Polish migrants in Ireland

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Plan for the presentation

1. Some figures: Intra-EU migrants
2. Some figures: Poles in Ireland
3. Some figures: Children and young people
4. Some figures: Multilingualism
5. Integration – the language aspect
1. Some figures: Intra-EU migrants

- 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)

- Migration to Ireland ‘unique in European terms’ (Mc Éinri & White, 2008: 153)

- Intra-EU migrants: more than **70%** of the non-Irish population (CSO, 2012)

- Integration literature/policy statements/reports tend to **ignore** intra-EU migrants

2. Some figures: Poles in Ireland

(Census data: 1996, 2002, 2006, 2011; see CSO website)
Census 2006

(CSO, 2008)
Census 2006: 63,276 Poles (disputed)

\[ \downarrow \]

Recession \textbf{(return?)}

\[ \downarrow \]

Census 2011: 122,585 Poles

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

- Largest \% of immigrant flows to Ireland from the post-2004 accession states (Krings et al., 2013); ‘the largest movement of economic migrants around Europe in recent memory’ (Johns, 2013)

- Ireland: traditional destination for Polish migrants? Not exactly. 
  Previous waves
  - Post World War II
  - “Solidarity migration” (early 1980s)
  - “Migration of hearts” (mid 1980s)

- Migration: ‘complex phenomenon’ (Grabowska, 2005) – economic and non-economic, e.g. start a new career, excitement and adventure, and other social (relationships, family reasons) and cultural (improve English) reasons

- Also, Ireland perceived positively by Poles
3. Some figures: Children and young people

- ESRI (2013) report on births to mothers born outside of Ireland: 18% (2004); 25% (2010)
- Almost 20% of non-Irish nationals are children (CSO figures)
- 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).

- 12% of primary school pupils and 10% of post-primary school students born outside of Ireland
- 160 countries; c. 200 languages
- For 70-75%, English/Irish is not their first language
  (Department of Education and Skills (DES), 2011)

- Census 2011: 122,585 Poles; 25,291 are children

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-4 years old (pre-school)</td>
<td>10,011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-12 years old (primary school)</td>
<td>10,355</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13-18 years old (post-primary school)</td>
<td>4,925</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Personal communication, Central Statistics Office, Ireland)
4. Some figures: Multilingualism

- 514,068 (c.11% of the total population) speak a language other than English or Irish at home
- Polish spoken by 119,526
- Benefits of multilingualism are wide-ranging and well-documented.

5. Integration

- Process of acculturation 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)
  \[\text{Two-way process}\]
- Focus on understanding the process: ‘How do newcomers become part of a society?’ (Castles et al., 2002)
- Overcoming the language barrier has been identified as ‘critical to successful integration’ (DJ ELR, 2000: 45; see also Ager & Strang, 2008: 182; Remennick, 2003, 2004)
- Mother tongue?
Complementary schools

- Also called weekend / supplementary / heritage language schools
- Ireland: Polish, Georgian, Estonian, Latvian, Lithuanian, Romanian, Russian and Ukrainian

Research says:

- Complementary schools ‘serve specific linguistic or religious and cultural communities, particularly through mother-tongue classes’ (Creese & Martin, 2006)
- They are ‘safe spaces’ where languages and cultures often hidden or ignored in the mainstream may flourish (Martin et al., 2004; Creese & Blackledge, 2008)

Polish complementary schools in Ireland

(Source: Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Dublin, personal communication)
31 schools
4,000+ pupils

→ 5 SPK (c. 2,600)
→ 26 community schools (c. 1,500)

First school established in 2005

Pupil numbers: 15 (smallest), 829 (largest)

Staffing: 2-43

Leaving Certificate Polish

- Curricular vs Non-curricular languages (provisions under Article 149 of the Treaty of Nice)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Polish</th>
<th>Total no. sitting non-curricular lgs</th>
<th>% sitting Polish of non-curricular lgs</th>
<th>% A/B/C grade in Polish</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>&lt;10</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>&lt;14%</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>254</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>92.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>171</td>
<td>541</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>94.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>328</td>
<td>817</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>90.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>451</td>
<td>1,050</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>95.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>574</td>
<td>1,262</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>88.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>707</td>
<td>1,370</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>91.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>769</td>
<td>1,470</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>91.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Polish at Junior Cycle (age: 14-15)

- The Junior Cycle Student Award (JCSA) (previously: the Junior Certificate)
- Short courses being developed, e.g. Polish as a mother tongue/heritage language [as well as Japanese, Russian, Irish Sign Language]
- 100 hours; 2nd and 3rd year of school

Employment

- Language barrier?

Change of thinking – see beyond an assumption of deficit

→ 56% of respondents across Europe were ‘able to hold a conversation in one language other than their mother tongue’ (Ireland not doing so well - 66% only mother tongue) (European Commission 2006: 3-4)

→ BUT large multilingual population; rich resource
References