The Experiences of Newcomer Populations in Ireland and Access to Education as a Basic Fundamental Right

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Cosmopolitan landscape

- Ireland –199,187.
- 16% labour force, 10% primary school, 7% post-primary school, 20% unemployed (Crowley, 2010).

- Main groups – Polish, Lithuanian, Romanian, Indian, Latvian, Hungarian nationals.

- Filipinos, Brazilians, Nigerians and Pakistani. Algeria, Bangladesh, Bulgaria, Congo, Czech Republic, Egypt, Ghana, Iraq, Malaysia, Mauritius, Moldova, Saudi Arabia, Sudan Thailand, Ukraine and Zimbabwe (CSO, 2012d).

'Celtic Tiger Era'

- Enticed, sought, needed.
- Low-skilled jobs, low-paid – catering, hospitality, services industries, construction.
- 35% of Indian workers and 32% of Filipino workers – health services.
- 25% of Lithuanian workers – retail.

- Polish were/are employed in retail and accommodation services.

- The latest figures show that migrants are more highly qualified than the indigenous Irish (Monaghan, 2015, 10).
- 48%.

Economic and social position of specific migrant groups

- Conditions attached to employment.
- Numerous groups have little/no rights & entitlements to public services including health service & education opportunities.
- Excluded & marginalised from mainstream society.
- Basically Invisible.

- Tax.
- Type of permit dictates rights & entitlements.
- Domestic sector – unregulated & v. vulnerable, exploited.

Weak 'integration' policy & practice

- Policy underdeveloped, ad hoc & in developing stages. Policy is contradictory – doesn't marry practice. 'Paper politics' (Fanning, 2011, 38). No resources.

- Different policies apply to different migrants*.

- Major differences between migrant groups on their rights & entitlements.
- Major inequalities between migrant groups & indigenous.
- Major difference within individual family members among siblings – IBC.
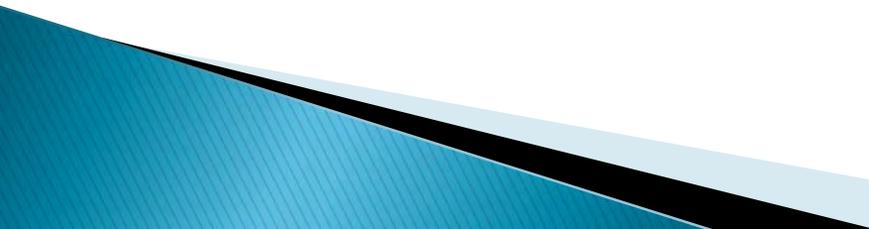
Discriminatory policy

- Form of Irish racism.
- Policy that marginalises groups from main stream society is discriminatory policy.
- Institutionally Racist.

- Example – *Irish Born Child Administrative Scheme for Immigrant Residency 2005* bestows different legal status, rights and entitlements on individual family members, which reinforces inequality within the single family unit (Coakley, 2012).

- Major source of tension within migrant families of Irish born children (Coakley, 2012).

Institutional racism

- Benchmarked – Steven Laurence Inquiry, (MacPherson, 1999).

- Institutional racism is the most difficult form of racism to tackle because of its covert nature.

- Existence of hidden or unhidden barriers to equality (Beire & Jaichand, 2006). Imparts inequality*.

State promotes anti- racist policy

- Numerous policy & practice – discriminates.
- Stark contradictions between 'integration' policy & practice on the ground.
- Prevalent in two contentious areas.

- Permit system – fraught with difficulties*. Linked to slavery.

- Policies that threaten the position of economic migrants are in danger of creating long-term marginalization and jeopardizing the long term future of 'integration'.

Education

- Education: key integration tool.
- Ireland – knowledge economy. Smart economy, intensely skilled.
- Education – basic fundamental right.
- Migrants – low pay.
- Higher education fee – 3 times more expensive.
- Access to HE opportunities impossible for some groups, vulnerable. Highly marginalised.
- Conditions of employment dictate what ea. group is entitled to access.

- People need assurances that their families would be integrated here. They are here to stay (Mac Éinri, 2008).

Sense of identity & belonging

- Education and human development are basic fundamental rights grounded in human dignity (Nussbaum, 2011).

- Nussbaum is a humanist who believes every individual is entitled to be treated with dignity. Human capabilities are about *'what people are actually able to do and to be'* (Nussbaum, 2001, 3).

- Education for human development begins with the idea of 'equal respect for all human beings and equal entitlement of all to a range of central human opportunities' (Nussbaum, 2009, 8). The Capabilities Approach theorises basic social justice and is wholly concerned with ingrained inequality and social injustice.

- Onus is on the State to ensure a certain basic level of capability, other wise it is considered a great injustice (Nussbaum, 1999, 34-35.)

Non-member, Invisible

- Michel Walzer (1983) Concept of Membership & Belonging

- Migrants are regarded as newcomers and are not welcomed by the host country as citizens. They are regarded as guest workers who free the citizens from unpleasant work (Walzer, 1983). Therefore, they are a necessary requirement like servants, with no political rights; sourced from poorer countries. There is a strong thought process of denial of the right to citizenship and there is a strong underlying threat of deportation. Individuals who are classified as non-members do not qualify for any of society's social goods. Politically the guest worker is tightly constrained, exploited and oppressed; basically they are disenfranchised. The State is seen as all powerful. Undeniably, the 'rule of citizens over non-citizens, of members over strangers, is probably the most common form of tyranny in human history' (Walzer, 1983, 62).

Lesson Learning for Ireland

- ‘Brixton and riots are nearly synonymous’ (Houses of Oireachtas Integration Policy Statement, 13 December 2007).

- The dominant migrant groups denied full social rights include workers in the unregulated domestic sector, work-permit holders, undocumented workers, asylum seekers, parents of IBC and the children and young people of these groups and aged out young people.

- *‘Ireland is sleepwalking itself into a colossal mess over integration’* (Forde, 2012d, 1).

- What’s the future outcome of Ireland's invisible people? and

- What’s the future out come of a divided society?
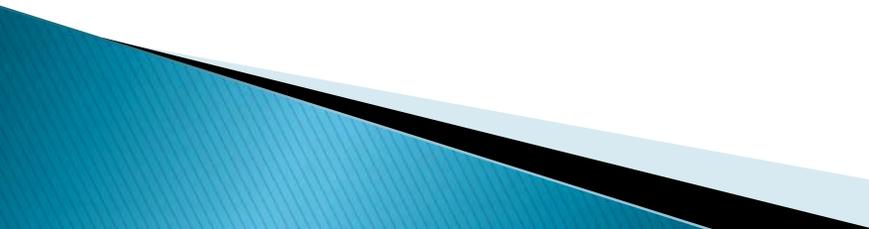
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