



Integrating the Future:

Nasc's Strategy on Access to Employment,
Education and Enterprise for Migrants in Cork



Oifig an Aire d'Imeachtha
Office of the Minister for Integration
Conor Lenihan T.D.

Published by Nasc: The Irish Immigrant Support Centre
Supported by The Office of the Minister for Integration and Pobal

This document is available in other languages from Nasc's website www.Nasclreland.org

© **Copyright 2008.** Nasc, Irish Immigrant Support Centre. All Rights Reserved.

No part of this book may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, or by any information storage and retrieval systems, without written permission from the publisher except for brief quotations used in critical reviews and other non-commercial uses permitted by copyright law.

The information in this document is provided in good faith and every effort has been made to ensure that it is accurate and up to date. Nasc disclaims any responsibility for errors and omissions in the text.

The views expressed herein are the views of Nasc and do not necessarily reflect the views of Pobal.

Contributors

The following researchers made contributions to this document: Michael Lyons, Peter Szlovak, Dr Will Denayer, Dr Wilberforce Owusu-Ansah.

Acknowledgements

This publication, and Nasc's other initiatives under its Employment, Education and Enterprise Project, would not have been possible without the generous funding received from the Office of the Minister for Integration's *Fund for Initiatives to Support Legally Resident Migrants*. Nasc appreciates this assistance and looks forward to working with these bodies again in the future.

Nasc would like to express its gratitude to the following people and organisations for their input and assistance during the formulation of this strategy:

Adult Guidance Service, Avondhu Development, Ballyhoura Integration Project, Bryan Mukandi, City of Cork VEC, Coláiste Stiofáin Naofa, Cork Chamber of Commerce, Cork City Enterprise Board, Cork College of Commerce, Cork Institute of Technology, Fáilte Ireland, FÁS, Independent Worker's Union, Integrating Ireland, KRAC Community Development Ltd., Lithuanian Association, Local Employment Service, Margaret Linehan, My Cork (Polish Organisation), Piaras MacEinri, Rita Keane, SIPTU, South Cork Enterprise Board, St Johns College of Further Education, University College Cork, Welcome English.

Edited by: Gertrude Cotter and Paul Dunbar

Designed by: DM Design, Cork

Published by: Nasc, Irish Immigrant Support Centre,
Enterprise House,
35 Mary Street,
Cork,
Ireland.

Phone: 021 4317411

Website: www.nascireland.org

Email: info@nascireland.org

Contents

What is Nasc?	5
Introduction	7
Research and Consultation Methodology	8
In Context	10
Migrant Education in Context	10
Migrant Employment in Context	18
Migrant Enterprise in Context	27
Special Focus: Recognition of Qualifications and Prior Learning	31
Strategic Recommendations	43
Employment	43
Education	51
Enterprise	64
Conclusion	68
Summary of Strategic Recommendations	69
Employment	69
Enterprise	71
Education	72
Appendix	75
References	75
Statistics	83
Glossary	96

What is Nasc?

“Nasc” is the Irish word for “Link”

Nasc: The Irish Immigrant Support Centre is a Non-Governmental Organisation that seeks to respond to the needs of immigrants, refugees and asylum seekers in the area of Cork, Ireland.

Our Vision: To contribute to an environment of social inclusion for all communities, based on the principles of equality, social justice and human rights.

Mission Statement: Nasc is a source of support and self-development for migrants, individually and collectively, and uses its experiences to promote fair, consistent and transparent policies.

There are 3 Aspects to Nasc’s Work

- One-to-One Advocacy
- Community Development
- Policy and Campaigning

One-to-One Advocacy

Nasc offers personal advice on a wide range of issues. We guarantee complete confidentiality. We run a drop-in service for any immigrant, refugee, migrant worker or asylum seeker from any part of the world. We also welcome academics, researchers, students and other voluntary and voluntary agencies. If we cannot help you directly we will refer you to a service which can help.

Community Development

Nasc is a Community Development Organisation and we work through our sub-groups. Members meet to identify collective needs, actions and projects and we support one another to achieve those objectives in any way we can. Our current sub-groups are open to all minority ethnic and Irish communities. Nasc currently operates the following sub-groups:

- Women’s Group
- Social and Cultural Group
- Policy and Campaigning Group
- Speaker’s Panel

Policy and Campaigning

One of the key pillars of Nasc’s activities is our Policy and Campaigning work. Due to its activities in the areas of Personal Advocacy and Group Capacity Building, Nasc is in an excellent position to understand the needs of migrants across a wide range of issues. This understanding, which can be augmented by other information sources such as research and networking with NGOs and other partners, enables Nasc to prioritise issues and focus on those on which it can have the most social impact. Nasc has identified 5 key policy areas in its business plan for 2007-2010:

- The Asylum/Protection Legal System and Direct Provision

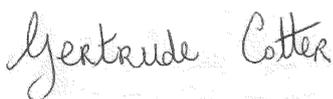
- Access to and Participation in Education/Training
- Access to and Participation in Employment/Enterprise
- Family Reunification
- Integration

Introduction

Since 1995, Ireland has experienced strong inward net migration. "In the period 1995-2000, approximately a quarter of a million people migrated to Ireland, about half were returning Irish and the remainder were European and American. The 'Celtic Boom' together with other factors has brought about this dramatic change" (Ward, 2003). An increased demand in the Irish labour market, due to full employment during the 1990s, subsequently resulted in "a steady inflow of non-Irish nationals seeking to satisfy the emerging labour shortage" (Immigrant Council of Ireland, 2005). In fact, between 1995 and 1999 Ireland experienced the second highest net migration among the 15 European Union (EU15) member countries at that time (Mac Éinrí and Walley, 2003). One-third of immigrants coming to Ireland were non-EU15 during the period 1992-1995. However, since 2000, immigrants from outside the EU15 countries have accounted for more than half of all non-Irish immigrants arriving in Ireland (Ruhs, 2005).

The above set of statistics highlights the need for urgent action on behalf of Government, statutory agencies, the private sector, educational institutions, voluntary and community organisations and trade unions if Ireland is to genuinely integrate and embrace the 'New Irish'. Nasc believes that if migrants are to achieve full integration in Ireland then they must be afforded the same opportunities as the indigenous population to participate fully in education, employment and enterprise. A barrier which inhibits a migrant's entry to the labour force, or prevents them from entering training/education, or stifles their attempts at establishing a business, represents a barrier to integration. It is on this basis that Nasc has undertaken to publish this strategy which will make recommendations on how these barriers can be removed or overcome.

It is incumbent on the Government to recognise that 10% of the people living in Ireland are migrants and there is still no integration policy in place. Essentially, we need a plan. Integration cannot be left to chance. The Government has a responsibility to put measures in place which will provide the best possible opportunities for genuine integration. The appointment in 2007 of a Minister of State with Responsibility for Integration is a welcome development. Nasc urges the Government to adequately fund and support this new ministry as it embarks on the formidable challenge of integrating all of Ireland's diverse cultures and communities.



Gertrude Cotter,
Director,
Nasc.

Research and Consultation Methodology

From its inception, this project has aimed to gather views from a wide range of parties who have an interest in migrant participation in employment, education and enterprise. This included, in no particular order:

- **Third-level institutions:** University College Cork and Cork Institute of Technology
- **Colleges of further education:** St. John's College, Coláiste Stiofáin Naofa, Cork College of Commerce
- **Statutory agencies:** FÁS, City of Cork VEC, Cork City Partnership, Fáilte Ireland, Enterprise Boards, Local Employment Service
- **Trade unions:** SIPTU, Independent Worker's Union
- **Migrant groups:** Lithuanian Association, My Cork (Polish Group), Nasc Membership
- **NGOs/Community Groups:** Avondhu Development, Integrating Ireland, Ballyhoura Integration Project, Cois Tine, Redeemed Christian Church of God
- **Employers:** Cork Chamber of Commerce, Construction Industry Federation, Various Businesses such as hotels, restaurants, manufacturers etc.

A variety of methods were employed which would ensure that all voices were heard and that the strategy which would ultimately be produced would be as well informed as possible. The above organisations were involved, to varying degrees, in one or more of the following initiatives undertaken for the formulation of this strategy.

Consultative Committees

Nasc approached a number of key stakeholders in the Cork area with a view to including them on consultative committees which would deal with employment, education and enterprise. The intention was to identify gaps and overlaps in service provision to migrants and to map out exactly what was proving effective in terms of meeting the needs of migrants. The issues arising out of these committees were ultimately intended to focus attention on the need for strategic actions/proposals which are included in this document.

Research

Independent research was commissioned by Nasc which would seek to uncover the various barriers to employment and education for migrants in Cork. A team of 4 researchers conducted a total of 72 interviews with migrants (who were either employed, unemployed or in education/training), service providers and employers. The focus of this research was to examine in detail what barriers migrants experienced when they attempted to secure employment or enter education. Further to this, employers were interviewed with a view to uncovering what barriers they encountered when attempting to hire migrants. The findings and recommendations of this research were intended to inform this strategy in terms of what actions could be taken at both a local and national level in order to dismantle some of the barriers for migrants.

Symposium

Nasc held a symposium on November 1st 2007 which sought to bring all stakeholders together for a single day. The objective was to concentrate efforts on identifying practical recommendations and actions which could be forwarded to the relevant bodies with a view to tackling the issues which

arose via the consultation committees and the research. The event consisted of addresses from experts in the field of migration including:

- Dr. Eamonn Noonan, Director of KIM, Norway's Contact Committee for Immigrants and the Authorities
- Patrick Wintour, UK Employability Forum
- Dr. Jack Jedwab, Executive Director, Association for Canadian Studies

Further to this, there were presentations from 3 migrants living in Cork who each detailed their experiences in terms of employment, education and enterprise respectively.

The afternoon session of the symposium saw attendees split into work groups that would each discuss a specific issue which was deemed important for migrants. The work group issues were as follows:

- Recognition of Qualifications
- Access to Employment
- Information Provision
- Racism and Discrimination in the Workplace
- Access to Education
- English Language Provision
- Enterprise

Each work group was assigned a facilitator and rapporteur and was asked to report back at a plenary session which closed the day's proceedings.

Focus Groups

The final element of the methodology for this strategy involved a number of focus group sessions. A total of four focus group sessions were convened. Rather than discuss or 'map out' current problems, participants were asked under the direction of the facilitator to identify solutions and actions which would circumvent or remove the barriers to employment, education and enterprise for migrants.

In Context

Migrant Education in Context

There are a variety of reasons why migrants arriving in Cork and Ireland, whether economic migrants or refugees and asylum seekers, may wish to access further education and training. However, there are a number of factors which can limit access to education, training and related services such as financial, bureaucratic and language difficulties. Information and English language provision are particular areas of concern and these issues arose frequently during Nasc's recent research¹ on migrant education.

Migrants arrive in Ireland with a wide spectrum of curricular and service needs ranging from literacy, language learning, further education, vocational training, third-level education to qualifications recognition. Gauging precise levels of educational attainment among migrants is difficult due to a lacuna in this area of study. Furthermore, according to an Irish Vocational Educational Authority (IVEA) Working Group Report there has been a "significant increase in the number of linguistic minorities arriving in Ireland" (IVEA, 2000). According to the National Adult Literacy Agency (NALA), Department of Education and Science (DES) returns for the years 2002-2005 show numbers of English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) students presenting to the adult literacy services for language classes have risen from 28,363 in 2002 to 35,552 in 2005 (NALA, 2007). This increase has been accommodated by adult literacy budgets without any specific increase or ring-fencing of dedicated funds to meet the demand. According to John Stewart of NALA "The total number of paid tuition hours provided in adult literacy has decreased steadily by nearly 50,000 hours each year since 2002." (NALA, 2007) Numbers of indigenous learners seeking non-ESOL provision has remained static at an approximate 25,000 during this time (NALA, 2007 citing DES Adult Education Returns). On the other hand, a recent report from the DES noted that:

The Department's budget for Adult Literacy was €1 million in 1997. By 2002 we had increased this to €16.7 million and in 2006 it was €23 million. An increase of € 7.4 million in the budget for Adult Literacy and Community Education in 2007 will allow for 3,000 additional literacy places in 2007. It will bring expenditure up to over €30 million, and the number of participants up to 38,000. (DES, 2007)

These statements indicate positions at variance but despite due consideration of exigent inflation and running cost increases in Ireland there is a clear need for dedicated increases in funding in some areas and a more effective and structured deployment of resources in adult education to meet demand. The summary of findings and recommendations of previous research conducted by Nasc and other NGOs such as the Immigrant Council of Ireland would indicate that there are many issues in need of resolution with regard to adult education and recognition of prior learning for migrants in Ireland.

¹ See Dunbar et al (2008).

English language tuition in Cork has up to recently been provided in an ad-hoc and largely uncoordinated manner despite the best efforts of practitioners and other providers. This is due to weaknesses in both national and local policies and procedures outside the direct control of providers. English language provision is funded from private and public resources. Language classes are organised directly and indirectly by statutory, community, voluntary and private commercial organisations. However, the demand for places is reported to be exceeding supply and while some providers are inundated others have spare capacity. According to key stakeholders who participated in Nasc's latest research some providers have a deficit of funding and space while others report poor and inconsistent attendance. Classes are run at multiple locations by multiple organisations. Some classes are free but others carry a charge. Some courses are certified while others use no accreditation. Some classes are full and others are cancelled due to funding shortfalls or inconsistent attendance. In some cases, there is a ceiling on accreditation levels which takes no account of prior learning, relevance or levels of learner ability.²

In the 2002/2003 academic year there were 9,108 third level students from outside Ireland in full-time education (Immigrant Council of Ireland, 2005) and 8,242 in 2004 (OECD, 2006). As shown by Barrett et al (2002) and Barrett et al (2006), "immigrants in Ireland have notably higher levels of education than the domestic population. This is in contrast to the experience, for example, in the United States where immigrants are generally less skilled than the native population." (Barret & McCarthy, 2002 & 2006). More recently, the Quarterly Economic Commentary of Autumn, 2006 reported that "The ESRI says that most recent immigrants to Ireland are more highly educated than their Irish counterparts, with over 40 per cent of those who arrived in 2004-05 having a third-level qualification, yet not as highly educated as earlier arrivals. The corresponding figure in the native population is below 30 per cent." (National Skills, 2006). Reporting in 2006, www.finfacts.com observed that:

The research shows how the most recent migrants in Ireland have high levels of education, although not as high as earlier arrivals. It also shows that the tendency for immigrants to be employed in low-level occupations, relative to their educations, lessens for immigrants who have been here for longer. This suggests that immigrants are not remaining in relatively poor occupational situations in Ireland over the long-run. (www.finfacts.com)

A subsequent reflections paper from the National Skills Conference (2006) pointed out that:

Even assuming the optimum output from the education system and up-skilling of the workforce, Ireland will continue to require immigration if it is to maintain its projected economic growth. As already pointed out the migrant inflow into Ireland to date has been for the most part highly skilled, immigrants have particular skill requirements which are unique to them. At the same time, there are also issues in integrating immigrants into the current education and training structure. (National Skills Conference, 2006)

2 *These findings arose during focus group discussions on education held by Nasc in Cork (February 22nd, 2008).*

Not only do adult education and training provision and recognition of prior learning play a vital role in successful migrant integration but in general “there is a positive link between investment in skills development and productivity. Higher levels of education and training lead to increased wealth and higher living standards” (Enterprise Strategy Group, 2004). Providing for ease of access to and participation in all forms of adult education, lifelong learning and RPL has an obvious and potent economic value for Ireland in the local and national context. The National Skills Conference reflections paper also states that:

The educational profile of the immigrant population has been higher than that of the resident population to date. However, an ‘occupational gap’ remains where migrants are employed in occupations lower than those one would expect given their educational attainment. While an occupational gap appears to be a feature of first wave migration internationally, challenges remain in terms of English language skills, recognition of international qualifications and integration of migrants into the formal education and training system. (National Skills, 2006)

In a more radical sense, migrant education is a human rights, development and social justice issue in terms of the social and economic empowerment of migrants and their families resident in Ireland and abroad. Lifelong learning, when effectively deployed, creates wealth with the potential to empower global communities and alleviate poverty on an incremental and equitable basis. This assertion, reflected in the proliferation of international money transfer outlets in recent times, is ample evidence of increased international financial traffic. It is widely accepted that there is a direct and proven link between levels of education and rates of pay earned by all workers in all societies. There is always a finite level of resources available for investment in education in a low tax economy such as Ireland but this strategy statement seeks to prioritise a set of vital actions to optimise the skills of our necessary and valuable migrant labour force to benefit all members of Irish and global society in the 21st century and beyond. These recommended strategic actions have been compiled from wide provider and practitioner consultation and are mindful of studied local and international research, best practice and experience. This strategy statement attempts to build on the valuable work done by the statutory, community and voluntary organisations currently working in education in Cork and Ireland.

In order to contextualise the educational needs of migrants in Ireland, it is useful to categorise them in terms of their status. Definitions of migrant adults typically in need of education services in Ireland are determined on a national basis as is the particular eligibility of different migrants to avail of certain adult education services. Immigrants can be divided into two general groups: A) European Economic Area (EEA) migrants and B) Non-EEA Migrants.

A) EEA Migrants

According to Articles 48-60 of the Treaty of the European Union, 1992 EU citizens have the right to:

- Access education: EU citizens can attend any educational institution on the same basis as an Irish Citizen.
- Access Adult and Further Education, including: VEC Adult Literacy Service, VTOS (please explain all short-cuts for first time usage) and FÁS training programmes is assured.
- Access third level education and local authority/VEC student maintenance grants on the same basis as an Irish citizen

B) Non-EEA Migrant Categories

There are several categories of non-EEA migrants in Ireland and their entitlements in respect of access to and participation in adult education vary depending on the circumstances. In general terms, according to the White Paper on Adult Education, 2000: "Refugees are entitled to the same access to education and training as Irish nationals." (White Paper on Adult Education, 2000) It also referred to the Refugee Language Support Unit (now IILT) established in Trinity College "to co-ordinate language assessment and tuition on a national basis." (White Paper on Adult Education, 2000)

Asylum seekers are still precluded from accessing and participating in the broader range of adult education provision but VECs have directly and indirectly (through funding community and voluntary organisations) made provision for literacy, language, Information and Communications Technology (ICT) and intercultural supports from literacy and Back to Education Initiative (BTEI) budgets as provided for in The White Paper on Adult Education (2000). This has also been the experience in the greater Cork area. Furthermore, statutory, community and voluntary organisations have occasionally accessed and provided ad hoc discretionary funding for asylum seekers to participate in temporary and part-time courses and have been known to meet examination and course fees occasionally and where provident on a local basis. Ward's (2003) publication provides for 10 categories of non-EEA immigrants. Ward's (2003) work in this area provides useful and detailed information by way of clarification. Therefore, it is unavoidable that definitive information provided therein is adapted, paraphrased and quoted here for the purposes of this document. The following lists migrants by category and briefly outlines what rights they have in terms of education in Ireland.

1) Work Visa/Authorisation Holders

While immigrant workers with basic education needs can access the VEC Adult Literacy free of charge, generally other programmes in Adult and Further Education require a fee. Moreover, the international economic fee is required for immigrant workers entering third level education and they are ineligible for higher education and student maintenance grants. However long-term resident immigrants may be eligible for higher education and maintenance grants in the future (Ward 2003).

2) International Students

Persons from outside the EEA may enter and study in Ireland on a study visa providing they can fulfill certain conditions: (1) provide an immigration history, (2) have a valid passport, (3) have evidence of their course and of fees paid (4) evidence of private medical insurance and self-sufficiency. Reliable and accurate statistics on the number of non-EEA students in Ireland are not available (Ward, 2003).

3) Persons Granted Leave to Remain on the Basis of Parentage of Irish Citizen Children

Permitted access to Adult and Further Education, including: VEC Adult Literacy Service, ESOL (explain in full)programmes, VTOS and FÁS training courses parents of Irish citizen children cannot access third level education on the same basis as EU nationals. Therefore, they must pay the full international economic fee for third level education and are not eligible for local authority/VEC higher education student maintenance grants (Ward, 2003).

4) Persons Granted Leave to Remain at the Discretion of the Minister for Justice

Allowed access to third level education and local authority/VEC higher education. Student maintenance grants are only available to persons with letters stating they have 'humanitarian leave to remain' (Ward, 2003).

5) Convention Refugees

- Access to education: convention refugees can attend any educational institution on the same basis as an EU citizen
- Access to Adult and Further Education, including: VEC Adult Literacy Service, ESOL programmes, VTOS and FÁS training courses
- The right to access third level education and local authority/VEC higher education and student maintenance
- Grants on the same basis as an Irish/EU citizen (Ward, 2003).

6) Programme Refugees

- Access to education: programme refugees can attend any educational institution on the same basis as an EU citizen
- Access to Adult and Further Education, including: VEC Adult Literacy Service, ESOL programmes, VTOS and FÁS training courses
- Access to third level education and local authority/VEC higher education and student maintenance grants on the same basis as an Irish/EU citizen (Ward, 2003).

7) Persons granted Family Reunification

- The right to attend any educational institution on the same basis as an EU citizen
- Access to Adult and Further Education, including: VEC Adult Literacy Service, ESOL programmes, VTOS and FÁS training courses
- Access to third level education and local authority/VEC higher education and student maintenance grants on the same basis as an Irish/EU citizen (Ward, 2003).

8) Asylum Seekers

While an application for asylum is being determined, applicants have no right to:

- Full-time education (unless under the age of 18)

Asylum Seekers have the right to access:

- Language and literacy provision, as well as mother culture supports through the VEC Adult Literacy Service and ESOL programmes (Ward, 2003).

9) Persons Granted Leave to Remain on the Basis of Marriage to Irish and EU citizens

- Access to Adult and Further Education, including Adult Literacy Service, ESOL programmes, VTOS and FAS training courses.
- Access third level education and local authority/VEC higher education and student maintenance grants on the same basis as an Irish/EU citizen (Ward, 2003).

10) Work Permits Holders

While immigrant workers with basic education needs can access the VEC Adult Literacy for free, generally other programmes in Adult and Further Education require a fee. Moreover, the international economic fee is required for immigrant workers entering third level education and they are ineligible for higher education and student maintenance grants. Long-term resident immigrants may be eligible for higher education and maintenance grants in the future (Ward, 2003).

Promising Developments in Access to Third-Level Education

There are a number of projects and initiatives currently underway, both locally and nationally, which have the potential to benefit migrants. Below are some examples of these initiatives with a particular focus on third-level institutions in Cork.

The Higher Education Authority: Strategic Integration Fund (SIF)

Under the strategic integration fund CIT and UCC along with 7 other partner colleges have received SIF 2 funding:

CIT's project proposal: Roadmap for Employer-Academic Partnership (REAP) was also allocated funding under SIF 2. The partners involved in this are Dublin Institute of Technology (DIT), Waterford Institute of Technology (WIT), Institute of Technology Tallaght (ITT), University College Cork (UCC), Institute of Technology Sligo (ITS), Athlone Institute of Technology (AIT), National University of Ireland, Galway (NUIG). The aim of the project is to facilitate the research, development and validation of a Higher Education / Employment Partnership Model and Roadmap. It will identify learning needs within workplaces, draw up a comprehensive plan for partnership between employers and Higher Education Institutions (HEI), and verify the effectiveness of the strategy through a diverse range of demonstrator collaborative activities. It

will provide the gateway to integrate and rationalise complementary initiatives and offer a single, simple, relevant and inclusive framework to facilitate interaction with the workplace (www.heai.ie)

It should be noted that, while the above initiative is not specifically aimed at migrants, it does have the potential to benefit them. UCC has also been allocated funding from the same source to widen participation in collaboration with CIT, NUIG, Trinity College Dublin (TCD) and University College Dublin. The following are some further examples of projects currently underway:

A. University College Cork

Specific Projects

As a result of SIF 2 funding the UCC Access Office may be in a position to provide support and resources to disadvantaged students in accessing and participating in their desired third-level study programme.

Bridges to Learning is a partnership project for inclusive higher education in the southern region between UCC and CIT (incorporating its associated Colleges and Schools). This strand focuses on schools, community-based groups, and voluntary/statutory agencies, and is designed to raise educational aspirations. It seeks to increase the number of disadvantaged and mature students accessing science and technology programmes. Both institutions will also collaborate with TCD Centre for Deaf Studies, and UCC alone will work with TCD's Certificate in Contemporary Living.

The **Connections** project aims to provide a model for regional partnerships to deliver on the National Access agenda. The project will also help to inform national access and widening participation policy by reviewing and evaluating data from collaborating institutions, analysing 'what works' and supporting the social dimension of higher education under the Bologna process.³ The partnership will link with regional networks in Dublin, Galway, Limerick and Waterford.

The funding is not intended to pay for an individual candidate's education, but rather to improve the quality of access for disadvantaged cohorts through a wide range of important actions. However, it may provide funding to help improve a capable but marginal or disadvantaged candidate's chances of access and participation through language support or proposed bridging courses, for example.

B. Cork Institute of Technology

Specific Projects

CIT are working to improve information provision for migrants. They are to produce a sign-posting leaflet which will point people to the colleges of further education if in need of language support, bridging courses and preparatory study to satisfy the entry level.

One of the projects focuses on migrants already in the workforce who may be interested in entering third-level education:

National objectives of attracting 40,000 non-nationals annually to support continued growth in the economy and the issues of recognising the qualifications and prior experience of these workers and facilitating their on-going learning and social integration present a challenge to the higher education system. This work package will establish the learning needs of the workers in the regions served by the collaborating institutions and pilot a bridging studies programme (www.cit.ie)

Another focus of the allocated SIF funding at CIT will address recognition of prior learning:

RPL, Assessment of Prior Learning (APL) and Assessment of Prior Experiential Learning (APEL) practices and procedures exist in many institutions, however, there is a lack of standardisation and it is recognised that practices that operate at a low-level can be very difficult to scale and support. One of the aims of this work programme is the development and publication of agreed guidelines and documentation covering these activities (www.cit.ie)

Migrant Employment in Context

Ireland has transformed from a country of emigration to a country of immigration in the past decade. The number of non-Irish nationals living in Ireland has significantly increased on a national level as well as in Cork City and County. Ireland's economic prosperity and high labour demand were the most decisive factors in this phenomenon: "high vacancy rates were prevalent across most occupational and employment categories, including both skilled and low-skilled jobs. Employers thus began to look abroad to recruit workers needed to alleviate labour shortages" (Ruhs, 2005).

In addition, it has been emphasised by economists and the Government that migrant workers help to tackle wage inflation and maintain Ireland's competitiveness as well as creating additional demand for products and services: "the arrival of migrant workers, who pay taxes and social contributions and purchase goods and services, contributes to sustaining the economic growth process" (Conroy and Brennan, 2003). It was thus pointed out that migrant workers are generally net contributors to local economies (Stalker, 2001).

Non-Irish nationals took up almost half of the newly created jobs between 2002 and 2006 while the unemployment rate remained low (CSO, 2007). By the end of 2007 they comprised 16% of the workforce and were working, to varying degrees, in almost every industry (CSO, 2008). Their substantial impact is typified by the fact that "in some hospitals, non-EEA workers comprise almost one third of the workforce and almost one half of the non-consultant doctors are from outside the EEA area" (EUMC, 2003). Thus, the migrant workforce is both an indispensable element of the current prosperity and a crucial component of the operation of the health sector. Strikingly, by 2007, more than a third of those employed in the hotel/catering sector were migrant workers (CSO, 2008). In absolute terms, the construction and manufacturing sectors employ the highest number of migrants (Ibid). These national trends are also reflected in the Cork area where migrant workers have become an essential and visible part of various industries, particularly at the low and high end of the labour market, which is in line with international experience (MRCI, 2007).

At the end of 2006 over half of the migrant workers in Ireland were nationals of the new EU accession states where Poland accounted for two-thirds of these employees followed by Lithuania, Latvia and Slovakia.⁴ According to the work permit statistics, the highest number of non-EEA migrants come from countries such as Ukraine and Romania, the Philippines, China, India, Malaysia, Brazil and South Africa and the United States.⁵ The UK represented around 15% of non-Irish national workers whereas the old EU countries without the UK and Ireland provide around 9 % of the migrant workforce (CSO, 2007a).

4 *This analysis is based on the Central Records System of the Department of Social and Family Affairs and the P35 files (Employer end-of-year returns) from the Revenue Commissioners. See CSO Publication: 'Foreign Nationals: PPSN Allocations and Employment, 2002-2006'; data extrapolated from Table 1a, 1b and 2) (available at www.cso.ie/releasespublications/documents/labour_market/current/ppsn.pdf)*

5 *See 'Work Permits Issued by Nationality'; Appendix: Statistics.*

Channels of Labour Migration

EEA citizens enjoy complete freedom of movement and employment within the EEA and do not need to have their employment organised prior to their arrival, an entitlement which was extended to the newly acceded EU countries in 2004. People outside the EEA are required to secure employment permits to be authorised to work in Ireland unless they establish residency and receive 'Stamp 4' residency status. People who do not need work permits include refugees, people who were granted permission to remain in Ireland at the discretion of the Minister for Justice, spouses or parents of Irish citizens and spouses and dependant children of EU citizens who are in employment or self-employed as well as those ex-work permit holders who have received long-term residency. It should be noted that asylum seekers are not allowed to work in Ireland.

The employment permit system has been modified to a large degree with the enactment of the Employment Permit Act 2006. It still requires a migrant to present evidence of a valid job offer. However, in pursuant of the Act both the employer and the employee may apply for the permit which is then issued to the employee and a copy is sent to the employer. Migrants with employment permits are expected to stay with their original employer for a minimum period of one year and are then free to move employer, provided that a new application for an employment permit is made.

The newly introduced green card permit for highly skilled migrants replaces the working visa/authorisation scheme and provides for permanent residency after 2 years continuous employment. Importantly, spouses/dependants of employment permit holders may apply for a work permit once they have a job offer and the permit of the original permit holder is valid. The detailed rules of employment permits are beyond the scope of this document. ⁶

Employment Support Agencies

FÁS is the national training and employment authority. It operates training and employment programmes, provides a recruitment service to jobseekers and employers, provides an advisory service for industry, and supports community-based enterprises. The Cork City Local Employment Service (LES) is a citywide service aimed at supporting job seekers in their efforts to find suitable work. The service was set up specifically for those who experience most difficulty in accessing work, education or training opportunities in Cork City. The Cork Council of Trade Unions sponsors a job club to provide training and support for people who would like to find work. The training topics range from health and safety to interview techniques and last up to 3 weeks.

⁶ For further information, please visit www.entemp.ie.

Employment Rights

Migrant workers are entitled to the same working rights as Irish nationals. These rights and entitlements are set out in legislative instruments and special agreements that have a statutory basis. The majority of these instruments and agreements regulate terms and conditions of employment such as working time, rest periods, leave entitlements and minimum pay rates. Termination/cessation of employment is also regulated whereby notice periods for dismissal/cessation are specified. People who are in employment for more than one year are protected against unfair dismissal, which arises when they are laid off due to, *inter alia*, race, religious or political belief, gender or as a consequence of unfair selection for redundancy.⁷

Importantly, there is no specific legislation governing overtime. However, Registered Employment Agreements (REA) and Joint Labour Committee (JLC) statements regulate the payment of overtime in certain sectors and regions. Furthermore, the same instruments specify detailed rules on working time and higher minimum wages in those sectors than the statutory minimum wage. The focus group discussions held by Nasc for this project highlighted the fact that these instruments are not adhered to in many cases. Some of these violations might be due to a lack of awareness of the existence of these instruments on behalf of employers.

Employees are protected against discrimination on the basis of race, skin colour, religion, nationality and ethnic or national origin.⁸ Discrimination arises if a person is treated less favourably than another person is treated, has been treated or would be treated in a comparable situation.⁹ Indirect discrimination is also outlawed when a seemingly fair practice/policy results in discrimination against minority group(s).¹⁰ A racist incident can be any incident that is perceived as racially motivated by the victim, a witness or a member of the Garda Síochána. These actions can range from threatening behaviour including verbal abuse and harassment to circulation of offensive material, incitement to hatred and assaults and are prohibited by the corresponding legislative instruments.¹¹

7 *Trade union members and pregnant employees are not required to be in employment for one year to bring a case against unfair dismissal. See Unfair Dismissal Acts 1977-2001.*

8 *See Employment Equality Acts 1998-2004*

9 *See Employment Equality Acts 1998-2004*

10 *For more information on employment rights, see www.employmentrights.ie*

11 *See 'Seeking Advice and Redress Against Racism in Ireland; An Information Handbook (NCCRI, Equality Commission for Northern Ireland and the National Plan Against Racism) (Available at www.nccri.ie/publications-other.html).*

Employment Rights Bodies

There are various statutory bodies that promote compliance with employment legislation. The **National Employment Rights Authority** (NERA) provides information on various elements of employment law. It also operates inspections which target specific industries. The Prosecution Service Unit may initiate legal proceedings should an employer be found in breach of employment legislation. The **Rights Commissioners** operate as a service of the Labour Court and are independent in their functions. Rights Commissioners investigate disputes, grievances and claims that individuals or small groups of workers refer under specific legislation which, for example, includes complaints with regard to national minimum wage, organisation of working time and unfair dismissal. The Employment Appeals Tribunal is an independent body established to provide a speedy, inexpensive and relatively informal means for adjudication of disputes on employment rights such as, for example, the right to receive notice upon the termination of employment. The **Equality Tribunal** mediates complaints of alleged discrimination under equality legislation. This is an independent and quasi-judicial body and its decisions and mediated settlements are legally binding. The Labour Court provides a free, comprehensive service for the resolution of medium to large-scale industrial disputes.

The Case for a Long-term Approach: Integration through Employment

While the positive economic impact of migration has been highlighted it is too often forgotten that migrants do not always enjoy a positive experience. They may face barriers to employment, discrimination, exploitation or unfair treatment. Furthermore, although some migrants come to Ireland temporarily, many of them are here to stay, a fact which was demonstrated through research commissioned by Allied Irish Bank in 2006 (AIB Global Treasury Economic Research, 2006). There is a pressing need for the abandonment of the 'guest workers' conception and a plan for the long-term integration of migrants which will address the accompanying challenges (Immigrant Council of Ireland, 2003). A core element of any integration strategy is employment as is clearly stated among the Common Basic Principles on Integration adopted by the European Council in 2004:

Employment is a key part of the integration process and is central to the participation of immigrants, to the contributions immigrants make to the host society, and to making such contributions visible. It is also important that there are sufficient incentives and opportunities for immigrants, in particular for those with the prospect of remaining, to seek and obtain employment...[and]... that Member States, in cooperation with the social partners, pay particular attention to and undertake effective action against discrimination in the recruitment policies of employers on the grounds of ethnic origin of the candidates (European Council, 2004)

This strategy will seek to improve migrant access to and participation in employment by removing unnecessary barriers and creating supporting mechanisms that respond to the particular needs of migrants. This will go a long way in facilitating their integration in Cork.

Access to Employment

At the time of writing this strategy fears of a global recession abound and there are signals of a serious downturn in the construction sector in Ireland which employs a large number of migrants (FÁS, 2007). It became obvious from the focus group discussions that a marked number of those people have registered recently at FÁS and present a new challenge to the employment support services in terms of the increased number of migrants who may lack language skills or qualifications that could facilitate their smooth transition into alternative employment. Census 2006 data and Quarterly National Household Surveys (QNHS) also highlight the presence of a group of mainly African workers who suffer unemployment due to various barriers (CSO, 2007). At a conference organised by the Irish National Organisation of the Unemployed in 2003 the Irish Refugee Council stated its unofficial estimate that unemployment amongst refugees is between 30% and 40%.¹² Regrettably, there is no official data on the percentage of refugees who are unemployed.

A growing number of cases before the Equality Tribunal (and Labour Court) demonstrate the prevalence of discrimination on the grounds of race, a large part of which takes place at the recruitment stage.¹³ Most prominently, discrimination in relation to access to employment takes the form of non-recognition of previous qualifications or work experience, which may be seen as a covert form of discrimination.¹⁴ It should be noted, however, that in some cases this may be ascribed to inadequate mechanisms to deal with foreign (in particular non-EEA) applicants, especially in the case of professional bodies, which govern entry to certain professions. Therefore, the Equality Tribunal/Labour Court did not rule against those employers but emphasised the discrepancies in the process of verification of foreign qualifications.¹⁵

An Overqualified Workforce?

Census 2006 and several other studies have also highlighted the fact that many migrant workers are employed under their skill level. "It is not difficult to see that immigrants are not fully employed in Ireland, in the sense that their distinctly higher levels of educational attainment are not reflected in a higher occupational attainment" (Barrett, 2006). While it is fair to say that migrants are prepared to take up positions under their educational level in the short term to secure their entry to the Irish labour market, and that many of them may not plan to settle down here, restricting migrants access to jobs commensurate with their educational attainment in the long term is "a wasted opportunity for the Irish labour market which cannot utilise the skills needed and already existing in the economy" (NCCRI, 2005).

12 Conference: 'Recognising Ability', The Marina Institute of Education, Griffith Avenue, Dublin 9 (September, 2003)

13 See Appendix: Statistics (See also Annual Reports, Equality Authority 2001-2006, available at www.equality.ie)

14 Equality Tribunal, DEC-E2006-057. Labour Court, Determination No. EDA0519 *Irish Society of Chartered Physiotherapists v Venera Ilieva and Tsvetko Mitov*

15 Equality Tribunal, DEC_E2004-001, *Henning v an Bord Altranais*; Labour Court, CD/06/661 Recommendation. 18659, *Powerohm Limited v A worker*.

Barrett et al (2006) point out that an average migrant receives 18% less than a native worker (Barrett and McCarthy, 2006), which was underlined by a study commissioned by the Irish Congress of Trade Unions (Wall, 2007). Moreover, FÁS has also claimed that EU accession-state nationals earn substantially less than Irish workers (FÁS, 2007). Thus, there seems to be a danger of creating a “segregated labour market for migrant workers” (MRCI, 2007).

Participation in Employment: Exploitation

Migrants can often be more susceptible to violations of their employment rights while at employment, most frequently the right to minimum pay, holiday pay entitlements and overtime pay (Hyland, 2005). Conroy and Brennan (2003) have also highlighted that many workers do not receive a written statement on the terms and conditions of their employment and these terms and conditions may change without their agreeing to that amendment.

The Migrant Rights Centre of Ireland (MRCI) also stressed that a high proportion of the migrant workforce is employed in subcontracted service provision which “can dilute issues of responsibility and accountability in relation to employment standards and protection of workers” (MRCI, 2007). According to findings of the focus group discussions held for this project, employers may simply not be aware that they are violating employment legislation, particularly specific instruments such as JLC agreements.

The increased awareness of employment rights and the strengthening of support mechanisms has helped a growing number of migrant workers to seek redress. Nevertheless, it is safe to say that a marked number of migrants still suffer from mistreatment and do not have their employment rights protected, primarily due to a lack of information on their rights and the available supports to enforce those rights (Hyland, 2003). Local research commissioned by Nasc showed that many migrants fear becoming unemployed if they attempt to challenge an employer (Dunbar et al, 2008). This reflects the findings of national research, which pointed out that “almost all the workers who attempt to have their rights vindicated following mistreatment by an employer had left, or been dismissed from, the employment before they were in a position to take any remedial action” (Hyland, 2003).

Participation in Employment: Racist Incidents

A study commissioned by the Steering Group of the National Action Plan Against Racism found that there was a positive shift in terms of understanding and awareness of non-Irish nationals and a decrease in the number of people experiencing racism as a result.¹⁶

16 http://www.diversityireland.ie/News/Current/Research_into_Opinions.html

According to the researchers, the fact that people had engaged more with the new communities was the major factor in explaining why they acknowledged the benefits of migration. In the focus group discussions for this project it was felt that racist incidents are relatively uncommon. However, the independent service of the National Consultative Committee on Racism and Interculturalism (NCCRI) that records racist incidents received a record number of complaints in 2007 showing a marked increase in racist incidents, an element of which was related to discrimination in the workplace.¹⁷ Independent research commissioned by Nasc suggests a similar increase in the number of racist complaints received by employers from clients/customers. Furthermore, according to respondents to this research, much of the discriminatory treatment/racist incidents takes place among staff rather than staff and management (Dunbar et al, 2008). It may be tentatively concluded that the growing number of complaints can be ascribed to an increased awareness of the mechanisms which victims of a racist incident may avail of. On the whole, any probable shift in people's general attitude should not obscure the fact that racist incidents do occur in Ireland.

Termination of Employment: Discrimination and Unfair Dismissal

Several successful challenges before the employment rights enforcement bodies indicate the practice of dismissals which are deemed discriminatory/unfair on the grounds of race.¹⁸ It is evident that there is an onus on an employer to ensure an employee's full understanding of various regulations in the workplace. This requirement requires that employers provide "proper induction courses and that they make resources available to enable them [migrant workers] to deal with any social and cultural differences which arise in these situations"¹⁹. In the case of *Rasaq vs. Cambell Catering* the Labour Court stated:

In the case of disciplinary proceedings, employers have a positive duty to ensure that all workers fully understand what is alleged against them, the gravity of the alleged misconduct and their right to mount a full defence, including the right to representation. Special measures may be necessary in the case of non-national workers to ensure that this obligation is fulfilled and that the accused worker fully appreciates the gravity of the situation and is given appropriate facilities and guidance in making a defence. In such cases, applying the same procedural standards to non-national workers as would be applied to an Irish national could amount to the application of the same rules to different situations and could in itself amount to discrimination.²⁰

17 Available at <http://www.nccri.ie/incidents-reports.html>

18 For more see: www.equalitytribunal.ie; www.eatribunal.ie. See also Appendix: Statistics

19 The Labour Court, Determination ED/01/27; The Equality Tribunal, (DEC-E2006-050)

20 The Labour Court, Determination No.EED048 'Campbell Catering Ltd. Vs. Aderonke Rasaq'

Undocumented Workers

Migrant rights organisations have long emphasised the fact that employment permit holders may lose their permit through no fault of their own and become undocumented.²¹ The recent Employment Permits Act (2006) states that permit holders who were made redundant or who were dismissed can be permitted to stay and seek other employment until the expiry of their work permit. This period, however, may often not be adequate to secure alternative employment.

Furthermore, the new employment permit regulations have set down a number of (mainly service industry) occupations which are ineligible for an employment permit. Migrants may only be granted an employment permit for jobs which pay less than €30,000 in exceptional cases. Regrettably, many previous work permit holders also became ineligible on the grounds that the same rules apply to the renewal of their work permits issued before the enactment of Employment Permit Act 2006. In addition to this, the increase in the fee borne by the employer and the length of time it takes to receive a permit also acts as a disincentive to hiring a migrant who needs an employment permit.

Equality Policy and Action

Clearly, the high levels of immigration to Ireland have created a far more diverse workplace. While Ireland has reaped great benefits from the arrival of this new pool of labour, this “diverse workforce will need to be managed strategically if this benefit is to continue” (Monks, 2007). Many organisations have responded by adopting equality/diversity policies and several of them have put in place positive initiatives to promote equality in the workplace or at least outline equality/diversity statements. Nonetheless, it was shown by a survey of European businesses that only half of the companies had a diversity policy in place and the majority had only adopted them recently (European Business Test Panel, 2005). Research commissioned by the Equality Authority also showed that many of these policies lack infrastructure to promote equality. It emphasised that “[o]rganisational policies, procedures and practices are required to reflect on equality competency for organisations to promote full equality in practice, to make adjustment for the practical implication of diversity and to prevent and combat discrimination” (Equality Authority, 2006).

A study carried out in the Blanchardstown area of Dublin showed that while small and medium enterprises may not adopt equality policies due to a lack of resources and awareness, they take a lead in terms of recruiting people from excluded groups in society, which includes disadvantaged migrants (Burtenshaw Kenny & Associates, 2003). There is a clear parallel need for training, awareness and policy development in those businesses. Nasc’s research showed that the majority of employers do not have an anti-racism policy in place, rather it is part of their equal opportunities policies (Dunbar et al, 2008). It raises questions as to how adequately an equal opportunities policy may address issues of discrimination or racism.

21 See MRCI ‘Bridging Visa Campaign’ at www.mrci.ie; See also Hyland (2003)

It should be noted that a variety of resources have been produced by various agencies which seek to aid the practical realisation of equality/anti-racism policies, for example, the Intercultural Toolkit for the Cork Workplace produced by Cork City Partnership²² (Cork City Partnership, 2007). However, there is no evidence to suggest that these resources are used by employers. It is regrettable that positive actions to achieve equality which are explicitly promoted by the Employment Equality Acts 1998-2004 are not implemented by many employers.

State Agencies and Voluntary Organisations Dealing with Migrant Workers

The establishment of NERA is a welcome development, particularly in light of the increase in the number of workplace inspectors and inspections. In addition, the ongoing campaign on employment rights without doubt has a positive impact on workers' awareness of their rights. An analysis of the cases before the various employment rights enforcement agencies suggested that a significant number of workers seeking redress are non-Irish nationals (Hyland, 2003). "[W]here an exploited worker has the capacity, the wherewithal and the support to see a claim through the full process, there is a very strong likelihood that he/she will have the wrong acknowledged and be awarded redress" (Hyland, 2003). Furthermore, trade unions along with migrant support organisations have developed an expertise on assisting migrant workers along with improving their services to them. FÁS and Local Employment Services also attempt to better their service provision by translating information materials and providing a phone interpretation service. The FÁS Employment Service in Cork also hired, on a temporary basis, non-Irish nationals to improve its service to clients.

While these developments can be seen as steps in the right direction, there is still room for improvement. Most importantly, there seems to be a low level of coordination between the various support bodies that help migrants. Workers do not necessarily receive proactive support from state bodies or employers (MRCI, 2007). It is also evident that instances of discrimination are difficult to prove. Most strikingly, research carried by the Central Statistics Office found that many actions of discrimination go unreported (CSO, 2004). There is also a lack of resources which is typified by the fact that the waiting time for cases to be investigated by the Rights Commissioner and the Equality Tribunal are excessively long, which decreases the value of any possible redress.

22 See also *Managing Diversity in the Workplace: Focus on the Employment of Migrant Workers* (available at www.nccri.ie/pdf/ManagingDiversity.pdf) or *Promoting Equality in Intercultural Workplaces* (available at www.equality.ie/index.asp?locID=105&docID=73)

Migrant Enterprise in Context

Promoting entrepreneurship is one of the most direct ways to create jobs, increase incomes, facilitate adjustment to economic change and strengthen economic competitiveness. Economies that grow rapidly usually have high rates of enterprise start-up. While not all areas with high start-up rates grow quickly, growth is difficult without a significant level of enterprise creation. Europe, including Ireland, needs more entrepreneurs to ensure that all people have the opportunity to pursue business start-up as a means of generating economic prosperity. Small Business Forum (2006) reports the need to encourage entrepreneurship and nurture small business development throughout the population and recommends that the Irish Government supports and reinforces initiatives in areas of relatively low entrepreneurial activity.

In addition, there has been strong inward migration flows to Ireland in recent years and it presents Ireland with a tremendous opportunity to embrace and harness the entrepreneurial potential of immigrants and enhance the national drive towards greater levels of entrepreneurial activity, while also facilitating the integration of minority ethnic groups in Ireland. The potential for growth among ethnic minorities is high as evidence abounds to suggest that ethnic minorities tend to be more entrepreneurial than the rest of the society. In other countries, immigrants have been shown to be amongst the most entrepreneurial, partly because they have often put everything on the line to move to work and they will make their own jobs if they have to (Meehan, 2007).

A major question related to the migration of entrepreneurs is which factors affect migrants' decisions to engage in entrepreneurial activities. Patricia Callan of the Small Firms Association (SFA) argues that entrepreneurship is motivated by two things, opportunity and necessity (Meehan, 2007). The debate on the prerequisites for entrepreneurial activities has been shaped by socio-economic arguments whereby two approaches have been used, namely, the Structural and the Cultural approach (Mavratsad, 1997). The Structural approach argues that the situation in the receiving society is a prime cause of migrants' engagement in entrepreneurial activities (Cole, 1959). Entrepreneurial skills among specific ethnic groups vary from place to place, since different regional socio-economic structures offer different ranges of opportunities for migrants. Migrants' choice depends on the structure of opportunity the migrants encounter in a receiving society. The notion of opportunity structure relates to social, political and economic circumstances that offer the migrants opportunities to start businesses. They developed an interactive approach in which different factors such as market conditions, ethnic and social networks, degree of accessibility, demand density, government regulation and social convention facilitate interaction among social groups and in some way impact upon ethnic entrepreneurship (Mulligan and Reeves, 1983; Gouch, 1984; Timmermans, 1986). The migrants might have planned to enter the labour market when they decided to migrate, but changed their minds when they saw opportunity in the entrepreneurial sector. One advantage of self-employment activities is that the migrants can ignore others for their supervision and rely on themselves for decision making. They have confidence within the entrepreneurial sector, because they believe that this sector offers them the possibility to achieve sustainable economic advancement without risking their social relations with the natives (Razin, 1991; Mager, 1989).

One critical aspect of the opportunity structure is the market conditions including market competition and market accessibility. Competition and accessibility in a market are dependent on the types of consumers migrants serve. The migrants may take advantage of opportunity in an ethnic product (Waldinger et al, 1990). The concentration of an ethnic group in great numbers within a receiving region increases the demand of an ethnic product. Cultural events and emotional attachment to home region requires that ethnic goods only be supplied by ethnic groups. The new migrant may see an opportunity to serve ethnic dishes which demand special preparation and cannot necessarily be served by other ethnic groups. For example, most Indonesian restaurants in the Netherlands are operated by the Indonesian Chinese. Apart from building on ethnic products, migrants have opportunities for serving the open market (Waldinger, et al, 1990). The migrants may cater to the general audience beyond their own ethnic backgrounds. Exotic products become items of general public consumption which can often only be provided by migrants themselves. Examples of ethnic products are wood carvings, paintings and crafts that are often identified with a particular cultural heritage. They could also enter markets which are under-served have been abandoned by previous entrepreneurs (Waldinger et al, 1990).

Previous entrepreneurs may move to other sectors or to other places and thus leave a space for new migrants. In this situation migrants grasp the opportunities when they find that the demands in receiving regions are still open and are not yet filled by local entrepreneurs. The entrepreneurs move toward products that are in demand; they do not restrict themselves to ethnic products, but instead may also serve the general audience with varieties of goods. There have been a large number of moves to entrepreneurship imposed by unfavourable conditions in the destination area, the most common of which is economic dislocation. As the migrants encounter unfavourable situations such as job discrimination and other hardships in the receiving region, they switch to self-employment activities as a safety measure. This often happened to migrants with limited education or limited skills. This is not a voluntary decision, but it reflects a no-choice, dead end alternative after the job search failure. The progress of the ethnic enterprise is also related to institutional responses in the host society. A policy of encouraging and promoting entrepreneurship effects the flow of migration and immigrant entrepreneurship development. In a community where there is discrimination in credit access for migrants, there is therefore less willingness for the migrants to remain at that place. Access to credit is important to permanent migrants who seek business expansion in the receiving society.

On the other hand, according to the Culturalist approach, values and cultural elements are the essential determinants of entrepreneurial activity. They refute the idea of a structure of opportunities within the receiving society. They believe that each migrant has brought with him an entrepreneurial skill that has been ingrained from an early age, or they think that there are value-laden groups, whose skills are cultivated within the family or within community. These skills are also known as ethnic resources. The family is the primary institution for grooming entrepreneurial skills (Borjas, 1993). Consequently, ethnic resources are regarded as fundamental to ethnic identity. The Jews in Europe and the Chinese in Southeast Asia are identified with business since the majority of them engaged

in business activities. The Culturalist also regards entrepreneurial activities as part of ethnic ideology. Studies from Ghana reveal that majority of adults would have been involved in an entrepreneurial activity of a kind while growing up to augment family incomes (Owusu-Ansah and Fleming, 2004 and Owusu-Ansah, 2005). Since it is an ideology, it has been taught, proselytised, and inculcated into children as a way of life. It is against similar argument that entrepreneurial activities are seen as an expression of one's faith. There are religious institutions which allow their congregation to engage in entrepreneurial activities, for example, the Mennonites in the United States (Redekop et al, 1995). There is also an argument that entrepreneurial activities demonstrate a nationalistic spirit of citizens. Research on Japanese entrepreneurs during the Meiji Restoration (Hirschmeier, 1971) and the Koreans during the Modernisation period (Byung-Nak Song, 1997), unveiled a picture of this tendency.

It is apparent from the above discussion that various perspectives exist to provide context to ethnic enterprise formation in a receiving country. It is also evident that each perspective has merits in explaining ethnic enterprise formation in the receiving countries, though none of the models could sufficiently explain why the phenomenon occurs or does not. What is inescapable is how the policies and practices in the receiving countries toward ethnic enterprise promotion are shaped and influenced by the tenets of these perspectives. In other words, a more holistic approach is required to address the phenomenon.

Research on immigrant entrepreneurship in Ireland is rather sketchy. One important development, however, is that migrants are gradually becoming a more important part of the Irish society as the society becomes more diverse. Another aspect, highlighted earlier, is that migrants and ethnic minorities are said to be relatively more entrepreneurial and eager to become self-employed or to start a small business, choosing this as the way to social and economic integration. Immigrants tend to experience social exclusion, discrimination, high levels of unemployment and cultural factors in their new environment. This partly affects the maximum utilisation of the potential talents with the segment of the Irish labour force. If such development is not checked it could gradually undermine the relationship between the migrant communities and the indigenous population. Entrepreneurship is increasingly recognised as a possible means for ethnic minority groups to overcome social exclusion and to gain a foothold in the market. Becoming self-employed can thus serve as an alternative to participation in the shadow economy, but in reality many immigrant entrepreneurs, due to social, cultural and economic barriers in the formal economic sector are funnelled into the informal economy. The motives for ethnic entrepreneurship are to be found largely in the challenges imposed by their less favoured position. They usually set up their businesses in those sectors where informal production would give them a competitive advantage. There is a tendency for ethnic entrepreneurs to establish business ventures without the necessary resources and advice because this support is either not available to them or they are unaware of them. .

In addition, support for enterprise in Ireland is largely geared towards manufacturing exporters, niche and internationally traded services which ethnic businesses may not qualify. Knowledge of local traditions and established methods of business is lacking within migrant communities. Largely, Ireland has a poor track record promoting ethnic entrepreneurship (First Step Microfinance, 2007). While Revenue figures suggest that there are 100 ethnic minority businesses registered each month, there is no official recorded data on the definitive number of ethnic business start-ups. In addition, there are significant difficulties accessing information even where it is available. Also it is apparent that there is an absence of ethnic minority trainers, consultants and mentors. The Irish situation contrasts sharply with the many and varied policies and programmes as well as activities existent in countries in the European Economic Area to promote immigrant entrepreneurship. Two case studies of good practice in promoting ethnic entrepreneurship from Sweden and France illustrate this point.

Examples of Best Practice in Promoting Ethnic Entrepreneurship:

Sweden: The Sweden Association of Ethnic Entrepreneurs –IFS

IFS was started in 1996 and is an independent not-for-profit association working with and for ethnic minority businesses. One of the important goals for IFS is to encourage entrepreneurship among ethnic minorities and to represent its member companies in dealing with public authorities, banks, customers, the media etc. IFS has 15 advisory centres in Sweden with 32 ethnic business advisors and works in 23 languages. IFS has over 4000 clients a year.

France: Institut International de Recherché et de Education, Cultures Development (IRFED)

The ‘Business Creation through Immigration’ initiative has been developed by IRFED (Institut International de Recherché et de Education, Cultures Development). In 1988, IRFED carried out a research action on business creation amongst ethnic minority entrepreneurs. Since then IRFED has developed ‘business creation through immigration’ as a specific field of work by establishing training and support programmes. In particular, the programme assisting ethnic minority women without education or preparation to create their own business or start an independent activity, has helped create hundreds of small enterprises.

European Union Study on Entrepreneurship

A recent study carried out for the European Commission by Triodos Facet and the Institute for Migration and Ethnic Studies (IMES) (2007) involving 31 European countries including Ireland recommended as best practice the need for four levels of intervention within programmes targeted at supporting and promoting ethnic entrepreneurship. The four areas were as follows:

- Awareness raising – Measures to create awareness amongst the ethnic community
- Policy – Measures and programmes to create a conducive policy environment
- Measures for institutional strengthening
- Services – Measures with direct services to entrepreneurs

Special Focus: Recognition of Qualifications and Prior Learning

Introduction

This section of the strategy document will discuss the various problems associated with the recognition of qualifications and prior learning. Nasc is aware, through independent research carried out on its behalf²³ and through its various contacts with the migrant community in Cork that recognition of qualifications and prior learning represent significant barriers to access to education and employment for migrants. In Ireland, recognition of qualifications gained abroad falls under the remit of the National Qualifications Authority of Ireland (NQAI). Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is defined as:

an assessment process that assesses the individual's non-formal and informal learning to determine the extent to which that individual has achieved the required learning outcomes, competency outcomes, or standards for entry to, and/or partial or total completion of, a qualification (Australian Qualifications Framework, 2004).

The problem of the recognition of foreign qualifications, prior learning and work experience have already been dealt with by several other authors. Coghlan et al., wrote a study on recognition for Integrating Ireland in 2005 and Ni Mhurchu in 2007 (also for Integrating Ireland). Many other texts exist, some dealing exclusively with the situation in Ireland, others with legislation within the EU or with experiences abroad. The recognition of foreign qualifications is a complex issue which could, however, be untangled and resolved easily enough if certain principles were accepted which would guide future policy-making in this domain.

Recognition of Qualifications and Prior Learning: Key Problems and Recommendations

Below, one will find a list of problems which have been documented in the literature. The list details issues – big and small – which Nasc feels need urgent action. In some cases, a possible remedy or solution is proposed. The settlement of the issues listed below asks for concentration and deliberation between all concerned stakeholders.

1. *Second Level Certificates*

In some cases, immigrants possess a post-secondary certificate but are unable to produce a secondary school certificate (Loghan, 2005: 13). Depending on specific requirements, the lack of such a certificate can cause problems, even if they can produce a recognised post-secondary credential. This situation is often a particular problem for older, qualified immigrants and refugees, for whom it may be impossible to obtain documentation detailing their secondary school education (see Loghan, 2005: 13).

²³ See Dunbar et al (2008)

In such situations, an exemption should be made so that a recognised post-secondary diploma or degree produced by a migrant should be accepted as sufficient proof of a secondary school certificate. The chance that someone is in possession of a certified post-secondary certificate without having a secondary school certificate is very small and even if this is the case the post-secondary certificate should be sufficient proof of her or his ability to learn.

2. Recognition of prior learning and work experience

Training practices in some countries do not traditionally lead to formal certification, despite the fact that they impart high levels of competency in trades-related work. Skilled and experienced people with highly developed abilities may have little formal documentation of their experience or training. The lack of prior learning and assessment tools, therefore, prevents many competent individuals with high trades-relevant competencies to maximise their economic potentials (see Lamontagne, 2003: 5; CAF, 2005: 4).

Also, those who take courses in their country of origin that are only partially completed find their third level study is being ignored in Ireland (Coghlan, et al., 2005: 17). Recent immigrants who enter education are often unable to receive any credentials or prior learning recognition. Although currently some institutes have models in place to remedy this problem, the situation still acts as a deterrent to immigrants who are unable or unwilling to commit to years of study of 'something they already know'.

Providing an opportunity to practice skills and assessing those skills in either a workplace or practical training environment is critical in building confidence and finding a way of evidencing ability. Provision of certificates, even if they do not amount to complete accreditation, provides evidence to employers (Phillimore et al., 2007: 55).

It is clear what needs to be done to remove this barrier. Prior learning and assessment procedures need to be put in place in a coherent way.

3. Standardisation of the required entry level of English

As Coghlan et al. (2005) reports, there is a problem with access to colleges. The colleges have different requirements for proof of level of knowledge of English. Some ask for the TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) or IELTS (International English Language Test) certificate, others organise exams of their own and some rely on interviews. This produces confusion and also unequal access and therefore, here also, uniformity and coherence is much needed.

4. Recognition by professional bodies

Recognition is defined as a "formal acknowledgement by a competent authority of the value of a foreign education qualification with a view to access to education and/or employment activities" (National Qualification Authority, according to the Lisbon Convention of 1997, in Ní Mhurchú, 2007: 23). There are two types of professions in Ireland and both require a qualification relevant for the area

in question, but one type is officially regulated while the other is not. In the type of profession that is officially regulated, the title of the profession is controlled through registration with a professional body. This is called a regulated profession. For the other type, accreditation by a professional body is not compulsory. This is called a non-regulated profession. A regulated profession is defined as any profession whose practice is controlled by law, regulation or administrative procedure and confined to the holder of a particular title or qualification (Ní Mhurchú, 2007: 24). There are currently fifteen separate EU directives governing the area of free movement of qualified EU national professionals between Member States. These only apply to EU nationals whose qualifications were gained wholly or partly in the EU or to third country qualifications already recognised and practised in an EU Member State for at least three years (Ní Mhurchú, 2007: 24). There are no provisions within current EU directives for third country nationals who have not acquired qualifications and experience within the EU (see for more information Ní Mhurchú, 2007: 20 ff). For the so-called non-regulated professions, while an endorsement of a professional body is not necessary, once it is verified that a person holds the relevant qualification, additional authorisation by one of the industry regulatory bodies is nonetheless required. There are many restrictions on professionals who have not undergone accreditation (see Ní Mhurchú, 2007: 22 ff in greater detail).

The record of the professional bodies in relation to recognition of foreign qualifications is below acceptable standards and some of the professional bodies act as barriers towards recognition. The view is that if highly educated immigrants want jobs in Ireland that match their experience and qualifications, it is essential that their foreign qualifications can be verified. This seems fair, but this is not what some of the professional bodies are engaging in. We give three examples in the boxes below. Nasc would like to point out these professions were selected to illustrate the problem due to Nasc members who would be professionals in these sectors and that there is no specific targeting, implied or otherwise.

The Pharmaceutical Society of Ireland

Registration with the Pharmaceutical Society in Ireland is required for anyone who wants to practice pharmacy in Ireland. There are three routes to registration with the PSI, depending on where one got her or his degree. Those with a diploma in pharmacy awarded in a country outside the EU/EEA, must apply for registration via the Non-EU/EEA route of registration. However, as can be read on the PSI website, this route is

“(...) currently (sic) suspended, pending the implementation of the relevant section, Part 4 (which relates to pharmacist registration) of the Pharmacy Act 2007. This legislation provides for a new Non-EU/EEA process and has yet to be commenced by the Minister for Health & Children. In preparation for the commencement of Part 4 of the Pharmacy Act 2007 the PSI is currently working with Department of Health & Children officials putting in place the process for qualification recognition and registration of Non-EU/EEA qualified pharmacists” (PSI Website).²⁴

24 See <http://www.pharmaceuticalsociety.ie/Registration/Registration/Navigation.html>

'Andrew' is a qualified pharmacist from Nigeria. He has been checking the web site of the PSI for updates concerning the new Non-EU/EEA route almost weekly. He has been doing this since 2002. It is impossible for Fred to register in Ireland, as the route he needs to follow is 'currently' suspended. Fred is currently a factory worker.²⁵

The Irish Speech and Language Therapy Association

Speech and language therapists who are being educated in Ireland can work as a certified speech and language therapist after four years of study at one of the universities which provide training in speech and language therapy. People are certified after obtaining their degree. On the other hand, American speech and language therapists who want to work in Ireland as a speech and language therapist need to be certified by the American Speech, Language and Hearing Association (ASHA). To get certified by ASHA, a speech and language therapist needs a BA or BSc as well as an MA. She or he needs 36 weeks of supervised clinical practice and has to pass a standardised ASHA test. ASHA also verifies the coursework and the clinical practice hours. Therefore, the credentials of American speech and language therapists to work in Ireland need to be higher than the credentials of Irish therapists.

The policy implemented by the Irish Speech and Language Therapy Association proved disadvantageous to the needs of the population for many years as they made it difficult for non-Irish therapists to practice in Ireland although the country suffered from a shortage of speech and language therapists.

Evidently, no one addressed the problems that such situations can logically lead to in the work environment even if recognition is successful. Forcing people to work on an equal footing and for the same pay with less qualified colleagues is not an intelligent use of human or educational capital. What is more, when problems arise, it is likely that, again, patients are the first victims.

The Irish Society of Chartered Physiotherapists

'Theresa' got her degree in physiotherapy from the University of Rome and obtained her MA in physiotherapy from another university in Italy. After this she worked as a physiotherapist for five years in Italy before moving to Ireland. The Irish Society of Chartered Physiotherapists (ISCP) required her to fill out an exhaustive application form and to pay €450. After many months, the ISCP told Theresa that her training was considered to be insufficient to work as a physiotherapist in Ireland. Theresa said: "At this point, I was given the option of sitting an exam and I was led to believe that I could only sit this one. If I failed, I would not get another chance. I know that this sounds strange, but that is what I was told". The other option was to go to a hospital and do a six-week training course under the supervision of a physiotherapist recognised by the ISCP. This is reasonable enough. However, the problem is that she was required to treat a very specific type of patient for which only one hospital in Munster supplied treatment. There is one hospital in Galway and a few in Dublin which also offer the care. When Theresa applied to these hospitals, she was told that they did not have time to take her on. Three years later, Theresa is still not able to work as a physiotherapist in Ireland although, in the meantime, the shortage of physiotherapists still persists.

The Irish Society of Chartered Physiotherapists

Unequal access is an obvious concern given the above examples. Several authors report that qualifications from some countries tend to be recognised more than others, as Ní Murchú writes, for “no apparent reason apart from the fact that professional bodies might be more familiar with one (...) than the other” (Ní Mhurchú, 2007: 23). Sometimes, as Ní Mhurchú adds, this might be explained by the existence of mutual recognition agreements with some countries. However, on an individual level and when dealing with migrants, this does not make sense and should not be a criterium. Second, as two of the above examples make clear, sometimes the foreign degree cannot be recognised in Ireland because the relevant professional body blocks the procedure for certain immigrants, as the Pharmaceutical Society has been doing since 2002 for non-EU nationals. The Irish Society of Chartered Physiotherapists, on the other hand, placed a demand on a candidate that proved to be impossible in reality. In the third case, the Speech and Language Therapy Association demands higher levels of education for foreign speech and language therapists than for Irish therapists. None of this is fair and should be considered unacceptable.

The third problem is that the procedures are complex and lack coherence and clarity. This is also the view of the Irish Business Employers Confederation “The current structure and set of rules are very complicated with different agencies involved, jargon and processes that are not customer focused” (IBEC in Ní Mhurchú, 2007: 24). This is, of course, also a problem. In the real day-to-day world, an employer wanting to hire a migrant worker but in need of specific information will probably be willing to write an e-mail or perhaps a couple of them, but she or he is not going to spend a whole day on this. In other words, the lack of clarity and the complexity of the structures constitute barriers. Ní Mhurchú notes that, while there have been attempts to create greater clarity, in the first instance through the National Qualifications Authority of Ireland (set up in 2001), employers and migrant bodies have not been sufficiently informed about this initiative. In 2007 very few employers were aware of the existence of the National Qualifications Authority in Ireland, although this institution is meant to be a national contact point for academic recognition and vocational education and training queries. Ní Mhurchú adds that professional bodies have been ignored in discussions about national and international strategies for academic and experiential recognition, with the result that there has been little opportunity for cross-collaboration between professional bodies to facilitate the sharing of decent and fair practices (Ní Mhurchú, 2007: 25). As Coghlan et al. report, apart from the problems of language and lack of information, there is a widespread feeling among highly skilled immigrants who need to register with a professional body in Ireland that these bodies lack flexibility and do not have a proactive approach to assisting non-EU nationals to register as easily and as fast as possible. Some migrants feel that there was a need for professional bodies to embrace diversity and be more inclusive in their attitudes (Coghlan et al., 2005: 24). To be more inclusive does not mean lowering standards in any way. It means that procedures should be equally open to everyone and that standards should be equal for Irish and non-Irish alike and should be applied in complete fairness and with openness of mind. Since this is not the case, there is de facto discrimination from the part of the professional bodies, especially, but not solely, towards non-EU nationals (see also Better, 2000).

5. Lack of documentation

Lack of relevant documentation is another key issue in the debate which so far has perhaps not been sufficiently emphasised. Migrants, particularly refugees, can sometimes encounter a problem of lack of documentation to prove their qualifications. Where degree certificates can be produced, institutions often ask to supply full transcripts detailing all the courses taken in each year of study, certified by the university (Coghlan et al., 2005: 14). This is required as a means of ensuring that degree certificates are authentic and also serves as a means of comparing course coverage in the different countries (Coghlan et al., 2005: 14). In itself, this is reasonable enough, but for some migrants this can lead to an insurmountable obstacle.

Coghlan et al., 2005 give an example that makes abundantly clear that in specific cases normal requirements for normal circumstances become absurd when dealing with refugees. According to Coghlan et al., the Irish Medical Council asks for letters of confirmation of training and professional status from the medical councils of countries of origin of refugees. Again, in itself this is fully understandable. However, as one Iraqi doctor put it, how could somebody write a letter of confirmation of their status to the Iraqi Medical Council, which at that time was directly controlled by Saddam Houssein, when he himself had been granted refugee status on the grounds of persecution by the regime of Saddam Houssein (Coghlan et al., 2005: 15)? Furthermore, as Coghlan et al. (2005) add, there is often reluctance on the part of professional bodies in countries of origin to supply documentation that would allow those trained in such countries to work elsewhere (Coghlan, et al., 2005: 16).

6. Translations of degrees/diplomas

Coghlan et al. (2005) report problems with the translation of degrees and diploma certificates, and with an understanding of the course level that a certificate indicated. For example, a Romanian refugee, who has graduated with first class honours and subsequently obtained a Masters degree had extreme difficulty persuading an Irish university that her certificate, which translated as 'graduation diploma,' was a university degree certificate (Coghlan et al., 2005: 17). Even if one were to accept that some degrees from some countries are recognised as "Diploma level", the problem in universities in Ireland in particular is that such a person has to start again at year 1. Universities in particular appear to not have any flexibility in relation to bringing people in to a degree course at year 2, 3 or 4. In practice this is a significant problem and means that migrants sometimes have to start their third level education again from scratch. Nasc has found that the Cork Institute of Technology is more flexible in such circumstances and we would urge other educational establishments to look at models such as the CIT model.

7. Lack of clarity and coherence

Lack of common rules is another problem that Coghlan and her colleagues rightly diagnose (Coghlan et al., 2005: 18). Whether or not someone from a non-EU background is accepted into a college or university depends on the attitude of the department in question, or an individual within it, rather than on clear entry criteria.

8. Late recognition

A study dealing with the situation of Philipino nurses within the Irish Health Sector reported that, although the non-recognition of qualifications is only one of several factors which contribute to a “weak, uneven and haphazard support infrastructure for migrant workers,” non-recognition or late recognition is potentially the most dangerous factor as it has powerful discriminatory effects and effectively provides for a system wherein migrant workers can legitimately be taken advantage of (see Ní Mhurchú, 2007: 27). This is so because these migrant workers were not being paid their full wages during the period while they awaited final registration. Following a review of an application, a nurse or midwife may be asked to undertake a ‘period of adaptation’ in an Irish hospital before she or he will be eligible for full registration. Such a period normally takes three months, but can last up to six months in cases where the candidate does not qualify for full registration during the first three months (Ní Mhurchú, 2007: 27). Such a system is obviously bad, as it produces an incentive for late recognition.

9. Educational fees

Educational fees are also a key issue. Those immigrants who are offered a place in a college or university have to deal with large fees (and lack of grants) as a major problem, as many of them are liable to pay fees at the exorbitant non-EU international student rate. As Coghlan et al. say this means accumulating large debts for some, for others it means working part-time and studying part-time and for others it means trying to access the social welfare system while studying (Coghlan et al., 2005: 16). Coghlan et al. report that some of those participants with professional training expressed resentment at being forced to pay for retraining or registration to get their professional qualifications recognised in view of the fact that the Irish government and people had paid nothing towards their education and training until now, but were nonetheless going to get the benefit of this professional training in the future (Coghlan et al., 2005: 17). This point certainly has some validity.²⁶ As migrants are going to stay here and as the Irish population is going to reap the benefits of their training, it is difficult to see why they should pay higher entry fees than Irish or EU students. After all, migrants are, on the whole, not foreign students who just come to Ireland to study.

One participant in Coghlan’s study made another point that is also worth considering. In order to access state sponsored scholarships, it was sometimes necessary for applicants to be supportive of corrupt governments overseas (Coghlan et al., 2005: 18). This, of course, mitigates against human rights or democracy activists who try to bring change in such countries (Coghlan et al., 2005: 18).²⁷

26 *Also to be kept in mind is that Ireland is being promoted as an international education centre and Irish universities derive significant income from international students. According to Lentin (Lentin, 2003: 15), there were 10,815 international students in Ireland – 27 per cent came from EU member states, bringing a total income of 80.6 million Euros to higher education institutions, plus another 86.5 million Euros spent on accommodation and other living expenses. These figures for 2002 include only international students who are here for a full course and omit thousands of Erasmus and Socrates students from the EU and beyond as well as language school students. Nor do the figures include a wider group of international students such as refugees and other members of ethnic minorities who have residency and citizenship rights in Ireland.*

27 *Students who have refugee status or who have been granted humanitarian leave to stay in Ireland and who have been resident in the EU for three years are accepted as EU students.*

10. Access to work

This also relates to difficulties with recognition of foreign degrees or prior learning and work experience. Some immigrants find it difficult to find employment of any kind because, as they are being told, they lack experience (Coghlan et al., 2005: 20). This is peculiar, given the fact that many of them have extensive work experience in their country of origin, sometimes in high level positions requiring far higher skills than the jobs they are applying for in Ireland (Coghlan et al., 2005: 20). This leads to a situation whereby immigrants who have been refused access to the occupation they have trained for at home and who lower their expectations, can still not find employment as employers will not hire them because they are 'overqualified' (Ní Mhurchú, 2007: 32).

The effective functioning of any labour market presumes the existence of institutionalised means for employers to access the productive value of prospective workers' skills. Employers need to know what is going on, which initiatives are underway, and how to compare qualifications.

The Cork Institute of Technology: A model of good practice

We choose to present the assessment procedure of Cork Institute of Technology (CIT) as a model of good practice. Nasc is not suggesting that this model is ideal. For example, it does not address the problem of what to do with a refugee who cannot prove his or her qualifications. However, the CIT model works reasonably well for most Irish and non-Irish students alike who have documented evidence of their qualifications, which is, of course, the great majority. Another advantage of the model is that it is, in essence, simple and therefore transparent and easily transferable.

Recognition of prior learning allows an individual with sufficient prior certified and/or experiential learning to gain credit for subjects or modules on a course. The process starts when a potential student contacts the head of the relevant department in order to explain his or her case. However, to a large degree this is only a formal requirement. The real process starts when the student contacts the Assessment Officer. The potential student has to produce a portfolio and is advised through this process by the recognition of prior-learning co-ordinator. The portfolio consists of a record of learning achievements, skills and competencies relevant to the particular course subject. The student is asked to compare achieved learning to the learning outcomes of the subject that can be found in the CIT prospectus. Learning outcomes is what the learner is expected to "know, understand and be competent, having successfully completed a particular subject." Potential students are asked to provide evidence that their learning is equivalent to the learning outcomes for a particular course. Once the portfolio is submitted, the assessment officer and another lecturer or lecturers consider

the previous experience against CIT's learning outcomes. The intention is to make certain that the potential student meets these learning outcomes, regardless of where the learning originally comes from and regardless of its nature, i.e. whether it is certified or experiential learning. The assessors can ask the opinion of another internal assessor or an external assessor can be involved. This process has to conclude in 13 weeks. The exemption can be granted or denied. If it is granted, the student receives credits for the courses in question. If the exemption is denied, the potential student is informed that the evidence in the portfolio is insufficient or that a key learning outcome is not met. In this case, the

assessment procedure remains unfinished and that further work needs to be done. Such work can consist of a research assignment, further study, an oral examination or a practical demonstration. A potential student can take up to 50 per cent of the subject/modules in non-award years and 35 per cent of the subject in award years.

For clarity, it has to be noted that the CIT system deals with two main categories. There is, first, the recognition for learning which already had formal certification within the education system and, second, the recognition for learning which has been gained through experiences in the workplace, in voluntary work or elsewhere. The system allows for learning to be measured and recognised regardless of where it was gained. This means that, in practice, the assessment falls into three categories: exemptions can be based on prior academic learning or on a combination of academic and experiential learning or it can be based on experiential learning only. In the first case, the procedure is very straightforward. A potential student only has to submit the syllabus of the subject he or she completed and an assessor will compare this syllabus with the CIT syllabus. Only the syllabus, a transcript of the results and a certificate from the awarding body needs to be submitted. The second case is somewhat more complex. In the case that a potential student has certificated learning which falls short of what he or she need to obtain an exemption, it may still be possible to obtain this exemption provided that the potential student can present experiential learning which covers the remaining outcomes. In the third case, potential students needs to prove that their experiential learning is appropriate for an exemption. This can be the case, for example, if it can be shown that previous work experience covers learning outcomes outlined in the CIT prospectus.

The assessment procedure is simple, but it constitutes proof of substantial social progress for Irish and non-Irish students alike. The system is still inaccessible for potential students who cannot prove their credentials, which can often be the case for refugees, as CIT demands a transcript of the examination certificate and a copy of the syllabus for each subject for which a credit is sought. All original examination certificates have to be authenticated. Exceptions for refugees should be made here, however, for the moment this does not happen, although the Portfolio Guidelines cite a wide range of evidence that can be used to verify learning. These include records of on-the-job training, letters of certification, judgements and evaluations by others, diaries, testimonials, copies of certificates, proof of completed work projects, published materials, written reports, photographs and audio and video tapes, teacher training records, reports on unpaid work, references and job profiles.

Conclusions

During the last twenty years, profound changes have been taking place in Ireland. The end of these changes is not in sight. As explained earlier, Ireland gains from the migrants who come to live here. This is not only true in economic terms. It could, however, gain more if its policies were more flexible and accommodating to the specific circumstances of migrants. Therefore, Nasc fully agrees with the assessment of the National Economic and Social Council:

Migrants bring new skills and expertise that increase productivity and hence real wages of natives, (...) (however) to make a success of migration, Ireland must connect the elements of its migration policy more closely and factor in the integration of migrants more fully into mainstream policies (NESC, 2006: 33)

Some of the policies and rules that are in place are de facto discriminatory and, in the final analysis, end up hurting migrants as well as the Irish population. For moral, ethical, political and economical reasons, we need to steer away from a society in which immigrants are treated with a 'guest workers mentality' (Mac Einri in Ní Mhurchú, 2007: 23) and in which they do not enjoy full rights. However, we will end up in such a dual society (if, indeed, we are not already there), all political proclamations to the contrary notwithstanding, if we fail to integrate immigrants into the fabric of our society: the worlds of work and education. It is time to recognise that the systems currently in place to deal with the recognition of foreign qualifications and prior learning and experience do not function sufficiently well and therefore we need alteration. If not, the only winners of this blatant unjust situation are some pockets in society which, under the cloak of defending the national interest, only serve themselves. This may sound harsh, but we believe that it is completely true. Ní Mhurchú (2007) writes that while there is no widespread desire in Ireland to discriminate against immigrants, the policies in this domain exhibit a lack of fairness and coherence, particularly towards migrants. As Ní Mhurchú (2007) rightly states, work is a key issue for integration, combating poverty and the current practices are clearly in breach of their intended purpose (Ní Mhurchú, 2007: 31). Racist attitudes should be fought wherever they arise. This, however, can only succeed when economic, educational, social and political conditions are altered in such a way that immigrants can avail of equal opportunities in this country. As long as the problems of recognition of qualifications and prior learning are not properly dealt with, discrimination will persist and, as a consequence, social exclusion and poverty will persist and racism will find fertile soil.

Professional bodies, basically, need to work for the welfare of the population in general. Studies by the Council of Europe Working Party on Refugee Qualifications indicate that the 'right to education' and the 'recognition of qualifications' are central components underlying the right to education in a society which is actively promoting social, cultural and economic integration. As Coghlan and her colleagues conclude:

It is clear (...) that there is an urgent need for more 'joined-up' thinking with regard to national criteria in the assessment and evaluation of non-EU academic and professional qualifications. It is equally clear (...) that there appears to be no coherent and standardised model of assessment

in place to both recognise and evaluate qualifications. What exists in practice (...) is often the dissemination of contradictory and misleading information, resulting in the construction of unnecessary institutional barriers and obstacles (Coghlan et al., 2005: 26)

The danger is that there are two systems in Ireland, one for 'native' people and one for those who are considered 'foreigners'. Ní Mhurchú (2007) concludes her study on the role of professional bodies by saying that the system (if that is the right word) which is currently in place lacks transparency and consistency, both with regard to recognition of qualifications and with regard to procedures for registration and accreditation (Ní Mhurchú, 2007: 34). Existing consultation mechanisms between government departments, employers and professional bodies are inadequate for the purposes of coordinating their various approaches when dealing with the issue of overseas qualifications and work experience (Ní Mhurchú, 2007: 34).

As Coghlan et al. (2005) note – and this is indeed essential – what should be done to improve the situation is “not a question of changing a few rules, or of tweaking the existing system. It is a question of changing a mindset” (Coghlan et al., 2005: 25 – emphasis in original). The immigrants interviewed by Coghlan et al., expressed the view that the Irish authorities and people have insufficiently understood that there are people living in Ireland who are going to stay and who have to be accommodated. There is a need for a vision of where Ireland will be in the future and how immigrants will fit into this future Ireland (Coghlan et al., 2005: 25). Coghlan et al. also note that the depth of the immigrants' feelings on these issues when they spoke about them cannot be fully conveyed in print. Anger, frustration and depression would be an accurate description of the emotions expressed by many: “(P)articipant after participant asked why the Irish government is seeking to import skills from abroad when it has people with those skills, who are not allowed to use them, already in Ireland” (Coghlan et al., 2005: 23).

Denayer and O'Tuama noted exactly the same in their study on informal employment in Cork. During the interviews, time after time, the interviewees were asked questions concerning policies that did not make sense according to the immigrants. The same picture arose when analysing questionnaires. The feelings that immigrants conveyed were alienation, depression, anger, helplessness, abandonment, failed integration and the experience of being a second-class citizen (see Denayer and O'Tuama, 2008: 70).

Perhaps educational institutions need to be called upon to provide the necessary bridge between foreign and domestic qualifications (Phillimore et al., 2006: 7). However, as such institutions are themselves highly bureaucratic and slow, they need to speed up efforts to develop the adequate means for immigrants to efficiently profit from their foreign-acquired qualifications. Ideally, employers should get directly involved in this process, but for this to happen specific incentives are necessary that depend on political willingness. The key issue, however, is timing. The longer it takes to implement change, the more the negative consequences of the actual situation will become outspoken: unrealised economic growth, unrealised human potential, unrealised integration. Certainly one of the most harmful consequences of the problem of the recognition of qualifications and prior learning is that it contributes to the formation of a vicious circle (see also Phillimore et

al., 2006: 11). Discrimination leads, by definition, to social disadvantage. Although many immigrants are self-reliant and reluctant to request social assistance, higher rates of social disadvantage and poverty inevitably translate into higher rates of utilisation of social services (Phillimore et al., 2006: 12). It puts pressure on the system which should not be there in the first place. This, in turn, can have the result of certain employers becoming more reluctant to employ immigrants. The longer people remain outside of training and work in their chosen field, the more significant the erosion of their skills becomes, which suggests that their prospect of working in their professional field decreases significantly the longer they are away from employment (CAF, 2004: 6).

Our overview of the literature has identified a list of problems migrants have to deal with in respect to the recognition of qualifications and prior learning and experience. The overview of the model used by CIT provides an example of how a large institution can seek to be flexible in terms of recognising prior learning, both accredited and experiential. The real question is now how to find the best way to proceed in dealing with the barriers that remain. Because many different institutions and people are involved, it makes sense to argue in favour of one major central institutional point which should unite all efforts. The process should involve employers, trade unions, immigrants and organisations representing the interests of immigrants, governmental agencies, universities, institutes of higher learning, professional bodies and other stakeholders. This idea is not new; it has, among others, already been voiced by Phillimore et al. (2006). Phillimore et al. (2006) state that one of the main problems lies in the need for many innovations to be undertaken on an occupation-specific basis (see Phillimore et al., 2006: 43). This is true, but, on the other hand, erecting such an institution (or changing the functions of an already existing one) could prove to constitute a major step in the right direction for many reasons. For one, professional bodies would become accountable in political terms for their policies. Second, through consultation and debate certain principles could be agreed upon which could consequently form the basis for the formulation of specific rules, according to the specific requirements of each of the professional bodies. This, in turn, would lead to harmonisation, standardisation and coherence in the requirements of the professional bodies. Fourth, since representatives of the employers would participate in these proceedings, many more employers would become knowledgeable about policies concerning the recognition of qualifications of migrants than is currently the case, while these requirements would at the same time gain considerable legitimacy in their eyes. As for the recognition of prior learning and work experience, cooperation would be required – or perhaps made compulsory - from licensing bodies for professions and trades which control access to degrees, recognition and registration and from educational and occupational training institutions and from Foras Aiseanna Sothair (FÁS), which is needed to participate in diagnosing and remedying skill gaps. While obvious political leadership is required to bring these elements together, it is time that this political leadership arises.

Strategic Recommendations

Employment

As noted elsewhere in this strategy, migrant workers comprise a significant proportion of the workforce in Ireland. It is important that, as a nation, Ireland acknowledges the contribution made to the economy. It is also important that we recognise the need for workers to continue to migrate to Ireland. Future projections suggest that Ireland will need 500,000 migrant workers over the next decade if it is to sustain its economic prosperity (MRCI & NCCRI, 2007). Thus, Ireland must recognise the need to successfully integrate these migrant workers, not just as enlightened self-interest, but with a vision for a diverse society and workforce. Nasc makes the following strategic recommendations which are aimed at ensuring migrants are empowered to earn a decent standard of living and contribute economically to Irish society.

Government and Statutory Agencies

Recommendation 1: Develop a National and Local Level Plan

As with the issue of Education and Training one of the key problems in relation to access to and participation in the workplace is that the government do not have a Plan at either a national or at a local level. For instance the government need a Plan in relation to the large numbers of people from the refugee community who are finding it difficult to access work. In addition any initiative at a local or national level needs to have a focal point. This raises once again the centralised nature of Irish governance structures. We recommend that the government appoint a body or unit to develop and implement plans in relation to migrant work, education and enterprise issues, or at least appoint specific agencies with responsibility in these areas. Should this come under the Office of the Minister for Integration then funds need to be allocated in order to implement the work which needs to be done. However in relation to work it would seem that the Department of Trade and Enterprise and the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform, also have a role to play, including providing funding for planning, implementation, development and monitoring.

At the same time it is important that any focal point works hand in hand with those already working on the ground and that work is carried out in partnership with local initiatives. In many cases the issue is around the provision of resources for existing work and synergies which stop and start because resources are not available.

Recommendation 2: Continuation of Existing Committee

In the absence of such a focal point we recommend the continuation of the consultation committee established by Nasc which included key players in Cork. This at least provides some forum for discussion and planning. However without resources the impact of such a forum will be limited.

Nasc is happy to facilitate this forum but our ability to develop projects will be dependent on funding becoming available

Recommendation 3: Right to Work for Asylum Seekers

Nasc strongly urged the Government to reconsider their prohibition on asylum seekers entering the workplace in Ireland, particularly in light of the length of time some asylum seekers must wait in order for their case to be processed

Recommendation 4: Bridging Visas for Expired Permit Holders

The current Employment Permit Act 2006 should be amended in order to provide for a bridging visa of at least six months for those ex-permit holders who lost their permit through not fault of their own.

Recommendation 5: Employment Permit Costs and Delays

The cost incurred by applicants for permits should be substantially reduced. This is an unnecessary impediment to employers and migrants alike. Further to this, the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment should examine ways in which the application process for work payments can be speeded up and made more efficient, both for employers and employees.

Recommendation 6: Permit Holder Spouse/Dependent Access to Employment

The spouse/dependent of a person with a valid employment permit should be allowed to access work without applying for a permit.

Recommendation 7: Additional Resources Directed to Employment Rights Bodies

Increased resources should be allocated to employment rights bodies, in particular to the Right Commissioner and the Equality Tribunal, in order to tackle the inordinate time it takes to process a claim.

Recommendation 8: Increase Financial Penalties on Employers

Current employment rights legislation does not provide for financial penalties to be imposed on employers for a range of breaches of employment legislation. If found to be in the wrong, employers are usually only required to pay back monies which workers are claiming. Employers who are deemed to have breached employment law should be liable for penalties over and above the payment due back to employees.

Recommendation 9: Allow Greater Access for Non-EEA Workers

At present, migration to Ireland comes largely from the EEA. Non-EEA workers, particularly those who are low-skilled, face a number of barriers. The manner in which the employment permit system is currently configured will lead to a skewed society in which only high-skilled non-EEA migrants can access employment in Ireland. The Government should consider alternative methods of allowing low-skilled non-EEA migrants into Ireland e.g. a lottery system similar to that in the United States. The essential principle of any approach adopted should be that non-EEA workers, irrespective of their qualifications, should be granted a core set of rights and entitlements including (not exhaustively) family reunification, spousal employment rights and access to key state services.

Recommendation 10: Statistics on Migrants and Migration

There is currently a gap in terms of the statistics available which would provide for an analysis of vulnerable migrant groups. For example, there is anecdotal evidence that unemployment is higher among refugees as opposed to the rest of the population. However, there are no statistics which detail the unemployment rate for refugees. If this data was available it would allow for a targeted approach to alleviating unemployment among specific groups. Statistics which is available on a range of issues tends to be at a national level if it exists at all. There is a need for statistics at a local level with breakdowns for other factors such as gender, age, ethnicity, etc.

Recommendation 11: Database of Employment Support Services

A database of employment support services should be compiled to assist unemployed migrants with details about the services provided by such agencies as FÁS, LES, Centre for the Unemployed, YMCA, Nasc and other relevant voluntary and statutory agencies. In particular, a list should be drawn up of those offering services of CV writing/editing and the filling out of application forms. The information should be circulated among employment support service providers, migrant support organisations and migrant community groups. As part of this wider strategy, Nasc has compiled an information booklet on access to employment and education for migrants. Nasc has undertaken to publish this booklet in English and make it available in a number of different languages on its website. It is recommended that all agencies could use this central resource to keep their information up to date. Nasc is committed to taking a lead on this initiative with a view to mainstreaming it in the future but can do so only if funding becomes available.

Recommendation 12: Promotion of Skills and Experience of Migrants

As noted earlier in this strategy, there are specific groups of migrants who are long-term unemployed but who have the same right as EU citizens to work in Ireland, for example, refugees and people with leave to remain. It is recommended that the skills and experience of these migrants should be promoted among employers through the medium of networks such as local business and employer groups.

Employers and businesses need to be made aware of the various categories of migrants and which

of these categories require permits. For example, the words 'refugee' and 'asylum seeker' are often used interchangeably and without distinction in the media and other forums. As such, employers could be unaware that refugees have the right to work without the need for a work permit while asylum seekers have no right to work. There are similar difficulties in relation to people with Irish-born Child (IBC) status, people with humanitarian leave to remain and people in Ireland as a result of family reunification.

Statutory agencies have a responsibility to compile and disseminate information which is aimed at employers and intended to inform them of the various categories of migrant worker and their respective entitlements in terms of employment permits. Local business and employer groups could be brought on board in order to act as conduits for this information to ensure that it reaches as wide an audience as possible.

Recommendation 13: Training for Service Providers

Training programmes should be implemented for service providers who assist migrant jobseekers. This could be carried out as an element of the committee mentioned above, where each stakeholder could bring in their expertise in addition to the involvement of external trainers/training companies. This work can happen in partnership with NGOs working in the field of migrant support.

Recommendation 14: Increase Training Opportunities

Additional resources are required for statutory training agencies which would enable them to decrease waiting time for some courses. This would aid the situation of unemployed migrants wishing to retrain or learn a new skill.

Furthermore, training agencies and further education colleges should be funded in this case by the Department of Education and Science/Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment to introduce conversion courses/refresher training courses for migrants trained outside of Ireland and who wish to return to their original trade in Ireland. In particular, courses should be established in trades where FÁS has identified labour/skill shortages.

Recommendation 15: Local Business Directory for Newcomers

State agencies with responsibility for employment should seek to compile a comprehensive list of businesses/employers in the Cork region. This would greatly assist newly-arrived migrants who have specific skills/trades to quickly identify possible employers. The listing should be constantly updated and may include a short description of the characteristics of each business and their general requirements for applications. Employer's organisations should have a role in contributing to the development of this service.

Recommendation 16: Migrant Skills Audit

This would entail carrying out a skills audit of long-term unemployed migrants and an assessment of the skills needs of businesses in Cork. These could then be matched under the aegis of a statutory body which would be responsible for linking with a training agency that would accredit these skills.

Recommendation 17: English Language Provision

As part of a coherent policy along with adequate funding to advance English language provision, an English language module should be attached to training and apprentice courses for those people whose first language is not English and may experience difficulties due to the complexity of English in a given trade/skill. Alternatively, an English language support service should be put in place. English language is discussed at length in the 'Education' section of this strategy.

Recommendation 18: Public Awareness Campaign to Highlight Value of Migrants in Ireland

The positive impact which migrants have on the Irish society could be promoted more by government. This would serve the dual purpose of combating racism and of highlighting the positive aspects of immigration. Trade unions and employers with models of good practice could be encouraged to contribute by bringing awareness to their policies, their work or their publications on equality, anti-racism and workplace initiatives which embrace migrants. This could involve disseminating information to various media outlets such as commercial advertisements in local newspapers and radio and the distribution of leaflets/displaying billboards on their experiences of migration.

Employers

Recommendation 1: Establish an Employer Network

It is recommended that an employer network be set up where employers could come together to discuss all matters relating to hiring migrant workers. This network could have responsibility for a number of issues including: training, information, development of resources, provision of advice and support to employers who wish to hire migrant workers but may not have the knowledge or expertise to do so.

Recommendation 2: Mentoring/Peer Networking

One of the problems migrants have is lack of peer networks in their area of work. It would be useful if employers of all kinds could consider reaching out to migrants with particular qualifications and trades. This might help to some extent in helping people not just to find work but to find appropriate work, given that many migrants are working in jobs that are below their qualification levels.

Recommendation 3: Diversity/Equal Opportunities Policies

Equal opportunities and anti-racism policies, and an actual plan for implementing those policies, should be actively promoted by all employers, with a view to ensuring the equal treatment of migrant workers. Particular emphasis should be given to the benefits of diversity/equality initiatives (borne out by research) such as enhanced commitment and motivation on the part of employees, a reduction in absenteeism and staff turnover, improved industrial relations, innovation and creativity.

It should also be stressed that the organisation will have access to a greater pool of labour and applicants of high calibre thus enabling it to achieve enhanced customer satisfaction and corporate reputation. The promotion could be carried out through the network of business organisations and local media as well as part of a public awareness campaign described above.

Recommendation 4: Diversity/Equality Mark

An awards system should be established in Cork to highlight those workplaces that adopt positive actions promoting equality and anti-racism in the workplace. This may require substantial input from trade unions, employer's organisations and relevant statutory agencies in order to make it a reality. Examples of what these policies might entail include:

- The organising training workshops which facilitate the communication between the members of workforces with different ethnic/cultural backgrounds and provide information on ethnic backgrounds or countries of origin of all staff
- Where resources permit (i.e. in large companies/organisations), the appointment of a diversity/equality officer with a special responsibility for implementing diversity/equality action plans
- The introduction of a comprehensive induction programme that ensures proper information for migrant workers with a particular focus on their understanding of grievance/disciplinary procedures, health and safety regulations and their main entitlements such as break times, holiday/annual leave and any other practical issues
- General information and orientation on the local area and information on the basic tax regulations, social welfare benefits and health services available
- Exit interviews along with assessment of migrant workers' experiences in the workplace
- The promotion of awareness of diversity in the workplace through posters, leaflets, newsletters and social events that help employees from various ethnic backgrounds to engage with each other and learn about their respective cultures
- The translation of safety documents, contracts and collective agreements into major languages represented in the workforce
- The accommodation of special leave requests for reasons such as religious festivals or trips to country of origin
- The accommodation of different religious needs in the everyday workplace

Partnership between voluntary/community sector, trade unions, statutory agencies and employers/employer bodies

In effect all of the above work should be done in a collaborative and consultative process. Statutory agencies in particular should be mindful of working with those already trying to develop models of good practice. There are also additional practical matters which we can work on collectively at a local level.

Recommendation 1: Migrant Employment Consultation Committee

The consultative committees which were convened by Nasc to inform this strategy proved a very effective means of establishing the current issues and concerns held by all stakeholders with regard to migrant employment. It is strongly recommended that a committee or forum of this kind continue in Cork on an ongoing basis and that it should meet regularly to discuss and plan for all issues pertaining to migrants in the workplace. Such a committee would comprise all key stakeholders including migrants, employer's bodies, statutory bodies, voluntary/community organisations, trade union representatives, employers and employment agencies. Nasc is willing to facilitate this process but without improved funding the work will not achieve its full potential. Such a forum is necessary in order to advocate for and plan for all other recommendations because without such a focus the work will not happen.

Recommendation 2: Personal and Community Advocacy

Various NGOs and trade unions already provide an advocacy service. This should not just continue but should be resourced adequately by appropriate government departments. One to one confidential, independent and trust-worthy advice is vital in this area but advocacy on behalf of migrant workers is also crucial. Cork needs an advocacy forum and Nasc urges all of those interested in migrant worker rights to form a forum for developing a joint action plan to support migrant worker rights and issues in Cork. Advocacy is also needed in relation to those who are long term unemployed. Nasc urges all sectors and including immigrant and minority ethnic led organisations and groups to join together to advocate for improved attention to the problem of long term unemployment amongst some migrant groupings.

Recommendation 3: Factsheet on Migrant Rights

Factsheets should be produced on migrant rights with a focus on employment and should be updated regularly. Statutory agencies with a responsibility for labour law enforcement and information provision should take a lead role. The factsheet should contain contact details for available supports such as trade unions, immigrant support groups, migrant-led community groups, employment rights bodies such as NERA, the Right Commissioners service and the Equality Authority. It is important that this document would include a clear reference to Registered Employment Agreements and Joint Labour Committee statements. The factsheet should be accompanied by training for the relevant service providers.

Recommendation 4: Translation and Language Support

Some migrants come to Ireland with little or no English. Nasc sees it as vital that these people are accommodated and encouraged to learn English in order for them to access gainful employment and integrate effectively. In the absence of a local translation service, the consultative committee described above should examine the possibility of designing a specialised service with the central participation of migrant-led organisations. This could designate persons as special translators/

counsellors to assist people from the same ethnic group who look for support. The possibility of providing this service through the Community Employment (CE) scheme should be explored.

Recommendation 5: Jobs Clubs

A jobs club should be set up with members from migrant communities which would focus on the following areas: employment support such as writing CVs, cover letters and application forms as well as the acquisition of interview skills; skills audit and reflection on past achievements; vocational guidance. Nasc has secured a small amount of funding for a jobs club but would require additional, ongoing funding if it were to continue this programme. Nasc encourages other agencies in Cork to set up similar clubs which could work in cooperation. Such clubs could then work in conjunction with the LES's new migrant guidance programme, training agencies, recruitment agencies, further education colleges, third-level colleges and employers.

As part of the jobs club, a special introductory programme should be established for people who have recently been granted refugee or leave to remain status which is to provide information on their rights, the services of employment support agencies, social services and employment rights organisations as well as voluntary organisations and migrant-led community groups.

Education

Recommendations for Government Policy and Statutory Agencies at a National Level

Recommendation 1: The Government needs a National Education and Training Plan addressing the education and training needs of migrants.

Ireland does not currently have a Plan to cater for the education needs of adult migrants. With 10% of the population now born outside of Ireland the government needs to plan for the future education and training needs of inward-migrants. Migrants will not always necessarily fit neatly into the education/ training systems that currently exist in Ireland. A revision of our system could serve the country well because many of the gaps that exist in our current system are now being highlighted by the arrival of people with a range of backgrounds. This requires the adaptation of traditional models which have been developed for a homogenous society. Other groups in Ireland have challenged these models in the past and some education/training institutes have responded. Migrants will benefit from the innovations that have happened but migrants also challenge us to once again re-think and importantly, to plan for the creation of a system which responds to the needs of the entire community.

This National Education and Training Plan can draw from international best practice. Migration, while reasonably new to Ireland, is a long standing phenomenon in other developed nations and this experience shows in some countries. According to the *Migrant Integration Policy Index (2007)* the most consistent top ten performers in terms of reception and integration of migrants internationally are Canada, Sweden, Finland, Norway, Portugal, Italy and Belgium. The performance indicators included are labour market access, family reunification, long-term residence, political participation, access to nationality and anti-discrimination. However, in terms of adult education and lifelong learning for migrants Healy (2007) cites Canada, Australia and New Zealand as exemplary:

Introductory and language programmes in Canada, Australia, and New Zealand generally provide more useful models than those in Europe. Ireland would benefit from providing independent centres for assessment and referral to language courses, as in Canada. The Canadian Enhanced Language Training programme is an excellent model for provision for academically-qualified migrants. Together with the Australian and New Zealand Home Tutor schemes, Canada's Host Program provides a useful example of integration within the local community. US programmes in relation to workers with low skill and language levels are useful models, yet overall, integration in the US is largely left to the labour market, and individual community initiatives (Healy, 2007)

Government policy needs to observe and take account of international best practice in respect of migrant education and implement strategies and policies in Ireland that will structure and organise provision in a more effective and efficient manner.

Recommendation 2: The government should establish a clear governance structure for the provision of Education and Training for migrants

What appears to be lacking nationally and locally is a clear governance structure for all aspects of migrant life, including education and training. Hence, decisions and plans come to local ad hoc initiatives which have merit but which lack the stamp of government approval, monitoring and funding. As a result, ad hoc initiatives can only have a limited impact and perpetuate both inconsistent standards around the country and sometimes competition between vested interests who are not always best placed to plan and implement the necessary modernising work that is needed.

Planners should indeed work alongside those developing existing projects and linkages but any modern government must have national and local plans. Nasc is not urging re-inventing the wheel but rather government planning which includes listening to the advice of, and in some cases incorporating, the projects of the many educational institutions, NGOs, researchers, community and voluntary groups and academics at home and abroad who have developed expertise and models of good practice. We urge the government to establish a governance structure, through the cooperation of the Minister for Integration and the Department of Education and Science, with a remit to plan, develop, evaluate and fund education which takes into account the specific educational needs of the adult migrant population. This governance structure needs also needs to be decentralised (see below).

Recommendation 3: The Government needs to provide Funding and Resources for Planning, Delivery, Curriculum Development, Evaluation and Monitoring of Education and Training Provision

The Government needs to continue to invest in adult education and lifelong learning as an economic and social priority. This will not only benefit migrants but also the wider population. The consideration of this investment must include the concept that migrants are an asset to Irish society and be mindful that migrants are eager to make a positive contribution. As well as making a contribution to the cultural diversity of Ireland, migrants, through their labour, make a substantial contribution to Ireland's Gross Domestic Product because they comprise approximately 10% of our population (CSO, 2007). The value of this contribution will rise as levels of education rise offsetting any investment made from public resources into education and integration.

Other host country experience abroad should inform the development of migrant education policies in Ireland. A revised education programme and investment now will ensure future savings for the Irish tax payer in terms of funding supplementary and special needs and education problems of social exclusion leading to crime, racism and poverty.

Where investment in education is concerned, Nasc would like to see a governance and operational structure in place which would ensure that funding to local authorities, educational institutions and community and voluntary groups is coordinated effectively in an effort to avoid gaps and overlaps in service provision and to prevent the development of sometimes inappropriate models. While some

aspects of migrant education provision can be facilitated from within existing resources, it is clear that a ring-fenced fund needs to be established for areas which are new for Ireland. This includes a ring-fenced fund for the provision of appropriate English language classes, accreditation of such courses, curriculum development and modern facilities. A distinction needs to be made between existing resources, such as adult literacy or community education, and the needs of migrants coming from a diverse range of countries and educational backgrounds, ranging from low-skilled migrants who may or may not have literacy problems, to migrants with postgraduate/doctoral degrees.

Recommendation 4: The Government should prioritise the provision of English language classes

English language provision should be better promoted, organised and accredited through increased funding and facilitation. Nasc supports the Immigrant Council of Ireland's call for a unit to be set up within the Department of Education and Science to administer English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) and for provision from a separate budget. In addition to English Language, recognition of prior learning, curriculum development and improved access and participation are all areas which require attention. These objectives could be achieved by working with and acknowledging the work of existing networks established by VECs, Further Education (FE) Colleges, Universities and Institutes of Technology (ITs), voluntary and community groups and other statutory organisations.

Recommendation 5: Information Provision

One aspect of education/training provision is the provision of information and advice on education/training in Ireland. Migrants sometimes do not understand the education system, grant opportunities, accrediting bodies, etc. Part of any plan should be the provision of information on educational opportunities and career advice.

Recommendation 6: Recognition of Qualifications

The Government needs to allocate further resources to enable the National Qualifications Authority of Ireland (NQAI) to speedily benchmark and streamline the process by which it recognises the qualifications of migrants. This would go some way to dispensing with the need to waste valuable resources in the re-education and training of migrants who have already acquired the necessary skills to work or study.

Recommendation 7: Revise educational grants to incorporate the real needs of the migrant population

From a migrant perspective it seems strange that although they might avail of unemployment assistance for "doing nothing", they cannot avail of unemployment assistance and study at the same time and at the same time if they are to access the Back to Education Allowance (BTEA) they must be unemployed for 12 months. Another anomaly is that many people with leave to remain in Ireland do not have access to free education, while some groups, e.g. refugees, do have such a right.

We recommend that the government look at both the BTEA scheme and other educational grants and schemes including the free fees scheme and take into account the actual legal categories and realities of migrants in the country. There is much confusion amongst colleges themselves regarding these matters and appropriate guidance from a national level could serve both to clarify rights and to enable migrant learners to access appropriate education and training.

Migrants should be enabled to avail of incentivised benefits while studying in order to promote integration, stake-holding, participation and employment in Irish society. Social welfare entitlements for migrants seeking to access education should be clarified in one document, putting in place the necessary guidance and financial support. As part of this it must be ensured that service providers are aware of the various entitlements and the available supports and that there is consistency in that regard within and among various educational establishments. Existing social policy documents such as the National Action Plan Against Racism and Discrimination and the National Plan Against Poverty have practical implications for access to education for migrants. Migrants should be empowered and supported in their efforts to avail of educational opportunities as provided for in this plan.

Recommendation 8: Change Education/Training Policies in relation to People who are seeking asylum

People who are seeking asylum should be afforded the opportunity to access and participate in a greater range of educational opportunities. Asylum seekers, who are not allowed to work or reside in the community, can often wait for up to five years for their case to be processed during which time it is extremely difficult to pass time constructively. Capable and educated migrants are often stranded in a limbo where they cannot develop personally or professionally for the duration of their application and therefore should at least be allowed to make educational progress.

Some people who are asylum seekers are granted Refugee, Leave to Remain or Subsidiary Protection status, some are not. For those who leave Ireland there is a benefit in education because they bring to their destination country or country of origin new skills and trainings. For those who stay here there is also a benefit. It must be remembered that those people have been refugees since the time of their arrival in Ireland. It is not their fault that the asylum legal system in Ireland is very slow. Rather than have a group of people emerging from institutional living (Direct Provision) often after 2-4 years, who have had little opportunity to integrate or to develop their skills, we could instead have a motivated population ready to respond to the needs of the labour market and ready to support themselves and their families.

We urge the government to reconsider their policies in relation to education provision for people in the asylum system.

Recommendation 9: Promotion of Work-Place Learning

National planning needs to develop improved models for work-based learning. Employers and educational institutions also have a role to play in this regard. Some employers are unwilling to invest in basic education for migrant workers assuming they will not be staying with the company or in Ireland. There are many benefits to ensuring adult basic education for all employees including

health and safety regulation compliance and more efficient and effective work practices to name but a few. Education policy makers and providers should continue to foster productive relationships with organisations such as FÁS, Irish Small and Medium Enterprises (ISME), Irish Business Employers Confederation (IBEC), Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment to further encourage and develop partnership and shared resources in encouraging work-based learning.

Recommendations for Statutory Agencies at a Local Level

Recommendation 1: Establishment of Local Education Authority

One of the benefits of having a new population in Ireland is that it highlights many of the shortcomings of our existing systems. In many aspects of Irish life Ireland is a very centralised country. Nasc has found that the absence of a local statutory agency in Cork to take a lead on issues relating to migrant education means that there is often a lacuna in relation to policy and strategic planning. We recommend that any government plan for education/training should include a decentralised governance structure which can address the specific needs and realities at a local level and can be accessible for all key actors. Such structures would also ensure consistency across the country in terms of policies and provision of a modern education system.

Recommendation 2: Continuation of existing collaborative networks

In the absence of such governance structures organic networks have been established in Cork. This is a very positive development and we recommend that any policy-makers should collaborate with those who already work on the ground and are already aware of the local nuances and realities. Two networks exist in Cork in relation to both Education and Training. One set up under the VEC, concentrates on English language provision and includes a wide range of English language providers. The other was set up by Nasc as part of this strategic policy work and it includes a wide range of actors not all of whom are English language providers. It is appropriate that both networks should continue since English language does require particular attention in its own right, while a concentration only on English language means that broader educational issues may not get discussed. These networks could merge into one. However we believe that there is merit in separate but linked networks so as to ensure that both sets of issues are given appropriate attention and merit. In practice it is very difficult to cover all issues within the time frame of meetings and there are also slightly different actors involved in each network. These networks could be formalised with a clear remit and provide a consultation committee in relation to strategic planning, information provision, implementation and delivery of educational services for migrants in Cork.

Recommendation 3: Provide Leadership

Currently these networks have been providing leadership and the VEC has committed to taking a lead. Although this is much appreciated by all, Nasc believes that the government should establish a decentralised body to lead specifically on migrant education/training. In addition, the VEC has

no particular role in relation to education/training/colleges outside its remit. However, in the clear absence of such a body, we welcome the VEC's leadership and ask other mainstream bodies such as FÁS, the higher education sector, Teagasc and similar bodies to join in taking mainstream leadership. The VEC and other mainstream bodies need to be adequately resourced in order to carry out this work effectively. At present this work is being carried out by the good-will of staff who have other work loads and little resources.

Recommendation 4: Provide Information

NGOs and statutory and voluntary support centres must communicate, cooperate and liaise as information providers to pool and dispense information, resources and knowledge so as to ensure an accurate and dependable advice and information service for migrant adult learners. A quality service and network of providers supported by the Minister for Integration's office should be made available on a regional basis. This action puts the person at the centre of the approach and information cannot be contradicted from place to place if printed by an authoritative source and widely used. Interdepartmental and inter-agency cooperation and communication is vital if good quality information provision is to succeed.

During consultations it was recommended that Nasc should take a lead in relation to information provision. Should Nasc receive funding for this work we are willing to take the lead in the coordination of information provision including web-site coordination. However, in the long run Nasc believes this is the role of a mainstream information provider.

Recommendation 5: Publish a Comprehensive Adult Education Guide for Migrants in Cork

Publish soft and hard copies of a multi lingual education and training services information book for the Cork area based on current eligibility, ancillary services and government policy. Building on the comprehensive analysis done by Ward (2003) and Healy (2007) this publication should provide general and specific information on all aspects of education for adults in the Cork area ranging from literacy to language provision to doctoral degrees and recognition of prior learning. This book should contain definitive and up to date support information for all types of migrant adult learners.

Nasc have already produced such a document and perhaps this could be expanded, published and updated regularly in book and PDF formats in partnership with other stakeholders discussed here. This action would help migrants move away from personal contacts to a standardised and dependable source of information which would be of great use to all stakeholders dealing with migrant education issues on a regular basis. At the moment information provision is ad hoc, and the quality of information often depends on the person contacted.

Having carried out substantive work in this area already, Nasc would be willing to take a lead on this initiative provided funding could be sourced. Ideally, the project could be mainstreamed through a statutory agency such as the Citizens Information Centre.

Recommendations for Further and Higher-Level Educational Institutions (Local and National)

Recommendation 1: Inter-Institutional, Inter-Faculty and Inter-Departmental Cooperation

It is recommended that Higher Education Institutions (HEI) in Cork should join with other actors locally so as to ensure that there is joint planning and cooperation in relation to migrant education and training.

Recommendation 2: Adopt Intercultural and Anti-Racism Policies

It is recommended that all colleges and universities in Cork should adopt intercultural and anti-racism policies. Such policies could include the following:

- General Statement incorporating intercultural and anti-racism principles
- The Aims and Objectives of such a Policy
- The Principles of such a Policy
- Implementation mechanisms
- Organisational structure and responsibility for implementation of the policy
- Provision of information and training on antiracism, interculturalism, rights and entitlements to students and staff
- Development of codes of practice for anti-racism/interculturalism, including penalties for racist policy breaches
- Institutions should create the supporting organisational infrastructure to ensure the implementation of this code of practice

All areas of college/university life need to be taken into account in developing policies and codes of practice e.g.

- All boards, committees and executive
- Student admissions, guidance and support
- Staff recruitment, support and career development
- Research
- Curriculum/teaching/assessment
- Quality Assurance
- Teaching and promotion of Learning
- Data collection and monitoring
- Publicity/Information including signage
- Access/admissions/outreach/student recruitment
- Racial harassment
- Student services, support and student's union

Recommendation 3: Develop Action Plans providing tools, processes and guidelines for the establishment, implementation and monitoring of policy and strategies, including:

Setting and achieving targets and strategic plans that promote diversity in order to facilitate institutions in moving towards a more intercultural environment. Such plans will include an evaluation of the current situation regarding participation of minority ethnic groups, a specific set of targets for participation and attainment, a time frame, actions, implementation mechanisms, resources, a communications plan for staff and students and specific review points to ensure progress. Each department within the institution should be required to produce its intercultural/anti-racism action plan.

More detail on recommendations 2 and 3 can be found in a booklet called “Creating an Intercultural Campus”, published by the Higher Education Equality Unit, UCC, 2002, and written by Mike Fitzgibbon and Gertrude Cotter.

Recommendation 4: Provision of Information to both staff and potential students

One of the key issues arising for potential students is either the lack of information or the lack of knowledge or confusion of migrant rights and entitlements. Each college needs to have a set of clear guidelines in relation to all migrant groups in Ireland, outlining which courses each group may apply for, what grants/fees migrants can apply for and outlining clearly how to apply for courses. Institutions should continue to develop clear and consistent “sign-post” information leaflets and disseminate them widely to all migrant applicants or prospective applicants. Furthermore, these institutions would benefit from good cooperative relationships with language providers in order to help develop integrated and meaningful bridging and language courses for learner development and preparation. Occasionally, a learner who may not be able to afford to attend at specific course, for example, might be able to afford the examination fee if he/she got free or subsidised tuition available elsewhere and then sourced the exam only at the accredited institution.

Recommendation 5: Institutions should introduce clear procedures for the Recognition of Qualifications and Prior Learning (RPL)

Educational institutions should seek to introduce clearly defined RPL procedures which would facilitate greater access to education for migrants. Both the Further Education and Training Awards Council (FETAC) and the NQAI have devised policies and guidelines on RPL.

One simple example of problems in this regard is when a student presents with a degree from a particular country and when that degree is recognised in Ireland only as a Diploma. In the current system in universities in Ireland such a person has to start again at Year 1 and cannot access a degree course at an appropriate level. Nasc, through its cooperation with CIT, is aware of the mechanisms in place in that institution which allows prospective students to enter courses at a higher level or

receive credits for modules to which they are deemed to have achieved the learning outcomes. Nasc strongly urges all of the relevant educational institutions to assess this very important issue for migrants and ensure that a flexible system is in place which is informed by the aforementioned policies of the FETAC and the NQAI.

Recommendation 6: Apply for funds which support migrant education

Education institutions can be pro-active in applying for funding which can help them to support the specific needs of migrants especially those whose language and study skills do not allow them to succeed or even enter access courses.

Recommendation 7: Develop Courses / Modules with a Specific Migrant Focus or Interest

Considering the importance of migration in this country socially, politically, culturally and economically, educational institutions should introduce modules in a variety of courses which focus on migrant rights and issues. All colleges should have anti-racism, diversity, intercultural and equality modules available as modules in all courses no matter what the area, from teaching to medicine to science, and for all staff.

In addition institutions could also introduce courses such as cultural or Irish civic education orientation courses, training courses for service providers for those working with migrants and courses with a “country of origin” content. UCC already has such a programme, with 35 migrants taking it in the 2007/08 academic year. However, funding is soon due to expire for this course.

Recommendation 8: Research and Consultation

The Education sector is in an ideal position to carry out research on all aspects of migrant education/training. We would encourage all departments, research centres and funding departments, within the various educational institutions to consider including research on migrant education/training within their remit.

Recommendations for English Language Provision

Recommendation 1: Develop a Cohesive, Integrated and Professional Service

An overhaul of how a wide variety of language providers fund, allocate, coordinate and deliver language provision is required both locally and nationally with particular focus on the needs of migrants. “The provision of services has been ad-hoc and developed by the providers themselves rather than delivered on the foot of a centrally coordinated strategy.” (Healy, 2007) VECs have provided what they can from various literacy and community education funds intended for other purposes originally. Much progress to date has been led by local management and practitioners

within the terms set down by government policy. Nasc proposes that language providers continue to work together to formulate an improved coordinated response mindful of the needs of linguistic minorities in respect of language learning. As mentioned earlier Nasc would like to see a national and local plan for English language provision incorporated within an overall Education Plan.

In the interim, Nasc would recommend that all who provide English language to think of what is best for the migrant population. It must be questioned if “ad hoc” funds to one project or another are the best way forward for the provision of such a vital service in a city the size of Cork. We would recommend the development of a specific plan to incorporate all aspects of English language provision including:

- Who should provide the service
- Where are the best locations
- Who should fund the service
- Who should apply for funding
- What accreditation systems/curricula will be used
- What are our targets as a city in relation to implementing this strategy
- Where is the best, most professional service
- Who can provide appropriate rooms, language labs, staff and a modern, well resourced service
- What type of qualification is necessary for a teacher of English

In the absence of a Department of Education office to take the lead in this area we would recommend that this plan be developed by the VEC in conjunction with the New Communities Adult Education group who could provide a forum for discussion and planning.

Recommendation 2: The VEC should take a lead in providing classes and in developing standards

Nasc would recommend that all English language provision up to level 5 should take place within VEC colleges, both colleges of further education and community colleges. The reason for this is that we believe that the infrastructure, resources, staff, accreditation systems and expertise already exist within these institutions. Other voluntary or community organisations who have developed an expertise in this area might work with the VEC so as to ensure consistent, professional standards across the city.

It must be noted that there is a tendency to suggest that Basic English be provided by the voluntary sector only. While recognising the expertise within the voluntary sector, it is important that Basic English also be seen as important enough to be mainstreamed and that there are standards and resources available at that level just as much as at other levels.

At present the VEC is best placed to lead on standardising and developing benchmarks for delivery, teaching and assessment across the city. This is so because the Department of Education does not have a local or national unit to deal with issue of migrant education. In addition other agencies or colleges of higher education and training agencies could be responsible for the provision of English language courses aimed at specific professions or courses.

Recommendation 3: Other Education/Training institutes should develop standards at their level, in collaboration with VEC and Education Network

Partnership with English language providers is vital to provide suitable and adequate linguistic support in advance of, or while, studying at an FE college or third-level institution. Cooperation of this nature should be actively encouraged and facilitated to optimise current resource levels in the absence of dedicated multi-annual funding. However, FETAC Level 3 language certification is insufficient for the requirements of FE Colleges in many cases. Collaboration with third-level institutions would ensure the further development of curricula that integrate with and prepare for third-level diploma and degree programmes offered by third-level institutions in Cork. These actions would lead to more efficiency and efficacy for teachers and learners in all types of educational institution.

Recommendation 4: Facilitate and promote easy access and participation

Ensure that the proposed ESOL programme provides “independent assessment and referral to service providers” (Healy, 2007) and that the proposed education unit or forum facilitates such actions. Make attendance of the programmes optional but incentivised in terms of the introduction of any citizenship programme that maybe introduced as a result of the Immigration, Residence and Protection Bill (2008). This would reduce confusion and multiple registrations for existing programmes. It would also result in a better use of resources by improving the consistency of attendance and certification. “Allow all residents aged over 18 with language or orientation needs to attend all or parts of the programme. Ensure that the classes comprise a maximum of 12 people, all of whom have similar needs with regard to English tuition or information.” (Healy, 2007)

Recommendation 5: Curriculum Development

Programme provision needs to be backed up by a coordinated investigation of local and national needs in respect of language provision. Such research and an appropriate response through a combined approach, improved funding allocation and stakeholder participation will serve the needs of migrants. “Determine the duration of courses according to assessment of need and length of stay, with a minimum of six hours of classes per week. It is recommended by stakeholders that we build on curriculum development and continue to improve the inclusion of “the cultures of learners and the local community in the programmes.” (Healy, 2007)

Recommendation 6: Home Tutor and On-Line Programmes

Education providers need to look beyond just the provision of courses in central locations. In order to cater for the widest possible audience plans should include the funding and development of home tutor programmes and on-line or distance learning modules. UCC has recently secured a license, with CIT, for a ‘life-long learning channel’ with a specific brief to focus on diversity and target migrants and minorities. Nasc welcomes this development as a positive example of how new technologies can be used to aid education.

Recommendation 7: Provide Courses during Summertime

English language providers should provide short summer courses in ESOL and computer applications for those migrants seeking to continue to learn English through the summer or those, as many do, who arrive in Ireland during the summer months

Recommendations for the Community & Voluntary Sector

Recommendation 1: Continue to Facilitate Strategic Thinking, Pilots Projects and Planning

NGOs and community organisations working specifically with migrants can sometimes initiate processes which others may not have within their remit. Their independence can be useful. Although they are often lacking in resources, they do have independence to initiate pilot projects and strategic thinking. Nasc recommends that NGOs in Cork might consider their role as facilitators and providers of a certain expertise, but not as replacements for what is the responsibility of mainstream service providers. In this way NGOs also need to be willing to sometimes give up what might be small amounts of funding and small projects in the interests of the overall good. But it also puts responsibility on mainstream providers to provide courses which NGOs are not always best equipped to provide. Nasc would recommend the continuation of the Education, Employment and Enterprise project. Nasc would also encourage other NGOs and community organisations to initiate pilots and processes which also engage with mainstream agencies.

Recommendation 2: Provision of Community Education Courses

Nasc sees the role of the community and voluntary sector as one which provides community education rather than mainstream education provision. Some migrants may feel more comfortable in a community organisation or an organisation working specifically with migrants, as a first starting point. Migrant organisations may also from time to time run courses which respond to a specific need where other institutions may not be in a position to mobilise quickly enough to respond.

Recommendation 3: Advocacy/Campaigning

Some organisations may be in a position to take on an Advocacy/Campaigning role in relation to Education. Nasc would encourage organisations who can do so, either independently or with others, to draw attention to the needs which the voluntary/community sector are seeing on the ground. This sector can be very close to the needs of migrants and can see in detail how peoples' lives are affected by policies, practices and procedures which do not respond to their needs.

Recommendation 4: Commission Research

Likewise the voluntary/community sector can from time to time access funding for research. Sometimes this sector can work effectively with academic departments and researchers and form

useful partnerships bringing together both practical and research skills under one umbrella. Nasc strongly encourages a close working relationship between academic departments, community/voluntary groups and statutory agencies to ensure that valuable resources and skills are utilised in order to serve the community well.

Recommendation 5: Information Provision and Advice

Some organisations within the community/voluntary sector are well placed to provide both information and advice to migrants and service providers. In this way the sector can provide a bridge and develop expertise in the area of migrant education/training.

Recommendation 6: Community/Voluntary Sector should devise strategies to include migrant educational needs within their own organisations

As with the academic and statutory sectors the community/voluntary sector also need to “own” migrant issues. Migrant issues affect people in communities right across Cork and each community and voluntary organisation needs to examine how they can best respond to the education/training needs of migrants within their communities.

Recommendations for Professional & Trade Associations

Recommendation 1: Improve Access to Professions/Trades

Nasc recommends that all self-regulating professional/trade bodies introduce facilities through which migrants can become accredited in Ireland. Many migrants have difficulties accessing certain professions in Ireland due to the absence of procedures through which they can have their qualifications recognised. Where procedures do exist, Nasc recommends that they be improved and streamlined in order to be more flexible.

Recommendation 2: Mentoring

Nasc recommends that governing bodies, trade associations and professional bodies establish professional mentoring programmes to support migrants in establishing prior learning and previously attained qualifications to expedite access to meaningful participation in professional life for eligible migrants.

Recommendation 3: Consultation

Given the Minister for Integration’s strong emphasis on qualifications recognition in a recent press release from an NQAI briefing, perhaps the minister could bring around the table the various professional bodies (regulated and non-regulated) with the various NGOs representing migrants. There is a need to include all qualification holders including trades/crafts and not only the “top layer” professions in any such discussions.

Enterprise

A Way Forward

Promoting ethnic entrepreneurship is an effective tool for integration. Entrepreneurial initiatives can indeed add to the integration process, particularly if the programmes are aimed at encouraging ethnic entrepreneurs to break away from the traditional niche markets they tend to operate in and crossing over to the overall economy. Like in all small and medium enterprise development programmes assistance extended to promote ethnic entrepreneurship needs to embrace all four aspects, awareness raising, creating a conducive policy environment, building up institutions led by energetic management and endowed with qualified staff; but neither will be effective without proper regulations and policies creating a level playing field.

It is against this background that concrete and feasible strategies and actions should be put in place at both the local level in the Cork region, and nationally, to help address barriers to ethnic entrepreneurship. This way the pool of latent entrepreneurial skills within the migrant population could be tapped to ensure maximum benefit to Ireland. It is in this light that the following recommendations and actions are forwarded with the intention of facilitating greater activity in the field of migrant/ethnic entrepreneurship.

In Partnership

Recommendation 1: Promote Migrant Businesses in Cork

There are a number of migrant businesses that are already doing well in the Cork region but would require recognition and showcasing in order to create awareness of them. This would have the two-fold purpose of motivating and encouraging both existing and potential entrepreneurs. It will also demonstrate to the general population and migrants alike the role which new communities are playing in their adopted home. For instance, a local ethnic entrepreneurship competition could be instituted which would go some way to achieving this. Similarly, an initiative such as a local entrepreneurship week including ethnic entrepreneurs could be introduced to create and promote entrepreneurship. The local enterprise boards and local media might consider promoting such an event.

Recommendation 2: Entrepreneurship as a Career

More often than not business start-ups are considered as a last resort even among the larger Irish community. As far as migrants are concerned, entrepreneurship can be seen as a convenient way of overcoming social exclusion and discrimination. This perspective can sometimes couch entrepreneurship in a seemingly negative light. A more positive approach would be to encourage and motivate migrants and the indigenous population alike to consider entrepreneurship as a career similar to all professions rather than a last resort. In fact, as discussed earlier, there is a tendency to

assume that people embark on entrepreneurship when they are economically challenged or maybe when they are losing their jobs. In this light, a more proactive stand on entrepreneurship as a career is the positive message that should be encouraged among ethnic minority entrepreneurs in particular, and in society in general.

Government

Recommendation 1: Remove Barriers to Entrepreneurship

The existing business regulation that requires migrants from outside the EEA (without stamp 4 status) to commit to transfer at least €300,000 to Ireland and to employ at least two EEA nationals in order to set up a business is excessive. The requirement that only non-Irish nationals with a 'Stamp 4' can start a business and/or avail of enterprise development training, advice and support excludes many migrant groups, including entrepreneurial international students and migrant workers, from engaging in entrepreneurialism. This policy would require a significant revision if Ireland is to maximise the latent talents of migrants or potential migrants.

Statutory Agencies

Recommendation 1: Enterprise Development Training and Mentorship

Entrepreneurship is not only about the creation of a new venture but also about a mindset, a way of thinking and doing that is beyond simply managing business that which already exists. Thus, if people understood that entrepreneurship was a way of thinking and of doing, that it was about behaviour that incorporated opportunity recognition, gathering resources, and building a team, then perhaps more people would believe that they were capable of entrepreneurial activity. This can only come about if there were enterprise development training dedicated to migrants in the Cork region. Migrants can be very enterprising and our experience in Nasc is that there is a great deal of interest in establishing small and medium size enterprises. For all potential entrepreneurs, seeking out information in order to fill gaps in their own knowledge is part and parcel of the start-up process. A programme of this nature was recently wound up in Cork. The Emerge programme, supported by the Cork City Enterprise Board and South Cork Enterprise Board in Cork County, provided well-tailored enterprise development training and mentorship to ethnic minorities at pre-enterprise, start-up and growth stages in the Cork region. This programme had to discontinue when the funds provided under the EU Equal initiative ended. This programme was a huge success in terms of providing ethnic entrepreneurs with all the things they needed to run a business in Ireland. Nasc strongly urges that funding for this programme be secured in order for it to continue. If such a programme could be continued it could be of immense benefit to ethnic entrepreneurs especially if they include break out strategies in terms of new opportunities to expand the business and to open to new and non-traditional markets.

Recommendation 2: Address Local Knowledge Gaps

Closely linked to the need for enterprise training is a lack of local knowledge. There is vast evidence which suggests that even where migrants have run businesses prior to arrival in Ireland, lack of local knowledge is a key barrier for them. Local knowledge relates to business jargon and nuances that has have little or nothing to do with language barriers and more to do with cultural idiosyncrasies. The local Emerge programme developed a key module titled: 'What they don't tell you about doing business in Ireland' that begun tackling this barrier. That module was very informative for participants of this programme. Unfortunately, as noted above, this programme came to an abrupt halt following winding up of the programme.

Recommendation 3: Networking

Research suggests that ethnic minority entrepreneurs tend to remain with co-ethnic networks and demonstrate very low levels of participation in mainstream business networks. Both of these factors are generally considered to be detrimental to the growth potential of migrant businesses. The Cork enterprise developing agencies including the local enterprise boards, local employers and business support groups could explore methods of engaging with the ethnic entrepreneurs, in particular by involving them in their networking events.

Recommendation 4: Cork City Development Plan

Cork City Council is currently formulating a development plan which will succeed the current 2004-2009 plan. Nasc urges the city planners to consider an ethnic quarter in the city with an ethnic enterprise centre which would have the two-fold purpose of attracting tourism and providing a vibrant dynamic to the city. This may involve restaurants, arts centres, music and retail. Migrants using this centre might be linked to training courses at local colleges of further and higher education so that people can work, earn a living, gain skills and an accredited qualification at the same time. This would enable adult migrants to overcome financial obstacles to ongoing education. Considerations such as those mentioned in this paragraph might also be kept in mind when planning for the Docklands redevelopment.

Recommendation 5: Innovative Enterprise Models

Enterprise Boards might consider looking at small enterprise models in other parts of the world. For example, in San Francisco a newcomer can immediately rent out a small stall and begin work immediately once they are legally entitled to work. Some stalls have bread making and baking facilities, cater for range of skills and trades, are relatively inexpensive to rent and are aimed at promoting integration and entry to labour force. While such an initiative would not be aimed solely at migrants, Nasc sees great potential in this model for ethnic entrepreneurs.

Recommendation 6: Ideas Bank

One of the great myths of entrepreneurship is that an entrepreneur has to be exceptionally talented or creative in order to find a business idea. If a range of innovative and viable business ideas could be devised, it would make it easy for potential migrant entrepreneurs to explore possibilities. This initiative would benefit by linking in with various training and mentorship programmes. Marketing expertise could also be made available to migrants in order for them to identify possible market opportunities and gain advice and insights into the field of business they are entering. As noted earlier, local knowledge is a key element in the orientation of migrant entrepreneurs. Possible partners for this initiative are enterprise boards, local employer groups, and education and training agencies.

Financial Institutions

Recommendation 1: Funding

One of the key barriers to entrepreneurship the world over is funding. However, it gets more complicated for ethnic entrepreneurs for a number of reasons including: a lack of collateral; their recent arrival in the state and; a lack of awareness on how to navigate through the financial institutions. This results in many of the viable business plans and proposals being abandoned. A way of promoting ethnic entrepreneurship is to address this key barrier. The enterprise boards and financial institutions as well as government institutions could help address this by being proactive in supporting migrant businesses and setting up a revolving fund to make finance more readily available to these groups. In other words, a dedicated ring-fenced funding is needed for ethnic minorities coupled with loan guarantees.

Conclusion

Ireland is fortunate in the sense that it can learn from the mistakes made by other countries that have experienced immigration for a greater number of years e.g. France, UK, USA. The failure on behalf of these countries to facilitate and manage immigration successfully has led to innumerable problems for migrants and the indigenous population alike, not least poverty, social exclusion, ghettoisation and racism. With the publication of this strategy Nasc is calling on the Government to address migrant access to the three key areas of employment, education and enterprise. Nasc feels that measures to effectively tackle these issues will have direct and indirect impacts upon the degree to which integration can be achieved in Ireland.

Cork has a wealth of statutory, community and voluntary organisations working in adult education. This well established and valuable network of providers and practitioners, must act in concert to improve and streamline education services for all migrant clients. They should advocate for widening the remit of all providers where a need is identified and lobby to lift frustrating, unnecessary and counter-productive restrictions on information, access and participation for migrants. These objectives will have to be acted upon in both a local and national context by all stakeholders.

Employers in Cork and Ireland have benefitted greatly from the increased availability of skilled and unskilled labour which immigration has delivered. It is important at this crucial juncture to ensure that migrants are allowed to reach their full potential in terms of career development. This will not only benefit the migrants themselves but also the Irish economy as a whole. Government, employers (both public and private), trade unions and training/educational institutions all have a role to play in providing a suitable environment in which migrants can participate fully in the economy.

Full participation in the economy does not only refer to employment, but also to enterprise. Migrant/ethnic businesses can offer something new to Ireland such as the introduction of new innovations, services and an increased labour demand. If migrants experience barriers when trying to establish a business then Ireland is potentially losing business.

Nasc has produced this strategy in consultation with all of the key stakeholders in Cork. As an organisation working for migrants we are acutely aware of the difficulties they face on a daily basis. It is envisaged that the actions and recommendations in this strategy will offer ways of overcoming these difficulties and thereby provide an environment in which integration can be achieved.

Summary of Strategic Recommendations

The following tables list Nasc’s strategic recommendations which we feel will provide an environment for greater access and participation for migrants in employment, education and enterprise. Where possible, we have directed recommendations towards certain stakeholders e.g. Government and statutory agencies, employers, educational institutions or the community and voluntary sector.

Some recommendations are more suitable for a joint response from a range of stakeholders. In these cases our recommendations are titled “In Partnership”. In this instance, Nasc strongly urges the involvement of all stakeholders including but not limited to: migrant groups, Government, statutory agencies, training agencies, trade unions, employers, business representatives, community/voluntary groups. Possible fora for discussion of such actions may include the consultative committees already established by Nasc or a similar forum arising out of a national or local plan as outlined in our recommendations.

However we would stress that all initiatives being undertaken in the future should be in consultation with existing stakeholders. This will serve not just to avoid duplication but to ensure that experience which has been built up on the ground, is embraced and acknowledged. In some cases projects have begun at local level but they lack funding or resources to carry them through. So for instance statutory agencies may not have to “reinvent the wheel” but may need to resource what is already happening.

Employment

Strategic Actions	Objective
Government and Statutory Agencies	
Develop a Plan for Migrant Employment at a National and Local Level	A comprehensive plan for current and future employment needs of migrants
Continuation of Nasc’s Consultative Committee	Provide a local platform through which migrant employment issues can be discussed
Allow Right to Work for Asylum Seekers	Allow asylum seekers the opportunity to provide for their own welfare
Establish a Bridging Visa Scheme	Allow expired permit holders adequate time to secure further employment
Reduce Employment Permit Cost and Delays	Make it easier for employers to hire migrants who need employment permits

Strategic Actions	Objective
Allow Spouse/Dependents of Permit Holders to Work without a Permit	Allow greater access to employment for spouse/dependents of permit holders
More Resources to Enforce Employment Legislation	Detection and prevention of exploitation and more efficient services in terms of workers seeking redress
Increase Financial Penalties on Employers	Deter employers from exploiting/discriminating against migrants
Greater Access for Non-EEA Workers	Allow for a diverse workforce and one not skewed towards high-skilled migrant workers
Carry out a Migrant Skills Audit	Provide an accurate picture of long-term unemployed migrants
Provide Quality English Language Programmes	Ensure that migrants can improve their language skills while in training
Public Awareness Campaign on the Various Contributions of Migrants in Ireland	Increase awareness among the general public of the advantages of immigration

Strategic Actions	Objectives
Employers	
Establish an Employer Network	Provide a forum where employers can share information and provide support on all aspects of hiring migrant workers
Introduce Mentoring/Peer Networking Schemes	Assist migrants in finding work appropriate to their skill level
Devise Diversity/Equal Opportunities Policies	Ensure migrants are afforded equal status and are free from discrimination and racism
Diversity/Equality Mark	Highlight employers who represent models of good practice in terms of diverse workplaces

Strategic Actions	Objectives
In Partnership	
Migrant Employment Consultation Committee	To provide a platform to discuss and plan for all issues pertaining to migrants in the workplace
Personal and Community Advocacy	Provide one-to-one support and advice for migrants with regard to employment issues
Publish Factsheets on Migrant Rights	Increase awareness among migrants of their rights and entitlements in employment
Increased Translation and Language Support	Support language needs of migrants in order for them to access employment
Set up Jobs Clubs	Provide job-seeking skills to migrants
Produce Statistics	Adequately plan for future/ projected migrant needs
Compile a Database of Employment Support Services	Increase awareness among migrants of available employment supports
Promotion of Skills and Experience of Migrants	Increase awareness among employers of the high levels of skill and experience among migrants
Introduce Training for Service Providers	Ensure that service providers can deal effectively with the specific needs of migrants
Increase Training Opportunities	Allow migrants easy access to appropriate training/up-skilling courses
Publish a Local Business Directory	Allow migrants to target employers in sectors which they are trained/ qualified in

Enterprise

Strategic Actions	Objectives
In Partnership	
Promote Local Migrant Businesses	Increase awareness of positive impact of migrant entrepreneurship
Promote Entrepreneurship as a Career	Increase employment opportunities for migrants
Initiate Cork Enterprise Week	Raise awareness among migrants of enterprise as a career

Strategic Actions	Objectives
Introduce Enterprise Development Training and Mentorship	Provide the necessary tools and skills for migrants to set up businesses
Address Local Knowledge Gaps	Provide migrants with a grounding in the culture of enterprise and business in Ireland
Greater Facilitation of Networking	Allow migrants access to networking opportunities with established enterprises
Explore Innovative Enterprise Models	Provide new avenues whereby migrants can exploit business opportunities
Create an Ideas Bank	Increase availability of viable business options/prospects
Government and Statutory Agencies	
Remove Barriers to Entrepreneurship	Make it easier for migrants and prospective migrants to establish a business
Reinstate the Emerge Programme	Continue the successful programme which specifically targeted migrant entrepreneurs
Introduce Ring-Fenced Funding	Dedicated funding for ethnic entrepreneurs
Local Planning Innovations	Provide dedicated spaces for ethnic entrepreneurship
Establish a One-Stop-Shop 'Ethnic Business Centre'	Provide a central location for migrants for all queries on establishing a business
Financial Institutions	
Greater Access to Funding	Allow migrants greater access to credit facilities

Education

Strategic Actions	Objectives
Government and Statutory Agencies at a National Level	
Develop a National Education and Training Plan	A comprehensive plan for current and future educational needs of migrants
Devise a Clear Governance Structure	A decentralised education and training governance structure which can respond to needs at a local level
Increase Funding and Resources	Provide adequate funding for planning, delivery, curriculum development, evaluation and monitoring of education and training provision
Prioritise English Language Tuition	Increase availability of quality, affordable English language tuition for migrants

Strategic Actions	Objectives
Improved Information Provision	Provide a clear and concise understanding of educational entitlements for each category of migrant
Improved Recognition of Qualifications	Speed up process whereby a migrant can have their qualification recognised
Revise Grant Schemes	Provide greater financial support to migrants who wish to enter education
Reassess Policy towards Asylum Seekers	Allow asylum seekers greater access to educational opportunities
Promote Workplace Learning	Allow migrants the opportunity to access training while at work
Government and Statutory Agencies at a Local Level	
Establish a Local Education Authority	Provide a formal platform for discussion and planning of migrant education needs
Continue Existing Networks	Provide a forum for discussion and planning of migrant education needs
Improve Information Provision	Standardise the information available to migrants to avoid conflict/confusion
Publish Comprehensive Guide	Locate all relevant information in one easily accessible document/location
Further and Third Level Institutes	
Increased Cooperation	Ensure joint planning and cooperation in relation to migrant education and training
Adopt Intercultural and Anti-Racism Policies	Foster great diversity in educational institutions
Develop Action Plans	Address barriers to access to education for migrants
Information Provision	Improve the quality of information available to migrants in terms of their educational opportunities
Introduce RPL	Permit greater access to education for migrants who have prior learning/experience
Explore Alternative Funding Sources	Increase availability of courses/training which meet specific needs of migrants
Develop Courses Which Address Migration	Increase awareness of migrant issues among indigenous and migrant population
Continue Research and Consultation	Provide the basis for future planning and policy on migrant education

Strategic Actions	Objectives
English Language Providers	
Develop a Cohesive, Integrated and Professional Service	Ensure migrants can access quality and affordable English language tuition
Leadership in English Language Provision	Ensure English language provision is coordinated effectively and standards are maintained
Increase Standards of Other English Language Providers	Ensure quality English language tuition at the required standards is available to migrants
Promote Access and Participation	More efficient use of resources and increase migrant attendance/participation
Explore Home Tutor/Online Programmes	Cater for a wider audience and use IT to a greater extent to deliver courses
Introduce Summertime Courses	Allow migrants to learn during the summer months
Community/Voluntary Sector	
Facilitate Strategic Thinking	Highlight gaps and overlaps in current education provision and suggest improvements
Provide Community Education Courses	Provide community education outside of mainstream educational institutions
Continue with Campaigning/ Advocacy	Highlight problematic areas and lobby for change in regulations/procedures
Conduct Research	Inform policy positions and highlight needs/issues
Provide Information	Provide information and referral services on all matters concerning education
Professional/Trade Associations	
Improve Access to Professions/ Trades	Provide clear mechanisms whereby qualified migrants can practice in their chosen profession/trade in Ireland
Introduce Mentoring Schemes	Support migrants to establish their prior learning and skills in order to access employment in their chosen field
Engage in Consultation with Relevant Stakeholders	Provide a forum where all stakeholders can raise concerns around recognition of qualifications

Appendix

References

AIB Global Treasure Economic Research (2006) *Non-National Workers in the Irish Economy*. Dublin: AIB.

Amnesty International(Irish Section) and the International Human Rights Network (2006) *Our Rights, Our Future: Human Rights Based Approaches in Ireland: Principles, Policies & Practice*, Dublin: Amnesty International

Barrett, A. (2006) "What We Know and What We Don't Know about Immigration in Ireland", Labour Relations Commission Review, Issue 1.

Barrett, A. and Duffy, D. (2006) "A Note on the Educational Profile and Occupational Attainment of Immigrants in Ireland", in Barrett, A., I. Kearney and Y. McCarthy (eds.) *Quarterly Economic Commentary*, Autumn, ESRI

Barrett, A. and McCarthy, Y. (2006) *An Analysis of Immigrant Earnings and Welfare Usage in Ireland*. Dublin, ESRI.

Barrett, A. and McCarthy, Y. (2006) *Immigrants in a Booming Economy: Analysing their Earnings and Welfare Dependence*, Discussion Paper Series, Forschungs Institut zur Zukunft der Arbeit (IZA) Institute for the Study of Labour, ESRI

Barrett, A., Beryin, A., Duffy, D. (2006) "The Labour Market Characteristics and Labour Market Impacts of Immigrants in Ireland," *Economic and Social Review*, 37, 4 – 34.

Barrett, A., J. FitzGerald and B. Nolan (2002) "Earning Inequality, Returns to Education and Immigration into Ireland", *Labour Economics* Vol. 9, No. 5

Banks, J.A. (1994) *An Introduction to Multicultural Education*, Cambridge MA: Cambridge UP.

Beller, M. (1995) "Admission to Higher Education: Current Dilemmas and Proposed Solutions," in: Kellaghan, T. (ed.), *Admission to Higher Education: Issues and Practice*, Dublin: International Association for Educational Assessment, 25-37.

Bennet, C. (2001) "Genres of Research in Multicultural Education," *Review of Educational Research*, 71/2.

Better, S. (2002) *Institutional Racism. A Primer on Theory and Strategies for Social Change*, Oxford: Rowman.

Borjas, G. J. (1993) "Immigration, Ethnic Identity and Assimilation: The Intergenerational Transmission of Immigrant Skills" in Giersh Herbert (ed.) *Economic aspects of international migration*, Berlin: Springer-Verlag.

British Council et al (2007) *Migrant Integration Policy Index*, Brussels: BC & MPG.

Burtenshaw Kenny & Associates (2003) *A Study of Diversity and Equality in Employment in Blanchardstown, Executive Summary* Dublin: Blanchardstown Employment Diversity and Equality Project.

Byrne, C. (2006) "Demand for foreign qualifications recognition increases 800%: a key issue for migrant workers in Ireland," National Qualifications Recognition Conference, Dublin, 25 April 2006.

Canadian Apprenticeship Forum (2004) *Accessing and Completing Apprenticeship Training in Canada. Perception of Barriers Experienced by Recent Immigrants*, Toronto: CAF.

Central Statistics Office (2004) *Quarterly National Household Survey, Quarter 4 2004*. Central Statistics Office.

Central Statistics Office (2005) *EU Survey on Income and Living Conditions (EU-SILC)*, Dublin: Central Statistics Office Website.

Central Statistics Office (2007) *Census 2006*, Dublin: Central Statistics Office.

Central Statistics Office (2007a) *Foreign Nationals: PPSN Allocations and Employment, 2002-2006*, Dublin: Central Statistics Office.

Central Statistics Office (2008) *Quarterly National Household Survey, Quarter 4, 2007*. Dublin: Central Statistics Office.

Coghlan, D. et al. (2005) *International Students and Professionals in Ireland. An analysis of Access to Higher Education and Recognition of Professional Qualifications*, Dublin: Integrating Ireland.

Cole, A. H. (1959) *Business Enterprise in its Social Setting*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Collins, A. (2002) *The Needs of Asylum Seekers in Cork*, Cork: Nasc.

Conger S. and Bezanson, L. (1996) *Review of Credential Assessment Services in Canada. Report prepared for the Departments of Canadian Heritage, Citizenship and Immigration, and Human Resources Development*, Ottawa: The Canadian Guidance and Counselling Foundation.

Conroy, P. and Brennan A. (2003) *Migrant Workers and Their Experiences*. Dublin: Equality Authority.

Cork City Partnership (2007) *Intercultural Toolkit for the Cork Workplace*, Cork: Cork City Partnership.

Cotter, G. (2005) *A Guide to Published Research on Refugees, Asylum-Seekers and Immigrants in Ireland*, Dublin: Integrating Ireland.

Couldry, N. (2000) *Inside Culture. Re-imagining the Method of Cultural Studies*, London, Sage.

Denayer, W. and O'Tuama, S. (2008) *Social exclusion and informal employment as a survival strategy of immigrants in deprived neighbourhoods of the city of Cork*, UCC and Cork City Council.

Department of Education and Science (2000) *White Paper on Adult Education: Learning for Life*, Dublin: Government Stationary Office.

Department of Education and Science Education & Science (2007) *Agreed Programme for Government Progress Report April 2007*, http://193.178.1.117/attached_files/RTF%20files/EducationAndScienceProgress07.rtf

Department of Foreign Affairs (2004) *Information Leaflet Concerning Working Visas/Work Authorizations for Employment in Ireland*, Dublin, DoF, Validation and Registration Procedures Section.

Dunbar, P., Connolly, F., Egan, M. A., Moynihan, K. (2008) *Evaluating the Barriers to Employment and Education for Migrants in Cork*, Cork: Nasc.

Ecotec (2005) *The Metropolitan City: Seeking Competitive Advantage through Local Actions to Integrate Immigrants and Minority Groups*, Birmingham: Ecotec.

Enterprise Strategy Group (2004) *Ahead of the Curve: Ireland's Place in the Global Economy*, Dublin: Forfás.

Equality Authority (2006) *Annual Report*. Dublin: Equality Authority.

EU Education and Culture (2007) "European Guidelines for the Validation of Non Formal and Informal Learning," *Paper for the Conference 'Valuing Learning: European experiences in validating non-formal and informal learning*, Lisbon, 26 November 2007.

European Business Test Panel (2005) *Report on Workplace Diversity and Non-Discrimination, Summary Report*. (Available at www.ec.europa.eu/yourvoice/ebtp/docs/execsummary_ebtp_workplace_en.pdf).

European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia (2003) *Migrants, Minorities and Employment: Exclusion, Discrimination and Anti-Discrimination in 15 Member States of the European Union*. Vienna: EUMC.

European Union (1992) *Articles 48-60 of the Treaty of the European Union*, European Union.

FÁS (2007) *Quarterly Labour Market Commentary: 1st Quarter 2007*. (Available at www.fas.ie)

FÁS (2007) *Irish Labour Market Review*. Dublin: FÁS.

First Step Microfinance (2007) *Immigrant Micro-Entrepreneurs in Ireland in 2006*, Dublin: First Step Microfinance.

Galvin, T. (2000) "Refugee Status in Exile: The Case of African Asylum-seekers in Ireland," in MacClachlan, M, O'Connell, M. (eds.), *Cultivating Pluralism. Psychological, Social and Cultural Perspectives on a Changing Ireland*, 175- 198, Dublin: Oak Tree Press.

Gilbert, N. (2004) *Transformation of the Welfare State. The Silent Surrender of Public Responsibility*, Oxford, Oxford UP.

Gray, B. (2006) "Migrant Integration Policy: A Nationalist Fantasy of Management and Control?," *Translocations. The Irish Migration, Race and Social Transformation Review*, 1.

Gouch, P. (1984) "Location Theory and Multi-Plant Firm: A Framework for Empirical Studies", *Canadian Geographer*, XXVIII, 2.

Healy, C (2007) *On Speaking Terms: Introductory and Language Programmes for Migrants in Ireland*, Dublin: Immigrant Council of Ireland.

Hirschmeier, J. (1971) "The Origins of Entrepreneurship in Meiji Japan" in P. Kilby (ed.), *Entrepreneurship and Economic Development*, New York: The Free Press.

Hyland, M. (2005) *Migrant Workers and Their Access to the Statutory Dispute Resolution Agencies*. Dublin: Labour Relations Commission.

IBEC (2005) *Immigration and Residence in Ireland, Submission to The Department of Foreign Affairs*, Dublin: IBEC.

Immigrant Council of Ireland (2003) *Labour Migration to Ireland*. Dublin: Immigrant Council of Ireland.

Immigrant Council of Ireland (2005) *Background Information and Statistics on Immigration to Ireland*, Dublin: ICI.

Integrating Ireland et al (2007) *Information Leaflet on the Immigration, Residence and Protection Bill*, Multiple Agency.

Iredale, R. (1988) *Wasted Skills. Barriers to Migrant Entry to Occupations in Australia*, Sydney: Ethnic Affairs Commission of New South Wales.

Kelly, O. (2003) *An Analysis of the Irish Response to the Growing Number of Asylum Applications with particular reference to Policing, Citizenship, Work and Racism*, unpublished MA thesis, UCC, Dept. Food Business and Development.

Lamontagne, F. (2003) *Food for Thought. Workers Educated Abroad: Seduction and Abandonment*, Ottawa: Canadian Labour and Business Centre.

Lentin, R (ed.) (2003) *Working and Teaching in a Multicultural University. Proceedings of a workshop held in Trinity College, Dublin, 16 November, 2002.*

Li, P. (2000) 'Earnings disparities between Immigrants and Native-Born Canadians,' *Canadian Review of Sociology and Anthropology*, 37, 3, 289-311.

Lynch, K. (2006) "Neo-liberalism and Education," Healy, S. Reynolds, B., Collins, M. (eds.), *Social Policy in Ireland. Principles, Practice and Problems*, Dublin: Liffey Press, 297-328.

MacÉinrí, P., and P. Walley (2003) *Labour Migration into Ireland*, Dublin: Immigrant Council of Ireland.

Marger, M. N. (1989) "Business Strategies Among East Indian Entrepreneurs in Toronto: The Role of Group Resources and Opportunity Structure." *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, Vol. 12 no. 4 pp. 539-563.

Mavratsad, C. N. (1997) "Conventional Approaches to the Study Immigrant and Ethnic Enterprise: The Structuralist Bias and a Culturalist Reformation." *Journal of Business and Society*, Vol 10, No. 1.

Meehan, A. (2007) 'Entrepreneurial Culture is Thriving in Ireland, Assisted by the Recent Influx of Enterprise-Minded Immigrants,' Dublin: The Sunday Business Post [11/3/07]

Migrant Rights Centre Ireland & National Consultative Committee on Racism and Interculturalism (2007) *Challenging Myths about Migrant Workers and their Families*. Dublin: MRCI & NCCRI.

Migrant Rights Centre Ireland (2007) *Realising Integration: Migrant Workers Undertaking Essential Low-Paid Work in Dublin City*. Dublin: Migrant Right Centre Ireland.

Monks, K. (2007) *The Business Impact of Equality & Diversity, The International Evidence*. Dublin: The Equality Authority and National Partnership & Performance.

MRCI (2007) *Realising Integration: Migrant Workers Undertaking Essential Low-Paid Work in Dublin City*. Dublin: Migrant Centre Rights Ireland.

Mulligan, G. F. and Reeves, R. W. (1983) "The Theory of the Firm: Some Spatial Implications," *Urban Geography*, Vol. 4, no. 32, pp.156-72.

Murtagh et al (2000) An IVEA Working Report, *Pilot Framework for Educational Provision for Asylum Seekers, Refugees and Minority Linguistic Groups*, IVEA
National Consultative Committee on Racism and Interculturalism (NCCRI) Bulletin, February, 2008

National Consultative Committee on Racism and Interculturalism (NCCRI) *Planning For Diversity: The National Action Plan Against Racism 2005 – 2008* <http://www.nccri.ie/pdf/ActionPlan.pdf>

National Health Service (Greater Glasgow and Clyde), 2006, *Pre-WHIGG Refugee Pilot Programme. December 2005 – January 2006*, Project Report. Glasgow: NHS.

National Skills Conference: *Skills in Ireland*, Farmleigh House, 26th October 2006, Reflections Paper

National Social and Economic Development Office (2006) *Migration Policy*, Dublin: National Economic and Social Council Report.

NCCRI (2005) "NCCRI Submission to the Immigration and Residence Discussion Document"
<Accessible at www.nccri.ie/policy-submissions.html#2005>

Ni Mhurchu, A. (2007) *Recognition of Professional Qualification: An Analysis of the Role of Professional Bodies*, Dublin: Integrating Ireland.

NQAI (2006) *Policies and Criteria for the Inclusion in, or Alignment with, the National Framework of Qualifications of the Awards of Certain Awarding Bodies*, Dublin: National Qualifications Authority of Ireland.

NQAI (2004) *National Policy Approach to the Recognition of International Awards in Ireland*, Dublin: NQAI.

NQAI (2003) *Awards and Qualifications – A Survey of Learners and Employers*, Dublin: National Qualifications Authority of Ireland.

----- (2007) *National Plan For Social Inclusion 2007-2016*, Dublin: Government Publications Office.

O'Brien, S. O'Fathaigh, M. (2007) *Key Aspects of Learning Partnerships for Social Inclusion. Exploring Lifelong Learning Contexts, Issues and Approaches*, New Oak Press, Cork.

Organisation For Economic Co-Operation And Development (2006) *Education at a Glance*, www.oecd.org/dataoecd/44/35/37376068.pdf

O'Regan, C. (2000) "Immigration and Resettlement in Ireland: Planning Services, Supporting People," in MacLachlan, M, O'Connell, M. (eds.), *Cultivating Pluralism. Psychological, Social and Cultural Perspectives on a Changing Ireland*, 199-218, Dublin: Oak Tree Press.

Owusu-Ansah, W. and Fleming, P. (2004) "Educating for Enterprise: Assessing the Impact of Entrepreneurship Education in Ghana", *Conference Proceedings of the EFMD 34th Entrepreneurship, Innovation and Small Business (EISB)*, Finland

Owusu-Ansah, W.A. (2005) *The Impact of Entrepreneurship Education on Career Intentions and Decisions at Tertiary Educational Level in Ireland and Ghana*, PhD Thesis: University of Limerick.

Razin, E. (1991) *Social Networks, Local Opportunities Among Immigrants: The Israeli Experience in an International Perspective*, Unpublished paper.

Redekop, C., Ainlay, S.C and Siemens R. (1995) *Mennonite Entrepreneurs*, Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press.

Reitz, J.G. (1998) 'Measuring Down', in Davies, C. (ed.), *Post 2000. Business Wisdom for the Next Century*, Toronto: Key Porter, 157-163.

Reitz, J.G. (2004) 'Immigration and Canadian Nation-Building in the Transition to a Knowledge Economy', in Cornelius, J., Hollifield, J, Martin, P., (eds.), *Controlling Immigration. A Global Perspective*, Palo Alto: Stanford University Press.

Ruhs, M. (2005) *Managing the Immigration and Employment of Non-EU Nationals in Ireland*. Dublin: The Policy Institute, Trinity College Dublin.

Rutter, J. (1999) *Refugee Children in the UK*, Berkshire: Open University Press.

Sleeter, C. E. (2005) *Approaches to Multicultural Education*, New York: Routledge.

Small Business Forum (2006) *Small Business is Big Business*, Dublin: Forfas.

Song, B. (1997) *The Rise of Korean Economy*, Hong Kong: Oxford University Press.

Stalker, P. (2001) *No-Nonsense Guide to International Migration*. London: New Internationalist.

Steering Committee For National Consultation (2006) *Verification of Compatibility of Irish National Framework of Qualifications with the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area*, Dublin: Report of Steering Committee for National Consultation.

Stewart, J. (2007) National Adult Literacy Agency Spring Journal: *Need for immediate dialogue and planning to realize the goals set out in national policy for adult literacy*. Dublin: NALA

Timmermans, H. (1986) "Locational Choice Behaviour of Entrepreneurs: An Experimental Analysis", *Urban Studies*, no. 23, pp. 231-240.

Torres, C. A. (1998) *Democracy, Education, and Multiculturalism. Dilemmas of Citizenship in a Global World*, Oxford: Roman and Littlefield.

Waldinger, R., Aldrich, H., Ward, R. and Associates (1990) *Ethnic Enterprise: Immigrant Business in Industrial Societies*, London: SAGE.

Wall, M. (4th July, 2007) 'Some migrants earn 31% less', Dublin: The Irish Times.

Ward, T. (2003) *Immigration & Residence in Ireland: An Overview for Education Providers*, City of Dublin Vocational Education Committee (CDVEC) in association with County Dublin VEC

Web Resources

<http://www.dochas.ie/documents/Head2Head.pdf>

<http://www.heai.ie>

<http://www.literacy.lancs.ac.uk/rapal/>

<http://www.nala.ie/faq/>

Statistics

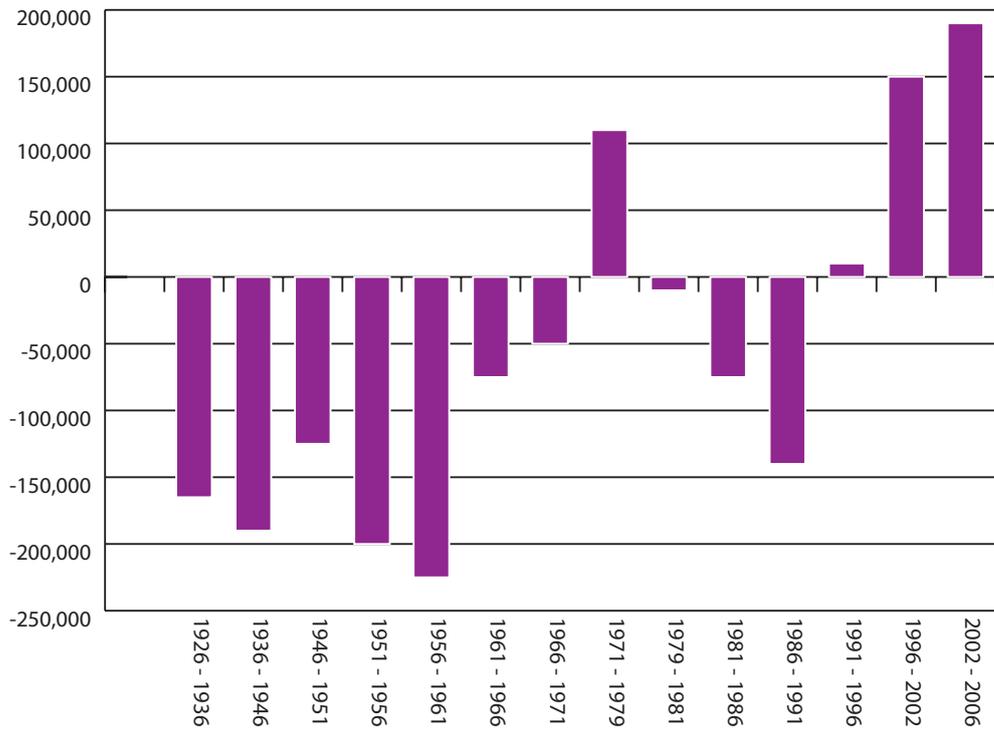
General Population Statistics

The following statistics are illustrative of the level of inward migration into Ireland. Figures which are specific to Cork or Munster are given where possible. There is a difficulty in relation to assessing the number of people in Ireland within specific categories. For example, the census does not count the number of refugees living in Ireland. There are also obvious difficulties with arriving at estimates for the number of people in Ireland who may, for whatever reason, be undocumented.

Population by Nationality 2006

Nationality	Total
Irish	3,706,683
Non-Irish	419,733
UK	112,548
Rest of EU	163,227
Rest of Europe	24,425
Africa	35,326
Asia	46,952
America	21,124
Other Nationalities	16,131
Not-stated, including no-nationality	45,597
Total	4,172,013

Estimated Net Migration for Ireland and Munster (1926-2006)²⁸

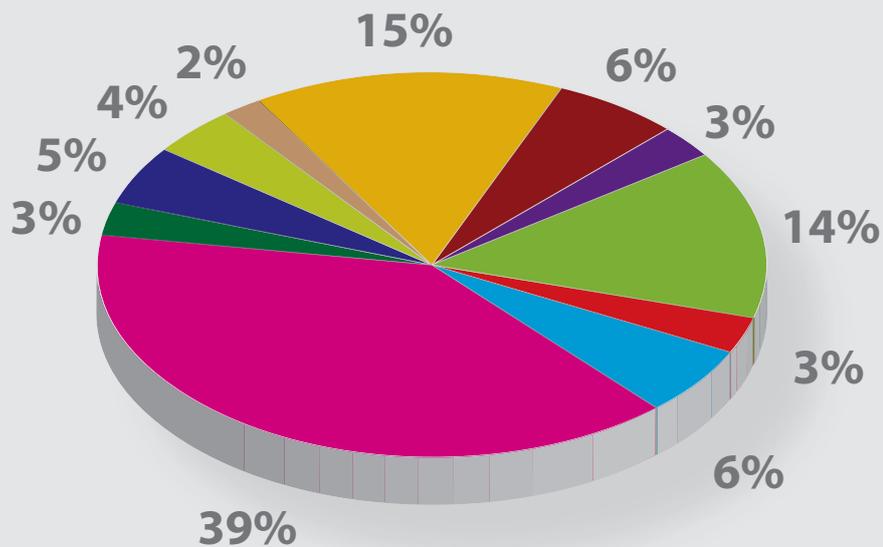


Estimate Net Migration in Munster (1926 - 2006)



²⁸ These charts were produced based on the data extrapolated from Table 1 in Volume 4 of the CSO's 2006 Census.

Birthplace of People in Cork (City And County) Who Were Not Born in the Republic of Ireland²⁹

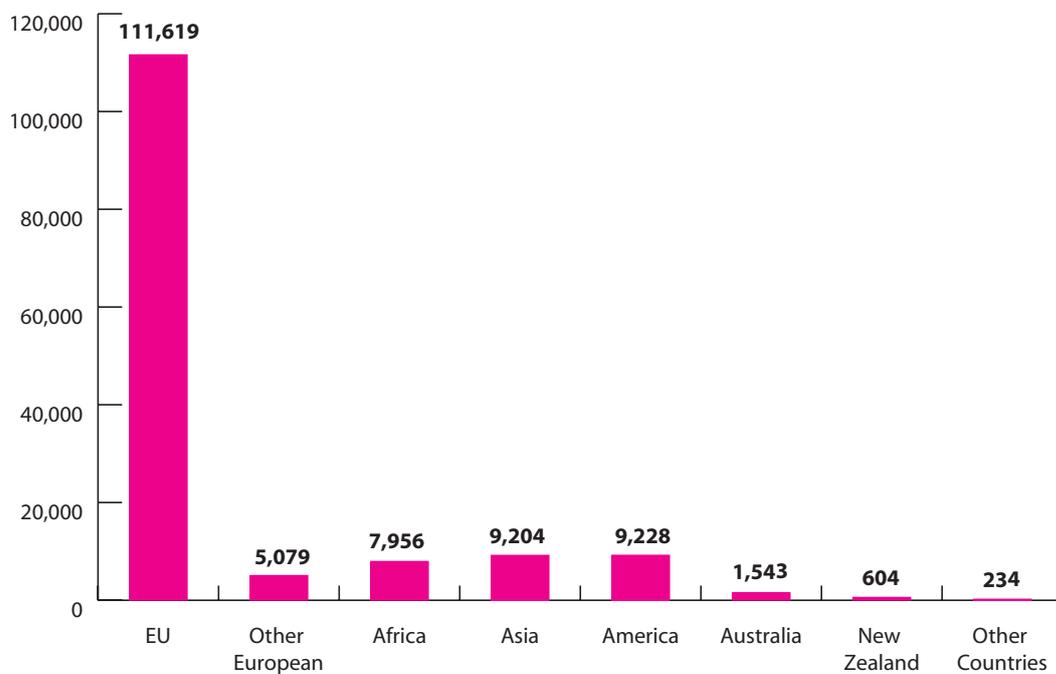


29 These charts were produced based on the data extrapolated from Table 28A in Volume 4 of the CSO's 2006 Census.

People Living in Cork City Who Are Not From County Cork, By Place of Birth³⁰



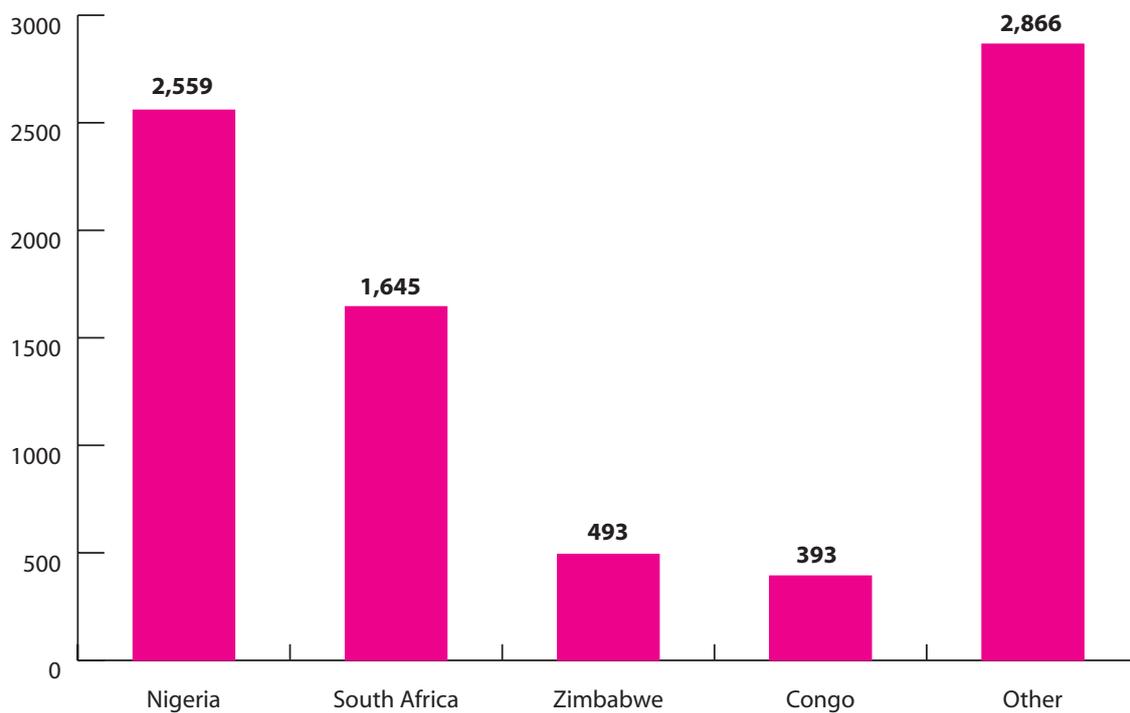
Birthplace of People Usually Resident in Munster, By Region³¹



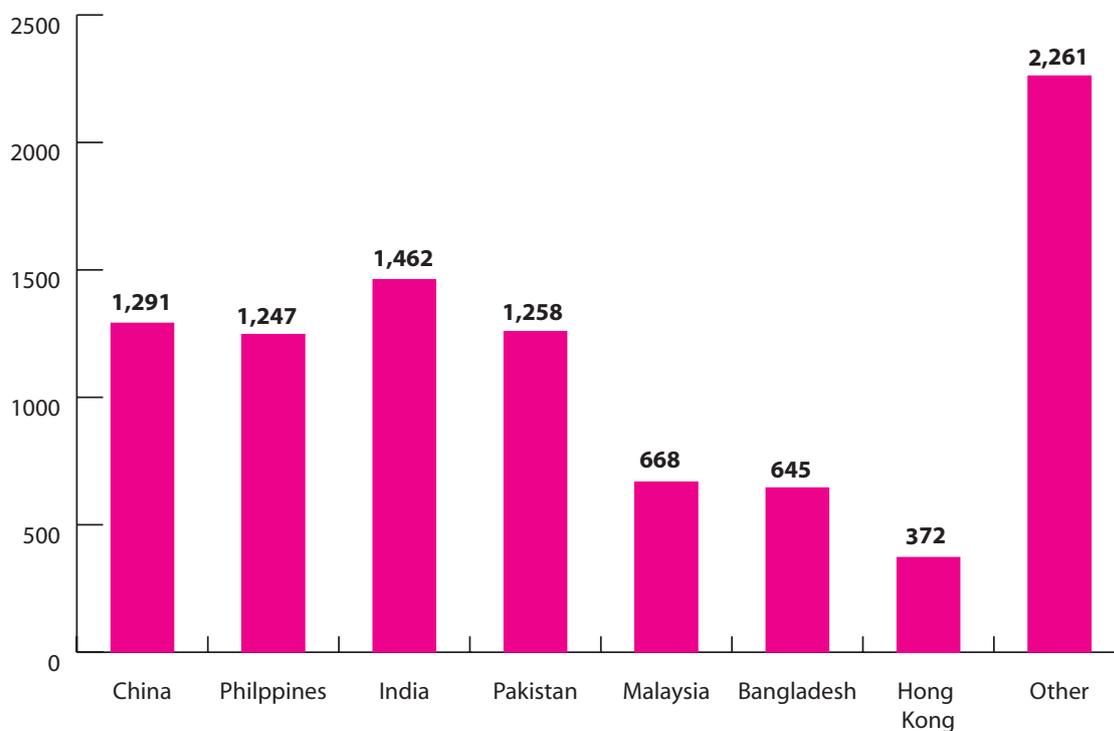
³⁰ This chart is based on data extrapolated from Table 33 in Volume 4 of the CSO's 2006 Census.

³¹ This chart is based on data extrapolated from Table 29A in Volume 4 of the CSO's 2006 Census.

People Living in Munster Who Were Born in Africa, By Country of Birth³²



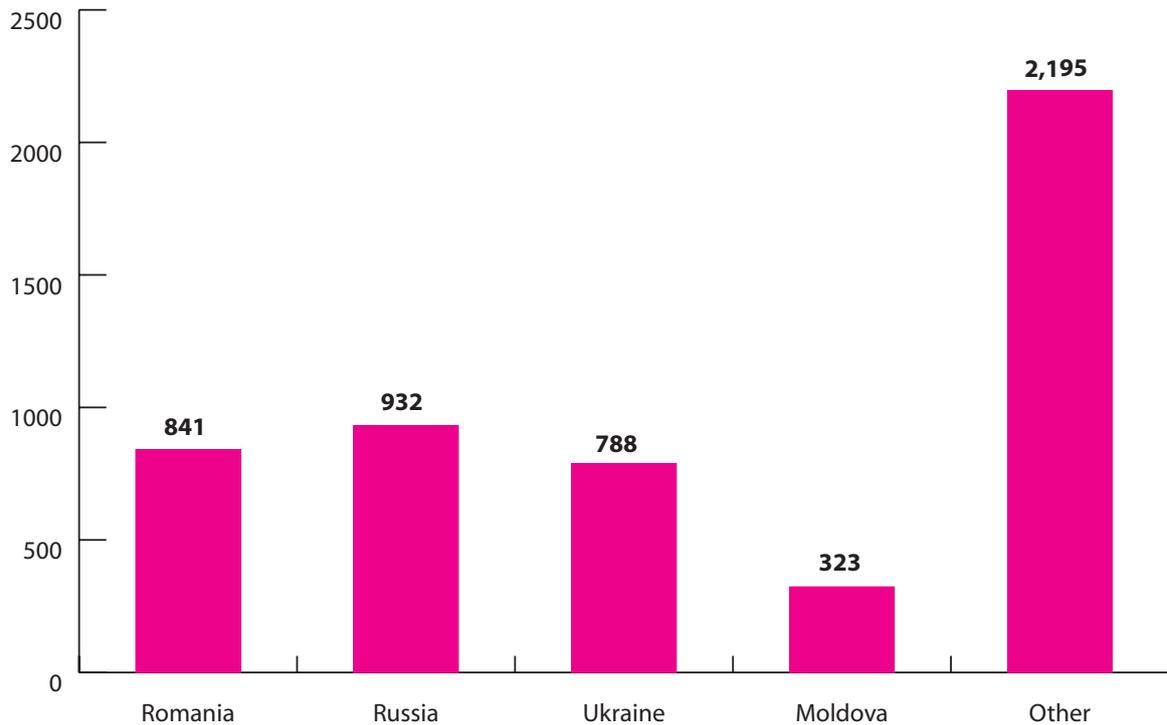
People Living in Munster Who Were Born in Asia, By Country of Birth³³



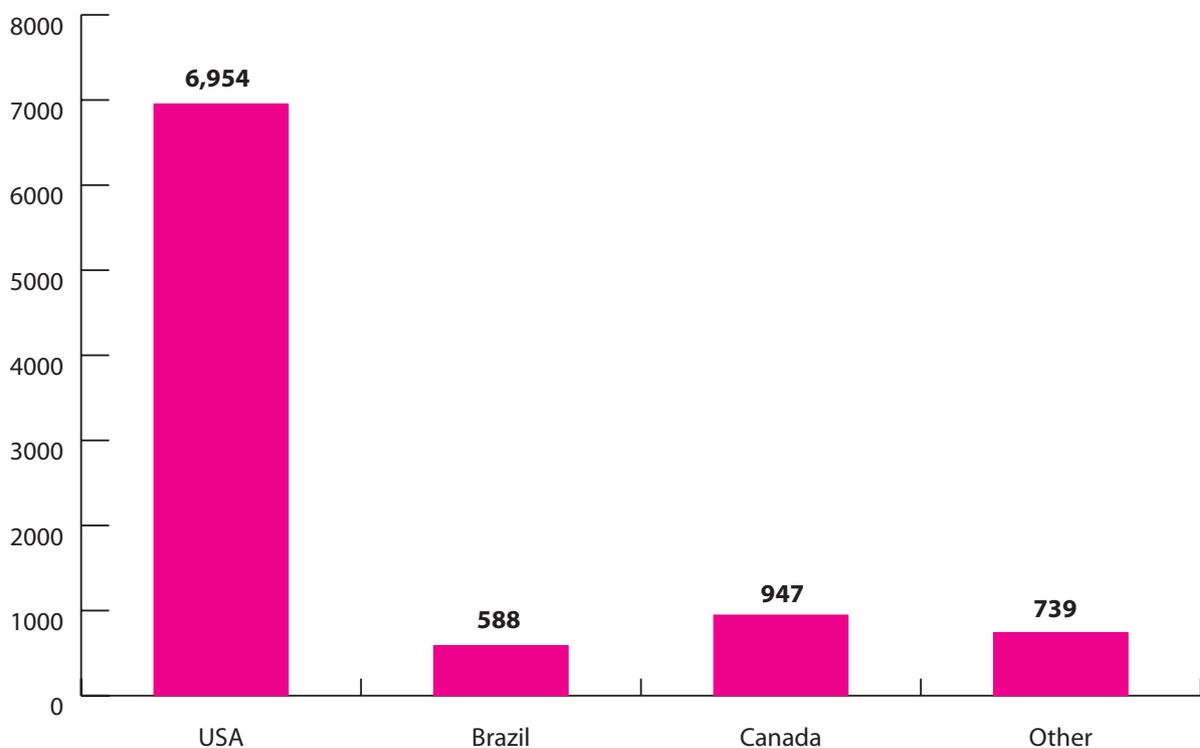
³² This chart is based on data extrapolated from Table 29A in Volume 4 of the CSO's 2006 Census.

³³ This chart is based on data extrapolated from Table 29A in Volume 4 of the CSO's 2006 Census.

People Living in Munster Who Were Born in Non-EU European Countries, By Country of Birth³⁴



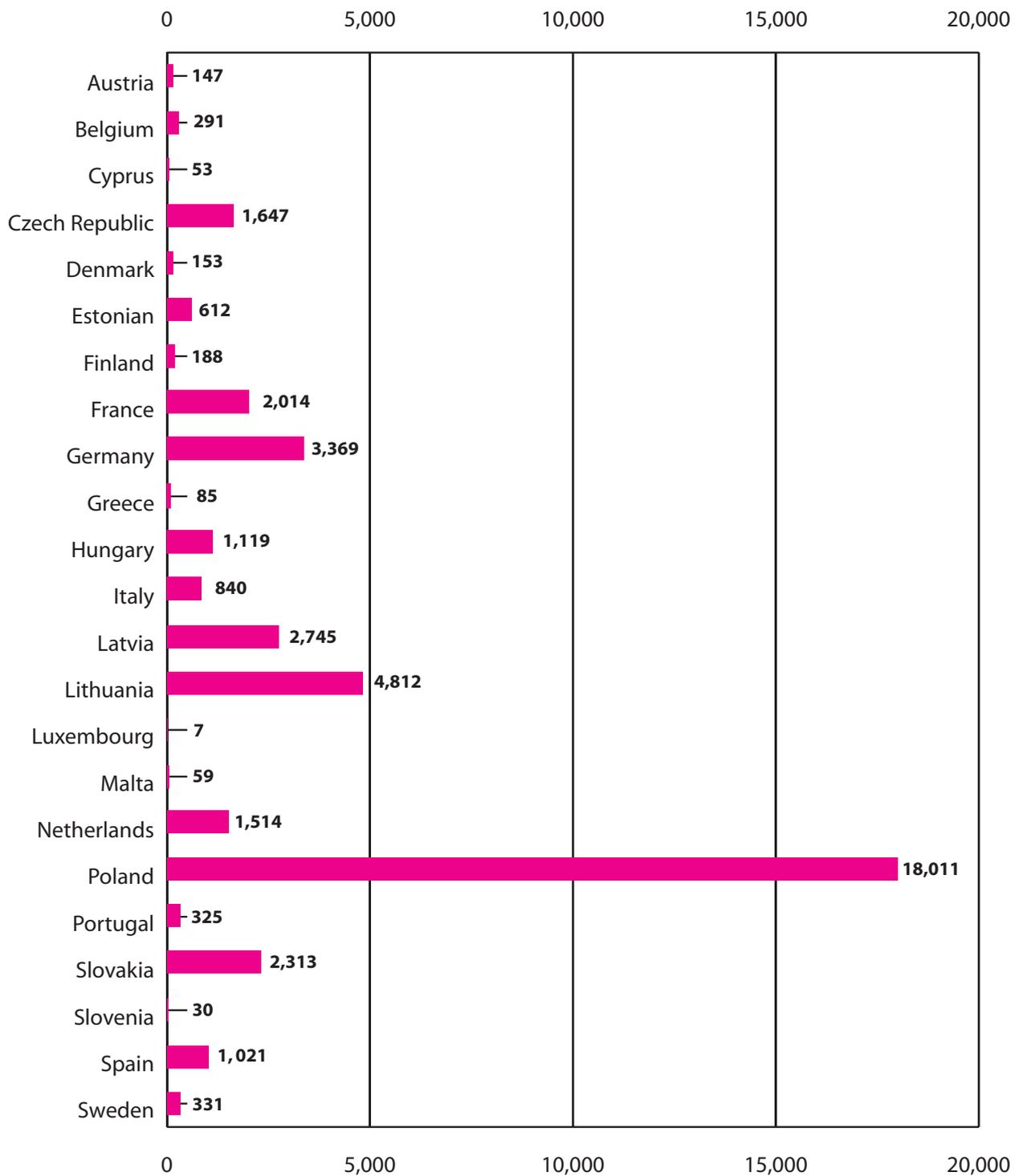
People Living in Munster Who Were Born in the Americas, By Country of Birth³⁵



³⁴ This chart is based on data extrapolated from Table 29A in Volume 4 of the CSO's 2006 Census.

³⁵ This chart is based on data extrapolated from Table 29A in Volume 4 of the CSO's 2006 Census.

People Living in Munster Who Were Born in Another EU Country, By Country of Birth³⁶



³⁶ This chart is based on data extrapolated from Table 29A in Volume 4 of the CSO's 2006 Census.

Work Permits by County

County/ Country	New Permits	Renewals	Group	Issued	Refused
	10134	13457	13	23604	2342
Antrim	3	2	0	5	0
Armagh	0	1	0	1	1
Belfast	0	4	0	4	1
Carlow	69	126	0	195	28
Cavan	59	316	0	375	23
Clare	139	332	0	471	35
Cork	633	891	0	1524	191
Derry	0	1	0	1	0
Donegal	141	178	0	319	47
Down	11	1	4	16	1
Dublin	5435	6093	9	11537	1124
Fermanagh	1	0	0	1	0
Galway	370	606	0	976	109
Kerry	112	249	0	361	38
Kildare	1200	1082	0	2282	141
Kilkenny	70	161	0	231	30
Laois	75	84	0	159	15
Leitrim	25	49	0	74	7
Limerick	303	412	0	715	84
Longford	30	47	0	77	15
Louth	120	193	0	313	38
Mayo	112	182	0	294	45
Meath	197	647	0	844	68
Monaghan	36	160	0	196	12
Offaly	43	83	0	126	16
Roscommon	39	119	0	158	10
Sligo	46	65	0	111	21
Tipperary	271	419	0	690	60
Waterford	94	186	0	280	33
Westmeath	156	198	0	354	42
Wexford	114	194	0	308	50
Wicklow	230	376	0	606	57

Asylum Seeker Population in Cork as of 13/1/08

Centre	Capacity*
Ashbourne House Hotel	108
Kinsale Road Accom. Centre	306
Glenvera Hotel	104
Millstreet Accom. Centre	245
An Poc Fada	40
Clonakilty Lodge	110

*The Reception and Integration Agency (RIA) do not release exact figures of the number of residents in each centre. The above figures refer to the capacity within each centre and the RIA state that centres are maintained at an 87% occupancy.

Employment Equality Acts 1998 And 2004

Claims	2004	2005	2006	Jan-June 2007
Gender	53	88	74	32
Race	51	82	146	143
Disability	38	65	54	49
Age	49	44	47	18
Sexual Orientation	4	4	7	
Traveller Community	5	2	1	
Religion	4	2	2	
Martial	4	2	1	
Family Status	10	2	4	
More Than One Ground	71	95	96	
No Grounds	8	13	16	
Total	297	399	448	

Equal Status Acts 2000 – 2004

Claims	2004	2005	2006	Jan-June 2007
Disability	52	45	52	30
Age	29	39	9	
Traveller Community	26	31	18	5
Race	21	15	15	6
Gender	7	12	7	
Marital Status	4	4	7	
Sexual Orientation	4	3	2	
Religion	0	2	1	
Family Status	4	1	0	
More Than One Ground	35	64	49	
No Grounds	3	7	6	
Total	185	223	166	

'Here To Stay' Study 2005 Non-Nationals in Irish Employment by Sector in Q3 2005

Sector	Total	Irish Nationals Number	Irish Nationals % Of Sector	Non-Nationals Number	Non Nationals % Of Sector
Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing	119,600	114,800	96.0	4,800	4.0
Other Production Industries	294,600	266,900	96.6	27,800	9.4
Construction	251,100	229,600	91.0	22,600	9.0
Wholesale & Retail Trade	286,600	267,800	93.4	18,900	6.6
Hotels & Restaurants	120,400	97,200	80.8	23,100	19.2
Transport, Storage & Communication	118,500	110,600	93.3	7,900	6.7
Financial & Other Business Services	263,300	241,800	91.8	21,500	8.2
Public Administration & Defence	101,000	99,500	98.5	1,500	1.5
Education	119,800	114,200	95.3	5,600	4.7
Health	191,500	175,900	91.9	15,600	8.1
Other Services	122,400	122,000	91.9	9,900	8.1
Total Employment	1,989,800	1,830,600	92.0	159,600	8.0

Numbers Employed in Q2 2005 by Sector and Nationality (Thousands)

Sector	Irish Nationals	United Kingdom	Other EU-15	Accession States	Non-EU	Africa	North America	Asia	Other	Total
Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing	109.0	0.7	0.7	2.9	*	*	*	*	0.3	113.7
Other Production Industries	269.0	5.5	2.5	10.3	1.6	1.4	0.4	2.0	1.6	294.2
Construction	220.6	5.0	0.7	12.2	1.3	0.5	*	0.9	1.0	242.4
Wholesale & Retail Trade	248.9	4.5	1.9	5.6	1.2	1.3	0.4	2.3	0.8	266.9
Hotels & Restaurants	89.2	2.0	3.0	7.8	0.9	0.9	0.5	5.6	1.1	111.0
Transport, Storage & Communication	111.4	2.7	1.1	1.3	0.5	0.5	*	*	0.3	118.2
Financial & Other Business Services	236.4	5.7	5.8	3.5	1.0	0.9	0.6	1.8	1.3	257.1
Public Administration & Defence	97.1	0.8	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	98.2
Education	116.6	2.3	2.1	0.3	*	0.4	0.5	0.5	*	123.1
Health	173.7	4.8	1.1	1.0	0.5	1.0	0.4	5.1	0.5	188.0
Other Services	107.1	3.6	1.9	2.4	*	*	0.3	0.5		116.4
Total Employment	1779.0	37.5	20.9	47.3	7.5	7.1	3.5	19.0	7.6	1929.2

*Too few to be shown separately

Increase in Irish Employment by Sector Year to Q3 2005

Sector	Irish Nationals	Non-Nationals	Total
Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing	-2,600	2,300	-300
Other Production Industries	-19,400	8,500	-10,900
Construction	20,000	10,400	30,400
Wholesale & Retail Trade	12,600	3,900	16,500
Hotels & Restaurants	-1,000	5,200	4,200
Transport, Storage & Communication	600	3,100	3,700
Financial & Other Business Services	14,500	5,700	20,200
Public Administration & Defence	7,000	500	7,500
Education	7,700	-200	7,500
Health	6,100	3,300	9,400
Other Services	6,000	1,900	7,900
Total Employment	51,500	44,800	96,200

Total Allocation of PPSNs by Nationality - EU Accession states from 1 May 2004 to end of February 2008

Country	Numbers
Poland	271,917
Lithuania	58,008
Slovakia	33,835
Latvia	28,245
Czech Republic	16,236
Romania	16,292
Hungary	14,882
Estonia	5,770
Bulgaria	1,168
Malta	577
Slovenia	330
Cyprus	126
Total	447,386

Work Permits Issued By Nationality 2007

	Nationality	New Permits	Renewals	Group	Issued	Refused
1	India	2728	1340	0	4068	321
2	Philippines	1263	2622	0	3885	268
3	South Africa	621	840	0	1461	115
4	Ukraine	334	1078	0	1412	81
5	USA	816	392	0	1208	102
6	China	372	816	0	1188	233
7	Brazil	259	914	0	1173	111
8	Pakistan	326	487	0	813	183
9	Australia	436	372	0	808	89
10	Malaysia	392	404	0	796	99
NB	Romania	94	25	0	119	57

Cork Live Register (Number of people claiming unemployment benefit)

	Feb 2006	Feb 2007	Feb 2008
Non-National	1,226	1,278	2,089
Irish National	7,662	7,213	7,855
Total	8,888	8,491	9,944

Glossary

AIT	Athlone Institute of Technology
APEL	Assessment of Prior Experiential Learning
APL	Assessment of Prior Learning
BTEI	Back to Education Initiative
CIT	Cork Institute of Technology
CSO	Central Statistics Office
DES	Department of Education and Science
DIT	Dublin Institute of Technology
ECDL	European Computer Drivers Licence
EEA	European Economic Area
EME	Ethnic Minority Enterprises
ESOL	English for Speakers of Other Languages
ESRI	Economic and Social Research Institute
EU	European Union
FÁS	Foras Aiseanna Saothair (Training and Employment Authority)
FE	Further Education
FETAC	Further Education and Training Awards Council
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HEA	Higher Education Authority
HEI	Higher Education Institutions
HETAC	Higher Education and Training Council
HSE	Health Service Executive
IBC	Irish-born Child
IBEC	Irish Business and Employers Confederation
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
IFS	The Sweden Association of Ethnic Entrepreneurs
IMES	Institute for Migration and Ethnic Studies
IRFED	Institut International de Recherché et de Education, Cultures Development
ISME	Irish Small and Medium Enterprises
IT	Institute of Technology
ITS	Institute of Technology Sligo
ITT	Institute of Technology Tallaght
IVEA	Irish Vocational Educational Authority
JLC	Joint Labour Committee
KIM	Contact Committee for Migrants and the Authorities (Norway)
LES	Local Employment Service
MELO	Minority-Ethnic Led Organisations
MRCI	Migrant Rights Centre Ireland
NALA	National Adult Literacy Agency
NCCRI	National Consultative Committee on Racism and Interculturalism

NERA	National Employment Rights Authority
NFQ	National Framework of Qualifications
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NQAI	National Qualifications Authority of Ireland
NUIG	National University of Ireland, Galway
OECD	Organisation for Economic Development and Cooperation
QNHS	Quarterly National Household Survey
REA	Registered Employment Agreements
RPL	Recognition of Prior Learning
SFA	Small Firms Association
SIF	Strategic Integration Fund
TCD	Trinity College Dublin
UCC	University College Cork
UCD	University College Dublin
VEC	Vocational Educational Committee
VTOS	Vocational Training Opportunities Scheme
WIT	Waterford Institute of Technology



Enterprise House,
35 Mary Street, Cork.

Tel **021 4317411**
Email **info@nascireland.org**
Web **www.nascireland.org**