

# Ireland's National Integration Strategy

OPMI

Sept. 8<sup>th</sup>, 2014



# Plan for the presentation

1. Introduction
2. Defining integration
3. Education
4. Health and wellbeing
5. Active citizenship and employment

# 1. Introduction: Intra-EU migrants

- **More than 70%** of the non-Irish population (CSO, 2011)
- More than 12.3 million EU-27 nationals living within the borders of the EU but outside of their own country of origin (Vasileva, 2011; Eurostat, 2010)
- Little known about ‘the objective and subjective profile of the emerging population of free-moving Europeans’ (Braun & Recchi, 2009: 85)
- Integration literature/policy statements/reports tend to ignore intra-EU migrants

Census 2006: 63,276 Poles (disputed)



Recession (return?)



Census 2011: 122,585 Poles

- 545,000 non-Irish nationals (c.12%); 387,000 are from EU countries → Poles make up 22.5% of the non-Irish population



## 2. Defining integration

- Process that ‘comprehends those phenomena which result when groups of individuals having different cultures come into continuous first-hand contact, with subsequent changes in the original cultural patterns of either or both groups’ (Redfield et al., 1936: 149) → **Two-way process**
- Question: ‘How do newcomers become part of a society?’  
(Castles et al., 2002)

# 3. Education – Children

- Focus tends to be an examination of their physical rather than psychological health (Suárez-Orozco, 2005: 135)
- ESRI (2013) report on births: 18% (2004); 25% (2010)
- Almost 20% of non-Irish nationals are children (CSO figures)
- Schools: children from 160 countries; 200 languages; 70-75%, English/Irish is not their first language (DES, 2011)



- These children, many of whom are being raised bilingually and biculturally, represent a substantial percentage of Ireland's youth population, meaning that the future of Irish society at all levels is **intimately tied** to the adaptation of these children (see Suárez-Orozco & Suárez-Orozco, 2001).
- Census 2011: 122,585 Poles; **25,291 are children**



0-4 years old (pre-school)	5-12 years old (primary school)	13-18 years old (post-primary school)
10,011	10,355	4,925

(Personal communication, Central Statistics Office, Ireland)

# Bilingualism and recommendations

- Overcoming the language barrier has been identified as ‘critical to successful integration’ (DJELR, 2000: 45; see also Ager & Strang, 2008: 182; Remennick, 2004; CBP 4)
- An integrated orientation (home and host cultures) – better sociocultural and psychological adaptation (Berry et al., 2006)
- Recommendations:
  - (i) Information is crucial: schools and parents; **recognition of first languages**
  - (ii) State recognition for complementary schools (links, policy partnership, resources, building space, funding, etc.)
  - (iii) EAL support
  - (iv) Language learning across the curriculum
  - (v) Child protection



# 4. Health and wellbeing

- **Culture in the Integration process**

Definition of culture: *'the deposit of knowledge, experience, beliefs, values, attitudes, meanings, hierarchies, religion, notions of time, roles, spatial relations, concepts of the universe, and material objects and possessions acquired by a group of people in the course of generations through individual and group striving.'* (Samovar & Porter, 1997: 13)



Culture is defined as a historically transmitted system of symbols meanings, and norms' (Samovar & Porter, 1997)

# Importance of culture and language

- Symbols and meanings are the patterns that define culture.
- Culture is not necessarily a spoken language by people but the communication that links them.
- That culture is the way in which people solve problems.
- People from different cultures are likely to produce significant contrasts with respect to problem solving approaches.
- Culture shapes the way people view and interact with the world, so understanding cultural similarities and differences is essential for facilitating effective communication and collaboration in a rapidly globalizing world.
- In our experience, we believe that people needs to undergo to services related health issues in his own language.
- Unless this person speaks in two languages. Then he can choose, in which he feels more comfortable.

# Integration and recommendations

- We need to bear in mind that, for some reason, Polish people decided to move to Ireland and live here; therefore, it is not good to be locked in their own community
- Clients should undergo psychotherapy in their own language and culture. We are all human beings and often we just stick to our own cultures
- The CKU is **a bridge** for Polish people to begin integration with the Irish and multicultural communities in Ireland
- It is **vitaly important** for our organisation to integrate with Irish organisations
- Recommendations
  - Increase the linguistic and cultural capacities of State and State-funded services
  - Promote bilingualism and the recruitment of Polish speaking professionals/ increase funds for Polish organisations
  - Provide English language learning opportunities

# 5. Active citizenship

25+ organisations/media, 30+ schools

## Recommendations:

- Reinstate the Minister for Integration
- Secure migrant political representation within existing or new decision-making structures
- Improve voter registration

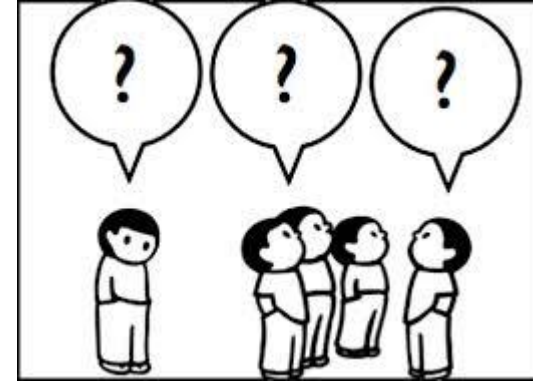
e.g. *Vote! You are at home* campaign



# Employment

Language barrier?

Motivation and inspiration needed



## Recommendations:

- Information packages with PPS (e.g. IVEA)
- Encouragement for public jobs
- Unions as a tool of access
- Encourage entrepreneurship

# Authors

Forum Polonia: [www.forumpolonia.org](http://www.forumpolonia.org)

CKU [www.ckudublin.org](http://www.ckudublin.org)

Irish Polish Society [www.irishpolishsociety.ie](http://www.irishpolishsociety.ie)

POSK [www.en.poskdublin.org](http://www.en.poskdublin.org)

Together-Razem Centre [www.together-razem.org](http://www.together-razem.org)

Polish Complementary Schools from Dublin and Dundalk

[www.polskaszkoladundalk.com](http://www.polskaszkoladundalk.com)

[www.polskaszkolawdublinie.com/en](http://www.polskaszkolawdublinie.com/en)

Polonia Razem [www.poloniarazem.com](http://www.poloniarazem.com)

and various Polish and Irish community activists employed in various Irish organisations and institutions:

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