



## Ireland

Traditionally Ireland has been a country marked by a declining population and high rates of emigration. Within the last two decades this situation has reversed dramatically. Immigration has increased significantly in the context of rapid economic growth. At first, flows were driven by returning Irish emigrants, but from the early 2000s non-EU nationals began to arrive in significant numbers for the first time, mainly to work but also to seek asylum. The scale of these developments put Irish policy-makers under pressure and the response was often *ad hoc*. Asylum policy was developed first and even today much of Ireland's immigration policy remains on an administrative rather than statutory basis. Attempts to clarify Ireland's immigration and asylum policy in a new Immigration, Residence and Protection bill have been frustrated by repeated delays in passing the bill through the legislative process.

In many respects, Ireland has now entered a new phase in its immigration history. As a result of severe economic contraction, immigration has declined significantly since 2007 and Ireland may soon return to net emigration. It remains to be seen whether migrant workers already in Ireland will return to their countries of origin, but it appears likely that at least some will stay. Although migrants who have lived in Ireland for only a



short period are excluded from Ireland's social welfare system, those who are entitled to support still represent a significant portion of the social welfare burden. Perhaps surprisingly, given the rapidity of recent population changes, Ireland has not yet faced serious integration problems. However, international experience shows that there is potential for tensions to develop as competition for work increases; a situation not helped by the fact that Ireland's integration policy is as yet poorly developed.

### Background Information

**Capital:** Dublin

**Official languages:** English, Irish

**Area:** 6 825 km<sup>2</sup>

**Population (2006):** 4 239 848

**Population density (2006):** 60 inhabitants per km<sup>2</sup>

**Population growth (2002-2006):** 8.2 %

**Foreign-born population as percentage of total population (2006):** 15 %

**Foreign national population as percentage of total population (2006):** 11 %

**Labour force participation rate (December, 2009):** 62.5 %

**Unemployment rate (December, 2009):** 12.5 %

**Religions (2006):** 87 % Roman Catholic, 3 % Church of Ireland (incl. Protestant), 1 % Muslim, 9 % other religions

### Historical Trends in Migration

Over much of its history Ireland has been a country of emigration. In 1841 the population of what is now the Republic of Ireland stood at over 6.5 million. By 1901, mainly because of emigration and the deaths that followed the Great Famine of 1847, it had fallen to about 3.25 million. Population decline continued, although at a slower pace, and in 1961 the population level reached its lowest recorded level ever: 2 818 000. The majority of Irish emigrants who left in the nineteenth century and in the early part of the twentieth century went to North America. These flows ended abruptly with the onset of the Great Depression in the 1930s. From this point onwards most Irish emigrants travelled to the United Kingdom particularly during and after the Second World War as large numbers of Irish men sought employment in the British war effort and the



Bundeszentrale für  
politische Bildung

NETZWERK  
**MIGRATION**  
IN EUROPA



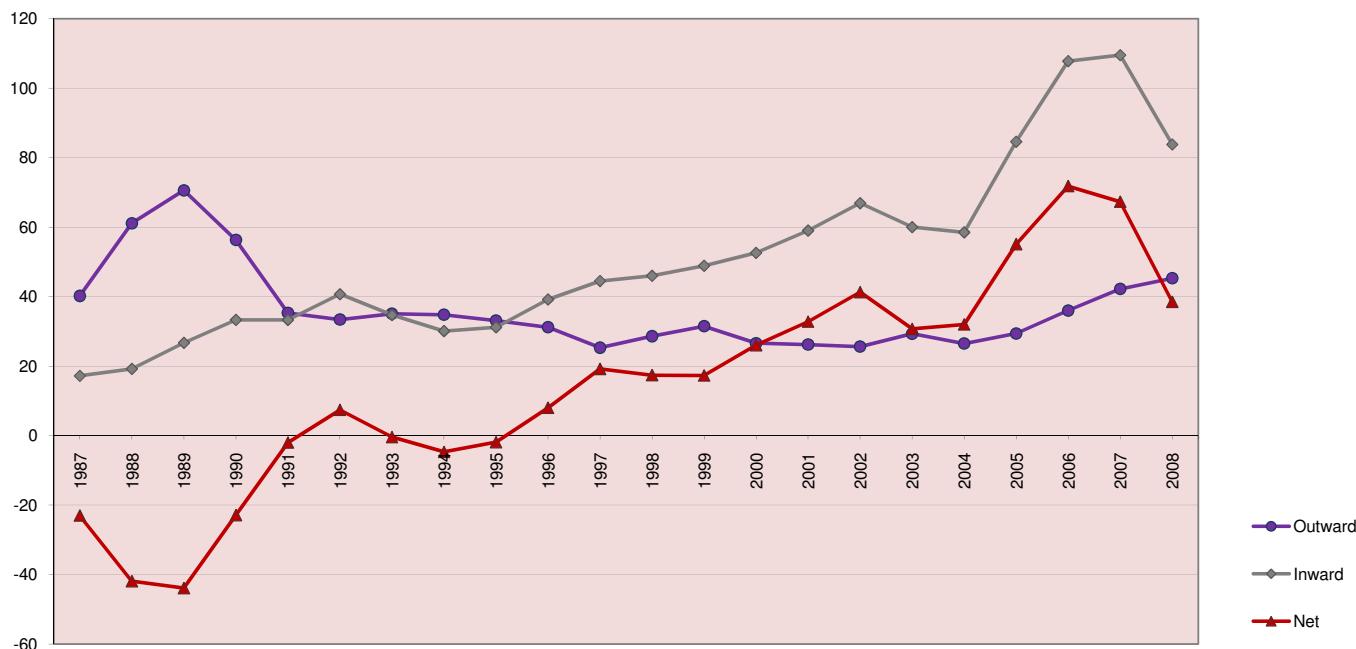
Hamburgisches  
WeltWirtschafts  
Institut

subsequent reconstruction. Estimates indicate that between 1946 and 1951 nearly 83 per cent of Irish emigrants went to the United Kingdom.

During the 1960s increased domestic economic growth slowed the pace of emigration and the population began to rise. The 1970s were remarkable in that net immigration was seen for the first time.<sup>1</sup> This trend could not be sustained, however. Poor global economic conditions in the early 1980s impacted severely on the Irish economy, resulting in a recession that lasted well into the second half of the decade. By 1986 the unemployment rate had reached over 17 per cent, significantly higher than that in the United Kingdom and a disparity that led to large-scale emigration. In 1988/89 net emigration stood at 45 000, or 13.0 per thousand of the population.<sup>2</sup>

Figure 1 shows that the beginning of the 1990s marked the start of a new phase in Irish migration history. Outward and inward flows were more or less balanced and from around 1996 immigration accelerated significantly as Ireland experienced unprecedented economic growth. This boom, which became known in Ireland as the “Celtic Tiger”, resulted from a range of long and short-term factors. Among the long-term factors that began to have an effect were the gradual dismantling of barriers to foreign trade and the encouragement of foreign direct investment, the introduction of free secondary education in 1967 and membership in the European Community in 1973. The short-term factors included membership in the European Monetary Union (EMU) in the 1990s. Investment in education resulted in large numbers of highly skilled Irish graduates who were able to benefit from the growth in the Information Technology, pharmaceutical, medical and other sectors in Ireland and abroad. Employment increased by almost 30 per cent between 1996 and 2001 and widespread labour shortages emerged which attracted large numbers of immigrants.<sup>3</sup>

**Figure 1: Inward, Outward and Net Migration 1987-2008 (in thousands)**



Source: Central Statistics Office. Population and Migration Estimates.

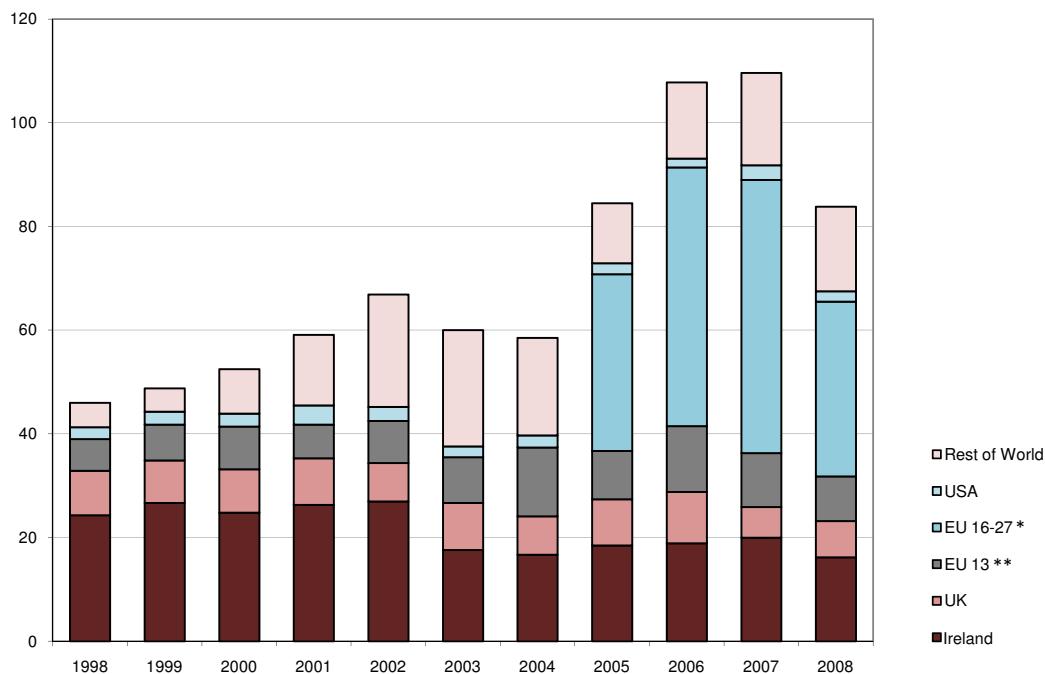
Note: Data relate to April of previous year-April of reference year.

In general terms the recent history of Irish migration (1990s onwards) can be characterised as having had four phases:

- Economic growth resulted in increasing immigration from the mid-1990s to the early 2000s, driven largely by returning Irish nationals. There were also dramatic increases in the number of asylum applicants.
- In the period 2002-2004 new peaks were reached in non-EU immigration flows and in the numbers of asylum applications. Asylum applications fell quickly from a 2002 peak and stabilised at a much lower level from 2004.
- Between 2004 and 2007 a substantial part of non-EU immigration flows converted to EU flows after the 2004 EU enlargement. New highs were reached in overall immigration, driven by nationals of the enlarged EU.
- Reduced but still significant net immigration has been experienced since 2007/2008, the fall largely resulting from economic contraction and associated decreased flows from new EU member states.

## Immigration by Nationality

The various phases of recent immigration to Ireland have been strongly associated with particular national groups. In the late 1980s around 65 per cent of the immigrants coming to Ireland were returning Irish emigrants. During the 1990s and 2000s the share of returning Irish dropped significantly and between 2006 and 2008 Irish immigrants made up only 18 per cent of the inflow. As the share of returning Irish migrants continued to fall, non-EU migrants came to dominate the flows, constituting more than half of all non-Irish immigrants arriving in Ireland between 2001 and 2004.

**Figure 2: Nationality Breakdown of Immigration Flows 1998–2008 (in thousands)**

Source: Central Statistics Office. Population and Migration Estimates.

Note: Data relate to April of previous year-April of reference year.

\* EU-Member states that joined the European Union in 2004 and 2007.

\*\* EU-Member states before 2004 (EU15), without the United Kingdom and Ireland (separately indicated).

Since the accession of ten new EU member states<sup>4</sup> in 2004 and two new EU member states in 2006 Ireland has experienced unprecedented net immigration. Nationals from the new member states have heavily dominated migratory inflows. Between 2005 and 2008 an average of 44 per cent of the immigration flow and 54 per cent of the non-Irish immigration flow, has been made up of nationals of EU States that acceded in 2004 together with Romania and Bulgaria which acceded in 2006. Figure 2 shows the nationality breakdown of the immigration flows between 1998 and 2008. Nationals from the new member states now clearly dominate the inflow rather than returning Irish migrants.

## The Immigrant Population in Ireland

Census 2006 provides a great deal of previously unavailable information on non-Irish nationals resident in Ireland. Table 1 compares the number and percentage of persons usually resident (i.e. all persons present on census night plus those who are usually resident but are absent for a period less than 3 months) in Ireland in 2002 and 2006 classified by nationality. The percentage of persons with non-Irish nationality increased significantly from 6 per cent to 10 per cent.

The most significant increase was seen in the EU category, which accounted for 2.5 per cent of persons enumerated in 2002 and 7 per cent in 2006. In line with recent trends in immigration flows this increase in the proportion of EU nationals was mainly driven by migrants from the 10 EU States that acceded in 2004: 120 500 or almost 3 per cent of the population enumerated on Census night held nationality of one of the EU10 States.<sup>5</sup>

The majority of non-Irish nationals usually resident in Ireland are in the 25-44 age group (52 per cent). Non-Irish nationals also have a slightly higher representation in the 15-24 age group than Irish nationals (18 per cent and 15 per cent respectively). Census 2006 indicated that Ireland is still quite an ethnically homogenous country. Almost 95 per cent of those who answered the nationality question indicated their ethnicity was White, while Black, Asian and other ethnicities accounted for just 1 per cent each. Of the respondents of Irish nationality, 98 per cent identified their own ethnicity as White, while this was the case only for 71 per cent of non-Irish respondents.

The vast majority of non-Irish nationals in Ireland are first-generation, i.e. were born outside of the country. Census

2006 indicated that just 5 per cent of non-Irish nationals enumerated were born in Ireland.

Irish nationals are also quite homogenous religiously: the vast majority enumerated identified themselves as Catholic. Non-Irish nationals are much more religiously diverse: just over half are Catholic, 11 per cent are Church of Ireland, Protestant, Presbyterian, or Methodist, and 5 per cent are Muslim. A much higher percentage of non-Irish than Irish nationals claim to have no religion (16 per cent and 3 per cent respectively).

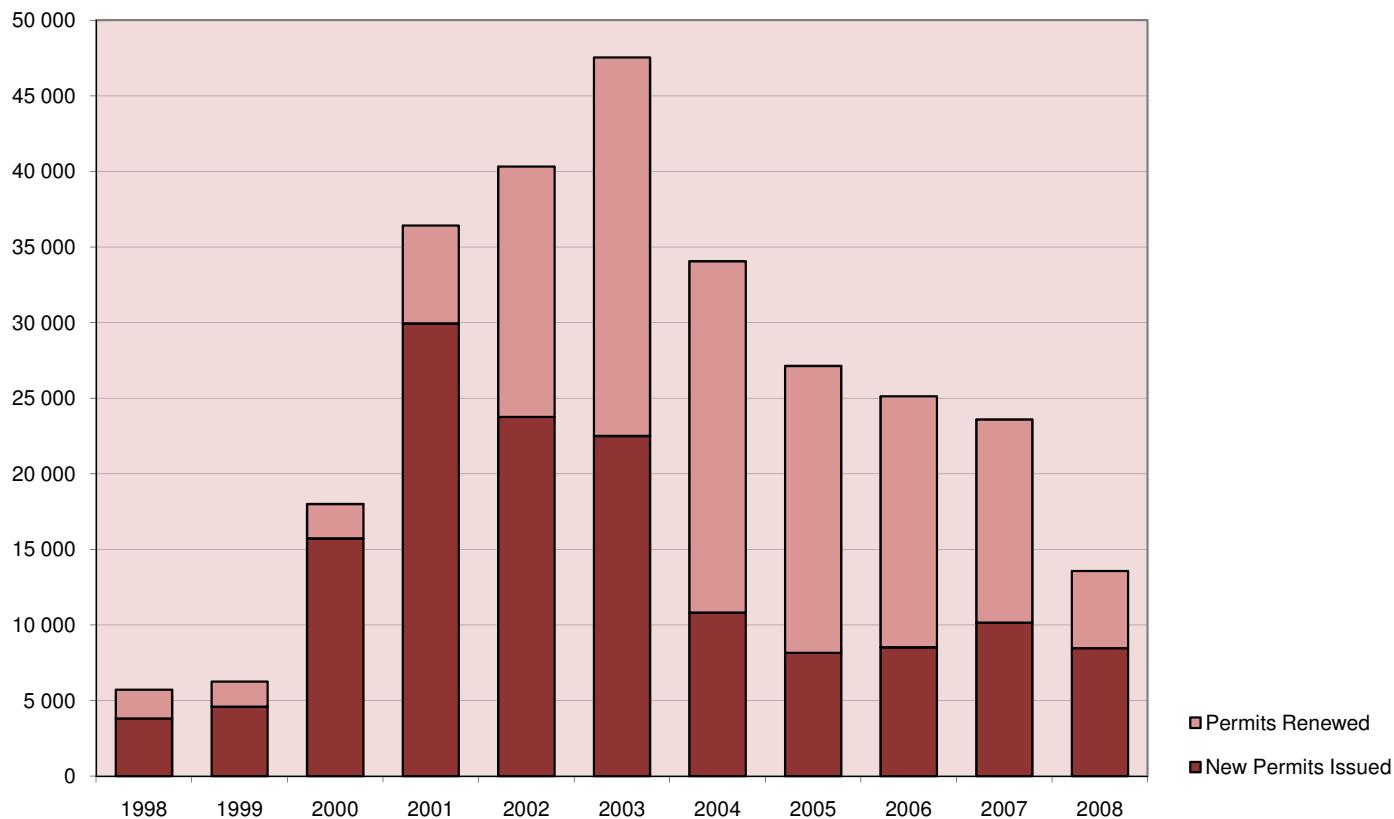
## Irish Migration Policy Development

Most of the existing Irish migration policy has been developed in the last two decades. The recent immigration increase seen in Ireland has been driven mainly by workers moving to Ireland to fill labour shortages and many of the policy developments relate to labour migration. Policy developments in relation to asylum, citizenship and general immigration are also discussed below.

### Labour migration policy

All nationals of the European Economic Area (EEA)<sup>6</sup> may migrate to Ireland to take up work without restriction. Managed labour migration policy refers therefore to workers from outside this area. Ruhs<sup>7</sup> characterises the Irish work permit system prior to 2003 as *laissez-faire* as it was almost entirely employer-led with little government intervention.

The number of work permits issued to non-EEA nationals increased dramatically from 6 262 in 1999 to 47 551 in 2003, a more than seven-fold increase. See Figure 3. Most of these

**Figure 3: Work permit allocations 1998-2008**

Source: Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment.

permits were issued in low-skilled occupations in sectors such as catering, other services and agriculture. In 2000 a work visa and work authorisation programme was introduced to facilitate the recruitment of highly-skilled non-EU nationals in the areas of information and computing technologies, construction professionals, and a broad range of medical, health and social care professions.

As the number of immigrants coming to Ireland increased the government sought to exercise more control of work permit allocations. From January 2002 employers were required to prove that they could not source workers in Ireland before applying for a permit, previously the requirement was voluntary. April 2003 saw an important step towards a more interventionist labour migration policy with the passing of the Employment Permits Act 2003 which put the employment permits system on a statutory footing for the first time. The Act was principally intended to manage the access of nationals from the new EU accession states to the Irish labour market in May 2004 by making provision for the introduction of a work permit for these nationals, should the labour market experience a disturbance. At the same time that Ireland was opening up to EU workers, conditions were made more restrictive for Non-EU nationals. The government had begun to pursue a policy of sourcing all but highly-skilled and/or scarce labour from within the EEA. The effect of this policy is evident in the drop in work permits issued post-2004.

The 2004 EU enlargement marked the start of a period of unprecedented rates of immigration to Ireland. Apart from Ireland, only the UK and Sweden granted accession state nationals

unrestricted access to their labour markets immediately upon EU enlargement, all other member states imposed restrictions. Nationals from the new member states have had unlimited access to the Irish labour market since May 2004. However, Irish welfare laws were changed prior to enlargement to make payments conditional on habitual residency in the state.

Nationals from the ten new member states, most significantly from Poland, dominated these flows, comprising over 40 per cent of total immigrants from 2005 onwards. See Figure 2. Partly in response to the magnitude of the flow, the Irish government sought to exercise increasing control over non-EEA labour migration. In January 2007 a new employment permit system was introduced with the objective of further restricting lower-skilled work permit allocations while attempting to increase Ireland's attractiveness to highly-skilled non-EEA workers. There are three main elements to the scheme:

1. A type of "Green Card" for any position with an annual salary of € 60 000 or more in any sector, or for a restricted list of occupations in healthcare, information technology, financial and industry sectors, where skill shortages have been identified, with an annual salary range from € 30 000 to € 59 999.
2. A work permit scheme for a very restricted list of occupations with an annual salary up to € 30 000, where the shortage is one of labour rather than skills. Work permits are now most usually issued in the catering, medical and nursing and other services sectors.
3. An Intra-Company Transfer scheme for temporary trans-national management transfers.

In 2008 the immigration rate slowed in response to economic contraction but large numbers of new EU nationals continued to migrate to Ireland (about 34 000 between April 2007 and April 2008). In the context of the current economic downturn policy has emerged to further manage lower skilled labour migration. It is significant that Ireland chose to maintain a work permit requirement for Romanian and Bulgarian nationals following their accession to the EU in 2006. In addition June 2009 saw a further tightening of the work permit system. No new work permits are issued for jobs with a salary of under € 30 000. The period for advertising the job within the EEA before applying for a work permit was extended and spouses and dependents of work permit holders are no longer exempt from this labour market needs test.

### Asylum-Related Policy

The number of asylum applications made in Ireland was very low prior to the mid 1990s: just 39 applications were made in 1992. In 2000 the number of applicants was almost 11 000, having increased more than nine-fold from 1 200 in 1996. The flow peaked in 2002 at 11 600. See Figure 4. The scale of these increases took Ireland by surprise and policy-makers struggled to cope with the flows, constructing an entire asylum system in the context of rapidly increasing demand. Starting in 2002, the number of asylum seekers declined and has been holding relatively steady at approximately 4 000-5 000 per year since 2005.

The breakdown of asylum applicants by nationality is shown below in Table 1. The flows have been dominated over the years by Nigerian and Romanian nationals although the number of applications from Romanian nationals has fallen off since the country's accession to the EU in 2006.

As the discussion above showed, both the number of new asylum applications and the numbers of non-EEA immigrants peaked around 2002. The former flow grew particularly suddenly from a very low base and this resulted in problems as the necessary structures for processing asylum applications were hastily put in place. The Refugee Act 1996, which was commenced in 2000, established the Refugee Applications

**Table 1: Applications for Asylum by Nationality 2004 and 2008**

Country	2004		2008	
	Number of Applications	Country	Number of Applications	Country
Nigeria	1 778	Nigeria	1 009	
Romania	286	Pakistan	237	
Somalia	200	Iraq	203	
China	152	Georgia	181	
Sudan	143	China	180	
Other	2 207	Other	2 056	
Total	4 766	Total	3 866	

Source: Office of the Refugee Applications Commissioner.

Commissioner (ORAC) as a statutorily independent body that considers asylum applications at first instance. The ORAC is also responsible for investigating family reunification applications made by refugees. The ORAC reports its recommendations to the Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform who issues final decisions. The Refugee Appeals Tribunal was also established under this Act and hears appeals of negative asylum decisions.

The Immigration, Residence and Protection Bill 2008 is due to be enacted in 2010. If enacted this Bill would also introduce a single protection determination procedure meaning that all protection claims, including claims for both asylum and subsidiary protection, would be examined under a single procedure. Applicants would be required to set out all of the grounds on which they wish to remain in the State at the outset of their claim, and all of these matters would be examined together.

### General immigration policy

During the latter part of the 1990s and early 2000s the government placed a deliberate emphasis on addressing the asylum situation first and developments in the immigration area have been put on the back burner.

Policies on other migration flows are not well-developed in Ireland. With the exception of recognised refugees, non-EU migrants may apply for family reunification under an administrative scheme only, with a resulting lack of transparency in decision-making. Non-Governmental Organisations working with migrants in Ireland have called for the introduction of a statutory family reunification scheme with a transparent appeals mechanism.<sup>8</sup> In relation to international students Ireland has adopted a relatively liberal approach allowing non-EEA students to come to work without a work permit for up to 20 hours per week during term time and full time during holidays. There are signs however that this system is being

**Figure 4: Number of New Asylum Applications 1992-2008**



Source: Office of the Refugee Applications Commissioner.

misused and restrictions have recently been introduced - discussed in relation to irregular migration below.

Legislative instruments have been introduced in a somewhat piecemeal manner to address specific issues as they arise. Even now most immigration-related services remain on an administrative rather than a legislative basis. Irish immigration policy is strongly influenced by the Common Travel Area shared with the UK.<sup>9</sup> Unlike the other 25 EU member states Ireland and the UK are not "Schengen states" and have chosen to maintain border controls with the rest of the EU. Only Ireland, the UK and Denmark may opt out of EU legal instruments on immigration and asylum. While Ireland has participated in a number of significant asylum-related instruments, this is not the case regarding immigration-related measures.<sup>10</sup> If enacted, the Immigration, Residence and Protection Bill 2008 will put much of Irish immigration policy on a statutory basis for the first time.

The capacity of the State to manage immigration is diminished in the context of large-scale EU immigration. As discussed above, non-EEA labour immigration is now quite restricted and it is likely that this is a trend that will continue as Ireland continues to seek to meet lower-skilled labour needs from within the enlarged EU while attempting to attract only highly-skilled workers from the rest of the world.

### Citizenship policy

There have been very significant policy developments in relation to non-Irish nationals and Irish citizenship in recent years. Like the United States and unlike any other European state, Ireland granted citizenship to anybody born on the territory (the *jus soli* principle) until 2005. In practice the non-Irish parents of Irish-born children could then apply for residency based on the Irish citizenship of their child. This led to concerns that non-Irish nationals, particularly asylum applicants, were travelling to Ireland and having children in order to gain that status. After a referendum in 2004 and a subsequent Constitutional amendment, changes in citizenship provisions were enacted which meant that any person born in Ireland after 1 January 2005 to non-Irish parents will not be automatically entitled to be an Irish citizen unless one of the parents was lawfully resident in Ireland for at least three out of the four years preceding the child's birth. Periods spent in Ireland as an asylum applicant or student are not considered.

Many non-Irish national parents who had applied for residency on the basis of their Irish child had their claims suspended in 2003. In January 2005 the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform invited these families to apply to remain in Ireland under the Irish-Born Child 2005 Scheme (IBC/05). Almost 18 000 applications were submitted under the Scheme and of these almost 16 700 were approved. Renewal arrangements have been put in place and after five years of legal residence the families concerned will be able to apply for citizenship.

All foreign nationals in Ireland may apply to become Irish citizens through naturalisation. Among various other requirements applicants must be able to show that they have had a period of 1 year's continuous residence in the State immediately before the date of application and, during the 8 years pre-

ceding that, have had a total residence in the State amounting to 4 years. (Altogether they must have 5 years' residence out of the previous 9 years.) The Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform has absolute discretion as to whether or not to grant naturalisation and there are significant backlogs in the system - on average an application takes 23 months to be decided upon. If a foreign national is married to an Irish citizen they may apply for Irish citizenship through naturalisation. The residence requirements are less stringent for the spouses of Irish citizens but there is no longer an absolute entitlement to Irish citizenship through marriage.

### Irregular Migration

Relatively little is known about the scale of irregular immigration to Ireland but given the fact that Ireland has just one land border, which separates Northern Ireland (UK) from the Republic of Ireland, illegal entry is likely to be less common than in other countries.

Recent policy responses to irregular immigration have focused on students and migrant workers. Non-EEA students in Ireland may work without a work permit for up to 20 hours per week during term time and full time during holidays. There is a concern that this system is being abused in that students are working for longer than the permitted hours and some may not be studying at all. In 2004 restrictions were introduced designed to counteract bogus English language schools providing a front for illegal labour migration. Since then only students who are pursuing courses that are of at least one year's duration and which lead to a "recognised qualification" as approved by the Department of Education and Science may enter the Irish labour market. The issue has not been resolved fully and in the future it is likely that a work permit requirement will be placed on students who wish to work while studying.<sup>11</sup>

Exploitation of migrant workers is an ongoing concern. During 2005 and 2006 in particular there were concerns that poorly paid migrant workers were displacing Irish workers. Two high-profile cases involving the companies GAMA and Irish Ferries provoked heated public debate and a resulting tightening of standards.<sup>12</sup> A National Employment Rights Authority (NERA) has since been established and tasked with maintaining employment rights and labour standards throughout the labour market, with a particular concern for the rights of migrant workers. The Employment Permits Act 2006 made some improvements in this area in providing that employment permits are granted to the employee and not the employer, in addition the permit states certain rights and entitlements of the worker concerned. The Act prohibits retention by the employer of the employee's personal documents.

Official data on the scale of trafficking to Ireland does not exist however there have been a number of important recent developments in relation to this issue. In June 2008 the Criminal Law (Human Trafficking) Act, 2008 was enacted. This was the first dedicated piece of anti-human trafficking legislation in the State since the Child Trafficking and Pornography Act, 1998. In addition a National Action Plan to Prevent and Combat Human Trafficking was published in 2009.

## Integration Issues

Clearly Ireland's population has undergone very significant change in the last 15 years yet integration policy remains at a very early stage of development. Until 2007 the only official integration policy related to recognition of refugees and there was a general perception that migrant workers would eventually go home. In 2007 the Office of the Minister for Integration (OMI) was set up with responsibility for the development of integration policy. There is also more acknowledgment at policy making level that some migrants may remain in Ireland (for example the proposed introduction for the first time of a new statutory long-term residency status in the draft Immigration, Residence and Protection Bill).

Despite the rapid nature of the recent changes and absence of integration policy Ireland has not yet faced serious tension between the Irish and migrant population. However, emerging research does point to inequalities that could quickly destabilise this situation if not addressed. For example Barrett et al. showed that in general Ireland's immigrants are a highly-educated group compared to Irish nationals but that not all immigrants are employed in occupations that fully reflect these high education levels.<sup>13</sup> Possible reasons for this disparity are proposed: recently arrived immigrants may lack local labour market knowledge and so accept jobs below those appropriate to their skill levels while they search for better jobs. The fact that UK and US immigrants suffer no occupational disadvantage prompts a suspicion that the occupation gap may be related to English language skills. McGinnity et al. found almost two-thirds of work permit holders reported that they are overqualified for their current job.<sup>14</sup>

Barrett and Duffy suggested that immigrants who arrived before 2004, many of whom were not EU nationals and did not have full right to work, may have been working illegally and that it has proved difficult for them to break out of a weak labour market situation.<sup>15</sup> Research has also been undertaken into labour market outcomes measured in terms of wages. Barrett and McCarthy found that immigrants were earning 15 per cent less than comparable Irish workers in 2005.<sup>16</sup> For immigrants from non-English speaking countries, the wage disadvantage was 20 per cent and for immigrants from the EU's New Member States the disadvantage was 32 per cent.

The first statement on the future direction of integration policy in Ireland was published by the Office of the Minister for Integration in May 2008. Developments arising from this policy statement have been limited to date and major new developments in the context of widespread budget cuts across government departments are unlikely for the foreseeable future.

Ireland has relatively robust anti-discrimination legislation that prohibits discrimination on grounds of marital status, family status<sup>17</sup>, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race or membership of the Traveller community.<sup>18</sup> However, research has shown that despite these safeguards immigrants do face discrimination in Ireland. Russell et al. found that 31 per cent of those of Black, Asian or Other ethnicity had experienced some form of discrimination in the past two years compared to 12 per cent of the entire population.<sup>19</sup> O'Connell and McGinnity found that non-Irish nationals were three times more likely to report

experience of discrimination while looking for work than Irish nationals, even after controlling for differences in gender, age and education between the groups, and are twice as likely to report experience of discrimination in the workplace.<sup>20</sup> Black respondents reported more difficulties looking for work than all other respondents from other ethnic groups. McGinnity et al showed that around one third of migrants had experienced harassment in a public place or in the workplace in the past two years.<sup>21</sup> A recent field experiment study by McGinnity et al has shown that employers are twice as likely to invite a candidate with an Irish name to interview as an equivalent candidate with a distinctively non-Irish name.

Unlike many other European countries Ireland grants exceptionally wide access to local political participation and has been cited as achieving best practice in the area.<sup>22</sup> All resident non-Irish nationals may vote in local elections in Ireland (including those on work permits or visas, asylum seekers and students) provided that they were usually resident in the country on 1st September of the year preceding the election. Local elections take place every five years and the most recent one was in 2009. In those elections all but one of the parties (Sinn Fein) had selected a number of immigrant candidates to represent them in the local elections. In Dublin City Council area 4 per cent of the total number of persons entitled to vote in the local government elections were non-Irish (excluding UK nationals).<sup>23</sup> Resident EU citizens may also vote in European elections.

## Current and Emerging Issues

Ireland is currently experiencing a significant economic downturn. Between the first quarter of 2008 and the first quarter of 2009 the number of people unemployed doubled. By December 2009 the unemployment rate stood at 12.5 per cent and is expected to continue to rise during 2010. The impact on non-Irish nationals has been particularly severe. In the third quarter of 2009 the unemployment rate for non-Irish nationals was 17.2 per cent compared to 11.9 per cent for Irish nationals. The sectors experiencing the most significant job losses, for example construction, wholesale and retail trade, are sectors where migrants tend to work.

The number of unemployed people entitled to social welfare continues to grow, representing an increasing burden on the state. Although many immigrants are not eligible for social welfare because they cannot prove "habitual residency", the number of non-Irish unemployed workers entitled to support is substantial.

The changed economic conditions have marked the start of a new phase in Irish migration history. It is likely that some migrants will begin to return to their countries of origin and, if international economic conditions improve, large-scale Irish emigration may resume. There are some indications that this has begun: emigration rates rose by 25 per cent between 2006 and 2008; however, net migration remains positive. Clearly some migrants will remain in Ireland to establish a permanent home and for this group there is a need for a more developed integration policy.

It remains to be seen how the experience of immigrants living in Ireland will change in the context of an economic downturn; however, international experience suggests that Ireland should be alert to the potential for increased discrimination as competition for jobs increases. In this context the budget cuts seen at the end of 2008 across a number of state agencies dealing with equality, human rights and anti-discrimination are particularly unwelcome.

#### Endnotes:

- <sup>1</sup> See Sexton (1996).
- <sup>2</sup> See O'Connell (2008).
- <sup>3</sup> See Hughes and Quinn (2004).
- <sup>4</sup> Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia joined the EU in 2004. Bulgaria and Romania joined in 2007.
- <sup>5</sup> See Quinn, Stanley, Joyce and O'Connell (2007).
- <sup>6</sup> The EEA comprises the EU plus Norway, Iceland, and Liechtenstein.
- <sup>7</sup> See Ruhs (2005).
- <sup>8</sup> See Immigrant Council of Ireland (2008) and Cosgrave (2006).
- <sup>9</sup> The Common Travel Area (CTA) arrangement with the UK also includes the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man.
- <sup>10</sup> Irish asylum law is currently based on the 1996 Refugee Act as amended, and S.I. No. 518 of 2006 which seeks to implement EU Directive 2004/83/EC ("The Qualification Directive"). Other significant EU instruments impacting on Irish asylum law are Directive 2001/55/EC ("The Temporary Protection Directive"), Regulation (EC) No. 343/2003 ("The Dublin Regulation"), Directive 2005/85/EC ("The Procedures Directive") and Regulation (EC) No. 2725/2000 (EURODAC), each of which Ireland has opted into.
- <sup>11</sup> On 1 September 2009, the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform published a set of proposals for reform of non-EEA student immigration and launched a public consultation process on the issue. While no immediate changes were announced at the time, it was noted that the concession should be the subject of further analysis in a separate review via an Interdepartmental Group on Student Immigration.
- <sup>12</sup> See Quinn (2006) for a more detailed discussion of these disputes.
- <sup>13</sup> See Barrett et al. (2006).
- <sup>14</sup> See McGinnity et al. (2006).
- <sup>15</sup> See Barrett and Duffy (2008).
- <sup>16</sup> See Barrett and McCarthy (2007).
- <sup>17</sup> 'Family status' concerns being pregnant or caring for a child. 'Marital status' concerns legal marriage status only and may not necessarily involve children. See [www.equality.ie](http://www.equality.ie) or [www.equalitytribunal.ie](http://www.equalitytribunal.ie) for further information.
- <sup>18</sup> A traditionally nomadic Irish population group, comparable to Sinti and Roma in other countries.
- <sup>19</sup> Russell et al. (2008).
- <sup>20</sup> See O'Connell and McGinnity (2008).
- <sup>21</sup> See McGinnity et al. (2006).
- <sup>22</sup> See Niessen et al. (2007).
- <sup>23</sup> See Fanning, O'Boyle and Shaw (2009).

#### About the author:

**Emma Quinn** is a Research Analyst at the Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI) and National Coordinator of the Irish National Contact Point of the European Migration Network.

E-mail: emma.quinn@esri.ie

## References

- Barrett, A. and Duffy, D., 2008. Are Ireland's Immigrants Integrating into its Labour Market? *International Migration Review*, Vol. 42 Issue 3, pp. 597-619.
- Barrett, A. and McCarthy, Y., 2007. The Earnings of Immigrants in Ireland: Results from the 2005 EU Survey of Income and Living Conditions. *Quarterly Economic Commentary*, Winter 2007, pp. 42-62.

- Barrett, A., Bergin, A. and Duffy, D., 2006. The Labour Market Characteristics and Labour Market Impacts of Immigrants in Ireland. *The Economic and Social Review*, Vol. 37, pp. 1-26.
- Hughes, G. and Quinn, E., 2004. The Impact of Immigration on Europe's Societies: Ireland. European Migration Network. Dublin: Economic and Social Research Institute.
- Immigrant Council of Ireland, 2008. Getting On - From Migration to Integration: Chinese, Indian, Lithuanian and Nigerian Migrants' Experiences in Ireland. Dublin: Immigrant Council of Ireland.
- Cosgrave, C., 2006. Family Matters: Experiences of Family Reunification in Ireland. A Critical Analysis of Government Policy and Procedure. Dublin: Immigrant Council of Ireland.
- Fanning, B, O'Boyle, N. and Shaw, J., 2009. New Irish Politics: Political Parties and Immigrants in 2009. Dublin: Migration and Citizenship Initiative, University College Dublin.
- Joyce, C., 2009. Annual Policy Report on Migration and Asylum 2008: Ireland. Dublin: Economic and Social Research Institute.
- McGinnity, F., Nelson, J., Lunn, P. and Quinn, E. 2009. Discrimination in Recruitment: Evidence from a Field Experiment. Dublin: Equality Authority/ESRI.
- McGinnity, F., O'Connell, P., Quinn, E. and Williams, J., 2006. Migrants' Experience of Racism and Discrimination in Ireland. Dublin: ESRI.
- Niessen, J., Huddleston, T. and Citron, L., 2007. Migrant Integration Policy Index. Brussels: British Council and Migration Policy Group.
- Office of the Minister for Integration, 2008. Migration nation: Statement on integration strategy and diversity management. Dublin: Office of the Minister for Integration.
- O'Connell, P.J. and McGinnity, F., 2008. Immigrants at Work: Nationality and Ethnicity in the Irish Labour Market. Dublin: Equality Authority/ESRI.
- O'Connell, P.J., 2008. Report to OECD Continuous Reporting System on Migration (SOPEMI). Dublin: Economic and Social Research Institute.
- Quinn, E. and O'Connell, P.J., 2007. Conditions of Entry and Residence of Third Country Highly-Skilled Workers in Ireland 2006. Dublin: Economic and Social Research Institute.
- Quinn, E., 2009. The Organisation of Asylum and Migration Policies in Ireland. European Migration Network. Dublin: Economic and Social Research Institute.
- Quinn, E., Stanley, J., Joyce, C. and O'Connell, P.J., 2008. Handbook on Immigration and Asylum in Ireland 2007. Dublin: Economic and Social Research Institute.
- Quinn, E., 2006. Policy Analysis Report on Asylum and Migration: Ireland Mid-2004 to 2005. Dublin: Economic and Social Research Institute.
- Ruhs, M., 2005. Managing the Immigration and Employment of Non-EU nationals in Ireland. The Policy Institute. Dublin: Trinity College.
- Ruhs, M., Updated by Quinn, E. 2009. Ireland: From Rapid Immigration to Recession. Dublin: Social Research Institute.
- Russell, H., Quinn, E., O'Riain, R., and McGinnity, F., 2008. The Experience of Discrimination in Ireland. Analysis of the QNHS Equality Module. Dublin: Equality Authority/ESRI.
- Sexton, J., 1996. Report to OECD Continuous Reporting System on Migration (SOPEMI). Dublin: Economic and Social Research Institute.

## Internet Sources

- Central Statistics Office Ireland  
<http://www.cso.ie/>
- ESRI- The Economic and Social Research Institute  
<http://www.esri.ie/>
- Immigrant Council of Ireland  
<http://www.immigrantcouncil.ie/>
- Irish Naturalisation and Immigration Service  
<http://www.inis.gov.ie/>
- MRCI- Migrant Rights Centre Ireland  
<http://www.mrci.ie/>

## ABOUT FOCUS MIGRATION

Publisher: Hamburg Institute of International Economics (HWWI), Heimhuder Strasse 71, 20148 Hamburg, Tel.: +49 (0)40 34 05 76-0, Fax: +49 (0)40 34 05 76-776, E-Mail: [info@hwwi.org](mailto:info@hwwi.org)  
In cooperation with: The German Federal Agency for Civic Education (bpb) and Network Migration in Europe e.V.

Editorial staff: Dita Vogel (head), Tanja El-Cherkeh, Gunnar Geyer, Rainer Münz, Antje Scheidler, Jan Schneider, Daria Braun.

focus Migration country profiles (ISSN 1864-6220) and policy briefs (ISSN 1864-5704) are published with the support of the German Federal Agency for Civic Education (bpb).

The information contained in these publications does not necessarily reflect the opinions of the bpb and HWWI. Partial reproduction and citation are authorised, provided the source is acknowledged.

Further online resources: [www.hwwi.org](http://www.hwwi.org), [www.bpb.de](http://www.bpb.de), [www.network-migration.org](http://www.network-migration.org), [www.migration-info.de](http://www.migration-info.de)

Our country profiles and policy briefs are available online at: [www.focus-migration.de](http://www.focus-migration.de)