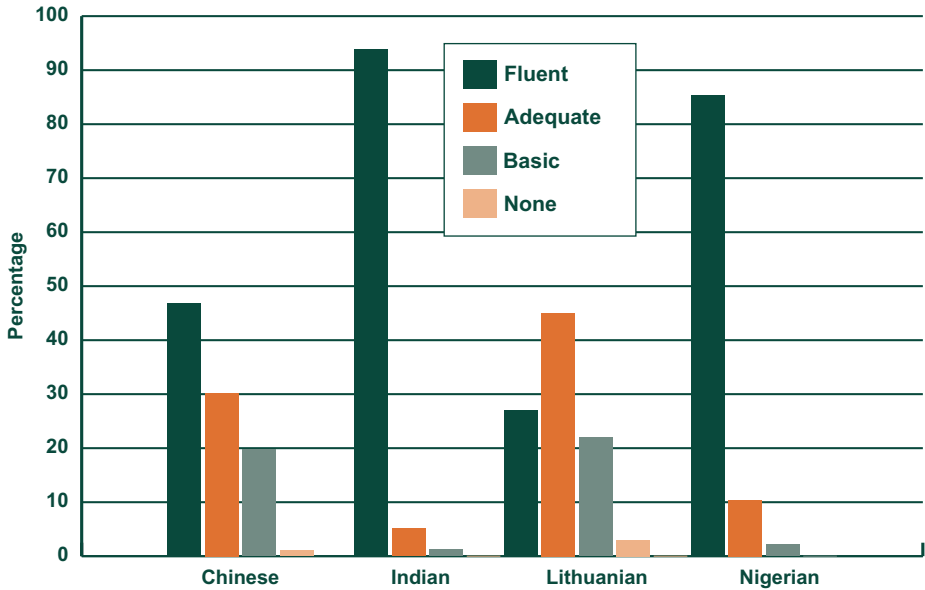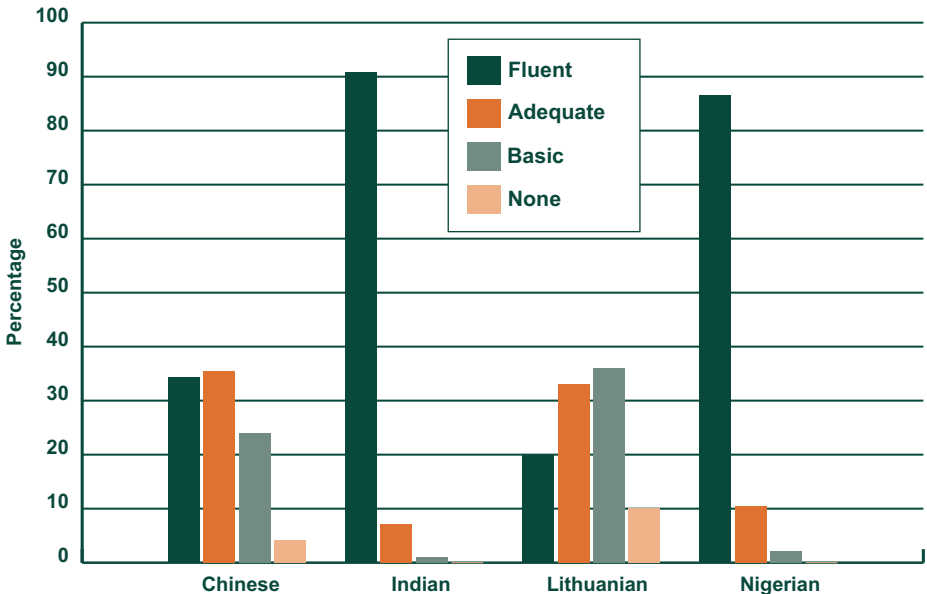

Figure 6.3: Proficiency in writing English

However, the survey findings on English language proficiency were not always supported by interviews. For example, an interviewee who had learnt to speak English found it hard to understand Irish accents.

'I studied English for nine years before I came over here. I thought I was fluent in it, I realised I wasn't... The only person I could understand back then was English; all the Irish people I had problems with' (L17)

This was reiterated by another interviewee, who commented that, although all Indians speak English, some found it difficult to understand the Irish accent and Irish expressions. One nurse was confused when she first arrived with the saying 'passing water' for 'passing urine' and had not heard the term 'being chesty' for 'having chest problem' (I2).

The central importance of language as a means of communication and as a precondition for integration was noted by many respondents. One commented 'The main problem is language, the language barrier' (L6), and that the 'most difficult thing for settling in is language. First is language, after that everything is good' (L4). Low levels of proficiency in English can lead to a variety of problems. These include difficulties finding employment. One interviewee stated that 'Lithuanians with no English have a hard time getting a job... unless you do cleaning' (L12). Others highlighted loneliness and isolation as a consequence.

'When I came here, I found many language barriers. I can't get in the Irish group. It's hard and I just want to avoid the kind of negative emotion because the more I contact the more I get confused, the more depressed I am. So, I just want to avoid and at the same time I didn't know any friends in Ireland so that's the reason I get confused you know... just walk around between the two' (C6)

This highlights a tension between the desire to interact and the obstacles to interaction that lead to loneliness and isolation.

Interviewees also highlighted the obstacles to becoming more proficient in English. Some commented on the pressures of work. One respondent mentioned that his housemates say they have no time to learn English since they work eight or nine hours in construction (L6). Some commented on how older migrants often felt they were too old to learn. 'My father finds it too hard for him at his age to learn language' (L6). Others observed a reluctance among their fellow nationals to become more proficient in English.

'A lot of my friends... they're not part of the society... Basically there's language barriers... it's the language. Secondly it's... do you want to learn the culture? A lot of them don't want to learn it... they are ok to live in the Chinese community. It's big enough and they have no need to go outside' (C5)

However, most shared the view articulated by one respondent that 'they would like English classes if they could find the time' (L15).

Both survey respondents and interviewees made it very clear that English is a basic requirement for life in Ireland, but they also want to maintain their national and regional languages. The maintenance of national and regional languages is important for those who see their stay in Ireland as temporary as well as for those for whom language is an important part of their identity. However, this did not extend to the Irish language. At least 65 per cent of respondents in all national groups disagreed that speaking Irish was important to fully belong in Irish society. This suggests that migrants are not being encouraged to learn Irish as an important part of the integration process. This may have future implications as some employment positions, such as primary school teachers, require knowledge of the Irish language.

Common Values and Irish Culture

In recent years, the issue of 'common values' has become a central topic in discussions on integration and policy development in Europe. Even though all societies are characterised by a diversity of norms and values, it is often assumed that there are common values and a national culture, an assumption that is promoted through official channels. Recent debates have raised questions about the nature of Irish culture (Kuhling and Keohane 2007). Nevertheless, there were relatively high levels of agreement among survey respondents with the statement that they shared common values with Irish people (see Figure 6.4).

Figure 6.4: Response to the statement 'I have many values in common with Irish people', by community
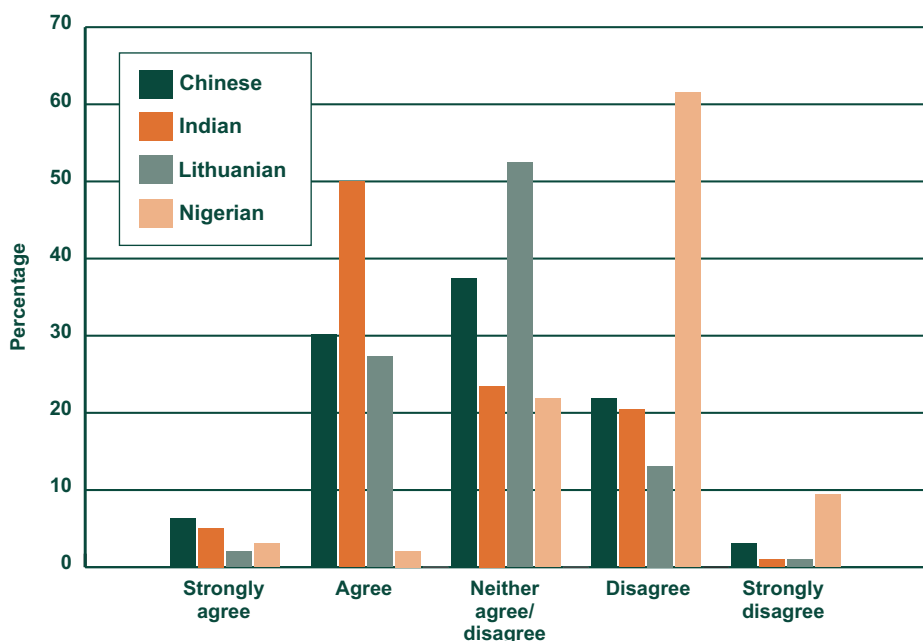
The highest level of agreement came from Indian respondents, with just over half agreeing or strongly agreeing that they shared common values with Irish people. Just over one-third of Chinese and around 30 per cent of Lithuanian respondents agreed. In contrast, just over 5 per cent of Nigerian respondents agreed with the statement and there was significant disagreement with this statement among them.

These shared values differed according to the national group. For example, Indian interviewees sometimes mentioned a shared emphasis on family values, whilst Lithuanians interviewees commented on similar historical experiences with colonialism, Catholic values, and similarities in the geographical size and landscape of the countries.

However, one respondent, who is married to an Irish man, rather astutely remarked that these values, although shared, were interpreted differently.

'Some cultural values are projected and accepted differently in both the countries, really everything... traditions, celebrations, holidays, how you treat your parents, how you treat your friends, your sense of humour, everything is so completely different. Mind you, Lithuanians like the black sense of humour but the wit is an Irish thing... And when you start interacting with them [the Irish] you can really start noticing that even the cultural values that are similar are so different, even the drinking culture... So it's different and the same at the very same time' (L14)

Another issue that came up in some interviews across all national groups was that of family relations and anti-social behaviour, particularly among young people. Many commented unfavourably on the high levels of freedom given to young people.

'The children have too much freedom here. There are no moral values. They don't learn anything from their grandparents... I think the freedom of the children should be limited a bit. They are too free and, when they become teenagers, they are much more violent and aggressive' (I3)

However, the same interviewee also observed that 'we find the older Irish generation, they are very good' (I3). Another interviewee expressed unease with the behaviour of young people in Ireland, especially when they were drinking alcohol (I4). Concern about the freedom of young people was behind the desire of many to return to their country of origin.

'For some Indians, it would be a reason to move back to India when their children become adolescents. They do not want their children to be influenced by this youth culture. Whereas in India the entire neighbourhood can correct a youth crossing the boundaries, in Ireland people are afraid to interfere' (I4)

Yet this was not only seen in negative terms, with the interviewee commenting 'There is also a positive view on the freedom of Irish children. They are motivated to develop themselves and to challenge the establishment'.

Conversely, a number of Indian interviewees also commented on the treatment of older people in Ireland. When asked if they would change anything about Irish life, one interviewee responded

'One aspect of Irish life? Respect for the elderly. Elderly people are not getting respect here at all... in India, elderly people... will be staying with the children and they will be looking after them really well, no problem at all. At home like. But here when they are old, they are... put in the nursing home – that is the sad thing... I am working in a nursing home, so I know the feeling how the mothers are feeling. Once they are in a nursing home, they are looking for their children, they want to go home every time. Every time they will be telling I'm going home, I want to go home. Where is my son? But in India I never had such an experience... good respect we give to the elderly person. And you know, if you go out for an exam or if you are going out for a job or anything like, you go to the elderly person and get a blessing from them. But here it's nothing like that. No respect for the elderly person' (I2)

People also identified a limited sense of community in Ireland compared to their home countries.

'For the Western countries, for the European people, they are independent, not like the Asian, they are dependent… What I spend today is what I gain tomorrow. They emphasise the self concept… the Chinese, we emphasise the group concept, we are in the group. If there's no group, you can't find yourself because you value yourself from the view of others in this group' (C6)

In addition to concerns about the behaviour of young people, a lack of respect for older people, and a different emphasis on the individual, interviewees also expressed their concern with Ireland's new consumerist society. One commented that 'Ireland is a shopping society… everything is about work and money and shopping' (L12).

'I think the average Irish person is beginning to suffer from "affluenza"… The affluence around the average Irish person is so much that they are all beginning to suffer from it… there is this culture in Irish community where it's like you have to live up to certain expectations. So, they strive to buy cars that are 07/08 for prestige and everything. For each car they take, they are running a new bill… direct debit payments to take it off. And if you really look at all these things, they try to live in big houses, they've big rents. Because they work and they earn money, they are able to pay for these things. But… nobody saves money in Ireland, there are no savings… So, I pray the economy continues to boom as it does… but it looks like no one is learning, everybody thinks the thing is going to last forever' (N9)

However, many interviewees commented favourably on differences in values between Ireland and their country of origin. The view that Irish society tends to be relaxed, laid back, friendly, and less pressurised was prevalent among interviewees.

'It's an easy life I guess. Like the study is not as intense as study back home… Ireland is very easy in that sense. People are more relaxed and laid back… And they're not very time conscious. If I have an appointment with someone, they are usually 15 [minutes] to half an hour late. So, yeah, it is easy I guess. And people are more friendly' (C7)

Interviewees also valued a number of features of Irish society such as State services, social welfare and democracy.

'On the positive side, I would say life is better, the transport system is good, the roads are better and, compared with the economy where I come from, the country where I come from life is stiffer. Life expectancy is better here, you know. The Government cares for the people more than they do in my country… Democracy in this country is great. Coming from where I come from, people in Ireland say that democracy is bad, but to me it's great. I signed an election contract recently; the results were out within two days… in France it came in a few hours. I saw an election where losers accept results; I say it's a school system, and it's so organised. I see children going to school and coming from school happy, you know. I see people walking you know and they are still able to pay their rents, they are still able to feed themselves' (N9)

In many ways, the complexity and ambivalence of the issue of shared values is captured by the following comment 'Some Irish people are very, very nice; have the same thinking as me; some not at all… I have my own thinking' (C17).

Having asked respondents whether they shared values with Irish people the survey also asked whether 'it is easy to become familiar with Irish culture and norms' (see Figure 6.5).

Figure 6.5: Response to the statement 'It is easy to become familiar with Irish culture and norms', by community
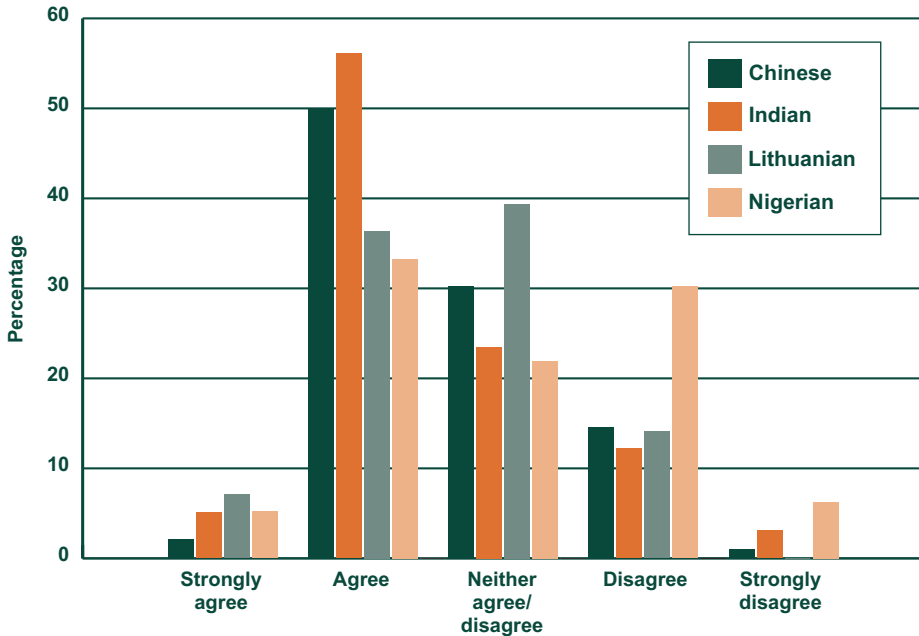
The majority of Chinese and Indian respondents agreed with the statement. Nigerians were most likely to respond negatively to this statement, and Lithuanians were most likely to be ambivalent. However, a number of interviewees commented on how their children were becoming familiar with Irish culture and norms more quickly than them. One interviewee noted that, when his wife arrived in Ireland on her own with the children, it was difficult at first for them to adjust.

> *'It was a new place for them. They felt in a strange place, but now they have adjusted. The children have Irish friends, go to school, go to Irish games, sports... Children adjust to everything fast'* (I6)

Families and Migration

Although discussions about migration tend to focus on individual migrants, it has become increasingly common to look at the role of the family in migration (Stark 1991). This relates to the importance of family relationships in patterns of migration, the importance of family reunification as a type of migration, and the ways in which migration reconfigures families and family relationships.

We asked survey respondents to identify their marital status (see Figure 6.6). While the majority of respondents are married or in long-term relationships, there are interesting differences between the national groups. Specifically, less than 30 per cent of Chinese respondents reported being married or in a long-term relationship, in contrast to more than 60 per cent of Lithuanian and more than 80 per cent of Indian and Nigerian respondents.

Figure 6.6: Marital status, by community
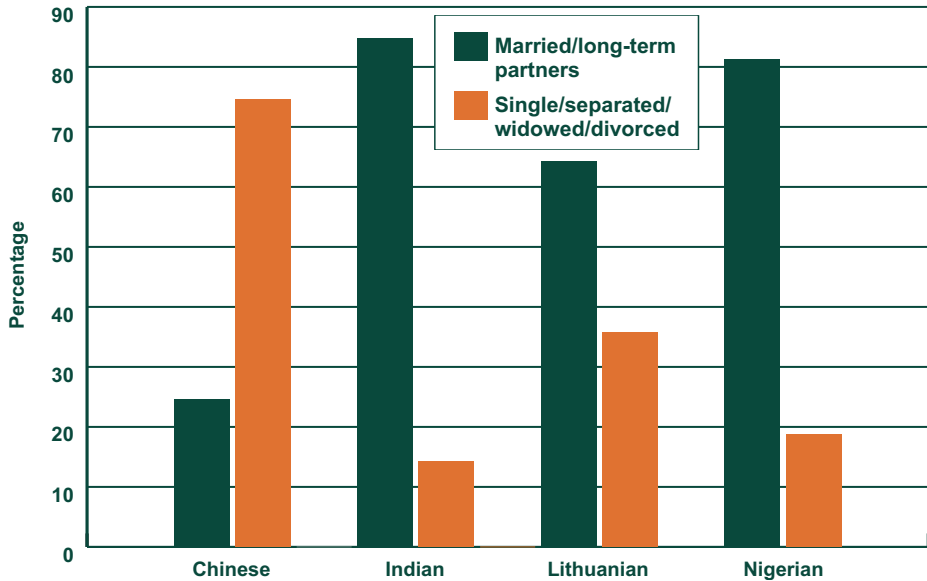
We also asked respondents who were married or in long-term relationships about the residence of their partner (see Figure 6.7). For all groups, more than 70 per cent of respondents in such relationships answered that their partner lived in Ireland. Almost 100 per cent of Indian respondents were in this situation. However, 25 per cent of Chinese, almost 20 per cent of Nigerian, and more than 10 per cent of Lithuanian respondents reported that their partner lived in their home country. Very small numbers of Nigerian and Lithuanian respondents reported partners living in places other than Ireland or their home country.

Figure 6.7: Residence of partner, by community
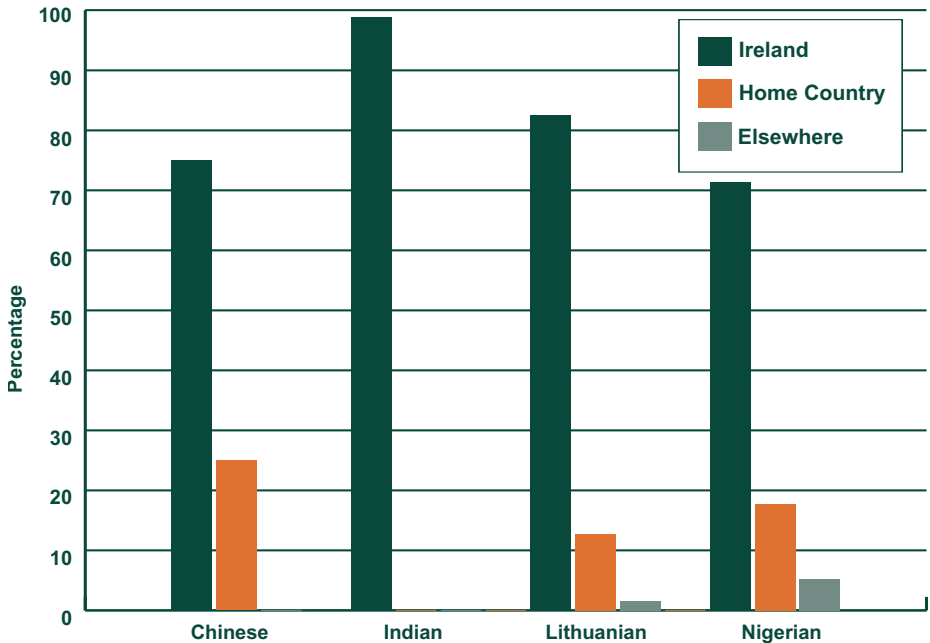
The percentage of survey respondents with children is shown in Figure 6.8. Nearly 90 per cent of Nigerian respondents have children, in contrast to just over 10 per cent of Chinese respondents. The proportion of Indian and Lithuanian respondents with children, at just over half, was roughly similar.

Figure 6.8: Percentage of respondents with children, by community
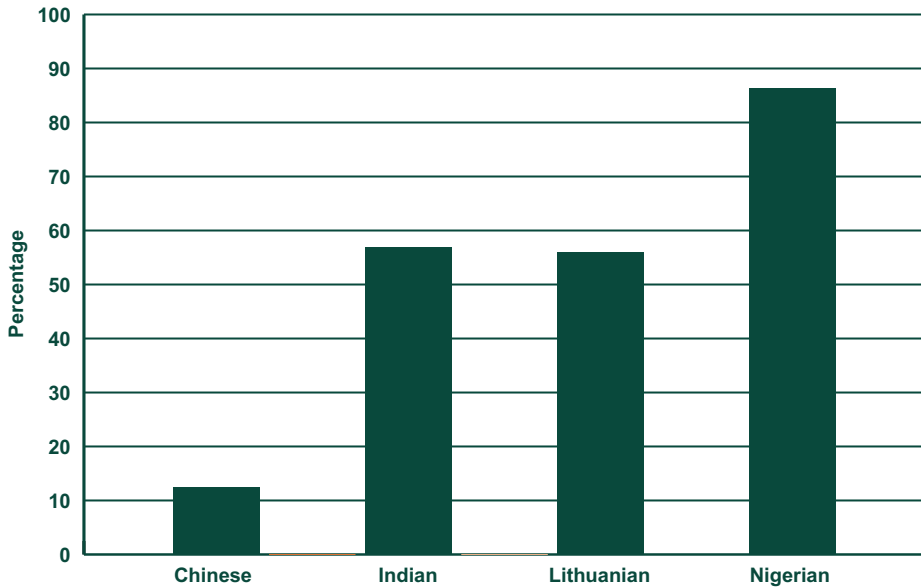
Numbers of children per family varied between the national groups. The majority of Chinese, Indian and Lithuanian respondents with children reported that they had just one child. The modal response for Nigerians was two children and more than 40 per cent of Lithuanian respondents also had two children. Nigerian respondents were most likely to have more than two children, with 45 per cent having three or more children.

We also asked respondents where their children lived. While the majority of respondents in all national groups had all their children living in Ireland, there were differences. Just over 58 per cent of Chinese and 67 per cent of Lithuanian respondents reported that all of their children lived in Ireland. This figure was higher for Indian and Nigerian respondents, at 90 per cent and 76 per cent respectively.

We extended our questions beyond the nuclear family and asked respondents if other family members, such as parents, siblings and in-laws lived in Ireland (see Figure 6.9).

Figure 6.9 shows the results for Lithuanian and Nigerian respondents, who reported a relatively high presence of other family members in Ireland, particularly siblings. For Lithuanian respondents, this may well be connected to their legal status, which allows freedom of movement between Ireland and Lithuania. Chinese and Indian respondents reported that none of their parents lived in Ireland. Very small percentages of respondents from these groups had other family members, such as siblings, living in Ireland.

Figure 6.9: Percentage of respondents with non-nuclear family members living in Ireland
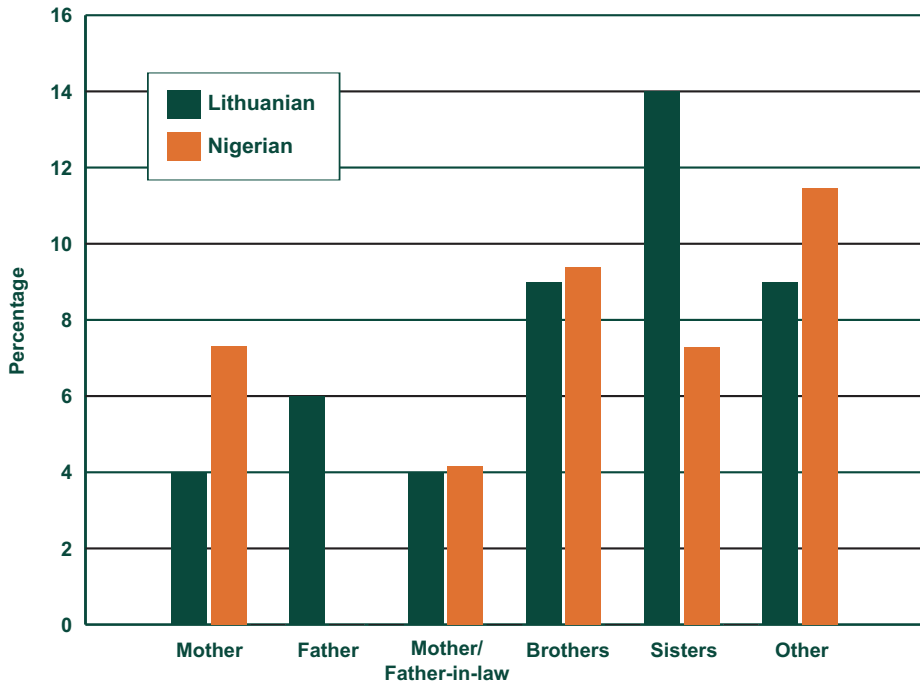
Family Reunification and Family Visits

Rights to family reunification also depend on the legal and migrant status of the applicant. The policy situation concerning family reunification in Ireland is complex and multilayered. All immediate family members of EU workers can join them, provided that they have resided with their EU national family member in another EU member state prior to coming to Ireland.

Individuals granted refugee status can be joined by their spouse and unmarried children under the age of 18. Children who have been granted refugee status have the right to be joined in Ireland by their parents. However, if they are granted Irish citizenship through naturalisation, they lose this right.

Holders of working visas are allowed to apply for family reunion after three months and those on work authorisations can apply immediately. Since February 2004, spouses of workers under the working visa/work authorisation scheme have a right to work through the spousal scheme. The holders of work permits have no automatic right to family reunification but can apply for members of their family to join them after 12 months.

All other migrants, and paradoxically Irish citizens too, have no guarantee for their family to join them, and must apply for ministerial discretion to the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform, where family reunification is decided on a case-by-case basis. Parents of minor Irish children or those on the IBC scheme can apply for family reunification but their applications are routinely refused on the basis of 'Government policy' (ICI 2006: 22) unless the applicant has been in employment for more than 12 months or a family member has exceptional needs.

We asked survey respondents if they had applied for family reunification. No Lithuanian and just one Chinese respondent had applied. This is no doubt connected to status: Lithuanians arriving after May 2004 can automatically bring over family members who are also Lithuanian citizens, and Chinese nationals coming to Ireland on a student visa have no right to family reunification. However, more than 9 per cent of Indian and over 10 per cent of Nigerians answered in the affirmative.

Of the small numbers that did apply, many of those applications for family reunification had been successful, with success rates of more than 70 per cent. It is important to note that these findings are not supported by other research on the issue (see ICI 2006). The low rates of application may be connected to a lack of information, a perception of a long and difficult process, or low success rates. Family, friends, and the internet were the most important sources of information on family reunification for Indian respondents, while the Government and lawyers were most important for Nigerian respondents.

However, these relatively high success rates mask a broader issue, which relates to family members visiting Ireland for a temporary period. This was not investigated in the survey, but surfaced as a significant issue in many of the interviews, particularly in relation to parents.

'The most negative [issue] personally for me is the fact that I can't even bring my mum here to visit me because of visa issues. I've been here seven years but, every time I apply, the visa gets rejected because my mum's on her own. My father... died a long time ago, so she's on her own and she doesn't have property or anything in her name. So, the immigration authorities think, if she comes here, she won't go back. I mean the rejection is based on assumptions. And she's got enough money and financially she's strong there... So, I think that's probably the most disappointing thing for me' (I14)

One interviewee wanted to bring his family to visit, but faced difficulties in doing so.

'My visa has expired, but the company has applied for its green card. It's been nearly... two months since they've applied. My visa ran out, I got an extension for three months, and I can't apply for a visa to bring them over because one of the criteria is that you need to have a visa valid for more than three months over here. So, I'm waiting for the thing to come to me (I16)

Again, the inconsistency and the level of unaccountable discretion of the adjudicating staff involved in the process confound many.

'They ask you for certain things and you provide those things and still [they] tell you "no". In the case of people who apply for a visa to visit Ireland, it is a nightmare most of the time. Three years ago, my mother was twice refused an Irish visa to visit me. I had to get an Irish person to intervene before they could give my mother a visiting visa. What were they looking for? They were looking for a bank statement, which I had because I was working at the time. I had even bought a home at the time but my mother was still refused the visa. So the criteria are not really clear cut. Many times, it depends on who you meet at the counter. I may have the same problem with you but, because we met two different people, the problem would be solved in two different ways' (N1)

The Cost of Separating Families

In many instances, separation from family members created major difficulties for interviewees. This was particularly the case for interviewees who are settling in or relocating to Ireland for longer or indefinite periods. As noted above, this is integrally connected to legal status and concomitant visa restrictions. One interviewee lives with her child and did not qualify for family reunification because of her residency status. She could not bring her partner to join her in Ireland and so her child only saw his father twice a year.

> *'Family life needs both parents. I would have thought that Irish people would see that… As a single mother, it affects me because I'm the sole parent to my child… I have full responsibility for everything concerning my son… if the father was here, we could share this work'* (N15)

The bulk of her salary goes to childminding and, while thankful for the new child benefit payment, she added that 'it's a struggle, when life could be much better for me' (N15).

Separation does not only affect partners, but also the extended family.

> *'If we can bring our parents it's fine. It's very difficult, they don't give a visa for parents. They will give one for only three months… it's not enough. Sometimes, when both of us are working, it is very difficult to look after the children, so the parents need to be here… to take care of the children. I think that should be allowed'* (I3)

Interviewees also spoke of such hardships with respect to the idea of staying in Ireland. One Nigerian doctor, the only son of elderly parents, has little time to travel back to Nigeria because of his busy work schedule. While it would be easier if his parents travelled here, he has been unable to obtain a visa for them to come to visit, despite the fact that they are retired 'and have very good reasons to stay in Nigeria. You can't just forget about the people left behind… It is not a privilege but a right. I'm contributing; I have every right' (N16). Although planning to stay in Ireland permanently, he still finds it hard to contemplate the possibility of not having friends and family visit. Another interviewee commented that these difficulties did not relate only to migrants, saying that 'it's the Irish nationals who married the non-EU, they are suffering as well. They need reform' (I4).

Transnational Families

Migration separates people from their broader families and leads to a reconstitution of family relationships. Given that most of the wider family does not live in Ireland, we looked at how migrants maintain and forge new links with family and friends in the country of origin.

The members of all four national groups reported regular contact with family and friends in their country of origin. Such contact takes a variety of forms such as email, text messages, and telephone. They also keep up to date with their home countries through cable television, radio, newspapers, and the internet, as well as visiting their country of origin, and providing support for family and friends in the form of remittances.

There are differences in the means of communicating with family and friends (see Figures 6.10 to 6.12).

Figure 6.10: Monthly contact by phone with family/friends in home country
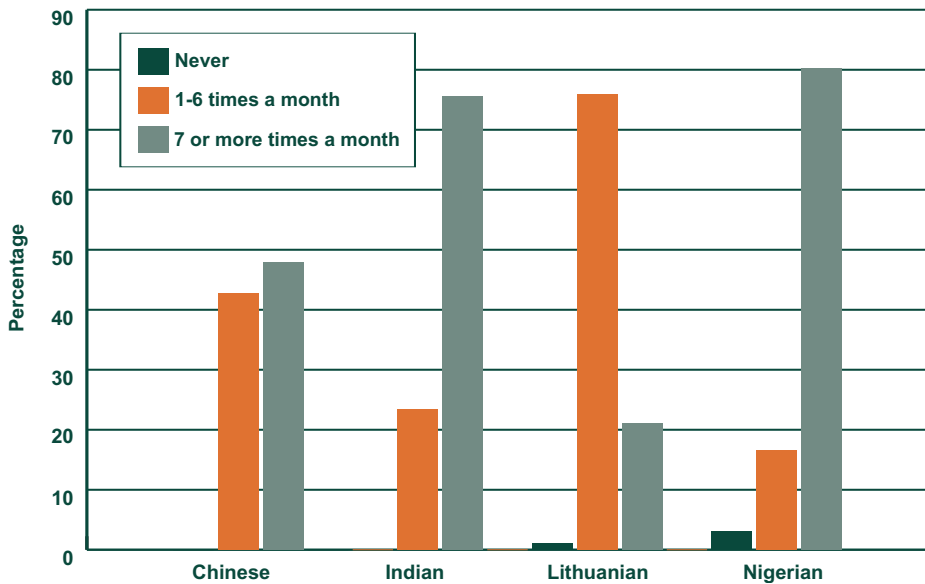
Telephone contact is extremely important for all groups (see Figure 6.10). A majority of Indian and Nigerian respondents, and nearly half of Chinese respondents contact their family and friends in their home country by telephone seven or more times a month. Three-quarters of Lithuanians make contact by telephone at least once a month. Contact by text message is particularly important for Nigerians and, to a lesser extent, Lithuanians (see Figure 6.11). Nigerian respondents were also most likely to keep in touch by email, with almost 70 per cent using email to contact family and friends seven or more times a month (see Figure 6.12). Lithuanian focus group participants also highlighted the importance of online chats among younger people.

These findings were supported by interview data, with interviewees across all national groups reporting that they stayed in constant contact with their families and loved ones through internet and phone, at least on a weekly and often daily basis.

'Maybe twice or three times a week I do ring home and even I talk two hours... Yeah it's very good because you want to know about the family and they want to know about you as well, about your studies, how you are doing. So it's really important. You can't just cut off everything, you can't do it. Family is really important' (I9)

Some chose not to contact their families too often.

'There are many negative things around me so I don't want to disturb them... Like... if my boss is annoyed at me because I make a mistake and I am sad, if I make a call, they can feel this negative emotion... basically, I only contact them when I am in a good mood' (C15)

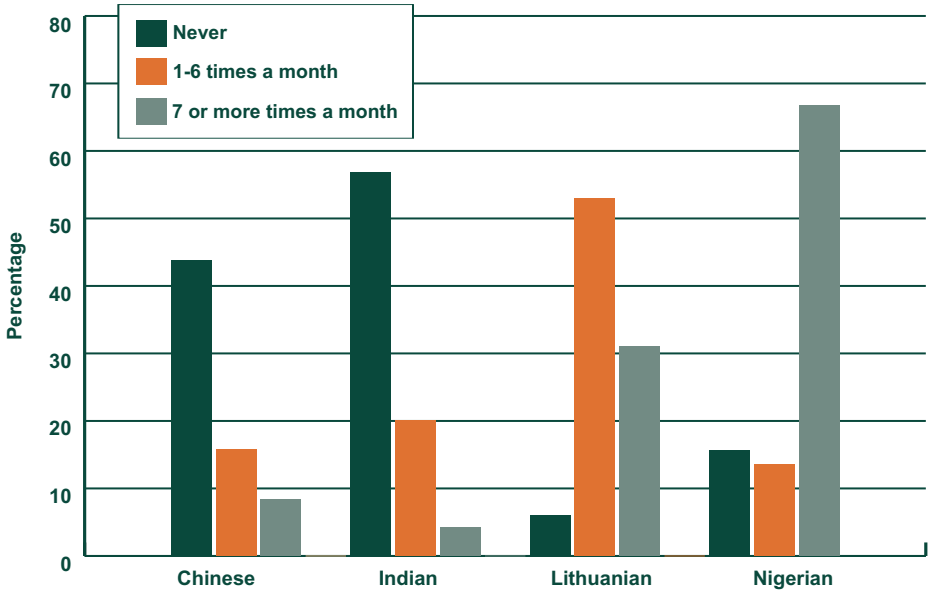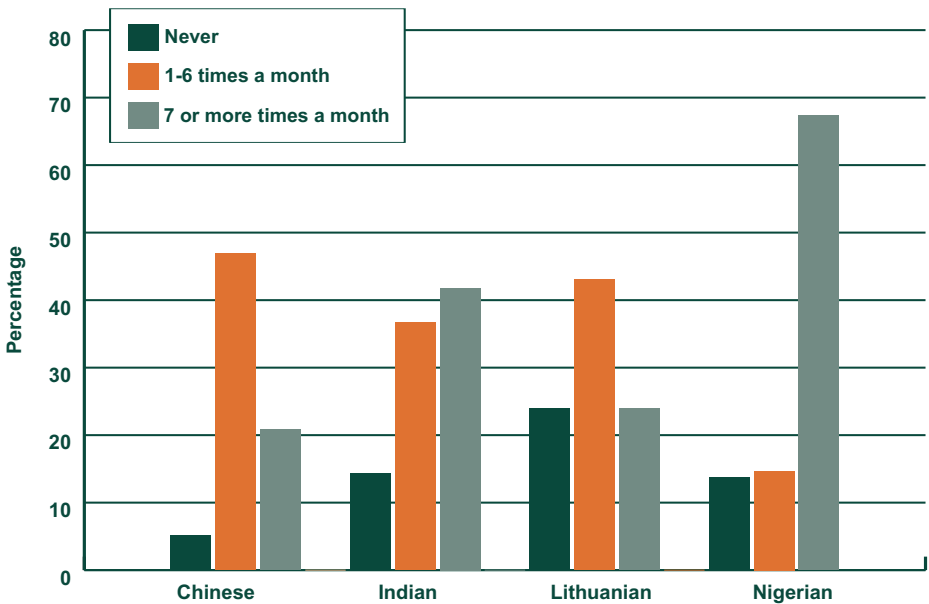Figure 6.11: Monthly contact by text message with family/friends in home country

Figure 6.12: Monthly contact by email with family/friends in home country

All national groups reported use of Irish national media as well as media from their country of origin, although there were differences in the rate of use. Nigerians were most likely to make daily use of television, with 99 per cent of respondents reporting that they watched Irish or British television on a daily basis. The lowest rate of use was among Chinese respondents, with only 39 per cent reporting that they watched Irish or British television daily. All respondents reported that they watched television from their home country, though the rates of daily usage varied from 20 per cent among Chinese to 58 per cent among Nigerians.

Radio was also popular, but respondents were significantly more likely to listen to Irish local or national stations on a daily basis than to listen to radio from their home countries. However, Lithuanians are more likely to read newspapers published in Ireland that target the Lithuanian national group. At least half of respondents from all national groups use websites on a daily basis, usually from their home country or international websites. There is very little use on a daily basis of websites created in Ireland that target migrants.

Communications technology provides a means to maintain contact with family and friends in cases where migrants have few opportunities to travel and where separation from family is difficult. It is also important for abating feelings of loneliness. On being asked her biggest obstacle living in Ireland, one person replied 'Getting over the fact that I won't see home for a long time' (L11). Another interviewee commented 'One thing that is always breaking my heart is that my family is back there' (L17). These difficulties are experienced by other family members. One person said 'My dad misses me a lot. He's always asking "so what's your plan, when are you coming back?"' (C11).

We asked respondents how many times they had visited relatives in their home country or in other countries since arriving in Ireland (see Figure 6.13). Almost 40 per cent of Nigerians and one-third of Indians have never visited home since arriving in Ireland. In contrast, less than 10 per cent of Lithuanians and around one-fifth of Chinese have never visited relatives in their home country. More than 40 per cent of Chinese and Indian respondents have visited relatives at home once or twice since arriving in Ireland, and over 70 per cent of Lithuanians have visited relatives at home at least once and at most six times since their arrival.

For those who are able to travel freely between Ireland and their home countries, interviewees discussed the ups and downs of living between two places. Chinese students often go back to China for the summer holidays.

'The first year when I went home, I couldn't wait. I really couldn't wait. I don't think I went anywhere before I went home the first year – what I usually do is I will travel a bit before I go home. But the first year I was just so desperate. Immediately after the exams finished I just went. And I booked the ticket half a year before that so I really couldn't wait to go home... A week before I came back [I thought] "Oh no, I am not going back again". And I was really depressed a week after I got back. And after that I was fine... that happens every year... leaving my parents and just leaving the environment, the place that I grew up. But after a week or so, I am okay again. I have to adapt' (C7)

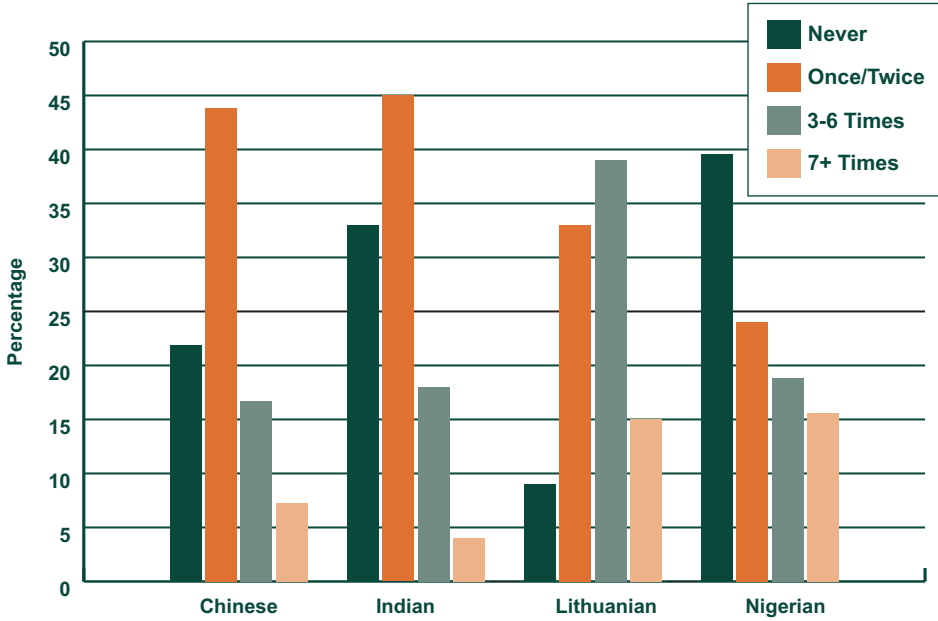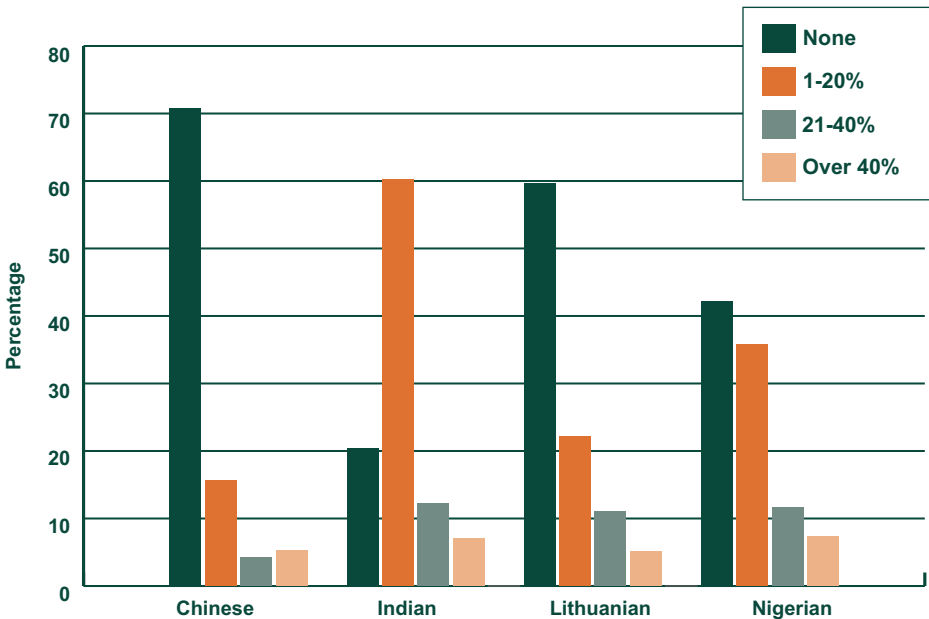## Figure 6.13: Number of visits to relatives in home country since arriving in Ireland

Figure 6.14: Percentage of income remitted to home country, by community

Contrary to general migration practices, the majority of respondents reported that they remitted none of their income to their home country (see Figure 6.14). Chinese and Lithuanians were least likely to remit income, with 70 per cent of Chinese and 60 per cent of Lithuanians reporting that they remitted none of their income. The corresponding figures for Nigerians and Indians were 43 per cent and 20 per cent respectively. The rates are, in general, relatively similar for men and women. Much of the remitted money was used to support relatives' living expenses and educational endeavours. A smaller number of respondents reported that remittances were used for personal financial gain, in the form of savings or property investment. However, the survey findings were disputed by participants in the Nigerian and Lithuanian focus groups, who felt that many survey respondents may have been reluctant to provide information on remittances for a variety of reasons.

Diversity in Ireland
Are New Communities Emerging?

We asked survey respondents and interviewees if they believed that there was 'such a thing as a Nigerian, Lithuanian, Chinese, or Indian community in Ireland'. Interesting differences emerged between the national groups (see Figure 6.15). However, participants in focus groups raised concerns about these questions, highlighting the diversity of meanings associated with the term community. For example, the Nigerian focus group suggested that community was usually understood in terms of spatial proximity or friendship groups, while the Lithuanian focus group suggested that community might be understood in terms of associations.

Figure 6.15: Response to the question 'Is there a national community in Ireland?'
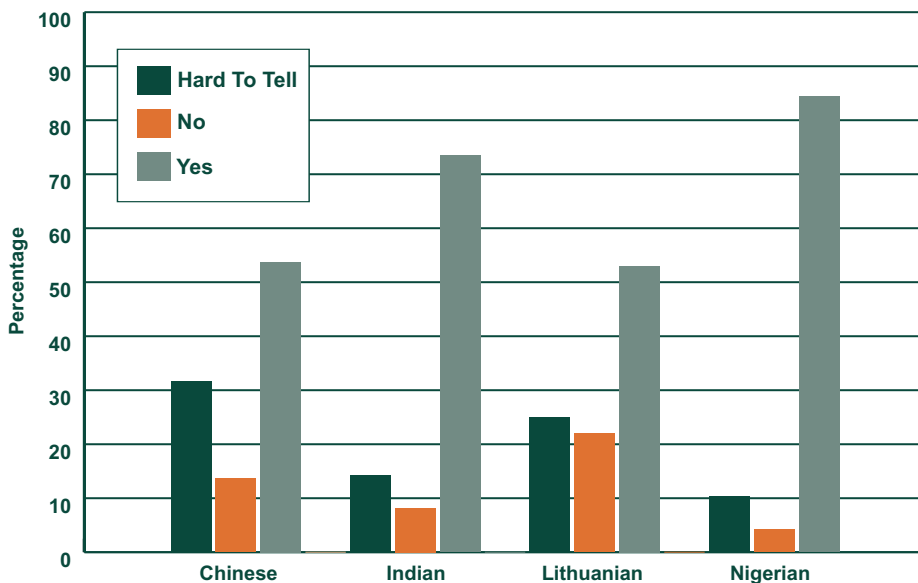
While more than two-thirds of Indians and more than 80 per cent of Nigerians felt that their national communities constituted a social reality in Ireland, only half of all Lithuanians and slightly more than half of Chinese respondents agreed. About one-quarter of all Lithuanian respondents were not sure, while just over 10 per cent of Chinese respondents disagreed outright. Participants in the Chinese focus groups suggested that more recent arrivals, and those with a less permanent status, might take longer to recognise and become involved with a Chinese community in Ireland.

When respondents were asked if, on identifying a national community in Ireland, they felt they belonged to that community, answers were more ambivalent (see Figure 6.16). Indian and Lithuanian respondents were most likely to answer that they belonged to a national community in Ireland, with more than half replying in the affirmative. In contrast, less than half of Nigerians and one-third of Chinese believed they belonged to such a community.

Figure 6.16: Response to the question 'Do you belong to a national community in Ireland?'
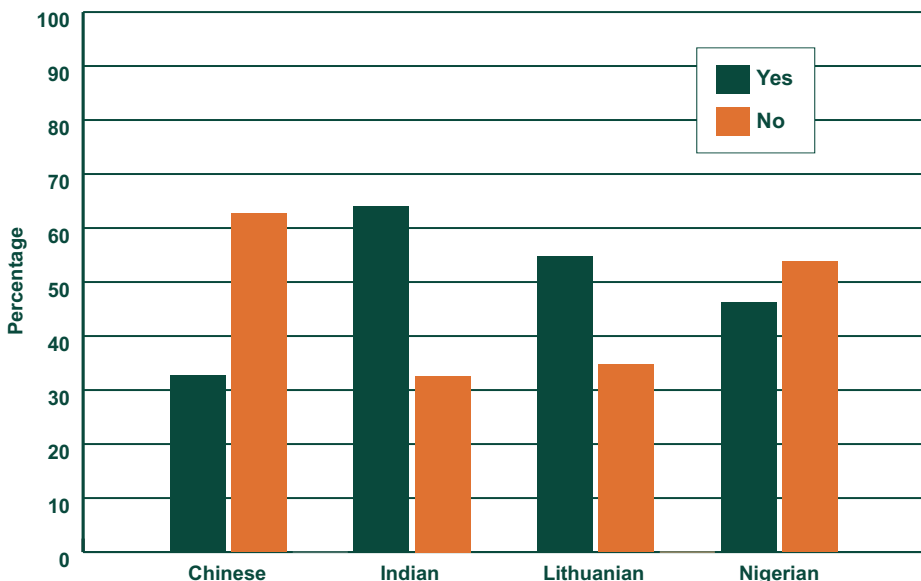
For some interviewees, community development activities played a key role in their social life and their sense of community. For others, however, community related less to national community and more to friends, church and other social activities. For example, one interviewee, who does little outside work, home, and church activities, commented that church interaction is the closest to engagement with the Nigerian community (N16). Another, when asked about community events, commented

'Community for me is more like a friends' circle... All the people I am living with or my friends at work – that is the community. And the rest involves meeting up because you are Indian... to make more contacts and interact more. Nothing more than that' (I4)

Interviewees identified a number of impediments to the formation of national communities in Ireland. These included status uncertainties for many migrants, which made it difficult for certain communities to gel. For example, many Chinese interviewees did not consider the community to be that well 'organised', in the same way that it may be in other countries such as the USA (C3). The issue of temporariness was raised by one interviewee.

> 'Most people, I'd say 80 per cent, are going to leave, go back because it is not open for non-European country… I mean, the Chinese community is always moving. And I feel I am a part of the Chinese community and a part of the Irish community… All Chinese people are doing things themselves, we are not a group' (C2)

Others commented on the internal diversity of national communities. 'Our [Nigerians] backgrounds are different, our orientations – it's not that easy for you to meet the people you can relate to…I keep mostly to myself' (N18). The issue of cultural difference was raised by another interviewee who, in noting that the Chinese community might not be very strong, said that 'most Chinese people tend not to get too close to Chinese people, whereas most other countries' people are more bonded together. Sometimes I isolate myself just to my friends' (C15).

While many interviewees spoke about their own experiences, while others also spoke about the experiences of their children. Many commented that their children mixed very well with children from other backgrounds and had a high sense of belonging to Ireland. This ease of interaction, while seen as positive by many parents, also raised questions and concerns about national communities and national identities.

> 'They have their own networks, they have their own friends, they will grow up here. You know, they will look for a job here… so what I'm doing to do to help them… to make their lives easier, because they are not Irish, you know what I mean? I hope to make them feel they are Irish, be part of the community' (C18)

> 'Every society has their culture – we have our own culture… some of our children are now adopting Western culture which is not ours. I always tell them to copy what is good, not bad. But you always have your culture. Children don't want it though, they want Western culture and that is the cause of a conflict of interests' (N8)

Other interviewees insisted on instilling home country norms in their children to facilitate a possible return.

> 'I might decide one day that I might be going back to my country… So if I decide that I am going back to Africa, they can decide not to come with me because this is the home they know. They have grown up in this community; they do things like Irish children even though I try to breathe my own culture down their throat. They are growing in two cultures and, when the time comes, they will have to decide where they want to belong' (N1)

The experiences of the second generation – their perceptions of belonging and their sense of identity – may diverge from those of their parents and will need to be separately investigated.

Accepting Diversity and Change

Ireland is increasingly becoming a diverse society. Migration to the country is officially encouraged and welcomed for practical purposes. These migrants are heterogeneous, from a wide variety of national, racial and ethnic backgrounds. We wanted to investigate how migrants from these different groups feel about the extent to which they personally feel welcome in Ireland and how their sense of this welcome extends to migrant groups more broadly.

We asked survey respondents if they felt that Irish people made them feel welcome (see Figure 6.17). Nearly 90 per cent of Indian respondents and around 70 per cent of Lithuanian respondents agreed with this statement. However, less than 50 per cent of Chinese respondents and less than 30 per cent of Nigerian respondents agreed. More than 30 per cent of Nigerian and over 40 per cent of Chinese respondents had no opinion on this statement.

Figure 6.17: Response to the statement 'Irish people make me feel welcome', by community
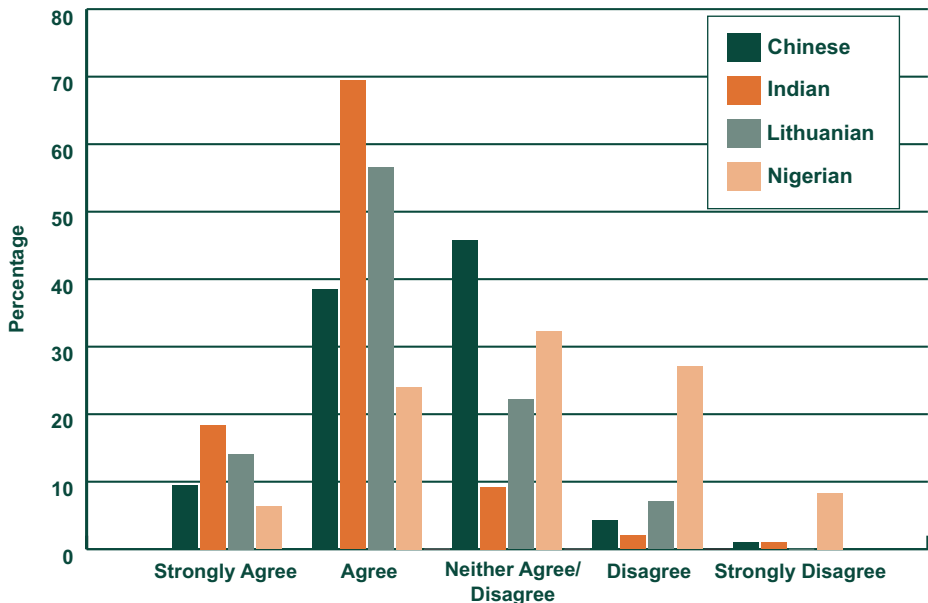
We also asked survey respondents to comment on the statement that 'Irish people accept diverse cultures and communities' (see Figure 6.18). In response, both Chinese and Indian respondents are relatively positive. This is in stark contrast to Nigerian respondents, a significant majority of whom disagreed with the statement. Lithuanian respondents were, again, quite ambivalent, with a slightly higher proportion agreeing rather than disagreeing with the statement.

Figure 6.18: Response to the statement 'Irish people accept diverse cultures and communities as part of Irish society', by community
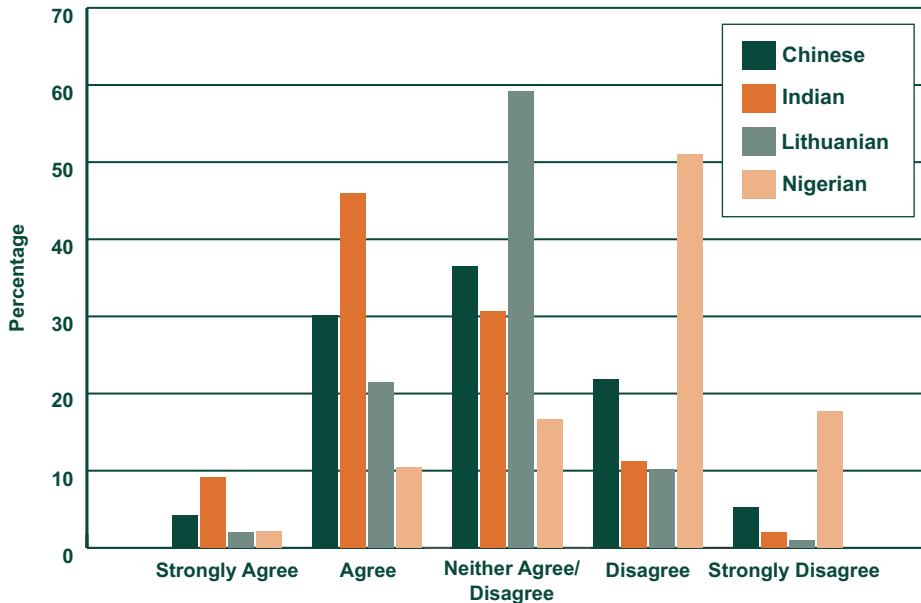
We also asked survey respondents if they felt accepted as part of Irish society (see Figure 6.19). Close to 50 per cent of Indian respondents agreed with the statement. Around 40 per cent of Chinese respondents agreed, while another 40 per cent were ambivalent. Lithuanian respondents were most ambivalent, with more than 60 per cent saying that they neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement. However, nearly 60 per cent of Nigerian respondents disagreed with the statement.

Broader questions about acceptance and belonging regularly surfaced in the interviews, with comments ranging from being very positive to quite negative. Some interviewees expressed a very strong sense of being connected to Ireland. 'It's my second home… if I was elsewhere in the world, if I see an Irish person or an Irish pub, I'll get really excited' (C13). Another noted that 'now I'm happy in Ireland, I don't want to go anywhere else' (L12).

Many interviewees mentioned how time played an important role. They said that they had experienced difficulties adjusting in the beginning but now felt relatively comfortable.

'I'll be here six years… Ireland became in my heart like my second home town. And maybe first year and then the second year I felt like… it is a foreign country… But now I get very comfortable with it. Sometimes if I just go visit to different countries, like two years ago I went to Spain, and when I… flew into Dublin Airport I felt like "Oh God, home again". And I'm sure that most of the Chinese people have the same feelings because they've been here very long. They come into Ireland very young and then they feel it themselves in this society very quick and then they get used to facilities and then the buildings. So, I found it's a second home town' (C11)

Figure 6.19: Response to the statement 'I feel accepted as part of Irish society', by community
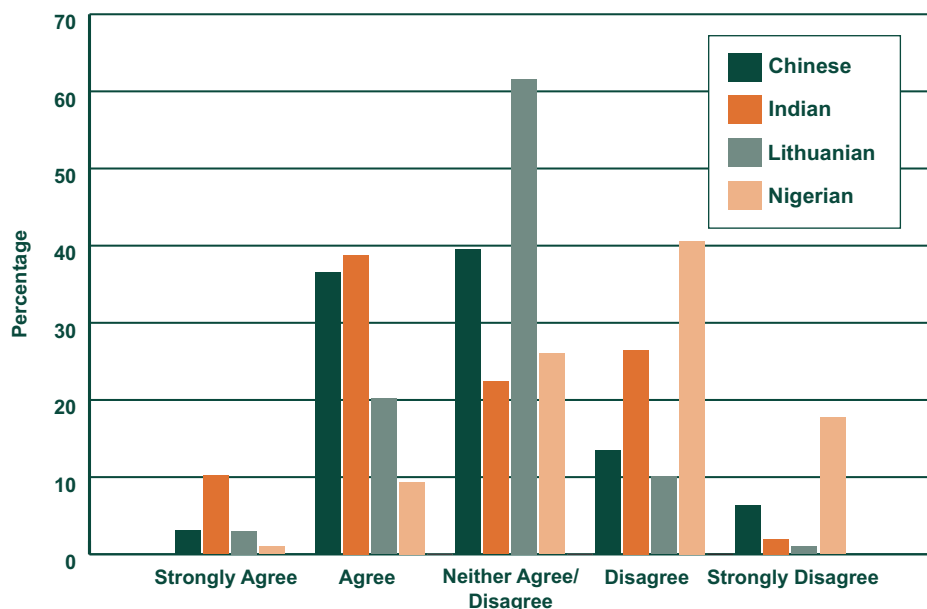
Others, however, feel less settled and connected, commenting 'home is home' (L9), while still expressing relative contentment with life in Ireland. Nevertheless, many respondents expressed a more ambivalent sense of belonging.

> *'Before [name] and myself came, I was not feeling at home, but now… we have a life here. So, I feel like I miss my parents even though we say the country is like that, like this. But home country is our own home country, so I miss the country. But you know I don't feel that I'm in a foreign country'* (I2).

This sense of dual belonging, of relative contentment in Ireland although missing the country one had left, was pervasive: 'I think I am Lithuanian and will stay Lithuanian because I can't forget my roots. In this period in my life, I'm happy here' (L4).

Interviewees often expressed ambivalence, with one commenting that 'sometimes I feel like a stranger or foreigner… there are sometimes I feel Irish'. One respondent captured the dual sense of dislocation – from the country of origin and from Ireland – that migration can engender.

> *'I'm at home yes, but I don't think I belong because I've only lived here for eight months… but I don't think I'll ever belong anywhere other than India… if I did go back to India today, you know I've been outside India for ten or 11 years, I probably wouldn't even belong there because it has changed so much over the past 11 years. I don't know if I can ever belong to any place'* (I10)

Some interviewees also expressed a sense of alienation from Irish society and are planning to return to their home country as soon as possible. This sense of alienation was not necessarily connected to length of stay and, in some instances, was related to the changing environment and treatment of their children.

'I think to me I am just getting the feeling about the sense of belonging has gone... My son was born... and educated here. When he was in first year in high school... he was very upset one day. He came home and said "Mummy, they said I am not Irish". It suddenly happened after all the newcomers come in. People all think of because so many Chinese are here suddenly and people start talking about it in the house. When they come back to school "Oh you are not Irish, you are Chinese". He is not happy because he thought he was Irish. He did exactly what the Irish do in school and he even learnt Irish very well' (C1)

Future Plans

There are differences in terms of how respondents see their place in Irish society (see Figure 6.20). Of the four national groups, only Nigerians have a strong sense of Ireland as a permanent home. However, Nigerian women were less likely to say that they plan to stay in Ireland permanently. The other three groups are less certain.

For all the other national groups, the most common answer to the question, how long do you intend to stay in Ireland, was 'don't know'. This was particularly prevalent among Lithuanian respondents. Some Indian respondents had plans to stay in Ireland for the medium term, with at least 30 per cent of men and women indicating that they intended to stay in Ireland for more than five years. Chinese respondents had a shorter outlook, particularly Chinese women. Of female Chinese respondents, 45 per cent indicated that they planned to stay in Ireland for less than five years. Lithuanian women were similarly inclined, with more than 40 per cent intending to stay in Ireland for less than five years.

Figure 6.20: How long do you intend to stay in Ireland?
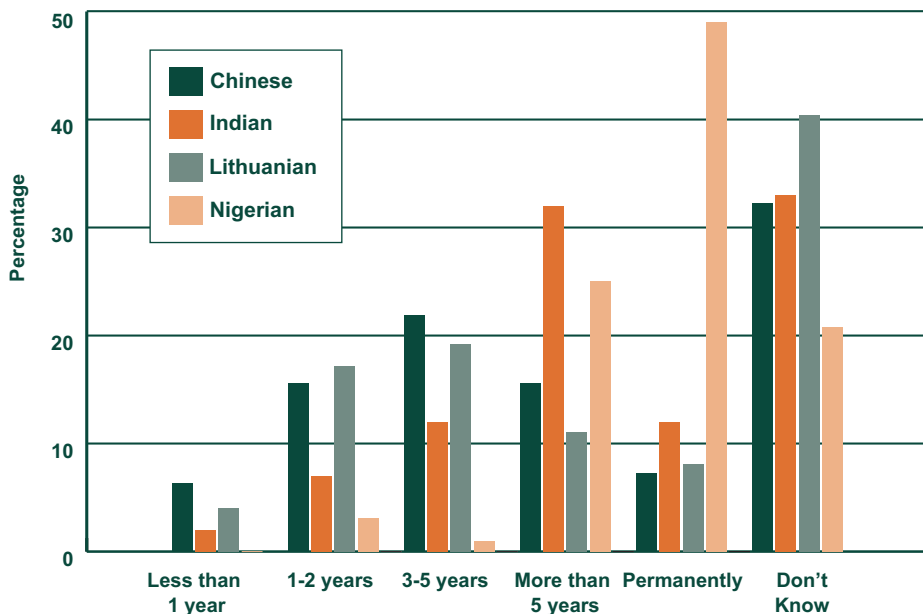
When we examined these figures by current status, some interesting but predictable patterns emerged (see Table 6.1). Asylum seekers, refugees, and those with leave to remain were most likely to indicate that they wanted to remain in Ireland on a permanent basis. However, EU citizens and students either planned to stay short term or were unsure as to their length of stay. There were similar levels of uncertainty in relation to future plans for those with work permits or visas.

Table 6.1: Future plans to reside in Ireland of survey respondents, by current status

	Less than 5 years (%)	Permanently (%)	Don't know (%)	Total number (%)
Work related	20	9	34	85
Student	50	2	35	84
Dependent	24	14	29	21
Refugee	0	75	13	8
Asylum	0	67	27	15
EU citizen	38	10	42	93
Family reunification	0	100	0	1
Leave to Remain	0	46	31	35
Undocumented	0	33	0	3
Other	15	46	10	39

Interviews also touched on the plans of respondents and their reasons for staying or leaving Ireland. The narratives around migration in many ways highlight how the justification for migrating changes.

> '*Everybody analyses the reasons why people left? And this reason has to be a trigger for you to go? Let's call that trigger the money thing. And everyone kind of goes for the money. But when people settle down and start living in Ireland, you start establishing the real reason why people really left their country and went to Ireland. Because the reasons seem to be different after a couple of years and you realise the money might have been the trigger but the real reason was that you were either looking for adventure or you were looking for a different environment or you were bored with what you were doing with your life or maybe you wanted to challenge yourself. You know these kind of personal subconscious reasons come out after you settle in the country and start living the quality life*' (L14)

Some felt the money and lifestyle kept them here. 'Once you're established financially, you get settled and then you start looking for quality of life' (L14). Another respondent talked about the fact that life was more balanced here and that she could have a middle-class lifestyle in Ireland. 'If I could have the same lifestyle but at home I would go home. But I can't, so I will stay here' (L17). Another respondent said that they wanted to stay in Ireland for their child's

benefit. 'Of course we will stay here... when he'll grow up, he'll be having friends here so naturally he won't want to go from here. He'll be sticking here only' (I2).

However, a number expressed uncertainty and ambivalence about their future in Ireland and felt they would stay here for the short term at least. 'We are quite happy, stay for one year at least' (L15).

> 'It is good to be here... but it is more of like going back home to live within your society. Kind of like a scene. Because I miss all the good things of what is going on over there. So, that could be the reason. But I am not adamant. No decision has been taken yet that I will be going this date or this year... And maybe in three years' time I will probably go back home for a year or so. Not more than that. I have to go there and see whether you can fit in or not. So, maybe in three years' time I could go back for a year or so and see how things go' (I9)

While some express future plans in terms of staying in Ireland, at least temporarily, others expressed a desire to leave Ireland. Reasons for leaving Ireland varied but were often tied to work, quality of life, or child and family reunification issues. In terms of work, some interviewees indicated that they would leave for reasons of career progression or lack of promotional opportunities, since they felt it was very difficult to develop their careers in Ireland.

> 'I know, from a career path, I will come to a standstill and I don't want to realise that later. I can see my colleagues; some of them have already reached that point where they find that they would be a bit better off if they had left earlier. Alternatively, they ask me to come back home. I come from Bombay. I'm very happy to go back' (I2)

One woman discussed settling permanently in Ireland.

> '[It] depends on how much I am accepted, how much I able to integrate, not just as a foreigner but as a member of the society. In terms of career progression, like in my workplace, we have instances when opportunities arise for promotion. But I wouldn't be considered for a promotion, not because I am not qualified, but purely because I am a foreigner. That is why they would not push me for a promotion' (N3)

However, as we noted above, reasons for leaving Ireland were not always professional or financial. One interviewee spoke about the trade-off between material wealth and having a good social and personal life.

> 'Money is very important if you want lots of things – to buy a car, go on holidays, meet people, see different countries. But I don't know, you miss other sides, like you can't go out with friends or you can't go out with a girl who understands you perfectly. You need to make a choice' (L9)

Other interviewees commented on the desire to bring up their children in their home country.

> 'If I'm going to go back, the sooner I go back the better for him. Once he gets used to the Western way of living – he's already age seven years now, so he is kind of used to the way of living – it will be harder for him to go back and adjust again, but the sooner the better for him... the educational system is also so different. It's far more challenging and he'd be doing a lot more

languages back home, which you don't do here. So for him, it will actually be a big shock in terms of accepting the changes in lifestyle' (I1)

Equally, for others, money was less important than going to their country of origin to raise a family. 'I will be going home, not because of the money but because I want to create a family' (L9). Another respondent noted 'It would be very important for me that my children can write and speak Lithuanian' (L17). This was sometimes reinforced by a sense of nationalism. 'I couldn't imagine raising a family here. I love my country too much… I wouldn't like my kids to be between two languages' (L12).

For some, the desire to return to the home country came from a sense of obligation, they felt 'duty-bound to go back, to contribute to my own society. It's unfair not to' (N16).

Conclusion

It is important to recognise that concepts such as family, transnationalism, culture, and belonging are contested. The nuclear families of migrants are relatively similar to Irish families. Most live in long-term partnerships or marriage and have one to three children, with the possible exception of the Chinese, many of whom are younger people studying in Ireland. However, the level of extended family is relatively low, which creates a range of difficulties. These include the lack of proximate family support and networks, which is particularly problematic for those with young children and/or older parents. This also creates difficulties for those from outside the EU who would like family members to visit for long periods. In many instances, migrants have redefined family to include friends.

The rules for family reunification and temporary visits have a significant impact on the quality of life for the migrant family (including issues relating to the ability to manage childcare needs, the importance of having both parents here for the children, and fulfilling obligations to elderly parents) and, as a result, migrants' capacity to participate fully in Irish life as well as the viability of their plans to stay in Ireland. These basic family needs are seen as being thwarted by a migration system that marks 'the family' as problematic.

However, despite the distances, migrants keep in regular contact with family and friends through modern technology and visits home. Many, as a consequence, see themselves as belonging to at least two places and feel connected to their home countries as well as Ireland. However, this sense of dual belonging can create tensions as well as opportunities.

New community formation in Ireland appears to be taking place, but this is not at the expense of participation in Irish society. Migrants straddle both, and do so practically and linguistically on a daily basis. The level of multilingualism among migrants is noteworthy, although this does not detract from difficulties faced by some migrants with more a limited proficiency in English. While migrants place a high value on learning English, they also value proficiency in other languages, including those from their home country. It is important that language policy facilitates and celebrates linguistic diversity.

Overall, migrants expressed a high degree of belonging to Irish society. They do not necessarily share the values they identify in Irish society and highlighted a number of differences in the treatment of children, elders, wealth, and consumption. However, many expressed a sense of acceptance by Irish society.

Migrants are not necessarily certain about their future plans. Those who are least clear are those with greater mobility, such as highly skilled workers and EU citizens. This is not necessarily specific to Ireland in the contemporary 'age of migration' (Castles and Miller 2003). However, what is specific is the extent to which status affects people's ability to make longer-term plans about where they live.

INTEGRATION AND THE EXPERIENCES OF THE CHINESE, INDIAN, LITHUANIAN, AND NIGERIAN MIGRANTS IN IRELAND

Introduction

Integration in Ireland: A Summary of Key Findings

Integration in the Irish Context

Developing an Integration Policy in Ireland

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, we summarise our key findings in relation to integration in Ireland. As emphasised in a recent OECD report, 'integration flows from the totality of policies and practices that allow societies to close the gap between the rights, status and opportunities of natives and immigrants (including their descendents)… [I]ntegration efforts should aim to close the persistent opportunity and outcomes gaps that marginalize immigrants and undermine social cohesion' (Dayton-Johnson et al 2007: 51-52). Through the examination of the ways in which migrants to Ireland, from different countries of origin and with different migration statuses, negotiate integration as an everyday practice, this study identifies the factors that promote and obstruct the integration process. As such, the research provides an important foundation upon which to guide the development of integration policy and practice in Ireland.

Integration in Ireland: A Summary of Key Findings

Whilst noting that integration is ultimately a two-way process, we have focused on the ways in which migrants have access to and engage with relevant functions and services of the State, achieve necessary economic and material security, are socially connected with members of a community they identify with and others, and have sufficient linguistic and cultural competence and security to confidently engage in the host society in a manner consistent with shared notions of nationhood and citizenship (Ager and Strang 2004).[6] Four key factors are central to this process (Loyal 2007).

1. The mode of entry and legal status of the migrant (for example, the difference between asylum seekers, labour migrants or EU nationals)

2. The characteristics of the migrant (for example, gender, age, race, education, and language proficiency)

3. The broad conditions of reception in a country (for example, attitudes towards migrants, the extent to which migrants are welcomed, and discrimination)

4. The shape of government policies towards migrants and towards the resident population as a whole (for example, socio-economic and physical infrastructure)

Through examination and analysis of political, economic, social, and cultural indicators of integration, our findings illustrate the ways in which these four areas are linked together through the everyday practices and experiences of migrants. We discuss each of these in turn.

Political Integration

It was stated earlier that citizenship is a legal and social status that provides rights and entitlements to individuals and access to a number of resources, as well as demanding obligations from them. Despite increasing talk about globalisation, citizenship as it is conferred through the nation-state continues to

---

6   The Home Office report also suggests that migrants are integrated within a society when they achieve outcomes equivalent to those achieved within the wider host communities. This was not an explicit focus of our research, but is referred to in various places where comparable data are available. This should, however, be the focus of future research.

be a major determinant in shaping peoples' lives in various societies, including Ireland (Loyal 2003). These rights and resources include: access to social welfare, education, and social services (including the health service); fair treatment in the labour market and workplace; and the right of individuals to vote, have family members live with them and be treated equally and free from discrimination generally. We also noted that, in practice, there is no clear-cut dichotomy between citizens and non-citizens in Western migrant states. Instead, a number of different legal statuses conferring different rights have been assigned to migrants. In investigating political indicators of integration, we paid particular attention to questions of differential rights allotted to migrants and the selective access to resources that ensued from this. The research found that the type of legal status a migrant acquired was crucial for shaping his/her experience of living in Ireland and subsequent level of integration.

Many survey respondents and interviewees indicated their lack of use of State services in Ireland, despite their significant monetary contributions to those services in the form of direct and indirect taxation. This suggests that the view that migrants are a drain on social services is a false one and that, in common with migration processes elsewhere, migrants contribute more than they take in social welfare (Stalker 2001). Many migrants, because of their legal status, are not permitted to claim social welfare. Therefore, a significant safety net that exists for taxpaying Irish citizens, and in a restricted form to EU workers here longer than two years, is unavailable to some EU workers and the majority of migrants, despite the fact that they are all regular tax contributors. When this policy is combined with the work permit/visa system, it means migrants become especially vulnerable to exploitation in the workplace and to falling into poverty.

The issues relating to family and family reunification pose particular and complex problems. Whether this involved bringing parents or a non-EU partner to Ireland on a temporary or permanent basis, family reunification was a recurring concern in the interviews. Bringing one's parents not only offers a network of support within a context where a migrant may feel lonely and isolated, it also functions as a replacement for crèche and childcare facilities that many migrants found unaffordable or difficult to secure. For many, the presence and visits of family are important elements in their lives and play an important role in their perceptions of integration and influence their future plans.

In examining the political and civic participation and activities of migrants, our research found that a large number of migrants displayed a lack of awareness of their right to vote in local and some in European elections in Ireland, again suggesting information failures in this regard. While some migrants are very active in civic and other activities, others report low levels of participation. This reflects broader trends in Irish society, often attributed to the pressures of everyday life (Taskforce on Active Citizenship 2007). Social and cultural background and migration status, as well as the pressure to meet material and family needs, play a significant role in determining the level and intensity of civic and political participation. Nevertheless, some political activities tied to mobilising and creating national communities and representing their interests have started to emerge. This was noted in the election of two Nigerian nationals to council positions. Moreover, civic participation was also increasing.

All four of the national groups have seen the emergence of national associations involved in social, cultural, political, or religious activities. Many of these organisations provide information in various languages, and some even social

support, to their national constituency as a response to Government failure to do so. Most of the organisations mentioned during the course of the research serve as critical links to Irish society through their activities, which promote exchange and opportunities for socialising, celebrating, and learning. These organisations, which depend on high levels of voluntary activity, need funding and a physical infrastructure to operate in order to develop more responsively to the needs of various migrants and on a long-term basis.

Economic Integration

The majority of migrants coming to Ireland come for economic reasons. Economic factors play an important role in integration and social inclusion. Migrants often move to improve their financial situation and qualifications. Employment provides not only a living income but also a social status, and a means for making social connections and learning about Irish society. Therefore, it provides a central node in facilitating integration and social inclusion.

In relation to economic indicators of integration, we examined educational and employment background, current employment, recognition of qualifications, job satisfaction and treatment at work, income, and living costs. Our research found that many of our survey respondents and interviewees were highly educated and worked in skilled positions before arriving in Ireland. On a positive note, this indicates a significant transfer of human capital resources to Ireland. These migrants may work as employees in Ireland, or they may work as entrepreneurs who create employment opportunities for the host society as well as for other migrants. However, it also points to broader questions of 'brain drain' from other countries.

The routes to Ireland seem to be varied, but many in skilled professions came through employment agencies. Others found jobs though the internet or newspapers, and still others through word of mouth from family and friends. It is important to note that many were actively encouraged to come by the Irish Government and by employers based in Ireland, often through job or education fairs involving FÁS, large companies, and educational institutions. As such, interviews revealed a range of different treatment and reception strategies, with high-skilled professionals typically benefiting from substantial support from their employers with respect to relocating. This often meant that such migrants could by-pass direct contact with immigration services, which in turn often led to more positive perceptions of Ireland. People who came on their own had limited support in dealing with migration and other services and with Irish society, which often created stress and anxiety. This implies the more structured and helpful the welcome, the more positive the consequent experience.

Employment levels of the migrants were generally very high, although there was some variation between the national groups. Patterns of labour market segmentation were evident with different nationals becoming filtered into certain types of job, such as the growing personal services sector, where wages are relatively low. This can lead to the emergence of stereotypes about migrants and their associations with certain occupations, and may lead to limited contact with Irish workers. It can also contribute to the economic marginalisation of certain migrants (Harris 1995; Stalker 2001; Waldinger 2003). Our research also provided evidence of deskilling and downward occupational mobility for respondents and interviewees within all four national groups – this was particularly acute for Nigerians who came as asylum seekers. Some migrants saw their under-

employment as temporary, either as a means to financial or personal improvement, or as a stage to future promotion. However, their willingness to accept their current situation is predicated on an assumption of future mobility.

The future mobility of migrants may not occur for a variety of reasons, but particularly because of workplace practices that are not favourable or inclusive to migrants. For instance, members of all four national groups experienced negative treatment in the workplace, such as discrimination, underpayment, bullying, harassment, and the blocking of promotions. This was particularly raised in relation to migrants whose work permits were held by their employers. In addition, some interviewees suggested that a process by which migrants were being placed in a racial hierarchy seemed to be emerging. Other obstacles included inconsistencies in recognition of qualifications and skills, and the slow pace of promotion for many migrant workers, particularly those in skilled occupations.

Future mobility may also be inhibited by restrictions on the employment opportunities for certain categories of migrants. We also found that many migrants were retraining or obtaining further qualifications in Ireland to enhance their employment prospects. This option may not be available to all migrants because of the prohibitive cost of education and training for non-EU citizens.

Although most migrants commented that their financial situation had improved since arriving in Ireland, living costs were widely identified as a problem. In this way, migrants faced similar pressures and challenges as the local population. Migrants used a range of coping strategies, such as shared accommodation, additional jobs, and restrictions on their spending. However, the difficulty in making ends meet has short- and long-term consequences for integration. In the short term, limited economic means can lead to limited social interaction, thus restricting the possibility for developing social relationships. In the long term, economic insecurity makes it difficult for people to achieve social stability and personal satisfaction.

Social Integration

In relation to social indicators of integration, we investigated patterns of interaction of migrants with different groups, including family, people from their own country, other migrants, and Irish people, as well as possible barriers to such interaction. In relation to social interaction, research in other contexts has suggested that some migrant groups are socially exclusive, only spending time with family members and migrants from similar national and social backgrounds. This has often been construed as problematic because of the barriers it may create to full participation in the host society. In addition, a failure to interact on a broad cross-community basis can lead to social exclusion, marginalisation and, when combined with poverty, to the formation of ghettoes.

However, our research found that survey respondents and interviewees interact to a significant extent with family members and people of their own nationality, but not to the exclusion of interacting with others such as migrants from other countries and Irish nationals. Of particular relevance is the high desire that survey respondents and interviewees expressed for more interaction with Irish nationals, although many highlighted the difficulties in getting to know Irish nationals well. In terms of activities, we found that interaction with family members and friends tended to be centred on the more private space of the home, but there was a greater tendency to interact with Irish nationals and work colleagues in more public spaces, such as public houses.

Survey respondents and interviewees highlighted similar obstacles to social interaction to those experienced in the wider society. Interviewees across all four national groups emphasised that the lack of time outside of work, study and family, and often the lack of resources, posed formidable obstacles in developing their social lives. The lack of time referred to by many interviewees may help to explain the high levels of social interaction with people who lived close by. Interviewees with young children faced additional obstacles because of the lack of affordable childcare facilities, often exacerbated by the lack of family support networks. However, issues of language were also important. Most participants recognise that English language skills are essential, not only for being able to effectively engage in interaction with Irish people but also for having the confidence to do so.

Places of work and education emerged as important sites of social interaction and have been highlighted in other contexts as important places for integration. In many ways, our research suggested that these are more significant sites than neighbourhoods and civic organisations, partly because of the limited time people can devote to activities outside work, education, and family. Therefore, it is important to recognise the workplace as a primary place for social interaction and for the development of social bridges. However, not all migrants have access to work (and some experienced discrimination in the workplace) or education, and needed access to other spaces and other forms of interaction.

Social interaction, and thus integration, is enabled in contexts where people feel safe and secure. Our research found that most survey respondents and interviewees felt physically safe where they live, despite their knowledge and experience of threatening acts. However, it is important to note that physical and verbal racism create obstacles to social interaction.

Questions of safety and security relate not just to physical safety but also to household stability. Since most migrants are tenants, they have insecure tenure. This can be socially destabilising and has broader implications for the process of integration into Irish society.

Most importantly, migrants experience the same problems as the wider society in relation to establishing close relationships with their neighbours, either due to having busy lives or the lack of spaces where they live that promote everyday interaction.

Cultural Integration

In relation to cultural indicators of integration, we investigated language use and proficiency, and common values. We looked at the impact that migration has on family structures and networks. We also addressed the question of diversity in Ireland, considering the formation of new communities and issues of acceptance, belonging, and long-term plans. Research in other contexts has suggested that often public debates about migrants focus on cultural differences rather than similarities. In some instances, this is framed in terms of audible or visible minority status. In other instances, it is focused on the extent to which children of migrants are encouraged to participate in the host society and adopt its norms.

Our research found that there are many cultural similarities between migrants and the host society. The first relates to the importance of family networks. It is clear from our research that separation from family is a source of unhappiness in many

cases, but that migrants have found creative ways of overcoming separation by using modern technology to keep in regular contact. This is particularly important in instances where travelling is a problem, for example because of status or because of limited resources. To cope with separation, many migrants are actively involved in creating new support networks in Ireland, through the development of national communities, and work and friendship networks with Irish people and with other migrants, and through the contacts migrant parents make through their children.

The second cultural similarity relates to language. In Ireland, State policy and popular opinion encourages and facilitates bilingualism. Migrants similarly value the ability to communicate in a variety of languages. However, there is no evidence that adult migrants are being encouraged to see the Irish language as a means of communication and integration in Ireland, despite the fact that many of their children are learning it in school.

A third area relates to cultural norms and values. Our research suggested that many migrants have access to learning about Irish cultural norms and values, suggesting a level of integration. However, migrants, in common with many Irish people, express reservations about some of these norms and values. Moreover, while migrants may identify the same values that are also important to Irish people, it is often the differences in cultural practices and attitudes that create the impression that these values differ. For example, while many interviewees enjoy socialising and seek greater interaction with Irish people, they prefer or feel more comfortable doing so in contexts other than those typically associated with Irish life. Others felt that they differed from Irish people in relation to values and norms concerning the family and the raising of children in particular, but often this was due to the fact that many experienced most racial harassment and abuse from youth and teenagers.

There is a level of uncertainty about the future plans of migrants, many of whom find it difficult to imagine Ireland as their permanent home. This is common among migrants in general, and it is also common among highly skilled workers across the world, who increasingly think in terms of global rather than national belonging (see, for example, Ley and Kobayashi 2005).

However, this level of uncertainty should not be understood as a definite plan to return to the country of origin. Research in a variety of contexts has pointed to the inevitability of 'temporary' migration becoming more permanent, as migrants develop a strong attachment to the people and places of the host society. Research has also highlighted the 'myth of return', which functions in many migrant discussions (Sayad, 2004). In an increasingly globalised world, research also points to the need for and necessity of labour mobility, as well as a recognition that migration patterns and behaviour are diverse and complex. However, plans to stay in Ireland also depended on migrants' perceptions of the opportunity to cultivate all the necessities for a full life. Here, constraints in relation to family reunification or more flexibility in terms of visits by family, the potential for career and economic progression, and acceptance by Irish society all figured prominently in their views of their future here.

Survey respondents and interviewees emphasised the importance of language for interaction and integration. Several highlighted the difficulties encountered in developing language proficiency in Ireland, such as pressures of work, lack of appropriate facilities, age, and difficulties in adapting to Irish-English. At the

same time, it needs to be recognised that the desire for integration differs, and many migrants wish to retain a sense of national identity in Ireland, often expressed through language or national community formation. This was a common experience for Irish emigrants in the past and should not be understood as a lack of desire for integration, but rather a recognition of the complexity of relationships of transnational belonging.

Two further points in relation to the issue of belonging emerged as important. First, it is clear that migrant 'communities' in Ireland are evolving; however, it is not at all clear as to what this means on the ground. It is often assumed that national 'communities' are a reality because of the existence of 'community' organisations that target specific national groups. The research reflects the important role these organisations are playing in the integration process overall, but it is important to note that, even though the participants in this study were from the same countries of origin, they are extremely diverse groups, differing across age, ethnicity, language, religion, class, and personal interests. Given these differences, it is not surprising that many migrants have yet to identify strongly with one particular group or may prefer to engage in contexts that are not specific to their national group.

Finally, the ways and extent to which migrants feel a sense of belonging and integration in Ireland is fundamentally linked to their perceptions of Irish attitudes towards them. Thus, while overall views concerning their lives in Ireland are positive, and while many feel that Irish people make them feel welcome, levels of perception regarding the extent to which Irish society is accepting of migrants or of diversity are comparatively low.

Integration in the Irish Context

When the process of integration is separated into political, economic, social, and cultural spheres, it is difficult to see the connections and links between them. To address this, we developed a variety of 'indices' of integration to obtain a more holistic measure of integration. This involved combining the results from key survey questions that reflected topics of importance to integration to provide an overall index or 'snapshot' of integration levels across all respondents in each of the four spheres of integration. For example, to assess levels of economic integration, we included answers to questions about economic status in Ireland, changes in employment status, recognition of qualifications, and whether income covers living expenses. To assess levels of political, social, and cultural integration, we included answers to questions about political and civic participation, language proficiency, social interaction, and about life in Ireland and views of Irish people. We then developed an overall index of integration (see Figure 7.1).
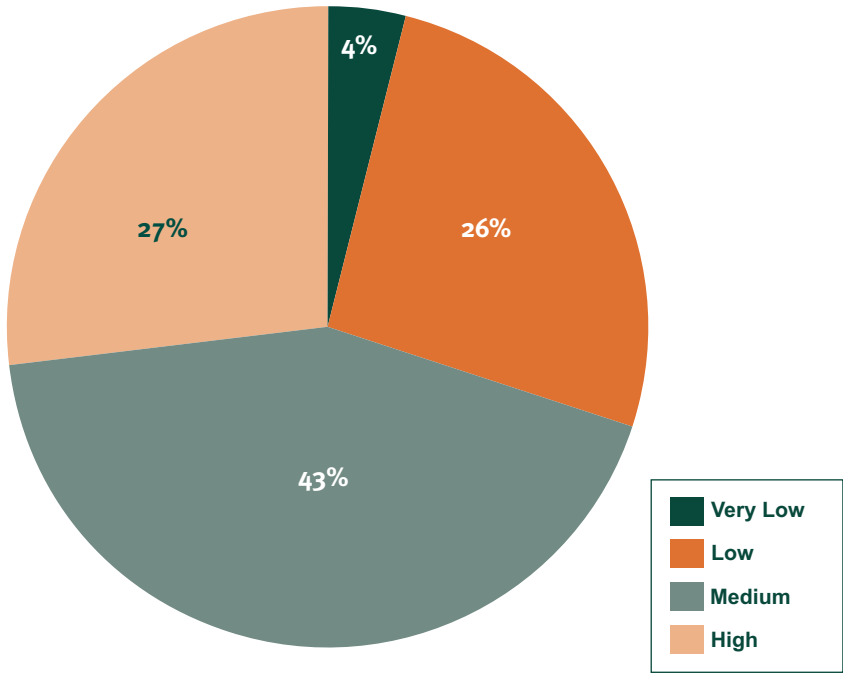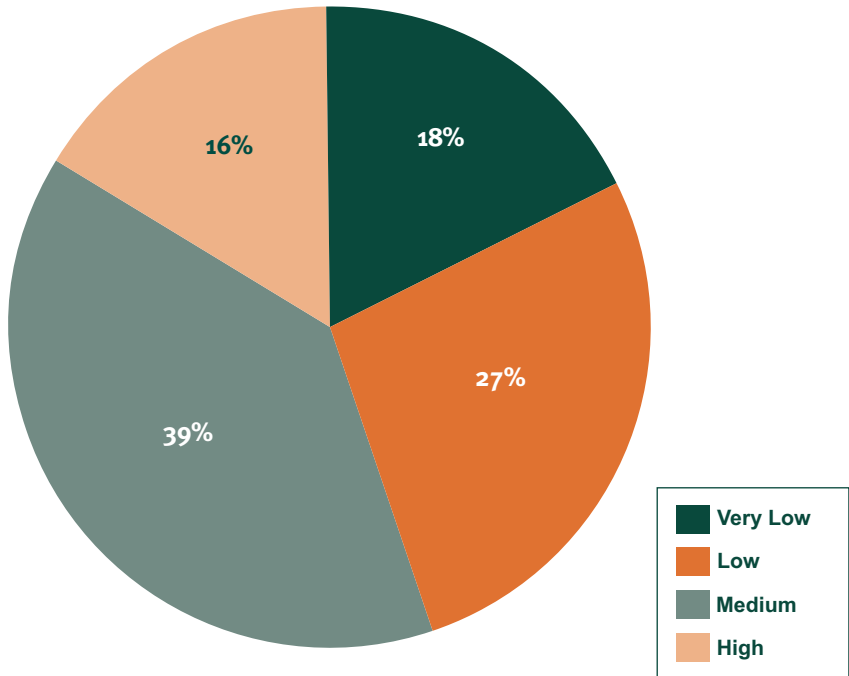
Figure 7.1: Overall levels of integration

- 4% — Very Low
- 26% — Low
- 43% — Medium
- 27% — High

Figure 7.2: Levels of economic integration

- 18% — Very Low
- 27% — Low
- 39% — Medium
- 16% — High

This suggests that the majority of survey respondents indicate medium or high levels of integration into Irish society, with nearly 70 per cent falling within these categories. However, it is often assumed that economic integration is the root of all other forms of integration: that without economic stability, migrants will not be able to forge significant links and achieve positive outcomes. Thus, when we separate economic factors from the overall integration index, the results differ slightly (see Figures 7.2 and 7.3).

Figure 7.3: Levels of political, social, and cultural integration

Legend:
- Very Low
- Low
- Medium
- High
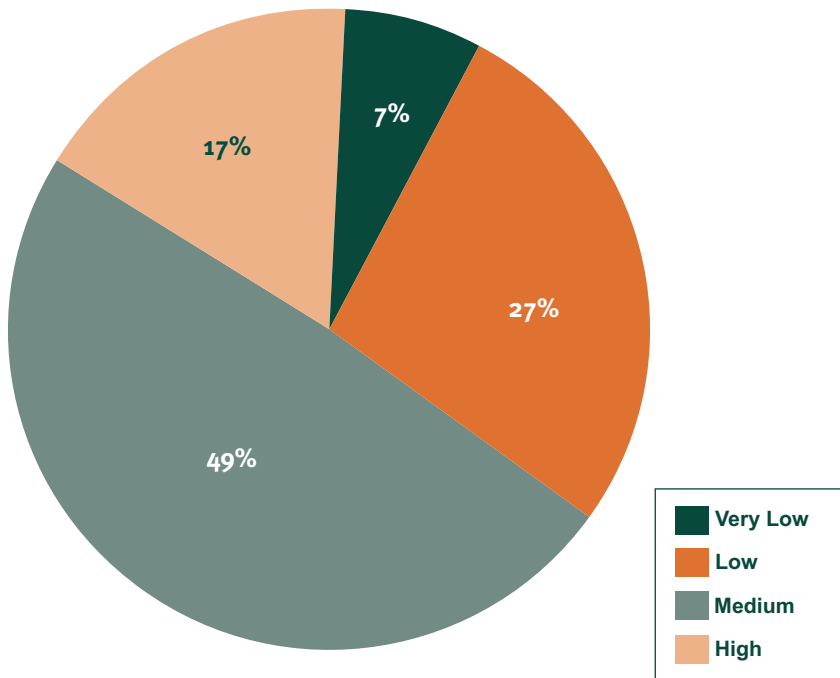
In general across the four groups, we see that the survey respondents are more likely to reflect medium to high levels of political, social, and cultural integration (more than 65 per cent) compared to economic integration (55 per cent). In this regard, it is important to note that the level of economic integration reflected by survey respondents is comparatively low. Of those surveyed, 18 per cent reflected very low economic integration, compared to 7 per cent reflecting very low political, social, and cultural integration. The relationship between economic integration and overall integration suggests that economic indicators, while important, are not necessarily the most important factors in integration.

However, general indices mask differences that emerge between national groups and between people with different migration statuses. When we further examine the overall index of integration by nationality, we see interesting differences between national groups (see Table 7.1).

Table 7.1: Overall levels of integration of survey respondents, by national groups

	Overall (%)	Chinese (%)	Indian (%)	Lithuanian (%)	Nigerian (%)
Very low	4	8	0	9	0
Low	26	42	4	30	26
Medium	43	38	53	39	43
High	27	12	43	22	31

More than 90 per cent of Indian respondents and over 70 per cent of Nigerian respondents indicated medium to high levels of integration. In contrast, half of Chinese respondents indicated low or very low levels of integration. Lithuanian respondents were more heterogeneous, with around 60 per cent expressing medium to high levels of integration, and around 40 per cent expressing low or very low levels of integration. When these overall levels of integration by nationality are further broken down to examine the differences in the levels of economic versus political, social, and cultural integration (see Table 7.2, where 'other' refers to political, social, and cultural), they reveal more complex dynamics and variations.

Table 7.2: Levels of economic integration, and of political, social, and cultural integration, of survey respondents by national groups

	Chinese		Indian		Lithuanian		Nigerian	
Level of integration	Economic (%)	Other (%)	Economic (%)	Other (%)	Economic (%)	Other (%)	Economic (%)	Other (%)
Very low	18	14	8	0	11	15	34	0
Low	48	38	18	11	20	34	22	25
Medium	32	42	42	61	55	38	28	53
High	2	6	32	28	14	13	16	22

From this table, it is clear that, for different national groups, there are different types of interaction between economic indicators and political, social, and cultural indicators. For example, for Nigerian respondents, despite relatively low levels of economic integration, the strength of political, social, and cultural integration contributes to a relatively strong sense of integration. In contrast, more Lithuanian respondents express medium levels of economic integration than of political, social, and cultural integration, and it is the strength of economic integration that affects overall medium to high levels of integration. Chinese focus group participants pointed out that it was important to consider the impact of status and situation on the levels of integration achieved by migrants.

We also examined the relationship between overall levels of integration and the amount of time spent in Ireland (see Table 7.3).

Table 7.3: Overall levels of integration of survey respondents, by length of stay in Ireland

Level of Integration	Up to 1 year (%)	1-3 years (%)	3-5 years (%)	5-10 years (%)	10 years or more (%)
Very low	7	4	4	2	0
Low	35	28	26	18	12
Medium	47	45	40	44	44
High	11	23	30	36	44

The findings suggest that high levels of integration increase over time, that medium levels of integration remain relatively constant, while low and very low levels of integration decrease. It would be unwise, however, to draw the conclusion that higher levels of integration are an inevitable outcome of length of time spent in Ireland. Since our survey focused on migrants at a particular point in time and did not track changes over time, it does not provide insight into the ways in which levels of integration for individual respondents have altered. It also does not distinguish between migrants on the basis of status, which is a crucial factor in successful integration. Thus, despite the common assumption that integration is a 'matter of time', there is not necessarily a direct connection between the length of time a migrant is in the country and high levels of integration.

Further insights into the relationship between integration and status are shown in Table 7.4. We categorised the status of survey respondents according to permanency and stability. On that basis, one category includes EU and Irish citizens. A second category is comprised of people with relatively stable (although not necessarily permanent) statuses, such as working visa holders, refugees and long-term residents. A third category contains those with less secure statuses, such as work permit or student visa holders, dependents, or those with leave to remain. The fourth and least secure category includes asylum seekers and undocumented migrants.

Table 7.4: Overall levels of integration of survey respondents, by status category

Level of integration	Overall (%)	EU/Irish (%)	Work visa, refugee long-term resident (%)	Work permit, student dependent, leave to remain (%)	Asylum/ undocumented (%)
Very low	4	9	0	4	0
Low	26	29	4	30	73
Medium	43	39	47	45	27
High	27	23	49	21	0

Based on these figures, it is clear that, for migrants who do not have the automatic right to move to or stay in Ireland, status plays a key role in contributing to high or low levels of integration. For instance, the level of overall integration indicated by more than 95 per cent of work visa holders, refugees, and long-term residents is medium to high levels. This contrasts with around two-thirds of those with the less secure status of work permits, student visas, dependents, or leave to remain, and almost three-quarters of those who are asylum seekers or undocumented migrants have low levels of integration. This general relationship does not hold for EU citizens, around one-third of whom express very low or low levels of integration. This raises further concerns about the meaning and practice of integration as it relates to EU citizens, since the assumption is that EU citizens are not in need of specific measures to ensure their integration into other EU countries.

We further disaggregated the overall index of integration by status into economic indicators and political, social, and cultural indicators (see Table 7.5).

Table 7.5: Levels of economic integration, and of political, social, and cultural integration, of survey respondents by status category

	EU/Irish (%)		Work visa, refugee, long-term residents (%)		Work permit, student, dependent, leave to remain (%)		Asylum seeker, undocumented (%)	
Level of integration	Economic (%)	Other (%)	Economic (%)	Other (%)	Economic (%)	Other (%)	Economic (%)	Other (%)
Very low	12	14	3	1	21	7	93	0
Low	21	33	18	11	36	29	7	53
Medium	55	40	46	57	31	48	0	47
High	12	13	33	31	12	16	0	0

From this table, it appears that status has a crucial effect on economic integration. For example, if we consider the medium and high levels of economic integration, we can see a clear link between levels of economic integration and permanency and stability of status. For instance, no asylum seekers or undocumented migrants (those with least security) indicated medium or higher levels of economic integration. In contrast, 67 per cent of EU/Irish citizens, 79 per cent of work visa, refugee and long-term residents, and 43 per cent of work permit holders, students, dependents, and those with leave to remain indicated medium to high levels of economic integration. Again, differences in the relative influence of economic factors versus political, social, and cultural factors emerge. For EU and Irish citizens, economic factors are most important in contributing to an overall sense of integration, while for all other groups, political, social, and cultural factors figure more prominently.

Migration Status: A Key Factor in Integration in Ireland

These indices of integration provide important insights into the relationship between a variety of factors affecting migrants' lives and their ability to participate in Irish society. Interviewees were at pains to point out that integration is a two-way process. On the one hand, interviewees acknowledged that migration involves hardships and were adamant that it is up to the individual to make integration successful, insisting that migrants have a duty and responsibility to learn about and adapt to Irish society. Most acknowledged that migration results in dilemmas and burdens on the receiving society and were grateful for the many opportunities and quality of life that living in Ireland provides them. On the other hand, interviewees also pointed out that the receiving society needs to understand the nature of migration, be aware of its challenges, and accepting of its outcomes. One interviewee pointed out 'That's what it has to be, because integration is a two-way process: you learn from me and I learn from you' (N1).

Our findings indicate that migration status plays a fundamental role in this process. This is in line with recent work where analysts are increasingly identifying legal status as the key determinant of integration (Dayton-Johnson *et al* 2007; Penninx and Martiniello 2004). Status creates a variety of restrictions on decision-making, self-sufficiency, and the capacity of migrants to benefit from basic economic, political, social, and cultural opportunities and services, creating a 'horizon of insecurity and risk' (Breckner 2002: 225). Moreover, the 'systematic prolongation of legal differences between citizens of a state and migrants reinforces social discrimination against the latter' (Hofinger 1996: 23). As such, problems arising from racism and the negative stereotypes, misinformation, and misconceptions regarding migrants, and the practical realities of migration for destination countries – which have also been equally identified as a central factor in the integration process – are directly linked to migration status (Institute for Public Policy Research 2007; Hofinger 1996; Dayton-Johnson *et al* 2007; Penninx and Martiniello 2004).

This dynamic was a recurrent theme throughout the interviews. It is reflected in the fact that even long-term residents felt the level of acceptance of migrants among the wider society is decreasing. Many interviewees identified the growth of a general anti-migrant or anti-foreigner sentiment that does not differentiate between national, ethnic, and cultural differences. One interviewee pointed out the challenges to integration posed by a society that construes migrants in a negative light.

> *'How can you integrate into a society that looks at you with hatred? How can you integrate into a society that looks at you with all kinds of contempt? The Irish would... integrate with us better when they know we're not users'* (N9)

Most interviewees acknowledged that migration results in dilemmas and burdens on the receiving society and are grateful for the many opportunities and quality of life that living in Ireland provides them. Even those who experienced incidents of severe racism and abuse emphasised that migration in Ireland is recent and it will take time for Irish society to adapt. However, many pointed to a fundamental lack of understanding and acceptance of the realities of contemporary migration, which creates the foundation for the racism and xenophobia that many have described during this research.

*'They don't understand that we are the generation of immigrants here…
[T]hey have failed to realise that people have to migrate at some point in
time; it's a natural phenomenon… Their way of behaviour depends on their
understanding of immigrants'* (N3)

In this respect, many interviewees highlighted the responsibility of the media and
the State in encouraging and facilitating integration.

*'The media and the Government and [their] influence are the big things for
the citizens… if the Government gives a negative sign, the citizens will think
"no this is not good, foreigners are coming in taking our jobs and then
companies pay them less, and then we're losing our jobs". But if Government
can give better explanations and education… and explain more, the situation
will change'* (C11)

As suggested by one Nigerian interviewee 'The key is Irish society offering
reasonable opportunities for integration and employment; if Nigerians are given
opportunities, I can see them establishing a respectful community' (N5).

Another interviewee commended the recent appointment of a junior Minister for
Integration. 'The new Minister is good for foreigners. Now they realise it's
important; foreigners are helping the economy – doctors, professionals – they
should tap into it. Like America – foreigners developed the country' (N8).
Many hope this appointment signals a wider recognition and valuing of the
contribution of migrants to Irish society, upon which a two-way process of
integration can be achieved and from which all parties – migrants and the
receiving society – are sure to benefit.

Developing an Integration Policy in Ireland

Contemporary Irish society is highly dependent on migrants and benefits
considerably from their presence in Ireland. First of all, the Irish economy has
expanded considerably in recent years and that expansion has been facilitated
by the contribution of migrant labour. Our research supports the findings of many
studies that show, without migrant labour, certain sections of the Irish economy
would not function (NESC 2006; Expert Group on Future Skills Needs 2005).
In addition to labour, migrants contribute to Irish society through direct and
indirect taxation, but make limited demands on the services provided by the Irish
State. In general, migrants are young, willing to work hard, highly educated,
and skilled. They also contribute significantly to the social and cultural diversity
of the country, and add vitality to the places where they live and work.
Their presence in Ireland enriches Irish society in financial terms, and in social
and cultural terms, particularly through their involvement in activities that are
categorised as active citizenship.

Despite the obvious contribution of migrants to Irish society, there are few
provisions for their further integration. Too often, migrants are understood as
temporary economic units and Irish migration policy has helped to support this
view. The implications of an understanding of migration as temporary and of
migrants as solely economic actors are highly problematic. Our research shows
the complex nature of the interaction between economic, political, social,
and cultural aspects of migration and integration, while research in other
contexts points out that the notion of temporary migration is often an illusion or
'myth', what Sayad (2004) calls the 'temporary that lasts'.

Integration policy in Ireland, despite claims to the contrary, fails to address the reality of migration to Ireland and of migrants' experiences through concrete measures that would facilitate integration. While there are some provisions made for migrants from outside the EU, migration within the EU receives little or no attention. However, our research shows that EU nationals face similar difficulties to migrants from outside the EU.

In important ways, our research supports the analyses and recommendations made in a number of other reports, particularly the recent NESC (2007) study on migration. It argues that Ireland needs to define its migration policy more broadly and clarify its migration policy in relation to economic and social development, the development of the rule of law, and the promotion of integration. It also argues that Ireland needs a 'whole-of-Government' approach, where social policy responds to the needs of migrants in the context of broader policy goals for society overall. Our study – an examination of the experiences and circumstances promoting and obstructing the process of integration across several national groups – provides an important foundation for developing informed policies and practices necessary for achieving the goals of integration. It creates the basis for identifying:

1. The barriers and obstacles to integration, and means of addressing them

2. Clear and fundamental principles that should underpin and guide the development and implementation of migration and integration policy and practice, which include minimum levels of rights and entitlements for all migrants, while responding to the diversity of migrant circumstances and experiences

3. Strategies for both mainstreaming and equality-proofing, as well as targeting policy responses in relation to integration

In the context of this study, three key principles underpinning the development of integration policy in Ireland emerge. First is the need to understand and respond to the ways in which all four areas of integration – economic, political, social, and cultural – are linked, along with the inter-relationships between policy and everyday life. For example, as reflected in the findings, the effective recognition of qualifications has an impact on more than just economic levels of integration. It not only has consequences for migrants' capacity to progress their careers but also for access to employment and networking among their peers. It also provides greater financial certainty and security, which in turn affords migrants more time for social activities outside the work and home. Similarly, family reunification not only increases the health and well-being of the family unit. It can provide essential social and economic support for migrant parents to engage fully in work or educational opportunities, social engagements, achieve self-sufficiency, and avoid the poverty or welfare trap.

Second, while recognising that different migrants have different needs and challenges, it is also important to highlight the high levels of similarity between migrants and members of the host society. Both groups face similar challenges in the context of a rapidly changing society: economic pressures, constraints on time, coping with poorly developed infrastructure, and dealing with changing values. Addressing broader questions of social inclusion and exclusion will have positive implications for the whole society, of which migrants are an integral part.

Social inclusion requires equality-proofing and mainstreaming services, as well as targeting those groups that are most vulnerable to exclusion in society. However, such policies will remain redundant without a considerable investment of resources to build a solid infrastructure through which they can operate and be implemented. Such social inclusion policies do not only affect migrants but have implications for improving the quality of life and service provision across all segments of society. Moreover, if Ireland is to become a well-functioning, integrated society, resource allocation for these policies needs to take place as a matter of priority, particularly in the context of an imminent economic downturn.

Third, the recognition that migration and integration are linked must underpin efforts to develop integration policy and principles, particularly in terms of the consequences of the multi-tiered system of rights and entitlements linked to differential types of migration status. Policymakers must acknowledge and respond to the realities and outcomes of this situation, particularly as this cuts across all experiences, opportunities, measurements, and outcomes of the integration process as examined in this study. As such, in line with most analysts, we agree that the design and implementation of migration and integration policies must be inter-related. The simplification of status, the clear expression of rights and entitlements linked to status and to residency in Ireland, the issue of family reunification, defined in its broadest sense, along with greater clarity in relation to qualifications and permanent residency criteria are essential steps in this regard.

Migration, in all of its diverse forms, is and will continue to be, a permanent feature of Irish society. Although wide-ranging, complex, and contentious, it is only one of many rapid and profound social and economic changes that are affecting all aspects of Irish society. While often discussed in economic terms and outcomes, migration involves more than labourers and workers. It also includes students, asylum seekers, children, and other family members. These are not simply arbitrary movements and relocations of people.

Migration to Ireland has evolved through long-standing links between Ireland and other countries, as well as the strategic sourcing of international investment and active recruitment of migrants by the Irish State. Responding to the varied patterns and consequences of contemporary migration is also part of Ireland's responsibility as a new 'global leader'. Importantly, many migrants have made Ireland their homes and have established strong connections to local people and places. Regardless of their plans and circumstances, well-informed and resourced integration policies and practices are essential to ensure the development of a well-integrated, democratic, and diverse society.

The year 2007 has seen the establishment of a junior ministry with responsibility for integration policy and the development of an Irish integration policy is on the agenda. While these are important and positive steps, concerns have been raised that this office lacks adequate funding, administrative standing, and is divorced from more broadly conceived migration policy. Moreover, evermore restrictive migration policies and measures threaten to significantly undermine these advances. Legislation such as the *Employment Permits Bill 2006* and the forthcoming *Immigration and Residence Bill* have proposed surveillance measures for migrants, restrictions on marriage, and have increased funding to monitor migration and border control. This, along with a circumscribed view of migrants

solely in terms of the economic skills they can supply, militates against the factors that will promote integration, as highlighted by this research. Such policies will not only actively and explicitly obstruct social integration but, through the omission of policies such as those involving family reunification, have also missed a valuable chance to facilitate the process of integration.

Ireland, with its long history of emigration, has a unique vantage point on migration issues. Irish policymakers could take the route of least resistance and follow established models in EU partner countries. Alternatively, Irish policymakers could draw on the Irish experience and develop an innovative approach to migration and integration that could serve as a model for other countries.

Our research has illustrated that, despite the fact that mass in-migration to Ireland is a comparatively recent phenomenon, migrants have achieved noteworthy levels of integration in a relatively short time. It could be argued, however, that this is as much a result of their own personal initiative, endeavour, and capabilities as it is the result of Irish policy and practice. And, while migrants have demonstrated their willingness to integrate, the research has also shown that integration is not simply a result of migrants' initiatives or 'a matter of time'. For integration to occur, the Irish State and society must also play a central role.

There is now a crucial need for the political vision and resource investment to positively and effectively support this process that is already in motion. Without this, many of the achievements towards integration will be lost, leading to the social exclusion, marginalisation, and political disenfranchisement that has been the fate of other European countries. Our research provides clear signposts to such an innovative approach. We hope that the Irish State and society will respond to this challenge.

REFERENCES

Ager, A., and A. Strang. 2003. *The Experience of Integration: A Qualitative Study of Refugee Integration in the Local Communities of Pollokshaws and Islington.* London: Home Office. Online Report 55/04.

Ager, A., and A. Strang. 2004. *Indicators of Integration: The experience of integration final report.* London: Home Office.
Available: ‹http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs04/dpr28.pdf›

Baubock, R. 1994. *The Integration of Immigrants.* Strasbourg: Council of Europe.

Bell, C., and H. Newby. 1971 *Community Studies: An Introduction to the Sociology of the Local Community.* London: Allen and Unwin.

Breckner, R. 2002. 'Migrants: A Target Category for Social Policy? Experiences of First-Generation Migration' in P. Chamberlayne, M. Rustin and T. Wengraf (eds.) *Biography and Social Exclusion in Europe.* London: The Policy Press.

British Council, 2007. *Migrant Integration Policy Index.*
Available: ‹http://www.integrationindex.eu›

Castles, S., and M. J. Miller. 2003. *The age of migration* [third edition]. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Castles, S., M. Korac, E. Vasta, and S. Vertovec. 2002.
Integration: Mapping the Field. Home Office Online Report 28/03.

Central Statistics Office. 2002. *Census 2002 Volume 4 – Usual Residence, Migration, Birthplaces and Nationalities.* Available:
‹http://www.cso.ie/census/Vol4.htm›

Central Statistics Office. 2006. *Census 2006 Volume 4 – Usual Residence, Migration, Birthplaces and Nationalities.*
Available: ‹http://www.cso.ie/census/Census2006_Volume4.htm›

Central Statistics Office. 2007.
Quarterly National Household Survey Quarter 2 2007. Available:
‹http://www.cso.ie/releasespublications/documents/labour_market/current/qnhs.pdf›

Children's Rights Alliance. 2006. *All Our Children: Child Impact Assessment of Irish Children of Migrant Parents.* Dublin: CRA.

Dayton-Johnson, J., L.T. Katseli, G. Maniatis, R. Munz, and D. Papademetriou. 2007. *Gaining from Migration: Towards a New Mobility System.*
OECD Development Centre.

Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment (DETE). 2007.
Statistical Tables and Company Listings for the Employment Permits Section.
Available: ‹http://www.entemp.ie/labour/workpermits/publications.htm›

Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform (DJELR). 2005.
Planning for Diversity: National Action Plan Against Racism.
Available: ‹http://www.nccri.ie/pdf/ActionPlan.pdf›

DoJ. 2005. 'Outline Policy Proposals'. *Immigration Bill.*

Duffy, D. 2007. *The Housing Tenure of Immigrants in Ireland: Some Preliminary Analysis.* Dublin: ESRI Working Paper No. 188.
Available: ‹http://www.esri.ie/UserFiles/publications/20070418091545/WP188.pdf›

Employment Permits Act 2006. Available:
‹http://www.entemp.ie/publications/labour/2006/emppermitsact2006.pdf›

Entzinger, H., and R. Biezeveld. 2003.
Benchmarking in Immigration and Integration. European Commission. Available:
‹http://europa.eu.int/comm/justice_home/doc_centre/immigration/studies/doc_im
migration_studies_en.htm›

Expert Group on Future Skills Needs. 2005. Dublin: FÁS.

Fanning, B., J. Shaw, J.A O'Connell, and M. Williams. 2007.
Irish Political Parties, Immigration and Integration in 2007. MCRI. Available:
‹http://www.ucd.ie/mcri/Political%20Parties,%20Immigration%20and%20Integrati
on.pdf›

FAQs Research. 2001. *Racism in Ireland: The Views of Black and Ethnic Minorities.*
Dublin: Amnesty International (Irish Section).

Favell, A. 1998. *Philosophies of Integration: Immigration and the Idea of
Citizenship in France and Britain.*
London: Macmillan/New York: St. Martin's Press.

Feldman, A. 2006a. 'Social research and immigration' in B. Fanning and M. Rush
(eds) *Care and Social Change in the Irish Welfare Economy.* Dublin: UCD Press.

Feldman, A. 2006b. 'Immigrant civic mobilization' in B. Fanning (ed)
Immigration and Social Change in the Republic of Ireland. Manchester:
Manchester University Press.

Feldman, A. 2003. *Developing a Code of Practice for Research and Development
Work with Minority Ethnic Communities: Report of a Workshop.*
Dublin: Social Science Research Centre.

Feldman, A., C. Frese, and T. Yousif. 2002. *Research, Development and Critical
Interculturalism.* Dublin: Social Science Research Centre.

Feldman, A., D.L. Ndakengerwa, A. Nolan, and C. Frese. 2005.
*Diversity, Civil Society and Social Change in Ireland: A North-South Comparison
of the Role of Immigrant/'New' Minority Ethnic-Led Organisations.*
Dublin: Migration and Citizenship Research Initiative UCD.

Gilmartin, M. 2007. 'Dublin: an emerging gateway' in L. Benton-Short and M.
Price (eds) *Migrants to the Metropolis: The Rise of Immigrant Gateway Cities.*
Syracuse: Syracuse University Press.

Harris, N. 1995. *The New Untouchables.* London: Penguin.

Healy, C. 2007 *On Speaking Terms: Introductory and language programmes for
migrants in Ireland.* Dublin: Immigrant Council of Ireland.

Hofinger, C. 1996. 'An index to Measure Legal Integration' in *Measurement and
Indicators of Integration*, p22-30. Brussels: Council of Europe.

Houston, S., R. Wright, M. Ellis, S. Holloway, and M. Hudson. 2005. 'Places of
possibility: where mixed-race partners meet' in *Progress in Human Geography,*
29:6, 700-717.

Immigrant Council of Ireland. 2005 *Are you the parent of an Irish child…?*
Available: ‹http://www.immigrantcouncil.ie/IBCrenewal.pdf›

Immigrant Council of Ireland. 2006. *Family Matters: Experiences of Family Reunification in Ireland – A Critical Analysis of Government Policy and Procedure.* Dublin: ICI. Available: ‹http://www.immigrantcouncil.ie/familymatters.htm›

INIS. 2007. *Student Visa Guidelines.* Available: ‹http://www.inis.gov.ie›

Interdepartmental Working Group on the Integration of Refugees in Ireland. 1999. *Integration: A Two-Way Process.* Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform. Available: ‹http://www.ria.gov.ie›

Institute for Public Policy Research.2007. *The Reception and Integration of New Migrant Communities.* London: Commission for Racial Equality.

Irish Refugee Council. 2006. *Making Separated Children Visible.* Dublin: IRC.

Joppke, C. 2005. *Selecting by Origin.* Harvard: Harvard University Press.

Kavanagh, A. 2004. 'The 2004 local elections in the Republic of Ireland' in *Irish Political Studies,* 19:2, 64-84.

Kuhling, C. and K. Keohane. 2007. *Cosmopolitan Ireland: Globalisation and Quality of Life.* London: Pluto Press.

Ley, D. and A. Kobayashi. 2005 *Back to Hong Kong: Return Migration or Transnational Sojourner.* RIIM Working Paper No. 05/09. Available: ‹http://www.riim.metropolis.net›

Loyal, S. 2003. 'Welcome to the Celtic Tiger, Immigration, Racism and the State' in C. Coulter and S. Coleman (eds) *The End of Irish History?* Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Loyal, S. 2006. *Stamp Collecting: Immigrant Status as a Determinant of Life Chances.* Paper presented at Rethinking Citizenship Education in European Societies. Lisbon: 27th April 2006.

Loyal, S. 2007. *Integration: A Sociogenesis.* Available: ‹http://www.ucd.ie/sociology/researchclusters.html#work›

MacÉinrí, P., and A. White. Forthcoming. 'Immigration into the Republic of Ireland: A bibliography of recent research' in *Irish Geography.*

McGinnity, F., P.J. O'Connell, E. Quinn, and J. Williams. 2006. *Migrants' Experience of Racism and Discrimination in Ireland.* Dublin: ESRI. Available: ‹http://www.esri.ie/UserFiles/publications/20061106142132/BKMNINT193.pdf›

MCRI. 2006. *Realising Integration: creating the conditions for economic, social, political, and cultural inclusion of migrant workers and their families in Ireland.* Dublin: MRCI.

NESC. 2006. *Migration Policy.* Dublin: NESC Publications.

ORAC. 2007. *Statistics.* Available: ‹http://www.orac.ie›

Penninx, R., and M. Martiniello. 2004. 'Integration Processes and Policies: State of the Art and Lessons' in R. Penninx, K. Kraal, M. Martiniello, and S. Vertovec (eds) *Citizenship in European Cities: Immigrants, Local Politics and Integration Policies.* Aldershot: Ashgate, pp 139-163.

Pillinger, J. 2007. *The Feminisation of Migration: Experiences and Opportunities in Ireland.* Dublin: Immigrant Council in Ireland.

Sayad, A. 2004. *The Suffering of the Immigrant.* Cambridge: Polity.

Spencer, S., and B. Cooper. 2006. *Social Integration of Migrants in Europe: A Review of the European Literature 2000 – 2006.* OECD. Available: ‹http://www.compas.ox.ac.uk/publications/papers/Spencer%20Literature%20Review.pdf›

Stalker, P. 2001. *The No-Nonsense Guide to International Migration.* London: New Internationalist/Verso.

Stark, O. 1991. *The migration of labour.* Cambridge MA: Blackwell.

Taskforce on Active Citizenship. 2007. *Report of the Taskforce on Active Citizenship.* Dublin. Available: ‹http://www.activecitizen.ie/UPLOADEDFILES/Mar07/Taskforce%20Report%20to%20Government%20(Mar%2007).pdf›

Waldinger, R., and M. Lichter. 2003. *How the Other Half Works.* California: University of California Press.

Williams, R. 1976. *Keywords: a vocabulary of culture and society.* London: Fontana.