

POLISH MIGRANT WORKERS IN IRELAND

POLSCY MIGRANCI PRACUJĄCY W IRLANDII

community
profiles
series



NCCRI

Polish Migrant Workers in Ireland

By Katarzyna Kropiwek
With Dr Rebecca Chiyoko King-O'Riain

Department of Sociology,
National University of Ireland, Maynooth

National Consultative Committee on Racism and Interculturalism
(NCCRI), Community Profiles Series

Project commissioned and funded by the National Consultative Committee
on Racism and Interculturalism (NCCRI)

The authors and the NCCRI would like to thank all those
who took part in interviews for this research.

September 2006

• KANAŁ •



Polski Klub i Restauracja

Tel: 8745850 Fax: 8745851

SEMINARIUM
INFORMACYJNE
DZIAŁALNOŚĆ
KULINARNA



OPEN



Table of Contents

Foreword	page 4
Introduction by Dr. Rebecca Chiyoko King-O'Riain	page 7
Summary in Polish	page 11
Statistical information	page 21
Methodology	page 23
Migration Decisions	page 27
Modes of Orientation	page 33
Impressions of Working in Ireland	page 37
Ethnic Institutions	page 40
Transnational practices	page 43
Problems facing Polish people in Ireland	page 44
Suggestions emerging from the research	page 46
Conclusion	page 47
Further Resources	page 48
References	page 50

Photographs used in this publication do not represent interviewees from the research and quotations used in this publication are in no way associated with people featured in the photographs.

Photograph: Derek Speirs

Foreword

Ethnic and cultural diversity in Ireland continues to change, primarily as a result of increasing inward migration, this has added to the rich diversity that always existed in Ireland, but which perhaps is now only beginning to be fully acknowledged.

While there has been an increasing interest on research focusing on migration in recent years it has tended to be from the standpoint of the receiving country. It is perhaps surprising that there has been comparatively little research that has been undertaken by or indeed focused on the views and perceptions of people from minority ethnic communities who already live in or have migrated to Ireland.

To help redress this imbalance the National Consultative Committee on Racism and Interculturalism (NCCRI) is publishing a series of 'community profiles' researched by and in partnership with researchers from minority ethnic communities in Ireland.

This publication, the first of this series of community profiles focuses on Polish migrant workers in Ireland. The second community profile will focus on Chinese students in Ireland.

It also emerges that maintaining Polish language and culture is an important consideration for many Polish migrants in Ireland. Contrary to previous assumptions, religion does not play a great or decisive factor in the decision by Polish migrants to migrate to Ireland.

Qualitative research was undertaken for this study in the form of in depth interviews conducted in Polish and focussing exclusively on Polish migrant workers in Ireland. The research was undertaken by Katarzyna Kropiwiiec with Dr. Rebecca Chiyoko King-O'Riain from the Sociology Department, National University of Ireland, Maynooth. The NCCRI is greatly indebted to Ms. Kropiwiiec for this important research and to Dr. King-O'Riain for her expertise in developing and guiding this research initiative. The NCCRI is further indebted to Fiona McGaughey, Research and Policy Officer, who managed this initiative on behalf of NCCRI.

Some interesting findings have emerged from this research. It notes that the decision to migrate to Ireland by Polish migrant workers is complex with both macro and micro economic and social factors playing a role in the decision-making process. Micro factors play a significant role. English is widely taught in Polish schools and there is potential to improve English language skills in Ireland; the support of family

and friends who have already emigrated to Ireland is important. However, many would not have emigrated if conditions in Poland were better.

It also emerges that maintaining Polish language and culture is an important consideration for many Polish migrants in Ireland. Contrary to previous assumptions, religion does not play a great or decisive factor in the decision by Polish migrants to migrate to Ireland.

Racism, particularly in the form of negative stereotyping, is an identified issue. There is often a lack of knowledge about Poland and its history among Irish people. Whilst most interviewees feel their work is valued, they are perceived as working hard and they receive appropriate earnings; there is evidence of racial discrimination in employment with Polish workers reporting being paid less, for the same work, than their Irish counterparts. A lack of information about rights, inadequate English skills and fear of losing their job mean that Polish workers are unlikely to complain. The interviewees identified recommendations, such as the provision of free English classes in the evenings.

The research findings provide a unique insight into the perceptions and experiences of Polish migrant workers' in modern Ireland and indicate that much remains to be done in tackling racial discrimination and promoting Interculturalism.

Philip Watt
Director
NCCRI

Anastasia Crickley
Chairperson
NCCRI

September 2006



CAFE
&
GROCERY
POLISH

Introduction by Dr. Rebecca Chiyoko King-O'Riain

This research project came out of a conversation, which began in a third year undergraduate special topics seminar entitled “Multicultural Ireland?” at the National University of Ireland, Maynooth in October 2005. As the seminar leader, I met Katarzyna and Ying (Katarzyna is a Polish student who is fluent in Polish, German and English visiting from the University of Frankfurt as an Erasmus student for the year and Ying is a final year student at NUIM fluent in Mandarin and English) in this seminar and we began talking about the experiences of Polish and Chinese people living ‘New Lives’ in Ireland. We noticed many similarities (both are big communities, both have strong social networks, both work hard and are recent arrivals), but we also noticed many differences which had to do with how they came to be in Ireland, what they were doing here and how they were perceived by others. With very few Polish and/or Chinese students in third level education in Ireland in social sciences, we felt that the opportunity of joining together to do research was just too good to pass up. We formed ourselves into a research team and set off to begin researching with the support of the NCCRI.

With rapid social, economic and political change in post-Celtic Tiger Ireland, one of the demographic shifts most discussed has been increased in-migration to Ireland from all over the world. Unusual in its migration pattern, Ireland stands as an interesting example of migration but also of how societies grapple with increasing ethnic diversity in a fast flowing economy and increasingly global sphere. While there are excellent studies of how these changes are affecting Irish society, people and even Irishness itself, our focus was slightly different. We were curious how these changes have affected migrants themselves in their own words. We thus set out to talk to Polish and Chinese people in their own native languages and with co-ethnic researchers. We also tried explicitly to compare the two ethnic groups to each other to better understand how structural and cultural forces influenced the two groups differently. To our knowledge, we are the first research team to explicitly attempt to do this with these two ethnic groups.

We conducted 50 semi-structured, in depth, qualitative interviews with 22 Chinese and 23 Polish young people (ages 18-30) and with 5 ‘experts’ (directors of community based organizations, language teachers, etc.). Ying Ying conducted all of the Chinese interviews in Mandarin and all Polish interviews were conducted in Polish by Katarzyna and then later transcribed into English. Dr. King-O’Riain conducted the 5 expert interviews in English.

In our research, we all felt that by using a co-ethnic researcher to conduct the interviews in the native language of the interviewees (the language they said they felt most comfortable in) we would make people more at ease and would hence increase the validity of what they were telling us. In short, we felt that they could be more open and honest with someone who had a similar background and cultural frame as themselves and who could relate to and understand their comments. We feel that we have been successful in ‘revealing’ some aspects of the migration experience to Ireland that would not have come to light had the interviewers and researchers been mainstream and the interviews in English. If we had interviewed just in English, we would have self selected more educated, younger and more confident voices into the research - many of which we have, but we also wanted to tap into less educated, older and perhaps less confident voices as well.

Recognizing the strong social networks of migrants, we did not recruit interviewees through any particular agency or contact. Again, we did not want to self-select migrants who had particular views or issues, which might manifest themselves through a particular group or agency. Convenience and snowball sampling were used to sample interview subjects from the greater Dublin area (where the majority of both Polish and Chinese reside). We did select interview subjects to gain views from a wide range of people using criteria such as: gender, age, rural/urban origin, type of job currently, type of education/training, length of time in Ireland, and work status. Therefore, the results are not generalisable to the entire ethnic population, but they do provide a window into the experiences that Chinese and Polish people in our sample are having in Ireland.

Ethical Research

Ethical approval and consideration are always important when doing research of this nature in order to protect the rights of those who are interviewed. This is particularly salient in a case where the interviewees are vulnerable in some way (are children, are exploited, etc.). To that end, we used a standard protocol for ethics at every level of our research. We went through ethical approval at NUIM and all interviewees consented to the interviews. We translated portions or the entire consent form when necessary to insure that all interviewees were aware that they had to the right to not answer or stop the interview at any time. Again, because we did this mostly through the medium of the native language and with co-ethnic researchers, we feel that interviewees were more comfortable stopping the interview, refusing or discussing difficult issues honestly with us. Ultimately, we hope that all the interviewees, who will remain anonymous and confidential, will be pleased to see their voices accurately represented here.

Acknowledgments

We would like to thank the NCCRI for funding this research (particular thanks to Fiona McGaughey for keeping us on track). We also want to thank Kairos, most especially Anne O'Brian, for providing the recording equipment to do the interviews and her technical expertise in crisis. The National University of Ireland, Maynooth department of Sociology provided computing, space, intellectual and collegial support for the project. Dr. King-O'Riain would also like to thank Kasia and Ying for their incredible work and for allowing her a small glimpse into the Chinese and Polish communities in Dublin. She learned much from you both.

An aerial photograph of a coastal town, likely in Ireland, showing a harbor with several boats, a large bridge spanning the water, and buildings along the shore. The image is in black and white and serves as the background for the text.

With rapid social, economic and political change in post-Celtic Tiger Ireland, one of the demographic shifts most discussed has been increased in-migration to Ireland from all over the world.



Włakka[®]

pszenna



GWARANCJA JAKOŚCI
TORTOWA

SCI

kości
młyny

Podsumowanie: Polscy migranci pracujący w Irlandii

Ogólny zarys:

Niniejsza publikacja jest prezentacją wyników badań empirycznych przeprowadzonych w okresie od stycznia do czerwca 2006 wśród 23 Polaków mieszkających w Irlandii. Badania opierały się na wywiadach w języku polskim, z imigrantami, którzy obecnie żyją i pracują w Irlandii. Rozmowy dotyczyły przeżyć i doświadczeń imigrantów od momentu przybycia do Irlandii, czynników, które zadecydowały o ich wyjeździe z kraju, oraz tego, czym zajmowali się przed emigracją. Publikacja analizuje czynniki odgrywające szczególną rolę przy podjęciu decyzji o wyjeździe z Polski i wyborze właśnie Irlandii na nowe miejsce zamieszkania. Szczególna uwaga poświęcona jest integracji Polaków w życie irlandzkiego społeczeństwa, pokonywaniu barier i trudności.

Badania wykazały, że emigracja jest powodowana głównie czynnikami ekonomicznymi. Polacy wyjeżdżają jako 'target earners' - głównie w celach zarobkowych, z zamiarem powrotu do kraju, lub 'global cosmopolitans' - młodzi wykształceni ludzie, chcący polepszyć jakość swojego życia, otwarci na możliwości, jakie otwiera przed nimi zjednoczona Europa. Oprócz czynników ekonomicznych zauważalne były czynniki socjalne i polityczne. Większość polskich emigrantów pracuje poniżej swoich kwalifikacji, w wielu przypadkach również osoby z wyższym wykształceniem i znajomością języka angielskiego. Niewystarczająca znajomość angielskiego jest głównym problemem polskiej społeczności w Irlandii i jest częstą przyczyną izolacji.

Siatka informacyjna wśród Polonii w Irlandii jest bardzo rozbudowana, ponieważ emigracja przebiega przeważnie w formie łańcuchowej (chain migration). Ponadto przepływ informacji między Polską a Irlandią funkcjonuje bardzo sprawnie.

Publikacja rekomenduje organizację bezpłatnych wieczornych kursów języka angielskiego i zwiększone poparcie dla organizacji etnicznych.

Informacje statystyczne

Liczba polskich imigrantów wzrosła znacząco w ciągu ostatnich pięciu lat. Z powodu pozytywnego rozwoju ekonomicznego oraz dość elastycznego rynku pracy i pozwoleń na pracę, Irlandia często jest wybierana jako kraj docelowy. Dodatkowym czynnikiem przyciągającym do Irlandii jest to, że jest to jeden z trzech krajów, obok Wielkiej Brytanii i Szwecji, który otworzył swój rynek pracy po rozszerzeniu Unii Europejskiej 1 maja 2004 roku. Od tego czasu, wielu obywateli z nowych krajów Unii zdecydowało się zmienić miejsce pracy i zamieszkania. Około 160 000 pracowników z nowych krajów Unii złożyło wnioski o przyznanie osobistych numerów usług publicznych (ang. Personal Public Service Numbers (PPSN))¹ w ciągu ostatnich dwóch lat. Jako że Polska jest największym z nowych krajów, odsetek polskich imigrantów, którzy przybyli do pracy w Irlandii jest najwyższy.² Ambasada Polska w Dublinie szacuje, że około 120 000 polskich imigrantów znajduje się obecnie w Republice Irlandii. Od maja 2004 roku do grudnia 2005 roku wydano Polakom 90 320 numerów PPSN.³ Najświeższe dane z Ministerstwa ds. Socjalnych i Rodzinnych podają, że od stycznia do końca kwietnia 2006 roku wydano polskim pracownikom 25 679 numerów PPSN, co przekłada się na jakieś 10 000 numerów miesięcznie.⁴ W oparciu o samą liczbę numerów PPSN, nie można ustalić ilu z zarejestrowanych pozostało w Irlandii oraz czy posiadają oni tutaj członków rodziny; ilu z nich już opuściło kraj, ani też ilu przyjechało po kwietniu 2006 roku lub pracuje nie posiadając numeru PPSN.

1 "... [PPSN] to indywidualny numer identyfikacyjny wymagany w celu uzyskania zatrudnienia w Irlandii oraz dostępu do świadczeń społecznych i usług publicznych. Numer PPSN jest dobrym wskaźnikiem krótkoterminowych trendów związanych z imigracją do Irlandii obywateli nowych krajów Unii Europejskiej. Należy zaznaczyć, że numery PPSN pozwalają prześledzić miesięczny przyływ imigrantów z nowych krajów Unii, którzy szukają głównie zatrudnienia a nie podwyższenia liczby imigrantów. Liczba wydanych numerów PPSN zwykle nieznacznie przewyższa liczbę obcokrajowców przybyłych z nowych krajów Unii, gdyż zawiera ona również imigrantów, którzy przyjechali do Irlandii tylko na krótko i wracają do domu." Doyle, N., Hughes, G. i Wadenjo, E. (2006) „Wolny przepływ siły roboczej z Europy centralnej i wschodniej”, s. 59, <http://www.esri.ie>.

2 Financial Times Polska, 12.02.06.

3 Dane uzyskane z Polskiej Ambasady w Dublinie drogą poczty elektronicznej, 27.03.06.

4 The Irish Times 23.05.06

Metodologia

Na potrzeby tego badania, przeprowadzono 23 narracyjne, częściowo ustrukturyzowane wywiady z polskimi imigrantami do Irlandii. Aby poprawić wiarygodność badania, wszystkie wywiady przeprowadzono w języku polskim, a następnie przetłumaczono na język angielski w fazie transkrypcji. Badanie etniczne pozwoliło łatwiej dotrzeć do grupy docelowej oraz uzyskać bardziej otwarte i autentyczne wypowiedzi w języku ojczystym.

Decyzje o migracji

Decyzja o migracji jest zwykle złożona i indywidualna. Każdy emigrant ma swoją własną historię życiową. Jednak, na podstawie 23 wywiadów przeprowadzonych w trakcie badania, dało się zaobserwować pewne powtarzające się schematy wyjazdu z Polski i wyboru właśnie Irlandii jako kraju docelowego.

Jest wiele powodów, dla których ludzie decydują się zmienić miejsce pracy i zamieszkania. Polscy imigranci w Irlandii zwracają uwagę, że na ich decyzje wpływały czynniki zarówno makro- jak i mikroekonomiczne. Mocno podkreślanym czynnikiem ogólnym, który ułatwiał im podjęcie decyzji o wyjeździe z Polski była niestabilna sytuacja na polskim rynku pracy. Stopa bezrobocia w Polsce w czerwcu 2006 roku wynosiła średnio 16 procent, w zależności od regionu od 12,3 do 24,7%.

Ludzie albo nie mają pracy albo boją się, że mogą stracić pracę, którą mają. Rynek w Polsce jest napędzany przez pracodawców – to pracodawca dyktuje warunki, a pracownik powinien być wdzięczny, że może pracować. Respondenci, którzy pracowali w Polsce mogą zarobić o wiele więcej w Irlandii, nie tylko jako specjaliści, ale też wykonując zajęcia, które nie wymagają specjalnych umiejętności.

Irlandia daje również studentom możliwość połączenia nauki z pracą na własne utrzymanie. Na polskim rynku pracy brakuje ofert dla studentów, które pozwoliłyby im na niezależność finansową w trakcie studiów. Ponadto, w Polsce nie ma wiele ofert pracy dla młodych absolwentów z krótszym doświadczeniem.

Wzrost ekonomiczny oraz braki siły roboczej były czynnikami, które motywowały Polaków do wyjazdu do Irlandii w sensie makroekonomicznym. Irlandzka gospodarka z wysokimi zarobkami, a co za tym idzie lepszymi warunkami życia i pracy, skutecznie zachęciły wielu respondentów do przyjazdu. Zauważyli oni szanse na to, aby osiągnąć o wiele więcej w sensie finansowym w krótszym czasie niż byłoby to możliwe w Polsce. W Irlandii są też większe szanse dla ludzi młodych na kontynuację nauki na poziomie podyplomowym.

Respondenci widzieli też wiele zalet osobistych. Obok lepszych warunków finansowych, Irlandia oferuje również lepsze warunki w miejscu pracy. Jako kraj anglojęzyczny, daje ona możliwość ćwiczenia języka (płynność w posługiwaniu się językiem angielskim jest w Polsce ceniona), co w połączeniu z doświadczeniem zawodowym zdobytym za granicą poprawi ich konkurencyjność w Polsce oraz będzie dobrze wyglądać w CV.

Migracja Polaków do Irlandii nastąpiła jako klasyczna „migracja łańcuchowa”. Przyjechali, ponieważ zachęcił ich ktoś, kto wcześniej przez jakiś czas przebywał w Irlandii; mieli gdzie się zatrzymać po przyjeździe, a w niektórych przypadkach mieli również pracę. Dla większości, pozostawanie bez pracy nawet przez tydzień było niemożliwe, więc im bardziej dostępna była praca i zakwaterowanie, tym większa była siła przyciągania. Wiele osób dotoczyło do swoich partnerów, ponieważ nie chcieli żyć oddzielnie, a niektórzy mieli w Irlandii przyjaciół lub członków rodziny, którzy wyrazili chęć pomocy, aby złagodzić skutki „lądowania” i ułatwić im start za granicą.

Wiedza o tym kraju zdobyta uprzednio podczas stypendiów i staży nakłoniła niektórych do powrotu do Irlandii. Poprzedni pobyt dał im wiedzę na temat irlandzkiej rzeczywistości oraz pozwolił im zbudować więzi towarzyskie i kontakty przydatne na wypadek powrotu.

Orientacje

Polska i Irlandia to dwa kraje Europy, w których jest najwyższy odsetek katolików. Co zaskakujące jednak, z badania wynika, że religia nie odegrała ważniejszej roli jako czynnik przyciągający Polaków do Irlandii.

Wielu Polskich imigrantów przybyło do Republiki Irlandii, aby zarobić i odłożyć pieniądze na lepszą przyszłość dla siebie i własnej rodziny w Polsce. Twierdzili, że chcą wrócić do Polski po spędzeniu pewnego czasu w Irlandii. Tacy tzw. target earners mają cele materialne, które pragną osiągnąć – w wielu przypadkach zapewnić sobie wygodne życie w Polsce w późniejszym czasie.

W czasie migracji, target earners skupiają się nie tylko na zarabianiu pieniędzy. Chcą podnieść poziom znajomości języka oraz zdobyć doświadczenie zawodowe, które wzbogaciłoby zawartość ich CV. Wielu ma nadzieje na dalszy rozwój zawodowy. Są młodzi i dopiero zaczynają swoje kariery. Osoby zatrudnione poniżej kwalifikacji pragną znaleźć zajęcie, które odpowiadałoby ich wykształceniu, wyszkoleniu i doświadczeniu zawodowemu.

Decyzja o powrocie do Polski wydaje się mniej prawdopodobna im dłużej pozostają w Irlandii. Stworzenie nowych więzi towarzyskich i silniejszych powiązań z Irlandią, jak na przykład zawarcie nowych przyjaźni lub wysłanie dziecka do irlandzkiej szkoły, sprawiły, że Irlandia stała się miejscem wygodniejszym do życia niż odległa Polska. Ale jednocześnie, podtrzymywanie języka polskiego i kultury polskiej jest ważną kwestią w wychowaniu drugiego pokolenia.

Wielu młodych, dobrze wykształconych Polaków decyduje się na przyjazd do Irlandii. Mówią dobrze po angielsku, a silnie rozwijająca się irlandzka gospodarka daje im okazję na zdobycie doświadczenia zawodowego przy wyższych niż w Polsce zarobkach. Nie zamierzają zostać w Irlandii na zawsze, ale postrzegają swoją aktualną pracę jako szansę na krok do przodu, niekoniecznie w Irlandii. Język angielski jest dla nich ważny i mają świadomość przewagi, jaką daje im międzynarodowe doświadczenie zawodowe. Można ich nazwać 'globalnymi kosmopolitami'⁵, którzy widzą dla siebie lepsze szanse za granicą niż w Polsce i wybierają to, co jest najlepsze dla ich kariery.

Wrażenia z pracy w Irlandii

Irlandia sprawiła na respondentach ogólnie pozytywne wrażenie. Irlandczycy są uważani za ludzi przyjaznych i uczynnych. Są też bardziej wyrozumiali względem pracowników zagranicznych z uwagi na irlandzką historię migracji.

Polskim imigrantom trudno jest przyzwyczaić się do irlandzkiej pogody i jedzenia. Narzekają na brak słońca, nadmiar deszczu, nadmiar 'fastfoodu' oraz na smak irlandzkiego chleba. Polskie sklepy i polskie działy żywnościowe w irlandzkich sklepach przyjęto bardzo ciepło.

Wielu wspomniało, że w Irlandii zdziwił ich brak inwestycji w infrastrukturę. Tak więc, podczas gdy imigranci byli świadomi, że Irlandczycy mogą uznawać ich za zacoowanych lub prostych, ponieważ pracują na słabo płatnych stanowiskach, byli też świadomi, że Irlandia pozostaje w tyle za wieloma miejscami, z których sami pochodzą.

Mimo to, Polacy czuli, że ich praca jest ceniona. Pracują ciężko i zwykle są odpowiednio wynagradzani. Ich doświadczenia związane z miejscem pracy utwierdzają ich w przekonaniu, że są postrzegani jako pracownicy godni zaufania, sumienni i zdolni do pracy przez wiele godzin w dużym tempie, a jednocześnie doceniani przez swoich pracodawców. Z drugiej strony, niektórzy uważali, że byli traktowani inaczej niż pracownicy irlandzcy i że wymagano od nich więcej. Niektórzy respondenci otrzymywali niższe wynagrodzenie niż Irlandczyk na tym samym stanowisku, lub też mieli trudności z otrzymaniem takich samych warunków pracy i uważali, że było to spowodowane ich narodowością.

5. Werber, P. (1999), „Ścieżki Globalne: Kosmopolici klasy robotniczej a tworzenie ponadnarodowych światów etnicznych” w Antropologii Społecznej, Tom 7, str. 17–35.

Instytucje etniczne

Wielu Polaków korzystało z instytucji etnicznych, aby pokonać tęsknotę za krajem lub też, aby zdobyć informacje o pracy w Irlandii, w celu zmiany pracy lub zdobycia lepszego doświadczenia zawodowego. Wielu wstąpiło do nich tylko dla zabawy lub po to, aby porozmawiać po polsku z rodakami. W trakcie sześciu miesięcy, w których prowadzono badania, polskie instytucje etniczne przeszły znaczącą ewolucję. W chwili obecnej pełnią one użyteczną rolę zarówno dla Polaków jak i dla Irlandczyków, którzy posiadają kontakty z Polakami w Irlandii.

Organizacje Informacyjne i Kulturalne

Chociaż wielu z respondentów twierdziło, że przybyli do Irlandii tylko czasowo, istnieje i rozwija się wiele instytucji, które służą polskiej społeczności i wydaje się, że będą to robić przez dłuższy czas budując polskie środowisko w Irlandii.

Polskie Centrum Informacji i Kultury w Dublinie dostarcza bezpłatnych informacji w języku polskim, głównie dla nowoprzybyłych, ale również dla tych, którzy pozostają tu już od dłuższego czasu, oraz promuje polską kulturę przez różnorodne imprezy. Polskie Stowarzyszenie Społeczno-Kulturalne oraz Dom Polski to miejsca gdzie można się spotykać i spędzić czas. Stowarzyszenie oferuje imprezy kulturalne w języku polskim oraz prowadzi w Dublinie bibliotekę, gdzie imigranci mają dostęp do polskich książek. Towarzystwo Polsko-Irlandzkie promuje polską kulturę wśród Irlandczyków oraz organizuje imprezy w języku angielskim.

Instytucje językowe i edukacyjne

W Dublinie istnieją dwie szkoły weekendowe dla Polaków. Polskie Stowarzyszenie Społeczno-Kulturalne oferuje kursy języka i kultury polskiej mające na celu podtrzymanie polskiego języka i kultury wśród dzieci dwujęzycznych. Jest też szkoła dla dzieci polskich obywateli mieszkających za granicą posiadająca akredytację Polskiego Ministerstwa Edukacji oraz posiadająca uprawnienia do wystawiania zatwierdzonych świadectw, aby wyrównać różnice pomiędzy programami szkół polskich i irlandzkich (na wypadek powrotu do Polski) i która będzie od roku 2007 działać jako pełnoprawna szkoła.

Podczas gdy niektóre instytucje kulturalne kładą nacisk na dzielenie się polską kulturą z Irlandczykami, większość instytucji organizuje imprezy artystyczne, kulturalne, muzyczne i informacyjne przeważnie po polsku i skierowane głównie do polskiej publiczności. Ustanowienie szkół z językiem polskim (niezależnie od sposobu ich organizacji) wskazuje na potrzebę podtrzymania języka polskiego u dzieci z pierwszego i drugiego pokolenia oraz orientację na Polskę i polski system edukacyjny. Niektórzy przybywają do Irlandii wyłącznie w celu zarobienia pieniędzy, ale stają przed trudną decyzją, kiedy pozostają w Irlandii do pewnego punktu w kształceniu własnego dziecka (zwykle czwarta klasa). Najczęściej polskie dzieci chodzą do zwykłych irlandzkich szkół i nieźle sobie radzą, kiedy już pokonają barierę językową.

Media

Polskie media w Irlandii rozwijają się bardzo prężnie. W chwili publikacji, w Dublinie wydawanych jest pięć polskich gazet: tygodnik Gazeta Polska, dwutygodniki Polski Express, Życie w Irlandii i Anons oraz miesięcznik Szpila. Publikacje te dostarczają porad prawnych dotyczących praw imigrantów i prawa irlandzkiego. Są też polskie spoty w irlandzkich mediach: polskie programy w irlandzkim radio i telewizji (Oto Polska), Polski Herald, tygodniowy dodatek do The Evening Herald oraz polskie kolumny w niektórych irlandzkich gazetach, jak Limerick Leader.

Ogólnie rzecz biorąc, czegoś mi brakowało.
Nie w sensie ekonomicznym, finansowym.
Brakowało mi po prostu przygód. Chciałem,
żeby moje życie było ciekawsze. Gdy nadarzyła
się okazja, zdecydowałem się ją wykorzystać.

Religia

W Dublinie znajduje się polski kościół, gdzie odbywają się msze w języku polskim, na które regularnie przybywa wielu wiernych. Religia nie wydaje się być czynnikiem decydującym o wyborze Irlandii jako celu migracji, ale Polacy przywożą swoją religię ze sobą. Kościół jest też ogniwem, które buduje więzi społeczne, pozwala ludziom spotkać się i uzyskać pomoc w potrzebie.

Życie towarzyskie

Polskie imprezy są coraz częściej organizowane w Dublinie, a w ciągu ostatniego roku odbyło się wiele polskich koncertów popularnych artystów, którzy zostali zaproszeni z Polski, aby wystąpić dla Polaków w Irlandii (muzyka, kabaret, itp.), wystaw sztuki i wykładów. Polskie puby i restauracje są postrzegane jako dobre miejsca spotkań, gdzie można pooglądać polską telewizję, posłuchać polskiej muzyki i skosztować polskiego jedzenia. Jest też coraz więcej sklepów, które dostarczają polskiego jedzenia i polskich produktów w dużych irlandzkich domach handlowych, jak na przykład Dunnes Stores, Super Valu; oraz polskich piekarni. Jak poprzednio, jest to nowy rynek żywności dla polskich imigrantów, ale też dla Irlandczyków.

Praktyki ponadnarodowe

Polscy imigranci w Irlandii nadal pozostają w bliskim kontakcie z Polską i innymi częściami świata. Mają bliskie kontakty z rodziną i przyjaciółmi, którzy zostali w Polsce. Jako że wielu z nich uważa swój pobyt w Irlandii za tymczasowy, żyją w obu miejscach naraz, utrzymując ściśle więzi z krewnymi i przyjaciółmi. Wielu z nich korzysta z osiągnięć techniki, aby radzić sobie z geograficznym odcięciem od poprzedniego miejsca zamieszkania.

Polacy wybierają różne sposoby komunikacji. Prawie wszyscy korzystają z Internetu jako sposobu utrzymania kontaktu z rodziną i przyjaciółmi. Piszą maile, korzystają z Internetowych komunikatorów, takich jak Gadu Gadu i telefonii internetowej, Skype.

Kolejnym bardzo wygodnym sposobem komunikacji jest telefon. W chwili obecnej istnieje szeroki wachlarz kart telefonicznych oraz wiele kafejek internetowych i sklepów z telefoniami – wielu imigrantów korzysta z nich, jako że nie mają stałej linii telefonicznej lub też czasem trudno im uzyskać połączenie internetowe w domu.

W sposobie korzystania z mediów Polacy są zorientowani na „dom”. Czytają i oglądają wiadomości z Polski przez Internet i podoba im się pomysł polskich mediów w Irlandii.

Polscy imigranci wysyłają do domu pieniądze, ale czasy wysyłania pieniędzy w szarych kopertach dawno minęły. Do przesyłania pieniędzy do domu, większość używa przelewów i transferów bankowych, a wielu korzysta z bankowości internetowej tu w Irlandii jak i Polsce do sprawdzania przelewów. Inni korzystają z Internetu, aby inwestować pieniądze na polskiej giełdzie papierów wartościowych lub, aby uprawiać hazard on-line w języku polskim.

Linie lotnicze oferują codzienne przeloty pomiędzy większymi miastami w Polsce i w Irlandii, a do Warszawy codziennie odjeżdża autokar.

Problemy, na jakie natrafiają Polacy w Irlandii

Dzięki swobodnemu przepływowi siły roboczej, niektórzy Polacy nie mają większych trudności po przyjeździe do Irlandii. Polskich pracowników nie dotyczy obowiązek wizowy ani też pozwolenia na pracę. Mogą przyjechać w dowolnym czasie i muszą jedynie zarejestrować się w Departamencie ds. Socjalnych i Rodzinnych i otrzymać numer PPSN, żeby uzyskać prawo podjęcia legalnej pracy w Irlandii. Największym problemem polskich imigrantów jest język. Im lepiej znają angielski, tym łatwiej jest im wkroczyć na ścieżkę kariery zawodowej.

Z powodu nieznamości języka, imigranci bywają narażeni na trudności. Nawet proste czynności, takie jak uzyskanie numeru PPSN, otwarcie konta bankowego oraz znalezienie zakwaterowania mogą być trudnym zadaniem bez znajomości języka.

Brak znajomości języka angielskiego jest też czynnikiem, który sprawia, że Polacy wiele tracą na rynku pracy. Konkurencja o pracę rośnie i nawet na stanowiskach niższego szczebla wymagania stają się coraz wyższe. Najważniejsze wymaganie dotyczy dobrego porozumiewania się. Wystarczające umiejętności językowe większość respondentów uznała za najważniejszy czynnik stanowiący o dobrym życiu za granicą.

Obawa o utratę pracy, połączona ze słabymi umiejętnościami językowymi pogłębia niezdolność do obrony swoich praw w obliczu dyskryminacji i nadużyć na rynku pracy (praca na czarno, zbyt niskie zarobki, złe warunki pracy). W Polsce jest wysokie bezrobocie i przez to w Irlandii stosunkowo łatwiej znaleźć pracę, ale w Irlandii o pracę też trzeba konkurować.

Słyszałem, że istnieje segregacja. Że Węgier zgodziłby się pracować za minimum 9 euro, Polak za 8 euro i wiem też, że Łotysz, Słowak i Rosjanin zaakceptowałiby stawkę nawet poniżej 7 euro.

Wnioski wynikające z badania

Wiele z tych wniosków pochodzi od samych respondentów oraz tylko potwierdza to, co zostało ustalone na podstawie poprzednich badań w odniesieniu do spraw, które są ważne dla imigrantów z innych krajów.⁶

Zajęcia z angielskiego

Wielu niedawno przybyłych Polaków odczuwa izolację. Wielu zna angielski na poziomie niższym niż by sobie tego życzyli czy potrzebowali. Ze wszystkich wypowiedzi wynika, że znajomość angielskiego jest kluczem do znalezienia pracy i dobrego życia w Irlandii. Dlatego też, jedną z sugestii jest to, aby pracujący imigranci mieli szansę uczęszczać na kursy języka angielskiego w celu poprawienia umiejętności porozumiewania się w języku angielskim. Dla wielu osób pracujących na niskopłatnych stanowiskach, cena za lekcje prywatne jest zbyt wysoka. Innym problemem jest czas, jaki imigranci mogą poświęcić na doskonalenie znajomości języka angielskiego. Dlatego też bardzo potrzebne są bezpłatne lub tanie wieczorowe zajęcia z języka angielskiego dla pracujących imigrantów. Ten program powinien zaspokoić potrzeby imigrantów i łączyć nauczanie języka z silnym naciskiem na język mówiony i treści związane z pracą.

Ponadto, zajęcia z konwersacji polsko-angielskich mogłyby okazać się przydatne zarówno dla Polaków jak i głównego nurtu społeczeństwa irlandzkiego: wskazywanie na podobieństwa i różnice, poznawanie kultury drugiego kraju poprzez język i kontakty osobiste jak również łączenie interesów z przyjemnością.

6. Patrz Conroy, P. i Brennan, A., „Pracownicy Migracyjni i Ich Przeżycia”, Dublin: Poznaj Rasizm; Mac Enri, P. i Walley, P. (2003), „Migracja siły roboczej do Irlandii”, Dublin: Irlandzka Rada ds. Imigrantów.

Dostarczanie informacji w Polsce na temat wyjazdów do Irlandii

Wielu nowoprzybytych Polaków mogłoby uniknąć wielu problemów w pierwszej fazie swojego pobytu w Irlandii gdyby otrzymali wiarygodne informacje jeszcze będąc w swoim kraju – na przykład, poprzez nowy CD Rom FAS oraz spoty reklamowe w polskiej telewizji, aby dowiedzieć się wszystkiego jeszcze przed wyjazdem. W ten sposób mogliby lepiej przygotować się na nową sytuację w Irlandii. Informacje przekazywane ustnie często rozpowszechniają przesadzony obraz Irlandii jako celtyckiego tygrysa oraz o „pracy dla każdego”. Istnieje potrzeba informacji oraz świadomości wymagań irlandzkiego rynku pracy. Nadal trzeba przypominać ludziom, że należy się dobrze przygotować, napisać CV i uzyskać tłumaczenia świadectw na język angielski oraz zdobyć referencje jeszcze przed wyjazdem z Polski. Konieczne jest uświadomienie ludziom jak wysoki jest koszt życia w Irlandii i ile trzeba czasu i środków, aby znaleźć pierwszą pracę po przybyciu do Irlandii.

Informacja o przysługujących prawach

Większość z respondentów przybyła do Irlandii w celu zarobienia i odłożenia pieniędzy. Niestety wielu z nich nie posiada wystarczającej znajomości języka angielskiego, a nawet ci, którzy znają język lepiej, mogą nadal mieć trudności ze zrozumieniem języka związanego z prawami i uprawnieniami. Dlatego też, przekazywanie informacji na temat praw i uprawnień w języku polskim (tak jak to zrobił SIPTU) jest zalecane i pomocne w podnoszeniu świadomości i pewności siebie wśród imigrantów. Jest jeszcze potrzeba informacji o prawach związanych zatrudnieniem (podatki, warunki pracy, przepisy zapobiegające dyskryminacji, itp.), oraz o tym jak dochodzić swoich praw w przypadku, gdy pracodawca nie wywiązuje się ze swoich obowiązków.

Istnieje gęsta sieć więzów społecznych, które wspierają ogromną liczbę polskich pracowników, ale mogłyby one robić znacznie więcej gdyby otrzymały więcej wsparcia finansowego i odpowiednie fundusze rządowe. Dlatego też zaleca się wprowadzenie większej liczby przepisów w celu wspierania i nawiązywania kontaktów z organizacjami irlandzkimi o wspólnych interesach (takich jak związki zawodowe), po to, aby wspierać polską społeczność budując silne więzy z innymi grupami społeczeństwa irlandzkiego o tych samych interesach (na przykład z innymi pracownikami).

Zakończenie

Z raportu wynika, że, podczas gdy większość imigrantów przybywa z powodów ekonomicznych (czy to jako target earners czy też global cosmopolitans), wywierają oni wpływ również w wymiarze społecznym i politycznym. Wielu posiada dobre wykształcenie, niektórzy również dobrze znają język angielski, przybywają też osoby mniej wykształcone. Niezależnie od tego, jest oczywiste, że większość z nich pracuje poniżej swoich kwalifikacji i umiejętności. W samej Irlandii jak i pomiędzy Polską i Irlandią istnieją silne więzy społeczne. Widoczna jest też pewna izolacja Polaków w Irlandii zarówno, dlatego że wszyscy przyjechali w tym samym czasie i mieszkają razem oraz z powodu ograniczeń językowych. Wysuwa się zalecenia i sugestie, aby zorganizować bezpłatne kursy języka angielskiego (wieczorami), zwiększyć wsparcie dla organizacji etnicznych oraz uznać polskie związki ponadnarodowe.

To była spontaniczna decyzja. Brałem pod uwagę kilka krajów. Początkowo myślałem o Hiszpanii. To, co zdecydowało o Irlandii to fakt, że mógłbym tu pracować legalnie, a zarobki są z pewnością lepsze niż w Hiszpanii. Poza tym, Dublin to stolica – wielkie miasto oferujące duże możliwości. Mogę tu znaleźć szkołę – chcę kontynuować naukę.



Statistical information

The number of Polish immigrants in Ireland has greatly increased in the last five years. Because of positive economic development and rather flexible employment and work permissions, Ireland is often chosen as a destination country. An additional pull-factor to Ireland is the fact that it is one of only three countries, including Great Britain and Sweden, that has opened its employment market to free labour movement after the enlargement of the European Union on May 1, 2004. Since then, many people from the new accession countries have decided to change where they live and work. Approximately 130,000 workers from the new union countries applied for Personal Public Service Numbers (PPSN)² in the last two years. As Poland is the largest of the accession countries, the percentage of Polish immigrants arriving to

The number of Polish immigrants in Ireland has greatly increased in the last five years. Because of positive economic development and flexible employment and work permissions, Ireland is often chosen as a destination country.

work in Ireland is the highest.³ The Polish Embassy in Dublin estimates, in March 2006, that about 120,000 Polish migrants were currently staying in the Republic of Ireland. 90,320 PPSN were issued to people from Poland between May 2004 and December 2005.⁴ The most recent numbers from the Department of Social and Family Affairs state that 25,679 PPSN have been issued to Polish workers from January until end of April 2006: roughly 10,000 per month.⁵ Based on PPSN alone, it is not possible to ascertain how many of the registered people stayed in Ireland and if they have family members here; how many have already left the country, as well as how many have arrived after April 2006 or are working without a PPSN.

2. "... [PPSNs] are individual identifiers required in order to gain employment in Ireland or to access state benefits and public services. PPSNs provide a good indicator of the short-term trends in migration into Ireland from the EU10. It is important to note that PPSNs record the monthly gross inflow of migrants from the Accession States who are predominantly looking for employment and not the increase in the stock migrants. The number of PPSNs issued is likely to overstate the stock of Accession State nationals as they will also include those EU10 migrants who work in Ireland for only a short period of time and return home." Doyle, N., Hughes, G. and Wadenjo, E. (2006) 'Freedom of Movement for Workers from Central and Eastern Europe', p. 59, www.esri.ie.

3. Financial Times Polska, 12.02.06.

4. Numbers received from the Polish Embassy in Dublin, enquiry via email, 27.03.06.

5. The Irish Times, 23.05.06.



Methodology

For this research, 23 narrative semi-structured interviews with Polish migrants to Ireland were conducted. To increase the validity of the research, all interviews were carried out in the Polish language and translated into English during the transcription. The co-ethnic research was a unique advantage in gaining access to the target group, and also in getting more open and genuine responses in the native language.

Knowing that the members of the Polish community in Ireland are interconnected, the interviewees were contacted by using snowball-sampling methods. For the semi-structured interviews a catalogue of questions was used, regarding the history of interviewees migration, push and pull factors influencing their decisions about migration, the circumstances of obtaining their current job, and their plans for the future in professional as well as in private life. The catalogue of questions served as a framework and stimulated the interviewees to talk freely about their experiences in Ireland. The interviews lasted between 35 and 65 minutes and were tape-recorded with the agreement of the interviewees. To maintain the anonymity, all the names have been changed.

Several expert interviews were also conducted with people working in Polish organisations serving the migrant community. In addition to the interviews, participant observation was carried out at the Polish Information and Culture Centre in Dublin and during Polish events.

The sample of 23 interviews with Polish migrants contained 12 female and 11 male interviewees. The interviewees were between 19 and 35 years old, came from different regions of Poland and have been living and working in Ireland, mostly in the greater Dublin area, for a period from three months to four and a half years. Many hold third-level degrees but work in under-qualified positions while others work commensurate with their education. Most of them are in steady relationships, (some married, some not), while seven are single. Many of the couples moved together from Poland to Ireland, or more precisely one partner came to Ireland to join the other. Only one couple interviewed is living separately: the husband in Ireland and the wife and son in Poland. Through participant observation, it was observed that there are many more divided families with one spouse only living and working in Ireland and remitting money to the others remaining behind to care for family in Poland. The families living separately were making efforts to live together again: either in Ireland or in Poland. The loss prompted by long-term separation takes a deep personal toll. Magda explains:

“I would like that it changes as soon as possible. We have enough. If it should be longer like that, two or three years longer, our marriage will break apart. It won't make any sense (...) How many important moments in Adam's life is he missing? Words, situations, a stupid Grandmother's or Grandfather's day, a carnival party in the kindergarten ... We cannot have a second child; I'm raising one child alone now (...) We are in a very difficult situation.”


(Female, 28, full-time care giver in Poland.)

Migration Theory

Neo-classical migration theories have focused traditionally on macro (push and pull) factors, which shape how people come to decide to move from one place to another for economic gain. Dual Labour market theories move away from micro rational choice theories to explain not individual decisions to migrate, but instead the structural conditions under which decisions are taken to analyse the labour demands of modern industrial societies. World Systems Theory extends this not just to singular modern economies, but instead the global world as an outcome of the structure of the world market including the demand for labour (and hence movement of people to fill that demand).⁶ Perpetuating and facilitating international movement are social networks of migrants throughout the world, which can develop into institutions, which facilitate (and control) migration flows from poorer to richer countries.⁷

This research does not carry out a detailed analysis of the macro context of economic migration in Ireland as others have done.⁸ Nor does it study that impact that this is having on understandings of Irishness⁹ or racialisation of Irishness.¹⁰ Instead, the research takes an interactionist perspective on migration. It uses the background of the economic situation to understand the processes that this small group of Polish migrants went through in their recent migration to Ireland and uses this to contextualise their “modes of entry”¹¹ (largely determined by EU membership) into Ireland, their “modes of orientation” to Ireland, Poland or elsewhere and the strategies they employ to activate their transnational social networks to cope with these factors. To do this, the research uses the rubric of “transborder nationalism”¹² which describes migrants as long distance nationalists (in this case to Poland) and “dual nationalists” as becoming a part of the host society while still identifying strongly and participating economically and politically in not only homeland, but also hometown, issues.

6. Wallerstein, E. (1974), 'The Modern World System: Capitalist Agriculture and the Origins of the European World Economy in the Sixteenth Century', New York: Academic Press.
7. Massey, D.S. et al (1993), 'Theories of International Migration: A Review and Appraisal' in *Population and Development Review*, Vol. 19, No. 3, pp. 431-466.
8. Hughes, G. and Quinn, E. (2004), 'The Impact of Immigration on Europe's Societies': Ireland, Dublin: ERSI; NESCC Report (2005), 'Managing Migration in Ireland: A Social and Economic Analysis' in the *Irish Times*, K. Holmquist (2006), 'Immigration Policies Bad for Irish Workers, Report Warns' (11.03.06); Barrett, A., Bergin, A. and Duffy, D. (2006), 'The Labour Market Characteristics and Labour Market Impacts of Immigrants in Ireland' in *The Economic and Social Review*, Vol. 37, No. 1, pp. 1-26.
9. Lentin, R. and McVeigh, R. (eds) (2002), 'Racism and Anti-Racism in Ireland, Belfast': Beyond the Pale Publications; Loyal, S. (2003), 'Welcome to the Celtic Tiger: Racism, Immigration and the State' in Coulter, C. and Coleman, S. (eds) 'The End of Irish History: Critical Reflections on the Celtic Tiger', Manchester: University of Manchester Press, pp. 74-94; Maguire, M. (2004), 'Differently Irish: A Cultural History Exploring 25 Years of Vietnamese-Irish Identity', Dublin: The Woodfield Press.
10. Mac an Ghaill, M. (2002), 'Beyond and Black-White Dualism: Racialisation and Racism in the Republic of Ireland and the Irish Diaspora Experience' in *Irish Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 11, No. 2, pp. 99-122; Moriarty, E. (2005), 'Telling Identity Stories: The Routinisation of Racialisation in Ireland' in *Sociological Research Online*, Vol. 10, No. 3, <http://www.socresonline.org.uk/10/3/moriarty.html>.
11. Portes, A. and Rumbaut, R.G. (1990), 'Immigrant America: A Portrait', Berkeley: University of California Press.
12. Fitzgerald, D. (2004), 'Beyond Transnationalism: Mexican hometown politics at an American Labour Market' in *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, Vol. 27, No. 2, pp. 228-247.

An aerial photograph of a coastline. The top half of the image shows the ocean with white-capped waves breaking onto a sandy beach. The bottom half of the image shows a wide, flat, light-colored area, likely a salt flat or a dry lake bed, extending to the horizon. The overall scene is captured from a high angle, showing the rhythmic patterns of the waves and the stark contrast between the water, sand, and the flat land.

Perpetuating and facilitating international movement are social networks of migrants throughout the world, which can develop into institutions, which facilitate (and control) migration flows from poorer to richer countries.

Quality
Homemade
Sandwiches

Polskie
Produkty



Tutaj kupisz
tradycyjne Polskie
Pieczywo

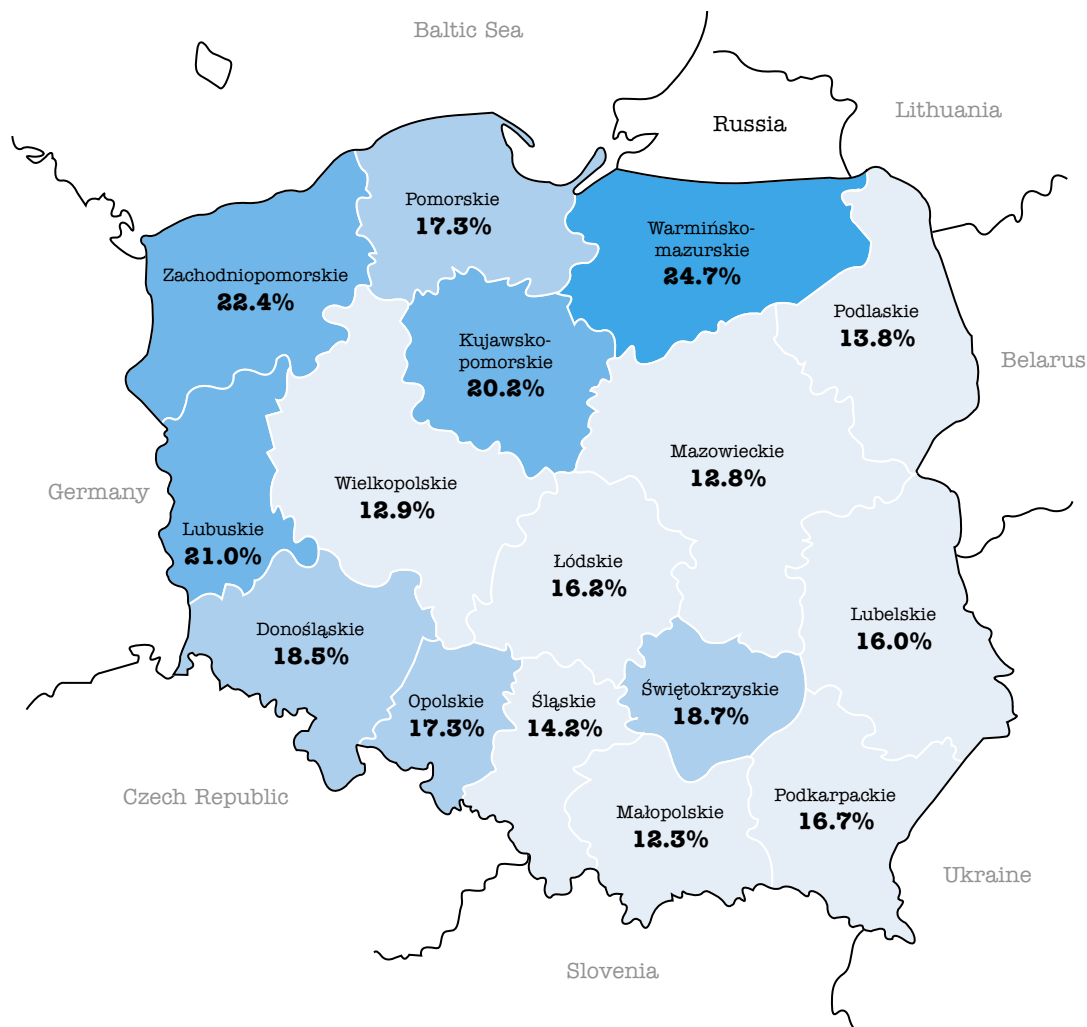
Chleb Duży
Graham
Razowy 100%
Bulki



Migration Decisions

The decision to migrate is a complex and individual one. Every migrant carries out his/her own unique life history. Still, of the sample of 23 interviews conducted for this research, it was possible to observe patterns of reasons for leaving Poland and choosing Ireland specifically as the destination country.

There are various reasons motivating people to change their places of living and working. As reported by Polish migrant workers in Ireland, both the macro economic and the micro economic factors played a role in the decision-making processes. The much-emphasised general (macro economic) push factor from Poland was the unstable situation of the Polish employment market. The unemployment rate in Poland overall is 15 per cent, ranging from 12,3 per cent to 24,7 per cent in some regions.



Numbers from 30.06.06
www.bezrobocie.net
retrieved on 30.08.06 with permission.



People either do not have jobs or they are often afraid of losing the position they have. The market in Poland is an “employer driven market” – the employer dictates the rules, and the employee should feel grateful for having the opportunity to work. Interviewees who had previously worked in Poland earned much more money in Ireland, not only working as professionals but also in low-skilled jobs.

“I love my country. If only it could offer me a little more money, a little better life conditions. I think that Irish people have a very good life; for the money they earn, they can afford quite a lot. Their life is cheaper than in Poland, if you consider what you can buy here for your wage. If I could have such life in Poland I wouldn’t have gone abroad.”

(Male, 28, construction worker)

“I love my country. If only it could offer me a little more money, a little better life conditions. I think that Irish people have a very good life; for the money they earn, they can afford quite a lot. Their life is cheaper than in Poland, if you consider what you can buy here for your wage. If I could have such life in Poland I wouldn’t have gone abroad.”

Interviewer: “How much did you earn in Poland?”

Interviewee: “2000 PLN”

Interviewer: “And here?”

Interviewee: “4 times more.”

(Male, 29, architect)

Ireland also offers a way to combine studying with work for the student’s own maintenance. The Polish job market does not have vacancies for students that would allow financial independence during the time they are studying. In addition, there are not many work opportunities for young graduates with less experience in Poland.

“I wanted to start studying somewhere where it makes sense to finish it. And secondly, I can do both at the same time: study (I’m an evening student), and work for my own maintenance. And that wouldn’t be possible in Poland.”

(Male, 24, shop assistant and student)

Economic growth and shortages in the labour force were motivating factors in coming to Ireland in the macro economic sense. Ireland's high wage economy, which goes together with better living and working conditions, effectively encouraged many interviewees to migrate. They saw the opportunity to achieve much more financially in a shorter period of time than would be the case in Poland. There are also greater chances for young people to continue education at the postgraduate level in Ireland. The interviewees put it this way:

"I wanted my child to have something; that its father doesn't have to work hard only to pay back debts".

(Male, 28, construction worker)

"We both worked in Poland before ... and we earned quite well ... As an engineer I earned 2,500 PLN gross, my wife with her BA degree also had 2,500 gross. We rented a flat, but the money we both had only allowed us to live from first to the first [of the month] practically and it wouldn't allow doing more. It annoyed us".

(Male, 26, Engineer)

"I decided to emigrate because I wanted to be a scientist. It's very difficult in Poland, because of the situation at the universities. It's hard, even if you're a good student, and I was one; I don't want to be immodest. I had good grades. I got a Dean's award for great grades, but no one gave me any encouragement to stay at the academy".

(Male, 25, Postgraduate student)

Polish migrants also appreciated the easy access to the Irish job market and the fact that Ireland gave up restrictions on the freedom of movement after accession in May 2004. As a result, there is no need for a visa or work permit for people coming to work from new EU member countries.

"We came to Ireland because they opened the border for foreigners first, for the new EU countries. They gave their jobs. One of very few countries. So we didn't need a visa. You only needed a passport or the national ID to cross the border".

(Female, 25, sales assistant)

The interviewees saw many advantages in the personal sense. As well as better financial conditions, Ireland also offers better conditions in the workplace. As an English-speaking country, it also opens the way to practise the language (fluency in English is valued in Poland), which together with work experience abroad would increase the competition value back in Poland and make for an attractive CV.

"And the experience in the job. I don't want to give up my profession. I'm learning English. I earn four or five times more than I could in Poland (...). Luckily we work in our professions. So we're getting experience in our professions and we'll be able to use it when we come back".

(Male, 29, architect)

Polish migrants to Ireland performed classical "chain migration". They came having been encouraged by someone who had already been staying in Ireland for some time; they had a place to live when they arrived, and in some cases a job also. For most, not working for even one week was not a possibility, so the more available the

accommodation and jobs were, the bigger the draw. Many joined the other half of a couple because they did not want to live separately, and some had friends or family members in Ireland willing to help soften the landing and make the start abroad easier.

“Because my husband came here first ... No, it started with his uncle. His uncle came here four years ago. And then, about two years ago the uncle brought my father-in-law here, and about two months later my father-in-law brought my husband here. And I allowed it, but on condition that in three months I’ll come too. Because I thought that a long-distance marriage does not make sense. I couldn’t imagine that he would be here and I would be in Poland”.

(Female, 25, sales assistant)

“Generally, I was missing something. Not in the economic, financial sense; I was just missing adventures. I wanted my life to be more interesting. When the opportunity came, I decided to take it”.

“Because of my husband. He came up with the idea of doing a PhD in Ireland. He was studying politics at a Polish University - something to do with the constitution. There were not many books on this topic available in Poland, so he had to come to Ireland to have access to the required books”.

(Female, 34, administrator)

“I finished my studies and Robert, my boyfriend, was already here and we wanted to be together; wherever, Ireland or another country, but Robert wanted to be here, earn money; he had some plans and I wanted to be with him”.

(Female, 23, sales assistant)

“I have my brother here and he helped me a lot (...) I wasn’t alone, and I didn’t have to ask strangers how to do it, where to go. I could ask my brother, without stress. It meant a lot to me”.

(Female, 23, sales assistant)

Knowledge about the country gained during a previous scholarship or internship stimulated the desire to come back to Ireland. A previous stay in the country provided insight into the Irish reality and also resulted in building up social networks and useful contacts for returning.

“It’s my second time here... I came as a Socrates student and coming here was the only possibility to get the scholarship from my faculty. I wouldn’t have minded going to Sweden or Finland at that point, but Ireland was the only option.

And when I was in Ireland, I improved my English. I knew some people, customs, food, and I knew that it wouldn't be a problem to come here for longer".

(Male, 25, engineer, Postgraduate student)

"My adventure in Ireland started with the internship from my university. The internship was supposed to last six months. After six months, the employer offered us jobs... Some stayed, and I went back, passed what I had to pass, suspended studying and came back to earn some more money".

(Male, 26, gardener)

These young migrants follow the adventure; they are "cosmopolitan"¹³ and want to experience a lot in life, before they start a serious, regulated, settled life.

"Generally, I was missing something. Not in the economic, financial sense; I was just missing adventures. I wanted my life to be more interesting. And when the opportunity came, I decided to take it".

(Female, 27, staff member in pharmacy)

Poland and Ireland are two of the countries in Europe with the highest percentages of Catholics. Surprisingly, this research has noted that religion did not play a great or decisive role as a pull factor for Polish people coming to Ireland.

The 'mode of entry' for Polish people to Ireland is smoothed by Poland's EU accession and Ireland's free work movement as well as the role that migrants' social networks play in encouraging people to come from Poland to Ireland for available jobs or homes or both.

"Because my uncle was already here, he helped me to find work; he arranged a job for me. When I came I had a job. But it was illegal, without taxes, for little money, €6 per hour, and without any social insurance. We lived at the construction site where we worked".

(Male, 28, construction worker)

"My brother got me here. In my first job I worked with the family where he worked. I didn't have any problems with job or house".

(Female, 23, sales assistant)

"First of all, I wanted to go to an English-speaking country. Secondly, my friend went to Ireland. She is studying here, and I knew we could stay together. I'm not a person, who would decide to go somewhere completely alone, without contact with anyone, just blind. I am an adventurer, but not to that extent".

(Female, 27, staff member in pharmacy)

13. Van Steenbergen. B. (1994), 'Towards a Global Ecological Citizen' in van Steenbergen, B. (ed) The 'Condition of Citizenship', London: Sage, pp. 141-152.

a
th steamy
elgance
1.50
t
1.90
S
nt

APPLE STRUDEL 1.60
DANISH PASTRIES 1.60
CROISSANT 1.00
PIE CORN 0.50
CRISPS 0.50
SOUP + BREAD

SUPP

COLORED
HAZELNUT



Modes of Orientation

The "mode of entry" also determined in large part the "mode of orientation" of people's actions. This research was conducted primarily with recent migrants who have been in Ireland for five years or less. Their plans for the future are not clear yet. The more recent the migration, the less precise the picture of the future seems to be.

Many Polish migrants came to the Republic of Ireland with the goal of earning and saving money for a better future for themselves and their families back in Poland. They stated that they wished to go back to Poland in the future after some time spent in Ireland. These target earners have material goals that they wish to achieve – in many cases to organise a comfortable life in Poland at a later stage.

“We want to be here, earn some money to have a good start in Poland, and go back. And have a colder winter, a warmer summer, four seasons, Mickiewicz [literature, culture and all that associated with the poet Mickiewicz]”.

(Female, 25, pharmacist)

“To save some money. To pay off my student debts... I didn't have the opportunity to earn before what I earn here. And I started to like it. I have money that others wouldn't earn in their lifetime in Poland”.

(Male, 26, gardener)

“We want to work here, get experience, and go back to Poland. I wouldn't want to stay here forever – not to settle down here. I think it'll be better in Poland; the whole family is there.”

During the time of migration target earners are not only concentrating on earning money. They want to improve their language skills and earn professional experience to enrich their CV. Many hoped to improve their professional development. They are young and starting their careers. Those who are underemployed, want to find jobs commensurate with their education, training and past experience.

“We want to work here, get experience, and go back to Poland. I wouldn't want to stay here forever – not to settle down here. I think it'll be better in Poland; the whole family is there”.

(Male, 29, architect)

“I just wanted to find something and start to earn money from the beginning. And then – and I still want to do it – I want to find a job in tourism, in my profession”.

(Female, 23, sales assistant)

The decision to return to Poland seems less likely the longer interviewees stayed in Ireland. Building up new social networks and creating stronger links with Ireland, such as making new friends, or sending a child to an Irish school, made Ireland a more comfortable place to live than the distant Poland. But at the same time, maintaining the Polish language and culture is a very important issue in the raising of the second generation.

“As I know the language better, as I stay here longer, I want to live here. I got used to it. Or rather, I got unused to Poland. I don’t know if I will find myself back there. When I go there for a month for the summer, many things disturb me. I didn’t have that feeling before. Before, there was only homesickness. And now, when I’m in Poland I think that I’m coming back home when I come here”.

(Female, 34, administrator)

Many young and well-educated Polish people decide to come to Ireland. They have a good command of English and Ireland’s booming economy gives them an opportunity to gain professional experience while earning higher wages than at home. They are not committed to staying in Ireland forever, but they see the current job as a chance to move on, not necessarily in Ireland. The English language is important to them and they are aware of advantages of international work experience. They could be described as “global cosmopolitans”¹⁴, seeing better chances for themselves abroad than in Poland and choosing the optimal career options.

“It wasn’t a trip to work, just to earn the money. I’m starting a new life, new possibilities. I finished studying and saw that nothing interesting awaited me there [in Poland]: low wages, less possibilities, high unemployment. I found that I’m a courageous person; I know English and I can try; I have my degree”.

(Female, 24, HR)

“It was a spontaneous decision... I took a few countries into consideration. Initially, I was thinking about Spain. What gave Ireland the advantage was that I could work here legally and the earnings are certainly better than in Spain. And Dublin is a capital city – a big city with possibilities. I can find a school here; I want to continue studying”.

(Male, 21, shop assistant)

Through participant observation, it was noted that a great number of Polish students are coming to Ireland during summer vacation from Polish universities. They could be classified as both cosmopolitan and target earners, choosing Ireland as a place where they hope to profit in many ways in a short period of time through improving the language, getting international experience, adventure and money for their education. They might come back (or go someplace else) as they start to develop a network between countries.

14 Werber, P. (1999), ‘Global Pathways: Working Class Cosmopolitans and the Creation of Transnational Ethnic Worlds’ in *Social Anthropology*, Vol. 7, pp. 14-35.

“It was a spontaneous decision. I took a few countries into consideration. Initially, I was thinking about Spain. What gave Ireland the advantage was that I could work here legally and the earnings are certainly better than in Spain. And Dublin is a capital city – a big city with possibilities. I can find a school here; I want to continue studying.”



Impressions of Working in Ireland

The overall impression of Ireland from the interviews was positive. Irish people are considered to be very friendly and helpful. They were also more understanding about foreign workers because of the history of Irish migration.

The weather and the food were difficult for Polish migrants to adjust to. They complained about lack of sunshine, too much rain, too much fast food and the taste of Irish bread. Polish shops and Polish food sections in Irish stores are welcomed.

“I don’t like the weather mostly ... It influences my mood - very pessimistic. It brings me down very much, such weather. I need sun. When I go to Poland, I’m happy.”

(Female, 25, sales assistant)

“Instead of clothes, take food with you, a suitcase full of food!”

(Male, 24, student)

Many also mentioned that the lack of infrastructural investment in Ireland was surprising. For example, a ‘know before you go’¹⁵ programme mentions that even though Ireland is a geographically-small country and one might expect things to be relatively close together, in fact, the public transport system is insufficient and unreliable sometimes.

“Instead of clothes, take food with you, a suitcase full of food!”.

So, while migrants themselves were aware that Irish people might think them ‘backwards’ or ‘unsophisticated’ because they will work low-wage jobs, they themselves were aware that Ireland lags behind many of the places from which they came.

Even so, Polish people felt that their work was valued here. They work hard and generally get appropriate earnings. Their experiences in the workplace make them feel that they are seen as reliable, diligent and willing to work long hours at a fast pace, while being appreciated by their employers. On the other hand, some felt that they were treated differently than the Irish workers and that more is demanded from them. Some interviewees received lower wages than an Irish person in the same position, or experienced difficulties in getting better terms and conditions, and they felt that this was because of their nationality.

15. This is a FÁS programme which provides information to people coming to Ireland from Poland.

“They say we work well. Carefully, good, fast. I think that’s because they hire us. And certainly for smaller money. I think that’s a reason as well”.

Interviewer: “Do you think Irish employees get more money?”

“Yes. I know that. I saw pay slips. The smallest rate Irish have is €13. Yes. I saw pay slips of my colleagues and it is so. Really!”

(Female, 24, sales assistant)

“Even if it concerns work, money ... for example, an Irish person will have an easier time getting a full-time job than a Pole. In the first instance, as it was in X [department store], when they gave a full-time position, they gave it to Irish first and only then to other persons. There is a difference between foreigners and natives – they have different conditions than us”.

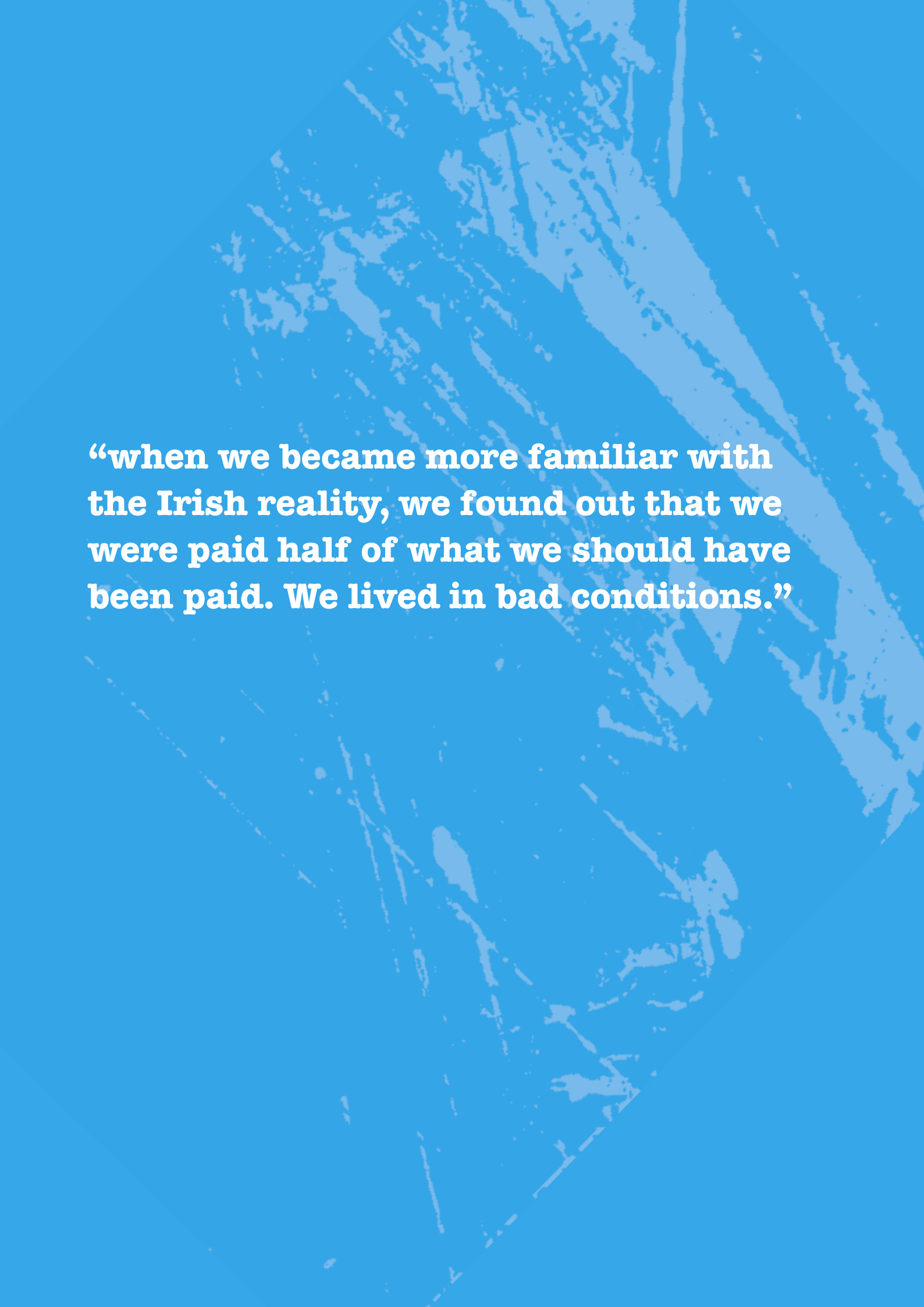
(Female, 26, department store worker)

“Here they say that in some way we take their work and that they can’t change jobs so easily anymore and they have less money. But on the other hand, they are satisfied with our work, at least the supervisors. When I talk to a usual employee, for them it’s not too good, but when I talk to a supervisor, they are very pleased with the work of foreigners, especially Poles. They say that we work very well, we are reliable, when we do something we do it properly and bring it to the end”.

(Female, 25, sales assistant)

“I don’t trust the Irish. They are nice and friendly, or they seem to be, but they think something else, and behave very different in situations... when we became more familiar with the Irish reality, we found out that we were paid half of what we should have been paid. We lived in bad conditions”.

(Male, 28, construction worker)



“when we became more familiar with the Irish reality, we found out that we were paid half of what we should have been paid. We lived in bad conditions.”

Ethnic Institutions

Many Polish people used ethnic institutions to overcome homesickness or to gain information about working in Ireland to change jobs or better their experiences. Many joined organisations just for fun or to converse in Polish with their fellow country men/women. The evolution of Polish ethnic institutions has grown exponentially over the six-month course of the research. They serve as a valuable resource for both Polish and Irish people in contact with Polish people in Ireland.

Informational and Cultural Organisations

Even though many of the interviewees stated they came to Ireland only temporarily, there are many institutions developing that serve the Polish community and seem to show the tendency of settling down and building up a Polish environment in Ireland.

The Polish Information and Culture Centre in Dublin provides a free information service in the Polish language, mainly for newcomers but also for those who have been here longer, and is promoting the Polish culture through events. The Polish Social and Cultural Association and the Polish House are places to meet and socialise. The Association offers cultural events in Polish and runs a library in Dublin, where migrants can access Polish books. The Irish Polish Society promotes Polish culture to the Irish and organises' events in English.

Educational Language Institutions

There are two weekend schools for Polish children in Dublin. The Polish Social and Cultural Association offers Polish language and culture courses aimed at maintaining Polish language and culture for bilingual children. There is also the school for children of Polish citizens living abroad certified by the Polish Department of Education and authorised to issue regular certificates to balance the differences in syllabi between Irish and Polish schools (in case of returning to Poland).

“For me it’s important that Polish is my daughter’s first language. But with the time it’s getting difficult (...) That’s why I want to change school. I want her to be able to speak good Polish”.

(Female, 34, administrator)

While the emphasis of some of the cultural institutions is to share Polish culture with Irish people, most of the institutions run arts, cultural, music and informational events, which are predominantly in the Polish language and aimed at a Polish audience. The arrival of Polish language schools (no matter how casually they are organised) indicate a need to maintain Polish language in first or second generation children and ultimately an orientation to Poland and the Polish education system. Some come to Ireland just to earn money, but face a serious decision when remaining in Ireland past a certain point in their child’s education (generally fourth class). For the most part, Polish children attend mainstream Irish national schools and do quite well once their English improves.

Media

Polish media are developing rapidly in Ireland. At time of publication, there are five Polish newspapers published in Dublin: Gazeta Polska, Polski Express, Szpila, Życie w Irlandii [Life in Ireland] and Anons. These publications provide legal advice on migrants' rights and Irish law. There are also Polish spots in the Irish media: Polish programmes on the Irish radio and TV (Oto Polska), Polski Herald, a weekly supplement to the Evening Herald and Polish columns in some Irish papers such as the Limerick Leader.

Religion

There is a Polish chaplaincy and services in Polish in Dublin, which are frequently visited. Religion does not seem a decisive factor in choosing Ireland as a migration destination, but Poles bring their religion with them. The church is also a chain in building up the social networks, meeting people and getting help when needed.

Socialising

Polish events are increasing in Dublin. In the last year there have been many Polish concerts, popular artists invited from Poland to play for Polish people in Ireland (music, cabaret, etc.), art exhibits and lectures. Polish pubs and restaurants are seen as a good place to meet, watch Polish TV, listen to Polish music and get Polish food. There are also an increasing number of stores supplying Polish food and Polish products in big Irish department stores, such as Dunnes Stores and Super Valu; as well as Polish bakeries. Again, this presents a new food market for Polish migrants, but also for Irish people.



Quality
Homemade
Sandwiches

Polskie
Produkty



Tutaj kupisz
Tradycyjne Polskie
Pieczywo

Chleb
Ciastka
Kuchnia
Budyń

Transnational Practices

Polish migrants to Ireland are still well connected to Poland and many other parts of the world. They have close ties to families and friends back home. As many of them see their stay in Ireland as temporary, they live their lives in both places keeping in close contact with relatives and friends back in Poland. Many use technology to adjust to being cut off geographically from their former lives.

There are different ways of communication chosen by Polish migrants. Almost all use the Internet as a way to contact families and friends. They write via email, by using internet communicators, for example: Gadu-Gadu and Internet telephony, Skype.

“Since my wife came to me – less often. Twice a week maybe I make a phone call. But when I was alone here and my wife was in Poland I used Skype and talked through the Internet every day, about everything, about the daily life”.

(Male, 25, engineer)

“I use the Internet every day. Gadu-Gadu and Skype, Msn communicator. And we have webcams and they can see us. Today I was talking with my mum about ribs with cabbage. I ordered them for Easter; she will cook them when I come”.

(Female, 28, architect)

Another increasingly convenient form of communication is the phone. There are now a big range of pre-paid cards and phone shops/Internet cafes – many migrants use them as they do not have a telephone land-line or sometimes find it difficult to get Internet connections at home.

“I ring my mum once a week, on Sundays. I use phone cards bought in Dublin. It costs about 9 cent per minute. I send text messages very often. And I also ring sometimes during the week in the evening. (...) I call from my mobile to the land line in Poland”.

(Male, 28, construction worker)

In using the media, Polish migrants are often ‘home oriented’. They read and watch news from Poland through the Internet and also like the idea of Polish media in Ireland.

“We have Polish television (Telewizja Satelitarna). And we want our parents to bring us cyfra polsat (digital satellite TV hardware). There are more Polish channels. One wants to see news, what’s happening in Poland. Now we have TVPolonia, Tele5 and Polsat2. Only three channels, not much. We buy Polish papers when we’re in Dublin. ‘Gazeta Polska’. And when we visit my brother-in-law we use the Internet, to read news”.

(Female, 25, sales assistant)

Polish migrants send money home, but the days of posting money home in a brown envelope are gone. Most use bank and money transfer services to send money home, with many using Internet banking both here in Ireland and in Poland to verify transfers. Others also use the Internet to invest in the Polish stock market or to gamble on-line in Polish.

There are airlines offering flights daily between major Polish cities and major Irish cities, as well as daily bus service to Warsaw.

Problems facing Polish people in Ireland

Due to free labour movement, some Polish people have a relatively easy start in Ireland. The issue of visa or work permits does not apply to Polish workers. They can come anytime they want and only need to register with the Department of Social and Family Affairs and receive a PPSN to be entitled to work legally in Ireland. The biggest problem Polish migrants face is with regards to language skills. The better the English, the easier the transition into a professional career seems to be. Lack of language skills makes migrants more vulnerable and exposed to difficulties. Even simple daily things, such as getting a PPSN, opening a bank account and finding a place to live, can become tough without knowing the language.

Lack of English is also a factor in Polish migrants losing out in the job market. The competition for work is increasing, and even for less qualified positions the requirements have become higher. The most significant requirement is to have strong communication skills. Sufficient language skills were named as the most crucial factor for a good life abroad by most of the interviewees.

“The language! My friends who want to come to Ireland ask me. They want to come for the summer. And I told them: you have time until summer - learn the language, go to language courses”.

(Female, 19, cleaner)

“I would say my English is good, but it doesn't allow me to express myself really. I know that I am a different person in English than in Polish. There are two different people. Talking in English I can say what I need. I can express my thoughts, but I can't express myself. In English, I'm reticent, not very talkative, and timid. I'm not spontaneous, I think a lot. Sometimes I think in Polish and have to translate. As I say, two different people. That's why I don't feel I'm being me in English. I'm just playing being me”.

(Female, 27)

The fear of losing their job, combined with weak language skills, contributes to their inability to defend their rights when faced with discrimination and exploitation (illegal work, underpayment, bad work conditions). There is high unemployment in Poland and it is relatively easy to find a job in Ireland, but there is competition for work in Ireland too.

Through participant observation research, it is noted that Polish workers spoke of employers who refused to register new employees with the Revenue and Social Welfare offices and preferred to hire them on a temporary basis and without paying taxes and social insurance. Polish workers themselves were very nervous about this as it is disadvantageous for the migrants, as they would need PRSI contributions for their pension or any benefits from Social Welfare (for example parents could not apply for child benefit without a PRSI-paying job, but there was no other way for some to find a job in Ireland than to go along with an employer who employs them casually with no PRSI contribution). Poles were afraid of losing their jobs. One of the cultural hangovers from Poland is the fear of losing work:

“God, what happens if I lose the job? It's more than respect for work - it's reverence. They are afraid that they won't find a new job. They are afraid that if they complain they will lose the job. It's the habit brought from Poland”.

(Male, 28, entrepreneur)

“I had a situation where an Irish person told me that I never will have so much as he has, because I’m from Poland. And that the wages are driven down is obvious and it will be worse with time. Irish see that Polish workers will work for less money, and give less”. (...)

Interviewer: “But there is the minimum wage”.

“There is, but regarding Polish people, many employers employ them illegally, or if they employ legally they make different tricks. As in my case, I work more hours than I should and get other money. Everything is legal, taxes are paid, but the amount of hours is not right”.

(Male, 28, construction worker)

“I’ve heard that there is segregation. That a Hungarian would work for €9 minimum, a Pole for €8 and I know that Latvian, Slovak and Russian would agree to work even for €7.”

Another area where the interviewees felt ‘different’ was in relation to their colleagues at work. They were aware of the ‘Polish plumber’ and ‘wage lowering’ stereotypes of Poles held in other countries, and possibly here in Ireland.¹⁶ They described the ethnic stratification within their workplaces as such:

“All the cleaning positions are filled with Russian-speaking nationalities, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, because they’re in the union, and maybe some from Russia, who came somehow, because normally they can’t work here, I don’t know, how it works there. So the whole cleaning is done by those nationalities. The first production line is Polish. The administration is Irish. And the engineers are mixed, but also mainly Irish. And all the supervisors are Irish”.

(Male, 35, production line worker).

“I’ve heard that there is segregation. That a Hungarian would work for €9 minimum, a Pole for €8 and I heard that Latvian, Slovak and Russian would agree to work even for €7”.

(Female, 24, sales assistant)

16. Roos, P. (2006), “Help: The Poles are coming!”: Narrating a Contemporary Moral Panic’ in *Human Geography*, Vol. 88, No. 1, pp. 91-103.

Suggestions emerging from the Research

Many of these suggestions come from the interviewees themselves and reinforce what previous research has identified as pressing issues for migrants from other countries.¹⁷

English Classes

Many recently arrived Poles are experiencing social isolation. Many have less English than they would like and need. In all of the interviews, English skills were identified as crucial for finding a job and getting along well in Ireland. Therefore, one suggestion is that migrant workers get a chance to attend language classes to improve their communications skills in English. For many working in the low-wage sector, the price of private language tuition is too high. The other issue is the time that migrant workers have available to invest in developing language skills. Free or low-cost evening English language classes for migrant workers are much needed. This programme should cater to the needs of migrants and combine teaching the language with extended emphasis on oral English and using employment related content.

Additionally, Polish-English conversation classes could also be helpful for both Polish and mainstream Irish communities: showing the similarities and differences, getting to know the other culture through the language and personal contacts and combining business with pleasure.

Providing Information in Poland about coming to Ireland

Many of the Polish newcomers to Ireland could have avoided some problems and trouble in the first phase of their stay in Ireland if they had received reliable information back in the home country – for example, through the new FÁS CD Rom and TV adverts in Poland to “know before you go”. Word of mouth often spreads exaggerated information about the Celtic Tiger and ‘jobs for everyone’. There is a need for information and awareness of the demands of the Irish job market. There is still the need to tell people to prepare well, to write a CV and have translations of certificates in English and obtain job references before they depart Poland. It is also necessary to make people aware of the high cost of living in Ireland and the time (and money) required for finding the first job before they arrive.

“Sometimes two hands and two legs are not enough. You need to know the language; you need to have some money in the pocket for a good start. And that it’s not as easy as it seems to be. It can be very difficult in the beginning.”
(Female, 28, OTC)

“The first thing is to take care of the language. Even when still in Poland. Because it’s really needed. It’s stupid when people think (I was thinking it too, and my dad was telling me) that you don’t need the language here – work is here. And I now think that language is the most important thing here (...) and to have some money for the start.”
(Female, 19, cleaner)

17. See Conroy, P. and Brennan, A., ‘Migrant Workers and their Experiences’, Dublin: Know Racism; Mac Enri, P. and Walley, P. (2003), ‘Labour Migration into Ireland’, Dublin: Immigrant Council of Ireland.

Information on Rights

Most of the interviewees came here to work, with the goal of earning and saving money. Unfortunately, many of them do not have sufficient command of the language, and even for those who have better language skills, language associated with rights and entitlements might still be hard to understand. Providing the official information on rights and entitlements, in Polish (as SIPTU have done) is recommended and helpful in raising awareness and self-confidence among migrants. There is a particular need for information on employment rights (taxes, working conditions, anti-discrimination legislation, etc.), and on how to seek redress when employers do not meet their obligations.

Dense social networks exist to support the large number of Polish workers, they could do so much more with more financial support, and should receive adequate Government funding. It is recommended that there be more provisions for support and linkages to Irish organisations with common interests (like trade unions), with a view to supporting the Polish community whilst building strong links with other groups in Irish society with the same interests (other workers for example).

Conclusion

The report finds that while most migrants come for economic reasons (either as target earners or global cosmopolitans), they are impacting socially and politically as well. Many are well educated, some with good English, and some are not so well educated. Irrespective of this, it is clear that most work below their skill level. There are dense social networks both in Ireland and between Ireland and Poland. There is some social isolation of the Polish in Ireland both because of the fact that they arrived all at the same time and live together, and due to language limitations. Suggestions and recommendations for free English courses in the evenings increased support for ethnic organisations and recognition of Polish transnational links are made.

Further Resources

Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Ireland
5 Ailesbury Road
Ballsbridge, Dublin 4
Tel: (+353) 1 2830855
Fax: (+353) 1 2698309
Web: www.dublin.polemb.net

Polish Information and Culture Centre in Dublin
56-57 Gardiner Street Lower, Dublin 1
Tel: (+353) 1 8196535
Fax: (+353) 1 8196536
Web: www.polishcentre.ie

Polish Social and Cultural Association
20 Fitzwilliam Place, Dublin 2
Tel: (+353) 1 6762515
Web: www.polish-sca.ie

Irish-Polish Society
20 Fitzwilliam Place, Dublin 2

Polish Chaplaincy
St. Mary of the Angels Church
Church Street, Dublin 7
Tel: (+353) 87 2393235
Web: www.polish-chaplaincy.ie

Dominican Polish Chaplaincy
St. Saviour's Priory
9-11 Upper Dorset Street, Dublin 1
Web: www.dublin.dominikanie.pl

National Consultative Committee on Racism and Interculturalism (NCCRI)
Floor 3, Jervis House
Jervis Street, Dublin 1
Tel: (+353) 1 8588000
Web: www.nccri.ie

Polish Weekend School
Szkolny Punkt Konsultacyjny przy Ambasadzie RP w Dublinie
Newpark Comprehensive School
Newtownpark Avenue
Blackrock, Co. Dublin
Tel: (+353) 87 6906098/87 6190004
Web: www.spzg.pl

Internet Resources
www.gazeta.ie
www.polskidublin.com
www.dublinek.net

References

- Barrett, A., Bergin, A. and Duffy, D. (2006), 'The Labour Market Characteristics and Labour Market Impacts of Immigrants in Ireland' in *The Economic and Social Review*, Vol. 37, No. 1, pp. 1-26.
- Conroy, P. and Brennan, A., 'Migrant Workers and Their Experiences', Dublin: Know Racism.
- Doyle, N., Hughes, G. and Wadenjo, E. (2006) 'Freedom of Movement for Workers from Central and Eastern Europe', Dublin: ESRI.
- Fitzgerald, D. (2004), 'Beyond Transnationalism: Mexican hometown politics at an American Labour Union' in *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, Vol. 27, No. 2, pp. 228-247.
- Grabowska, I. (2005), 'Changes in the International Mobility of Labour: Job Migration of Polish nationals in Ireland' in *Irish Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 14, No. 1, pp. 27-44.
- Hughes, G. and Quinn, E. (2004), 'The Impact of Immigration on Europe's Societies: Ireland', Dublin: ESRI.
- Laitner S. and Wagstyl, S. (2006), 'Europa radzi sobie z naplywem sily roboczej' in *Financial Times Polska* (12.02.2006).
- Lentin, R. and Mc Veigh, R. (eds) (2002), 'Racism and Anti-Racism in Ireland', Belfast: Beyond the Pale Publications.
- Loyal, S. (2003), 'Welcome to the Celtic Tiger: Racism, Immigration and the State' in Coulter, C. and Coleman, S. (eds), 'The End of Irish History: Critical Reflections on the Celtic Tiger', Manchester: University of Manchester Press, pp. 74-94.
- Mac An Ghail, M. (2002), 'Beyond a black-white dualism: Racialisation and Racism in the Republic of Ireland and the Irish Diaspora Experience' in *Irish Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 11, No. 2, pp. 99-122.
- Mac Énrí, P. and Walley, P. (2003), 'Labour Migration into Ireland', Dublin: Immigrant Council of Ireland.
- Maguire, M. (2004), 'Differently Irish: A Cultural History Exploring 25 Years of Vietnamese-Irish Identity', Dublin: The Woodfield Press.
- Massey, D.S. et al (1993), 'Theories of International Migration: A Review and Appraisal' in *Population and Development Review*, Vol. 19, No. 3, pp. 431-466.
- Moriarty, E. (2005), 'Telling Identity Stories: The Rountinsation of Racialisation of Irishness' in *Sociological Research Online*, Vol.10, No. 3, <http://www.socresonline.org.uk/10/3/moriarty.html>.
- NESC Report (2005) 'Managing Migration in Ireland: A Social and Economic Analysis' in Holmquist, K. (2006), 'Immigration Policies Bad for Irish Workers, Report Warns' in the *Irish Times* (11.03.06).

Portes, A. and Rumbaut, R. G. (1990), 'Immigrant America: A Portrait', Berkeley: University of California Press.

Roos, P. (2006), "Help! The Poles are Coming": Narrating a Contemporary Moral Panic' in *Human Geography*, Vol. 88, No. 1, pp. 91-103.

Wallerstein, E. (1974), 'The Modern World System: Capitalist Agriculture and the Origins of the European World Economy in the Sixteenth Century', New York: Academic Press.

Werber, P. (1999), 'Global Pathways: Working Class Cosmopolitans and the Creation of Transnational Ethnic Worlds' in *Social Anthropology*, Vol. 7, pp. 14-35.

Zachary, P.G. (2000), 'The Global Me: New Cosmopolitans and the Competitive Edge: Picking Globalism's Winners and Losers', New York: Perseus Books Group, Public Affairs.

The Community Profiles Series

National Consultative Committee on Racism and Interculturalism (NCCRI) is publishing a series of 'community profiles' researched by, and in partnership with, researchers from minority ethnic communities in Ireland.

The first two publications in this series are:

Polish Migrant Workers in Ireland (published 2006)

Chinese Students in Ireland (published 2006)



NCCRI

community
profiles
series