



COUNTRY FACTSHEET: IRELAND 2012

EUROPEAN MIGRATION NETWORK

1. Introduction

This EMN Country Factsheet provides a factual overview of the main policy developments in migration and international protection in Ireland during 2012, including latest statistics. It has been prepared in conjunction with the European Commission's 4th Annual Report on Migration and Asylum (2012).

2. Legal Migration and Mobility

2.1. PROMOTING LEGAL MIGRATION CHANNELS

Ireland undertook a number of measures relevant to **student migration**. Over 60 Irish academics travelled to India to **promote Irish higher education to potential international students**. Student migration was linked to economic outcomes: the Minister of State for Training and Skills highlighted that it was estimated that "for every 100 additional international students who come to Ireland support the creation of 15 local jobs, through spending on tuition, accommodation and other living expenses". Also in 2012, the *Third Level Graduate Work Scheme* set up in 2011 to provide students access to the labour market after graduation continued to apply. The Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act (2012) established the Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) merging four existing awarding and quality assurance bodies.

2.2 ECONOMIC MIGRATION

In 2012, the Minister for Justice, Equality and Defence declared his aspirations to **promote migration as a means to boosting the country's economic development**. Irish labour market policy currently focusses on ensuring that general labour and skills needs are met from within the workforce of the European Economic Area (EEA) and work permits are only issued to non-EEA nationals that meet specific employer demand for strategic skills or labour shortages. However, in 2012, Ireland continued to review its regime to attract **highly-qualified workers**, e.g. carrying out a review of the current national scheme for Intra-Corporate Transferees (with

any changes expected to be included for as part of a revised employment permits bill in 2013). As from November 2012, immigration arrangements for non-EEA doctors recruited to the Irish public health service entered into force. The amendments provide doctors registering or renewing their permit at an immigration office with a two year permission upon specific requirements (Locums and private health sphere doctors are not eligible). Also, the Health and Social Care Professionals (Amendment) Act 2012 introduced provisions to **facilitate the recognition of professional qualifications** obtained outside Ireland; this is still awaiting approval from the Minister for Health. Further, two new initiatives¹ were set-up to attract **foreign investors** and **entrepreneurs** – i.e. to provide permission to reside in Ireland in return for an investment. The initiatives offer favourable conditions for family reunification (provided the migrant has the means to support the family member). A number of **specific labour shortages** continued to exist in sales (including customer service), the IT sector and in science and engineering fields, business, some administrative occupations and certain personal care occupations and skills shortages were identified in the ICT sector, high-tech manufacturing (primarily biopharmaceuticals) amongst other sectors.

2.3. FAMILY REUNIFICATION

The Minister for Justice, Equality and Defence announced the prioritisation of the development of a **comprehensive policy approach to family reunification and settlement**. The policy will focus on reunification involving third-country national family members of Irish citizens and those of resident third-country nationals.

2.4. INTEGRATION

In late 2012, the Integration Centre published a report, 'Migrants and the Irish Economy' and summarised two major areas of focus for government

¹ The Immigrant Investor Programme and The Start-Up Entrepreneur Programme.

policy: (i) ensuring key skills can be brought into Ireland from overseas and (ii) ensuring 'requisite support' is in place for resident migrant workers and businesspeople with regard to their economic, legal and cultural integration. It recommended increased language and occupation-related training, as well as a more streamlined process for recognition of qualifications. The amount of funding granted by the Office for the Promotion of Migrant Integration (OPMI) to organisations promoting integration and tolerance decreased from previous annual amounts to €1,295,844, although organisations also received funding from the European Refugee Fund (ERF) and the European Integration Fund for Third Country Nationals (EIF). The Employment of People from Immigrant Communities (EPIC) Programme provided training in English for work, interview skills, living and working in Ireland, as well as IT skills to EU immigrants and non-EU immigrants on 'Stamp 4' residence permits to improve their access to employment or further training.

2.5 MANAGING MIGRATION AND MOBILITY²

Measures were introduced to **facilitate the entry of temporary migrants from specific countries: Ireland's first formal visa waiver programme was extended** for four years with the aim of 'boost[ing] tourism and business, especially from emerging markets' and Bosnia and Herzegovina were added to the programme; a 'Working Holiday Programme' was introduced for young persons from the Republic of China (Taiwan); and a further visa initiative announced during 2012 will allow short-term accredited visitors attending 'The Gathering Ireland 2013' to have their visa application processed free-of-charge and its processing prioritised³.

At the same time, the **fees for non-EEA migrants registering their stay in Ireland doubled to €300**. Fee exemptions applied to Convention refugees and their family members; minors; spouses, widow/ers, civil partners or surviving partners of Irish citizens; spouses and dependents of EU nationals in possession of a permit under Directive 2004/38/EC; Programme refugees and victims of trafficking.

Since June 2012 Ireland has **cross-checked visa application information with data from the UK** as part of on-going cooperation and investigation into visa fraud. In an end of year review, the Minister for Justice, Equality and Defence mentioned the prioritisation of cooperation with the UK on initiatives such as a Common Travel Area visa in 2013.

² "Managing migration and mobility" refers to the following themes: visa policy, Schengen governance and border monitoring.

³ Attendees with verified invitations from event organisers will be provided with a code to quote on their visa application which will ensure priority processing of a free-of-charge visa application.

3. International Protection and Asylum

There was criticism from civil society over the standard of services for child asylum seekers staying in 'Direct Provision' asylum reception centres. A report by the Irish Refugee Council⁴ highlighted issues with overcrowding, inappropriate sleeping provisions and sanitary facilities. The Minister for Justice, Equality and Defence stated that some of the highlighted issues had been, and would be, addressed.

The second phase of implementing **the European Database of Asylum Law (EDAL)** began in September 2012. The project ran by Irish Refugee Council (IRC), was developed in conjunction with the European Council on Refugees and Exiles (ECRE), and financed by the ERF and is an online database of case law from EU Member States relevant to the interpretation of European asylum law. In 2012 decisions from the European Courts of Justice and of Human Rights were added, and extension of case law of six Member States (Austria, Greece, Italy, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia) will also be added until the end of the second phase (February 2014).

Ireland continued its participation and involvement with the **European Asylum Support Office (EASO)** during 2012. Ireland deployed a national expert to provide 'Train the Trainers' training within the European Asylum Curriculum (EAC) on 'Interviewing Children Module' and has also incorporated EASO training materials into national Refugee Status Determination (RSD) training modules.

After parliamentary debate, **Ireland decided not to 'opt in' to Council Directive 2011/95/EU**, the Recast "Qualifications Directive".

4. Unaccompanied Minors and other Vulnerable Groups

A **National Office for Unaccompanied Minors was established** within the Office of the National Director for Children and Family Services. The role of the Office is to develop national strategy policy and practice on social work services for unaccompanied minors, and it is envisioned that it will collect national data. Officials of the Office of the Refugee Applications Commissioner (ORAC) attended a number of meetings on **age assessment for unaccompanied minors** organised by the EASO. Ireland continued to attend the EU-level Expert Group on Unaccompanied Minors in the Migration Process and in March 2012 attended the second Expert Group meeting on 'Family Tracing'.

Regarding other vulnerable groups, the **Criminal Justice (Female Genital Mutilation) Act 2012** was enacted. It prohibits female genital mutilation and creates an offence in Section 3 of removing or

⁴ Arnold, S. (2012). State Sanctioned Child Poverty and Exclusion.

attempting to remove a female from Ireland (i.e. travelling to another country) for the purpose of FGM.

The Irish Naturalisation and Immigration Service (INIS) published guidelines to **help legally-resident non-EEA victims of domestic abuse whose immigration status is derived and/or dependent on that of the perpetrator of domestic violence** apply for independent residence.

5. Actions against Trafficking in Human Beings

Ireland published the general scheme to pass the **Criminal Law (Human Trafficking) (Amendment) Bill** in order to transpose Directive 2011/36/EU on preventing and combating trafficking in human beings and protecting its victims. Work continued during 2012 on a review of the **National Action Plan to Prevent and Combat Trafficking in Human Beings 2009-2012 (NAP)**, with a view to introducing a new Plan in 2013. An **Interdepartmental High Level Group** comprising senior representatives from various Government Departments and Public Sector bodies continued to meet regularly during 2012.

During 2012, the Anti-Human Trafficking Unit (AHTU), within the Department of Justice and Equality related to prevention of trafficking in human beings, carried out various **training and awareness-raising activities**. It trained 62 members of An Garda Síochána and two members each of the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) and the Northern Ireland Public Prosecution Service. It submitted publications and articles placed in magazines aimed at reaching persons within different sectors (e.g. hospitality and vocational education). With the assistance of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, AHTU also disseminated an information pack on indicators of trafficking in human beings to visa offices and diplomatic offices abroad.

A new partnership programme between Irish Aid and the International Labour Organization (ILO) was approved offering €12 million to projects, with priority themes including forced labour and child labour.

6. External Dimension of EU Migration Policy

A report commissioned by the Advisory Board for Irish Aid published research on possible updated **indicators on the development impacts of Irish migration policy** including inflow as a percentage of total population, support for remittances to developing countries, and the ratio of tuition fees for non-Irish students and Irish students.

7. Irregular Migration

Cooperation with the UK to prevent irregular migration within the 'Common Travel Area' (CTA) continued, particularly with regard to exchange of information. Several data exchanges took place during the year including **cross-checking of Irish visa biometric data** with that of the UK's immigration fingerprint data (see also section 2.5).

During 2012, Ireland began the process of opting into some eleven EU **readmission agreements** during 2012, namely with Macao, Sri Lanka, Albania, Russia, Macedonia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia, Moldova, Pakistan and Georgia. It continued to return third-country nationals through voluntary and forced return (see Table 8 in Statistical Annex) and participated in a total of seven **joint European return operations** organised by Frontex.

The Migrant Rights Centre Ireland (MRCI) campaigned for an **'earned regularisation scheme'** for undocumented workers which would require them to have worked over a period of time, paid taxes and met other criteria. With regard to undocumented non-national workers who have been exploited, and in response to case law,⁵ a Private Members Bill, the Employment Permits (Amendment) Bill 2012, was introduced with the aim of **granting redress to exploited non-national workers**, where they can demonstrate that s/he had made attempts to obtain legal employment. The proposed legislation aims to prevent employers from avoiding penalties by virtue of the illegality of the contract of employment. A new employment permits bill is to be published in 2013 and would include specific, technical provisions for protecting undocumented workers.

8. Provision and Exchange of Information to support Policy Development

During 2012, Ireland continued to participate in the EMN and in supporting EASO and Frontex and was active in the Strategic Committee on Immigration, Frontiers and Asylum (SCIFA), the High Level Working Group on Migration and Asylum and in all European Council working parties with a migration or asylum remit. Data sharing activities with the UK are described in sections 2.5 and 7.

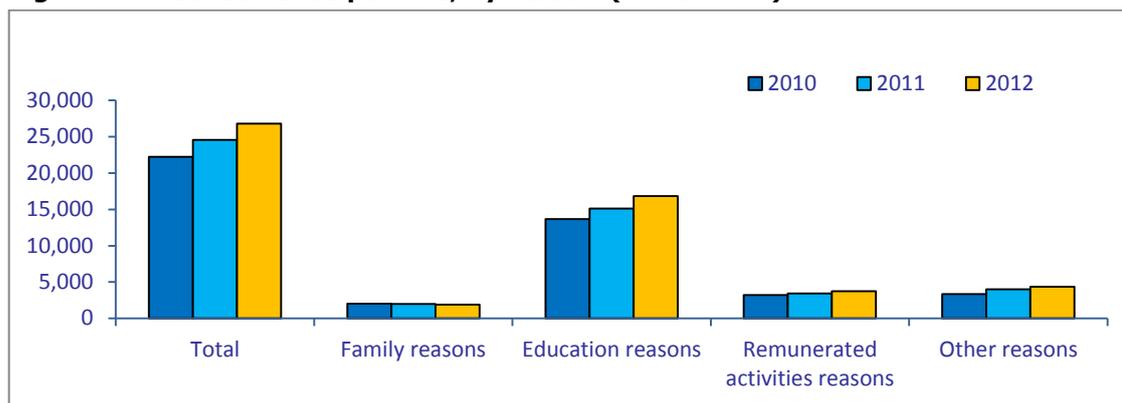
STATISTICAL ANNEX

The Statistical Annex provides an overview of the latest available statistics for Ireland on aspects of migration and asylum (2010-2012), including residence, asylum, unaccompanied minors, irregular migration, return and visas. Where statistics are not yet available, this is indicated in the Annex as "N/A".

⁵ Hussein v The Labour Court

Statistical Annex: Immigration and Asylum in Ireland (2010-2012)

Figure 1: First residence permits, by reason (2010-2012)



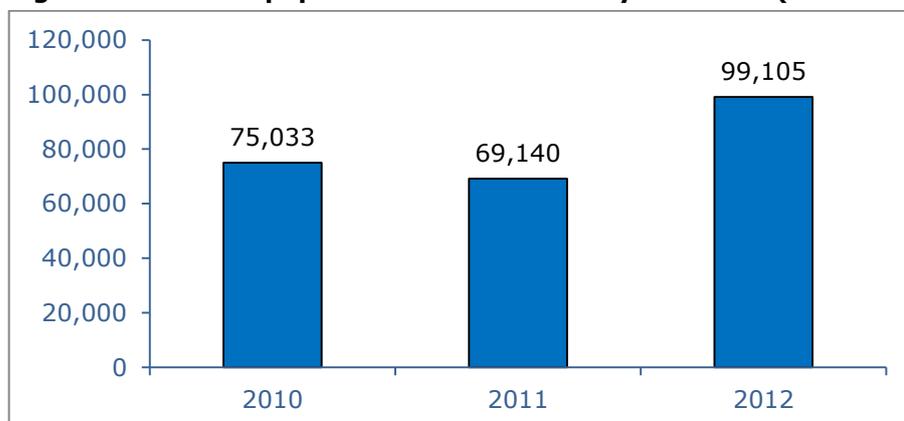
Source: Eurostat migration statistics (migr_resfirst)

Table 1: First residence permits: Top 5 nationalities (2010-2012)

2010	2011	2012
1. Brazil – 4,177	1. Brazil – 5,151	1. Brazil – 5,712
2. USA – 3,984	2. USA – 3,984	2. USA – 4,206
3. China – 1,452	3. China – 1,549	3. India – 1,872
4. India – 1,258	4. India – 1,380	4. China – 1,793
5. Nigeria – 974	5. Nigeria – 1,052	5. South Korea – 1,094

Source: Eurostat migration statistics (migr_resfirst)

Figure 2: Resident population of third-country nationals (2010-2012)



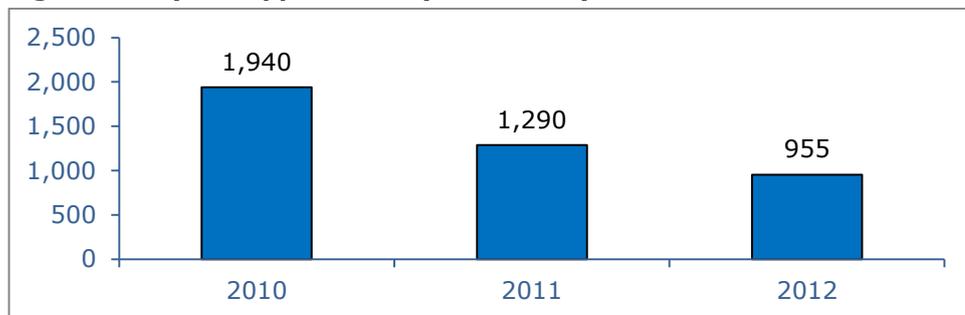
Source: Eurostat migration statistics (migr_pop1ctz)

Table 2: Resident population: Top 5 nationalities (2010-2012)

2010	2011	2012
1. Poland – 90,170	1. Poland – 86,328	1. Poland – 123,926
2. UK – 84,153	2. UK – 79,739	2. UK – 113,665
3. Unknown – 56,894	3. Unknown – 52,772	3. Unknown – 62,897
4. Lithuania – 36,410	4. Lithuania – 35,330	4. Lithuania – 37,091
5. Latvia – 19,823	5. Latvia – 19,263	5. Latvia – 20,837

Source: Eurostat migration statistics (migr_pop1ctz)

Figure 3: Asylum applications (2010-2012)



Source: Eurostat migration statistics (migr_asyappctza)

Table 3: Asylum applications: Top 5 nationalities (2010-2012)

2010	2011	2012
1. Nigeria – 385	1. Nigeria – 180	1. Nigeria – 160
2. China (including Hong Kong) – 230	2. Pakistan – 175	2. Pakistan – 105
3. Pakistan – 200	3. China (including Hong Kong) – 140	3. Democratic Republic of Congo – 60
4. Democratic Republic of Congo – 70	4. Democratic Republic of Congo – 70	4. Zimbabwe – 50
5. Afghanistan – 70	5. Zimbabwe – 65 Afghanistan – 65	5. Albania – 45

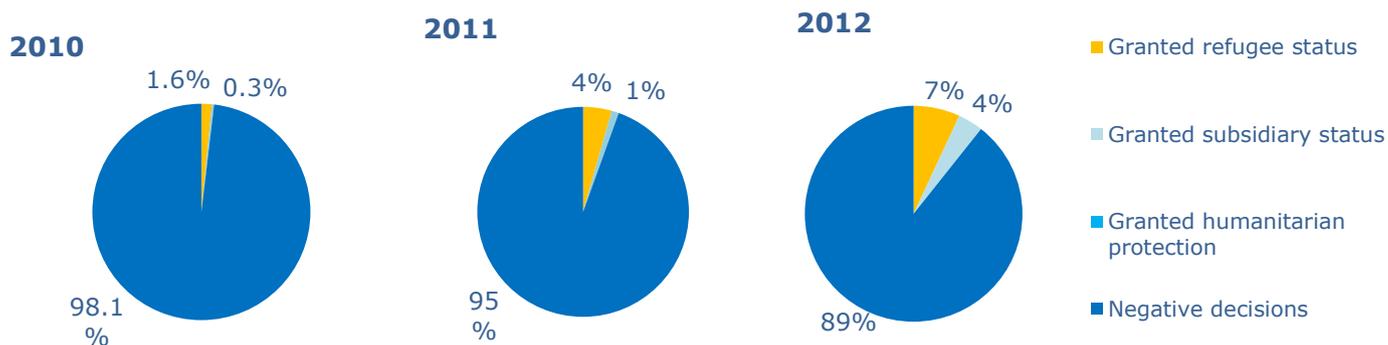
Source: Eurostat migration statistics (migr_asyappctza)

Table 4: Asylum applications - First instance decisions by outcome (2010-2012)

	Total decisions	Positive decisions	Of which:			Negative decisions
			Refugee status	Subsidiary protection	Humanitarian reasons	
2010	1,600	25	25	5	N/A	1,575
2011	1,365	75	60	15	N/A	1,295
2012	940	100	65	35	N/A	840

Source: Eurostat migration statistics (migr_asydcfsta)

Figures 4-6: Asylum applications - First instance decisions by outcome (2010-2012)



Source: Eurostat migration statistics (migr_asydcfsta)

Table 5: Third-country nationals relocated and resettled (2011-2012)

	2010	2011	2012
Third-country nationals relocated	N/A	10	10
Third-country nationals resettled	20	45	50

Source: Eurostat migration statistics (migr_asyresa) and National contributions to EMN Annual Policy Report

Table 6: Unaccompanied minors (2010-2012)

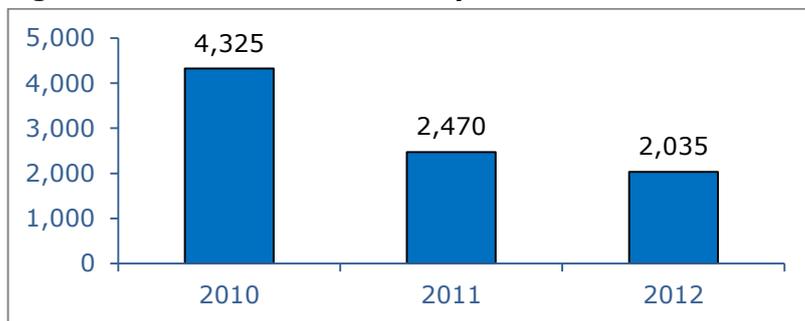
	2010	2011	2012
Unaccompanied minors (total)	N/A	N/A	N/A
Unaccompanied minors not applying for asylum	N/A	N/A	68
Unaccompanied minor asylum applicants	35	25	25

Source: National contributions to EMN Annual Policy Report

Table 7: Number of third-country nationals refused entry at external borders (2010-2012)

	2010	2011	2012
Third-country nationals refused entry at external borders	2,790	2,545	2,205

Source: Eurostat migration statistics (migr_eirfs)

Figure 7: Number of third-country nationals found to be illegally present (2010-2012)

Source: Eurostat migration statistics (migr_eipre)

Table 8: Third-country nationals returned (2010-2012)

	Third-country nationals ordered to leave	Returned as part of forced return measures	Returned voluntarily	Returned through an Assisted Voluntary Return Programme
2010	1,495	343	461	376
2011	1,805	280 ⁶	475	402 ⁷
2012	2,065	302 ⁸	449 ⁹	359

Source: Eurostat migration statistics (migr_eiord) and National contributions to EMN Annual Policy Reports

Table 9: Number of visas issued by type (2011-2012)

	2010	2011	2012
Total visas	N/A	N/A	132,425
Schengen visa (short-stay visas)	N/A	N/A	N/A
National visa*	N/A	132,410	132,425

Source: Commission Staff Working Documents on the Annual Report on Immigration and Asylum and * National Contributions to EMN Annual Policy Report (Annex)

⁶ The number refers to deportation orders under Section 3 of Immigration Act 1999 only.

⁷ In addition, 73 people benefited from of administrative assistance from the Irish Naturalisation and Immigration Service (INIS).

⁸ The number refers to deportation orders under Section 3 of Immigration Act 1999 only.

⁹ From that number a total of 359 were returned through voluntary return and reintegration assistance from the International Organization for Migration (IOM) office in Dublin and 90 benefited from administrative assistance from the Irish Naturalisation and Immigration Service (INIS).