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A Fourth Wave?

Emigration from Ireland in the wake of the global financial crisis

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For my parents

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List of abbreviations used

CSO	Central Statistics Office
EFSF	European Financial Stability Fund
EFSM	European Financial Stability Mechanism
ESRI	Economic and Social Research Institute
EU	European Union
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GNP	Gross National Product
HEA	Higher Education Authority
IMF	International Monetary Fund
LFS	Labour Force Survey
NAMA	National Asset Management Agency
NESC	National Economic and Social Council
QNHS	Quarterly National Household Survey

Abstract

The aim of this thesis is to examine emigration from Ireland in the wake of the global financial crisis. In order to do so, Ireland's tradition of emigration is contextualised and recent developments are analysed. Much research has been conducted on historical emigration from Ireland, particularly on the surge of emigration caused by the Great Famine. Later emigration waves have also attracted considerable attention, both in academic and in public discourse. However with the advent of economic prosperity ushered in by the 'Celtic Tiger', large-scale emigration appeared to become a thing of the past. It has however decisively re-emerged in the wake of the 2008 global financial crisis; in 2009 Ireland had the highest emigration rate in the European Union.

This paper makes use of qualitative and quantitative data to document current emigration from Ireland. Given the novelty of the phenomenon academic literature on this topic is extremely scarce; information on current emigration patterns has thus been garnered from official data and from media reports. In addition the thesis draws on the results of a questionnaire distributed to recent emigrants. 58 completed responses were received; these data permit a nuanced portrayal of the rationale behind emigration decisions. The role which economic, social and cultural factors play in facilitating emigration is also examined. The combination of qualitative and quantitative methods provides insight into current emigration from Ireland. While the scope of this paper is necessarily limited, it should also be seen as a contribution to a broader research agenda. Further work is required to determine the nature, extent and significance of renewed emigration from Ireland; this thesis constitutes a preliminary attempt to address this.

Abstract

Das Ziel dieser Masterarbeit ist es die Emigration aus Irland im Rahmen der globalen Finanzkrise zu untersuchen. In diesem Zusammenhang wird Irlands Emigrationstradition und die jüngere Entwicklung kontextualisiert und analysiert. Die historische Emigration aus Irland, vor allem der Auswanderungsstrom der großen Hungersnot (Great Famine), wurde schon sehr intensiv erforscht. Auch den späteren Emigrationswellen wurde viel Beachtung geschenkt, sowohl im akademischen als auch im öffentlichen Diskurs. Doch mit den wirtschaftlichen Wohlstand, der durch den Aufstieg des „Celtic Tigers“ kam, schienen Massenauswanderungen der Geschichte anzugehören. Im Zuge der globalen Finanzkrise hat sich die Emigration aber wieder verstärkt; 2009 hatte Irland die höchste Auswanderungsrate der EU.

In dieser Masterarbeit werden sowohl qualitative wie auch quantitative Forschungsmaterialien verwendet, um die jetzige Emigration aus Irland zu dokumentieren. Da es sich hierbei jedoch um ein aktuelles Phänomen handelt, gibt es nur wenig akademische Literatur dazu. Informationen zum gegenwärtigen Emigrationsverhalten stammen von offiziellen Quellen und Medienberichten. Darüber hinaus bezieht sich diese Masterarbeit auf die Ergebnisse eines Fragebogens, der an Neu-Auswanderer verteilt wurde. Es wurden 58 ausgefüllte Fragebogen ausgewertet. Diese Daten ermöglichen es, ein nuanciertes Bild der Gründe, die hinter der Entscheidung auszuwandern stehen, aufzuzeichnen. Des Weiteren wird die Rolle von ökonomischen, sozialen und kulturellen Faktoren und ihr Einfluss auf die Emigration bewertet. Die Kombination von qualitativen und quantitativen Methoden bieten einen Einblick in die heutige Emigration Irlands. Während der Rahmen dieser Arbeit notwendigerweise begrenzt ist, soll es doch als ein Beitrag zu einer größeren Forschungsagenda verstanden werden. Weitere Arbeit ist erforderlich um den Charakter, die Ausbreitung und die Bedeutung der erneuten Auswanderung Irlands festzustellen; diese Masterarbeit soll dafür als erster Versuch dienen.

Introduction

“No matter how short or how long, how easy or how difficult, every act of migration involves an origin, a destination and an intervening set of obstacles.”¹

Preamble

It is perhaps a truism to assert that migration has been a defining feature of Ireland’s history. Certainly emigration from Ireland is not a new phenomenon. Patrick Fitzgerald and Brian Lambkin’s *Migration in Irish History*² takes the 1607 ‘Flight of the Earls’ as its starting point in considering emigration from and immigration to Ireland; however it could be argued that the Flight of the Earls marks the culmination of processes set in train as early as the twelfth century with the Norman conquest of Ireland. Either way it is clear that the historical roots of migration run deep. More recently the experience of the Great Famine (1845 – 1852), a watershed in Irish history, resulted in a quantitative leap in the scale of emigration, precipitating a population decline which would last for over one hundred years. Writing in 1989, Brendan Walsh estimated that in the sixty-five years [sic] since the foundation of the Irish Free State the country had “lost about 0.5 per cent of our population a year”³ on average through (net) emigration. The twentieth century witnessed peaks of emigration during the 1950s and again during the 1980s with an average net outflow of 40,000 people per year and 27,000 people per year respectively.⁴ Emigration from Ireland has sometimes thus been categorised into three waves: the ‘first wave’ of post-Famine emigration, the ‘second wave’ of the 1950s, and the ‘third wave’ of the 1980s.⁵

¹ Lee, E.S.: ‘A Theory of Migration’ *Demography*, 3:1, pp. 47-57, reprinted in Fitzgerald, Patrick and Lambkin, Brian: *Migration in Irish History, 1607-2007*, p. 2.

² Fitzgerald, Patrick and Lambkin, Brian: *Migration in Irish History, 1607-2007*, Palgrave Macmillan, Basingstoke, 2008.

³ Walsh, Brendan: ‘Emigration: Some Policy Issues’ in *The Irish Banking Review*, Summer 1989, p. 3.

⁴ Walter, Bronwen: *A study of the existing sources of information and analysis about Irish emigrants and Irish communities abroad*, Anglia Polytechnic University, Cambridge, 2002, p. 3.

⁵ Ibid.

The long economic boom which the country enjoyed between 1994 and 2007 brought record growth and prosperity however. In the heyday of the so-called Celtic Tiger, unemployment levels dropped to under five per cent of the working population and emigration declined accordingly. During this time the country's GDP per capita increased from sixty per cent of the EU average to stand at 145.5 per cent of the EU average in 2006.⁶ Ireland also attracted substantial inward migration flows, notably from the ten new member-states which joined the EU in 2004, becoming for the first time in its history a migrant-receiving country rather than a migrant-sending country. In tandem with this, much current research on migration has focused primarily on the topic of immigration to the country. Recent developments have altered the situation dramatically however. Ireland has been severely impacted by the global financial crisis, with its economy officially entering recession in the first quarter of 2008. Unemployment soared to 13.4 per cent by June 2010⁷ and emigration increased correspondingly. Figures for the period April 2008 to April 2009 released by the Central Statistics Office (CSO) indicate that emigration climbed by over 40 per cent during this time.⁸ Net emigration reached 34,500 during the period from April 2009 to April 2010, the highest figure since 1989.⁹ The Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI) has predicted further net outward migration of 60,000 in the year to April 2011 and of 40,000 in the year to April 2012.¹⁰ Such figures are comparable to the worst years of 'second wave' and 'third wave' emigration; as such it begs the question of whether, after it had been supposed that emigration had long been relegated to a spectre of an impoverished past, Ireland is now facing into a 'fourth wave' of emigration.

⁶ Kirby, Peadar: *Celtic Tiger in Collapse. Explaining the Weaknesses of the Irish Model*, Palgrave Macmillan, Basingstoke, 2010, p. 33.

⁷ Economic and Social Research Institute: *Quarterly Economic Commentary*, Economic and Social Research Institute, Dublin, Summer 2010, p. 37.

⁸ Central Statistics Office: *Statistical Release on Annual Population and Migration Estimates*, Central Statistics Office, Dublin, 2009, p. 1.

⁹ Central Statistics Office: *Statistical Release on Annual Population and Migration Estimates*, Central Statistics Office, Dublin, 2010, p. 1.

¹⁰ Economic and Social Research Institute: *Quarterly Economic Commentary*, Economic and Social Research Institute, Dublin, Winter 2010, p. 32.

The aim of this thesis is to examine emigration from Ireland in the wake of the current and ongoing recession. The thesis will commence with a discussion of migration theory in general and its evolution over the past decades. The history of Irish emigration from the mid-nineteenth century will be outlined, followed by a more detailed analysis of ‘second wave’ and ‘third wave’ emigration. With regard to the present situation, the ‘Celtic Tiger’ and subsequent recession will be contextualised and an assessment of present emigration trends will be attempted. Information for the thesis will be drawn from a number of sources. Books and journal articles will be used to research migration theory and to gather data on facets of historical emigration. A number of reports on emigration have also been commissioned by the Irish government, most recently in 2002. However there is little or no academic literature devoted to the latest emigration phase, precisely because it is such a recent event. To compensate for this, in addition to drawing on media reports on the current state of affairs, a questionnaire has been distributed to a number of Irish people who have left the country in the last two years. The questionnaire was made available online and was sent via email to contacts identified by the author. It was also posted on the social networking site Facebook and on the Irish internet community Boards.ie.¹¹ In this manner it is hoped to gather some qualitative data on the emigration experiences of the Irish community today.

Obviously this type of research is not without its limitations. The relatively small sample size precludes the amassing of significant quantitative data. Furthermore, the sample cannot claim to be representative of Irish emigrants in general as it relies to a considerable extent upon connections of the author. Moreover, the possibility of self-selection among respondents must also be taken into account; a variety of factors can influence an individual’s readiness to answer a questionnaire. Nevertheless, despite these drawbacks it is felt that the qualitative data obtained in this way can make a valuable contribution towards research on current emigration trends. In

¹¹Available at www.facebook.com and www.boards.ie respectively.

tandem with these qualitative data, quantitative migration statistics made available by the CSO and the ESRI will also be drawn upon. The thesis intends to combine both qualitative and quantitative data to provide a nuanced portrayal of emigration today. It is hoped that this assessment will throw some light on the phenomenon, and indicate whether it may be characterised as a ‘fourth wave’.

At this point it seems advisable to comment on the statistical data available concerning emigration from Ireland. Bronwen Walter states bluntly that “no record is kept of numbers leaving Ireland”¹², noting the obvious difficulties for researchers which this entails. As such, the primary source of migration data is the Census of Population, which is carried out at five-year intervals. Moreover, data available for Irish migration prior to 1987 are for *net* migration; that is, the sum of emigration minus immigration. According to the National Economic and Social Council (NESC) report *The Economic and Social Implications of Emigration*, figures for net migration are derived as residuals; population data are obtained from the Census, while figures for births and deaths are compiled from the General Register Office. The difference between these figures is then calculated as net migration. This can be deceptive, as in 1991 where a small negative net migration figure was in fact the result of a large emigration flow which was offset by an immigration flow which was almost as big,¹³ or in the 1970s where a large positive net migration figure was the result of high immigration which nevertheless concealed substantial continuing emigration.¹⁴

Historical factors serve to further complicate the picture. Until 1922, with the foundation of the Irish Free State, Ireland was a part of the United Kingdom. Even after the foundation of the Free State, and its subsequent metamorphosis into the Republic of Ireland twenty-seven years

¹² Walter, Bronwen: *A study of the existing sources of information and analysis about Irish emigrants and Irish communities abroad*, p. 3.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ National Economic and Social Council: *The Economic and Social Implications of Emigration*, National Economic and Social Council, Dublin, 1992, p. 59.

later, no controls were imposed on migration between the United Kingdom and Ireland.* In fact, a so-called ‘common travel area’ existed between the two countries, a system which persists to this day. This means that there has in practice been free migration between the United Kingdom and Ireland (with the exception of the period from 1939 – 1952 when wartime travel permits were required by the British government); as Bernard Ryan highlights Ireland was “not classed as a ‘foreign country’”¹⁵ under British nationality law. This situation is due in no small part to the land border between the Republic of Ireland and the United Kingdom, a border which is “approximately 180 miles long, does not follow natural boundaries and cuts across some 180 roads”¹⁶. Ryan contends that this border played a major role in the creation of a common travel area between the two states, as both governments were well aware of the difficulties inherent in attempting to police it. As a result, the limited data which exist on gross migration flows prior to 1987 exclude migration flows to the United Kingdom; these data are based on figures for passenger manifests and passport issuances, neither of which were relevant in the case of the United Kingdom. Inevitably the absence of data on gross migration flows to this major country of destination for Irish emigrants renders the remaining data useless; the NESC report thus records a gap of almost fifty years in the data it provides on such flows, with the exception of the aforementioned wartime period for which records of UK travel permits issued could be used. Estimates of gross migration flows from 1971 onwards have however been made by the authors of the NESC report based on combining net migration figures with census data and data from

* At this juncture it may be useful to note the distinction between the Republic of Ireland and the island of Ireland and to clarify the sense in which these terms are used in the text. The Republic of Ireland was founded in 1949 as the successor to the Irish Free State which had been established in 1922. The territory of the Republic (as of the Free State) consists of twenty-six counties, occupying approximately five-sixths of the island. The remaining six counties in the north form part of the United Kingdom (*lit.* the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland) and have done since the island was partitioned in 1922. In the text of this thesis, ‘Ireland’ will be used to refer to the Republic of Ireland, and ‘the island of Ireland’ will be used on those occasions when reference is being made to the entire island e.g. in discussing emigration prior to 1922.

¹⁵ Ryan, Bernard: ‘The Common Travel Area between Britain and Ireland’, *Modern Law Review*, 64, 2001, p. 860.

¹⁶ *Ibid*, p. 869.

annual Labour Force Surveys (LFS), following Damian Courtney who estimated gross migration flows for the period from 1982 – 1987 in a similar manner.¹⁷

Since 1987 the CSO itself has produced a yearly *Statistical Release on Annual Population and Migration Estimates* which has expanded the amount of data available to researchers. These releases provide information on gross migration flows to and from Ireland, derived primarily from the Quarterly National Household Survey (QNHS).^{*} They also indicate the main destinations of emigrants. The 2009 and 2010 releases contain data on the nationality of those who have emigrated over the past three years; it is the first time that data on the nationality of emigrants has been included in the releases. According to the CSO, this data is derived from an analysis of those sampled in the QNHS who subsequently leave the country. The 2009 and 2010 data on destination countries was also based on this analysis and as such differs in derivation from the data presented in previous years. This new analysis forms part of “ongoing work aimed at improving the methodology used to measure migration”¹⁸. The figures which are supplied in these annual releases are adjusted to correspond with Census data once the latter are available, i.e. at five year intervals. According to Walter, studies have shown that the information contained in the annual releases is “close enough to the more accurate Census figures to be useful”¹⁹.

Nevertheless it must be noted that the results of the 2006 Census necessitated significant adjustments to the release data covering the inter-censal period of 2002 – 2006 as the latter was

¹⁷ Courtney, Damien: ‘A Quantification of Irish Migration with Particular Emphasis on the 1980s and the 1990s’ in *The Irish Diaspora* ed. Andy Bielenberg, Longman, Harlow, 2000, p. 301.

^{*} It should be noted that the figures in the CSO *Annual Releases* are for the year ending in April i.e. the *Annual Release* for 2010 contains data for the period from April 2009 to April 2010. The *Annual Releases* are usually published on the website of the CSO in autumn of the respective year; at the time of writing the most recent release is that of April 2009 – April 2010 which was made available online in September 2010.

The Quarterly National Household Survey (QNHS) is a large-scale, nationwide survey of households in Ireland. It is designed to produce quarterly labour force estimates that include the official measure of employment and unemployment in the state. The survey began in September 1997, replacing the annual Labour Force Survey (LFS) http://www.cso.ie/qnhs/what_is_qnhs.htm.

¹⁸ Central Statistics Office: *Statistical Release on Annual Population and Migration Estimates*, 2009, p. 9.

¹⁹ Walter, Bronwen: ‘From ‘flood’ to ‘trickle’: Irish migration to Britain 1987-2006’, *Irish Geography*, 41, 2008, p. 185.

“underestimating the magnitude of both the inward and the outward gross flows”²⁰. These revisions resulted i.a. in figures for gross emigration flows being revised substantially upwards, notably in 2006 where the readjusted gross emigration flow was more than double the previous release estimate. As the same underestimation of flows had occurred in the case of immigration however, figures for net migration during this period remained largely the same overall. The CSO has taken steps to correct this, introducing an adjustment factor to the QNHS to ensure that QNHS samples accurately reflect the population make-up recorded in the 2006 Census.²¹ The difficulty of calculating migration flows in a country where citizens are not required to register their place of residence and where citizens of the European Union are not required to register their presence in the country is naturally considerable, so the margin of error in the CSO annual release data is perhaps not so surprising. Nevertheless it demonstrates the weaknesses of the figures for inter-censal periods and, while the CSO is endeavouring to improve its methodology, the efficacy of such measures will only be apparent after the Census of 2011. Moreover, considering that the rather more reliable data on net migration indicate a substantial shift from net immigration of almost forty thousand in the year ending in April 2008 to net emigration of nearly thirty five thousand in the year ending in April 2010, gross migration flows during this volatile period may prove difficult to estimate with any level of accuracy. Definitive figures for this period will not be available until 2012 however; as such the annual release data will be used as an indicator of migration trends while bearing in mind the weaknesses previously noted.

Migration

Migration is not a new phenomenon; indeed it can be posited that it has been a feature of human history since the original semi-mythical move out of Africa. More concretely, in works such as

²⁰ Central Statistics Office: *Statistical Release on Annual Population and Migration Estimates*, 2007, p. 8.

²¹ Ibid.

Migration in World History and *Cultures in Contact* Patrick Manning and Dirk Hoerder have illustrated the extent to which migration has characterised societies from the earliest times to the present.²² Thomas Faist focuses on more recent migration patterns, using periodisation to distinguish three eras of migration since the sixteenth century. According to Faist, the first migration period consisted of early European colonisation overseas together with the slavery and indentured labour that accompanied it, while the second was characterised by mass migrations from the ‘Old World’ to the ‘New World’ during the industrialisation of Europe. This was followed by what he refers to as “the contemporary period”²³ of migration which commenced after the Second World War. Faist characterises this latest period as being dominated by migration moves from economically less developed countries to economically more developed countries.

In recent times the topic of migration has attracted increased attention, with the end of the Cold War seemingly having “opened the floodgates for vast new population flows”²⁴. Despite sometimes hyperbolic depictions in public discourse however migration flows as a proportion of the total population remain remarkably constant over time. The United Nations database for migration statistics categorises almost 214 million people or 3.1 percent of the world’s population as international migrants in 2010, compared to 155.5 million people, or 2.9 per cent of the world’s population in 1990.²⁵ Similarly Adam McKeown compiles figures from several sources which indicate that migrants formed 2 per cent of the world’s population in 1910, increasing somewhat over the course of the next century to 2.8 per cent in 2003.²⁶ Differences in

²² Hoerder, Dirk: *Cultures in Contact. World Migrations in the Second Millennium*, Duke University Press, Durham and London, 2002. Manning, Patrick: *Migration in World History*, Routledge, New York, 2005.

²³ Faist, Thomas: *The Volume and Dynamics of International Migration and Transnational Social Space*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2000, p. 26.

²⁴ Castles, Stephen: ‘Migration and Community Formation under Conditions of Globalisation’ *International Migration Review*, 36:4, 2002, p. 1143.

²⁵ United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division (2009). *Trends in International Migrant Stock: The 2008 Revision*, <http://esa.un.org/migration/index.asp?panel=1>.

²⁶ McKeown, Adam: ‘Global Migration, 1846-1940’, *Journal of World History*, 15:2, 2004, p. 184.

the percentages given are attributable to different data sources; nevertheless both demonstrate that migrants comprise a small percentage of overall population totals.

In the academic sphere also, migration has been the focus of much attention. A classic definition of migration is that provided by Everett S. Lee, who contends that migration is “defined broadly as a permanent or semi-permanent change of residence”²⁷. This definition however does not draw any distinctions between such changes of residence, be it a move across the street or a move to a different continent. Administrative boundaries have therefore commonly been used as a means of assessing migration; a move across an administrative boundary is perceived as migration while a move within an administrative unit is regarded merely as relocation. Migration is further differentiated on the basis of the type of administrative boundary crossed; international migration entails crossing the boundary of a country while internal migration refers to the crossing of an administrative boundary within a country.²⁸ Emigration and immigration form subsets of international migration; emigration refers to the act of leaving a country whereas immigration refers to the act of arriving in a country. Migration may also be classified according to the duration of a move. The United Nations Recommendations on Statistics of International Migration distinguishes between ‘long-term’ and ‘short-term’ migrants; the former being those who move to another country for a period of one year or longer, while the latter are those who move to another country for a period of more than three months but less than a year. This excludes however those cases where the movement is “for purposes of recreation, holiday, visits to friends and relatives, business, medical treatment or religious pilgrimage”²⁹. Different types of migration may also be distinguished, for example along a continuum from voluntary migration to

²⁷ Lee, E.S.: ‘A Theory of Migration’, reprinted in Fitzgerald, Patrick and Lambkin, Brian: *Migration in Irish History, 1607-2007*, p. 2.

²⁸ Faist, Thomas: *The Volume and Dynamics of International Migration*, p.18.

²⁹ U.N. Statistics Division 2008, quoted in Ratha, Dilip and Xu, Zhimei: *Migration and Remittances Factbook 2008*, World Bank, 2008: <http://siteresources.worldbank.org/EXTDECPROSPECTS/Resources/476882-1157133580628/FactbookDataNotes.pdf>.

forced migration.³⁰ Furthermore the migration spectrum encompasses both ‘primary’ or first-time migration as well as return, transilient and circular migration processes.³¹

Despite much research on the subject, there is “no such thing as a general theory of migration”³². Rather, a number of different theoretical models have been advanced to explain the phenomenon of migration. Within migration literature, three levels of analysis are commonly outlined. Work carried out at the micro level of analysis concentrates on the individual migrants; i.a. their motivation to migrate, the constraints which they face and their decision-making processes may be examined. At the macro level, research focuses on political and economic structures which affect migration such as the policies of sending and receiving countries and the effects of international norms and instruments on migration flows. The meso level provides a link between the other two levels of analysis in focusing on the relationships which exist between individuals. By examining familial, social and economic ties it facilitates an examination of the networks which connect migrants both to their home countries and to their host countries. It also permits an analysis of the various forms of social capital and social organisation on which migrants may draw.

Faist distinguishes three ‘generations’ of scholarship on migration. The earliest of these conceptualisations, derived from neo-classical economics, “emphasises the push-pull nature of migration”³³. On the macro level it posits that migration is caused by the uneven distribution of labour and capital. In countries where labour is scarce relative to capital, wage levels are high while in countries with a large endowment of labour relative to capital, wages are low. Accordingly workers migrate from countries with abundant labour and low wage levels to countries with shortages of labour and high wage levels. This flow continues, leading eventually

³⁰ Faist, Thomas: *The Volume and Dynamics of International Migration*, p. 24.

³¹ Ibid, p. 19.

³² Arango, Joaquin: ‘Explaining migration: a critical view’ *International Social Science Journal*, 165, 2000, p. 283.

³³ Faist, Thomas: *The Volume and Dynamics of International Migration*, p. 11.

to equilibrium in wages and labour across the board since wages in sending countries rise as labour supply declines while wages in receiving countries fall as labour supply increases. On the micro level this theory construes migration as a result of “individual decisions by rational actors”³⁴ and assumes that migrants migrate in order to gain a better rate of compensation for their labour than is possible in their home country. The decision to migrate is thus taken on the basis of a cost-benefit calculation and as such migrants are expected to move to countries where net returns would be highest. More recently, a ‘new economics of migration’ theory has developed out of the neo-classical economics school of thought. Its emphasis is still that of rational choice, but the scope of its analysis is directed at families and households. In this context migration is seen as a strategy which is utilised by such groups to minimise risks. Group income is derived from a number of different sources including from migrant(s) abroad; remittances sent by migrants can provide a source of capital for economic ventures in the home country or equally can be used to tide families there over difficult times. By thus diversifying the sources of their income, families attempt to ensure their economic survival and growth. The economic focus of these models excludes the roles which other factors may play in migration however.³⁵

In contrast to such rational-choice models, later conceptualisations emphasise the importance of structural factors on the macro level in determining migration, asserting that migration flows “occur in structured relationships between emigration and immigration states”³⁶. Dual labour market theory points to an inherent demand for foreign labour in modern industrial societies, citing this ‘pull’ factor as the cause of migration flows. The source of this demand for foreign labour lies in the division of industrial economies into “a capital-intensive primary sector and a labour-intensive, low-productivity secondary sector”³⁷. This segmentation of the labour market creates unstable, unskilled, low-paid jobs in the secondary sector which are unattractive to local

³⁴ Arango, Joaquin: ‘Explaining migration’, p. 285.

³⁵ Ibid, p. 286.

³⁶ Faist, Thomas: *The Volume and Dynamics of International Migration*, p. 12.

³⁷ Arango, Joaquin: ‘Explaining migration’, p. 289.

workers. Such positions would historically often have been occupied by teenagers and women; however longer schooling terms and lower demographics have curtailed the availability of the former while the latter also increasingly seek higher waged, higher prestige jobs in the primary sector. Such trends therefore work to “increase the underlying, long run demand for immigrants”³⁸, who are often prepared to accept wages which may be high compared to those in their home country and who may be relatively indifferent to notions of prestige current in the host societies.

World system theory similarly stresses the concept of foreign labour as vital for modern industrial societies; however it points to the emergence of a capitalist world system as the driving force behind migration flows. The ‘modern world system’ thesis developed by Immanuel Wallerstein holds that under European hegemony the world has been divided into core regions, semi-peripheral regions and peripheral regions. Drawing on Wallerstein’s work, world system theory explains migration as a product of the ongoing “extension of the capitalist mode of production from core countries to peripheral ones”³⁹. Capitalist firms benefit from semi-peripheral and peripheral regions as sources of land, raw materials and cheap labour. Their penetration into such regions however entails the spread of the capitalist system which, in tandem with processes of modernisation, gives rise to dislocations in those regions. The ensuing incorporation of such semi-peripheral and peripheral regions into the world market economy involves the disruption of traditional ways of life and the displacement of sections of the population. As a result, such regions are often left with a “mobile population that is prone to migrate abroad”⁴⁰. Both world system theory and dual labour market theory accord primacy to processes on the macro level as determinants of migration flows; as such they offer little room

³⁸ Massey, Douglas S.; Arango, Joaquin; Hugo, Graeme; Kouaouci, Ali; Pellegrino, Adela; Taylor, J. Edward: ‘Theories of International Migration: A Review and Appraisal’, *Population and Development Review*, 19:3, 1993, p. 443.

³⁹ Arango, Joaquin: ‘Explaining migration’, p. 290.

⁴⁰ Massey *et al.*: ‘Theories of International Migration’, p. 444.

for analysis of either the agency of individual migrants or the networks between migrants in examining the constitution of these flows.

The most recent scholarship on migration focuses on the concept of transnational social spaces. Faist describes transnational social spaces as “combinations of ties, positions in networks and organisations, and networks of organisations that reach across the borders of multiple states”⁴¹. Attention has been devoted to analysing the relevance and importance of such ties and networks in view of their influence on the decision to migrate. Network theory holds that migrant networks, defined as “sets of interpersonal ties that connect migrants, former migrants, and non-migrants in origin and destination areas through ties of kinship, friendship, and shared community origin”⁴², serve to increase the probability of migration. Acting as “conduits of information and social and financial assistance”⁴³, such networks reduce the costs and risks associated with migration. Insofar as those who have migrated retain ties to those at home, migration creates links between home and host countries which prospective migrants can draw upon in a number of ways. Moreover, as migration increases, such networks become denser which in turn encourages more people to migrate.

Related to this is the theory of cumulative causation, which posits that the effects of migration on countries of origin may also fuel further migration. This can manifest in a number of ways, as Douglas Massey illustrates. If certain members or groups in a community are receiving remittances from abroad, their income will increase correspondingly. This may result in a sense of relative deprivation among the rest of the community and act as a catalyst for others to migrate. Processes of chain migration may ensue if individuals, drawing on assistance from community members who have already migrated, join them in the host country and then in their

⁴¹ Faist, Thomas: ‘Transnationalization in international migration: implications for the study of citizenship and culture’, *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 23:2, 2000, p. 191.

⁴² Massey *et al.*: ‘Theories of International Migration’, p. 448.

⁴³ Boyd, Monica: ‘Family and Personal Networks in International Migration: Recent Developments and New Agendas’, *International Migration Review*, 23:3, 1989, p. 639.

turn facilitate the migration of other community members in the home country. Moreover, a ‘culture of migration’ may develop within a community subject to high rates of migration, which may “chang[e] values and cultural perceptions in ways that increase the possibility of future migration”⁴⁴. Behaviours associated with migration become ingrained into the community and migration is valorised, often being viewed as a rite of passage for younger members of the community. Those who choose not to migrate may be held in less regard than migrants and be considered “lazy, unenterprising and undesirable”⁴⁵. Sustained migration may also deplete communities of human capital, reducing growth and innovation in the home communities and rendering them increasingly stagnant, which in turn may provide further incentive to migrate. Such meso level analyses, while adding considerable richness to research on processes of migration, fail to explain the origins of migration however.

It is clear that the conceptualisations of migration which have been outlined thus far can justly be described as a “fragmented set of theories”⁴⁶, each of which has its respective strengths and weaknesses. One possible way of bringing these together is by means of a migration systems approach. Migration systems theory seeks to identify migration systems, characterised by “the relatively stable association of a group of receiving countries with a number of areas of origin”⁴⁷ resulting both from migration and also from other system linkages. Migration systems theory focuses on such linkages as well as on processes within these migration systems, which would allow for the integration of a number of theoretical models in a comprehensive multi-level analysis. This approach is however as yet in its infancy; indeed according to Joaquin Arango it remains a desideratum which has yet to be fulfilled.⁴⁸

⁴⁴ Massey *et al.* ‘Theories of International Migration’, p. 452.

⁴⁵ *Ibid*, p. 453.

⁴⁶ *Ibid*, p. 432.

⁴⁷ Arango, Joaquin: ‘Explaining migration’, p. 292.

⁴⁸ *Ibid*.

Literature Review

If the study of migration is of relatively recent provenance, then the area of Irish migration studies is newer still. Fitzgerald and Lambkin credit the publication of Patrick O’Sullivan’s six-volume series *The Irish World Wide* (1992 – 1997) together with that of Akenson’s *The Irish Diaspora: A Primer* (1993) with the establishment of this field. In his ‘General Introduction’ to *The Irish World Wide* series O’Sullivan describes the series as “map[ping] out an area of interdisciplinary academic study”⁴⁹, defining it as a ‘state of the art’ of Irish migration studies in its current form. Covering such broad themes as ‘patterns of migration’ and ‘the Irish in the new communities’ along with volumes dedicated to creativity, gender, religion and the Famine, the series certainly goes a long way towards providing an overview of Irish migration worldwide. Much of the content focuses on the Irish diaspora, that is, on Irish-born emigrants and their descendants, and on examining diasporic communities and their experiences with assimilation, integration and identity in the receiving country.⁵⁰ In a similar vein, research on specific Irish communities or communities of Irish descent has been undertaken by i.a. Enda Delaney and Bronwen Walter on the Irish population in Britain, Donald Harman Akenson and Kevin Kenny on that of North America, and Piaras Mac Éinrí and Russell King with Lucy Arbuckle on that of Paris and of Rome respectively.⁵¹ There is also a burgeoning literature on return migration to Ireland, e.g. the work of Caitríona Ní Laoire and Mary Corcoran.⁵²

⁴⁹ O’Sullivan, Patrick: ‘General introduction to the series’ in *Patterns of Migration, The Irish World Wide: History, Heritage, Identity*, Volume 1, ed. O’Sullivan, Patrick, Leicester University Press, London, 1992, p. xiii.

⁵⁰ This parallels a broader shift in Irish society at the time, which was beginning to recognise migration and diaspora “as positive attributes of Irish culture”. (Walter, Bronwen: *A study of the existing sources of information and analysis about Irish emigrants and Irish communities abroad*, p. 16.) This is best exemplified by President Mary Robinson’s inaugural speech in 1990 where she declared herself proud to represent the Irish community worldwide (ibid, p. 26).

⁵¹ See e.g. Delaney, Enda: *Demography, state and society: Irish migration to Britain, 1921-1971*, Liverpool University Press, Liverpool, 2000; Delaney, Enda: *The Irish in Post-war Britain*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2007; Walter, Bronwen: ‘Challenging the black/white binary: the need for an Irish category in the 2001 Census’, *Patterns of Prejudice*, 32, 1998, pp. 73-86; Walter, Bronwen: *Outsiders inside: whiteness, place and Irish women*, Routledge, London, 2001; Akenson, Donald Harman: *Being Had: Historians, Evidence, and the Irish in North America*, P. D. Meany, Toronto, 1985; Akenson, Donald Harman: *The Irish diaspora: a primer*, P.D.Meany, Toronto, 1993; Kenny, Kevin: *The American Irish*, Longman, London, 2000; Mac Éinrí, Piaras: ‘The New

In assessing the literature on Irish migration, it may be useful at this point to appropriate Fitzgerald and Lambkin's conception of migration as a 'three-stage process'. According to this conception, migration can be viewed as a structure comprising the processes of leaving, of crossing and of arriving.⁵³ It seems fair to say that the historiography of Irish migration has been primarily concerned with the processes of arriving in the destination countries (i.e. Irish immigration) leading to a plethora of studies e.g. on the Irish in the United States, while the processes of leaving Ireland (i.e. Irish emigration) are comparatively under-researched. This parallels larger trends in academia; Nancy Green notes the prevalence of literature on immigration within the field of migration studies.⁵⁴ Moreover, Ireland's recent history as a country of net immigration from 1996 to 2008⁵⁵ has fuelled scholarship on this phenomenon, overshadowing research agendas on emigration. In line with this, a 2008 bibliography on recent research into immigration into Ireland comprised a list of some four hundred titles produced within the past twenty years.⁵⁶ In contrast, there is a paucity of recent literature dealing with the topic of emigration, and what there is tends to focus almost exclusively on historical emigration. According to one scholar, this has resulted in a situation where "we now know more about [its]

Europeans: the Irish in Paris today' in *Emigration, employment and enterprise*, eds. Joe Mulholland and Dermot Keogh, Hibernian University Press, Cork, 1989, pp. 58-80; Mac Éinrí, Piaras: 'The Irish in Paris: an aberrant community?' in *Contemporary Irish migration*, ed. Russell King, Geographical Society of Ireland Special Publications, Dublin, 1991, pp. 32-41; King, Russell and Arbuckle, Lucy: 'A note on the Irish in Rome' *Irish Geography* 25:2, 1992, pp. 188-194.

⁵² Ní Laoire, Caitríona: 'The 'green green grass of home'? Return migration to rural Ireland', *Journal of Rural Studies*, 23, 2007, pp. 332-344; Ní Laoire, Caitríona: 'Settling back'? A biographical and life-course perspective on Ireland's recent return migration', *Irish Geography*, 41:2, 2008 pp. 195-210; Ní Laoire, Caitríona: 'Complicating host-newcomer dualisms: Irish return migrants as home-comers or newcomers?', *Translocations: Migration and Social Change*, 4:1, 2008, pp. 35-50; Corcoran, Mary P.: 'The Process of Migration and the Reinvention of Self: The Experiences of Returning Irish Emigrants' *Eire-Ireland*, 37:1-2, 2002, pp. 175-191; Corcoran, Mary P.: 'Global cosmopolites: issues of self-identity and collective identity among the transnational Irish elite', *Études Irlandaises*, 28:2, 2003, pp. 1-15.

⁵³ Fitzgerald, Patrick and Lambkin, Brian: *Migration in Irish History*, p. 16.

⁵⁴ Green, Nancy: 'The Politics of Exit: Reversing the Immigration Paradigm', *The Journal of Modern History*, 77, 2005, p. 264.

⁵⁵ As per the data on net migration presented in the annual CSO statistical releases e.g. Central Statistics Office: *Statistical Release on Annual Population and Migration Estimates*, Central Statistics Office, Dublin, 2010, p. 2

⁵⁶ Mac Éinrí, Piaras and White, Allen: 'Immigration into the Republic of Ireland: a bibliography of recent research', *Irish Geography*, 41:2, pp. 151-179.

pre-Famine trends [...] than we do about young Irish school leavers and college graduates in the international labour market today”.⁵⁷

Returning to Faist’s periodisation of migration, literature on Irish emigration in the ‘contemporary’ period is thus relatively scarce. Nevertheless, a number of valuable sources on the topic exist. Chief among these are three reports on emigration commissioned by the Irish government. The twenty-four member Commission on Emigration and Other Population Problems was established in 1948 with a mandate “to investigate the causes and consequences of the present level and trend in population”⁵⁸. After six years it produced a ‘Majority Report’ and two ‘Minority Reports’, which explored the period of ‘second wave’ emigration in the nineteen fifties. This was followed almost forty years later by the 1991 NESC report *The Economic and Social Implications of Emigration* which documented the ‘third wave’ movement of the nineteen eighties. In 2001 the Task Force on Policy regarding Emigrants was set up, with the aim of recommending a “coherent long-term policy approach to meeting the needs of Irish emigrants”⁵⁹. Both a report, *Ireland and the Irish Abroad: Report of the Task Force on Policy regarding Emigrants* and a background study, *Study of the existing sources of information and analysis about Irish emigrants and Irish communities abroad* were produced under the aegis of the task force and together they provide a comprehensive and wide-ranging overview of Irish emigrant communities abroad.

In addition to these reports, there is also a corpus of secondary literature on ‘contemporary’ emigration from Ireland. Much of this was produced by researchers affiliated with the ESRI and is primarily econometric in scope, focusing on the analysis of variables such as wage differentials

⁵⁷ MacLaughlin, Jim: ‘Emigration and the construction of Nationalist Hegemony in Ireland: The Historical Background to ‘New Wave’ Irish Emigration’ in *Location and Dislocation in contemporary Irish society: Emigration and Irish identities*, ed. Jim MacLaughlin, Cork University Press, Cork, 1997, p. 6.

⁵⁸ Commission on Emigration and other Population Problems: *Reports 1948-1954*, Stationery Office, Dublin, 1955, p. 1.

⁵⁹ Task Force on Policy regarding Emigrants: *Ireland and the Irish Abroad: Report of the Task Force on Policy regarding Emigrants*, 2002, p. 6.

and labour market conditions in order to derive estimated migration equations.⁶⁰ Moreover the ESRI research, in keeping with the institution's goal of "produc[ing] research that contributes to understanding economic and social change"⁶¹, dates largely from the nineteen eighties, a time when emigration commanded much attention in public discourse. In more recent years its research emphasis, in line with demographic trends, has shifted to immigration to Ireland.

The topic of emigration from Ireland in the 'contemporary' period has also attracted the attention of a number of academics. Chief among these is Jim MacLaughlin, who has written extensively on the subject. His works include *Historical and Recent Irish Emigration: A critique of core-periphery and behavioural models* (1994) and *Ireland: The Emigrant Nursery and the World Economy* (1994). He is the editor of and a contributing author to *Location and Dislocation in Contemporary Irish Society: Emigration and Irish Identities* (1997) and he has also published several journal articles. In his oeuvre MacLaughlin deals primarily with issues of capitalism and of class, drawing on world-systems theory to argue that emigration disproportionally affects certain segments of Irish society. Ian Shuttleworth has focused on the issue of graduate emigration from Ireland in a number of articles 'Graduate Emigration from Ireland: a symptom of peripherality?' (1990), 'Irish Graduate Emigration: the mobility of qualified manpower in the context of peripherality' (1993), 'The Emigration and Employment of Irish Graduates: the export of high-quality labour from the periphery of Europe' (1995) and 'Graduate Emigrants: A new wave in Irish emigration' (1997). Shuttleworth conducted extensive surveys among students and graduates in an attempt to

⁶⁰ See e.g. Barry, Frank and Bradley, John: 'On the Causes of Ireland's Unemployment', *Economic and Social Review*, 22, 1991, pp. 253-286; Curtis, J. and J.D. Fitzgerald: 'Real Wage Convergence in an Open Labour Market', *Economic and Social Review*, 27, 1996, pp. 321-340; Geary, Patrick and McCarthy, Colm: 'Wage and Price Determination in a Labour Exporting Economy: The Case of Ireland', *European Economic Review*, 8, 1976, pp. 219-233; Honohan, Patrick: 'The Link between Irish and UK Unemployment', in *Quarterly Economic Commentary (Spring)*, Economic and Social Research Institute, Dublin, 1992; O'Gráda, Cormac: 'Determinants of Irish Emigration: A Note', *International Migration Review*, 20, 1986, pp. 650-656; O'Gráda, Cormac and Walsh, Brendan: 'The Economic Effects of Emigration: Ireland' in *Emigration and its effects on the sending country*, ed. B.J. Asch, Rand, Santa Monica, 1994, pp. 97-152; Walsh, Brendan: 'Expectations, Information, and Human Migration: Specifying an Econometric Model of Irish Migration to Britain', *Journal of Regional Science*, 14, 1974, pp. 107-120; Walsh, Brendan: 'Tests for Macroeconomic Feedback from Large-scale Migration Based on the Irish Experience: A Note', *Economic and Social Review*, 20, 1989, pp. 257-266.

⁶¹ 'About ESRI' section from the ESRI website http://www.esri.ie/about_us/.

determine proclivity to emigrate and factors which influenced emigration decisions. The empirical data collected in this manner provide the basis for a detailed and insightful analysis of the subject. Graduate emigration is also the focus of Gerard Hanlon's contribution to *The Irish World Wide* series. In a chapter entitled 'Graduate Emigration: a continuation or a break with the past?' (1992) Hanlon investigates the career paths of young accountancy professionals and their patterns of movement through the medium of semi-structured interviews with a number of such individuals. Ellen Hazelkorn's chapter 'We can't all live on a small island': the political economy of Irish migration' (1992) which appears in a later volume of the series deals in turn with structural changes within the Irish economy and the impact of these on emigration.

While Enda Delaney's primary area of research is that of the Irish community in Britain which he has documented in depth, he has however also published more generally on emigration, as in his 1998 article 'State, politics and demography: The case of Irish emigration, 1921-1971'. Delaney's more recent work assesses the role played by transnational networks in shaping Irish emigration. Together with Donald M. MacRaild he is joint editor of *Irish Migration, Networks and Ethnic Identities since 1750* (2007) to which he also contributed a chapter 'Transnationalism, Networks and Emigration from Post-War Ireland' (2007). Although primarily concerned with Irish communities overseas, *The Irish Diaspora* (2000) edited by Andy Bielenberg also features three chapters on 'general studies' of emigration, Delaney's 'Placing Postwar Irish Migration to Britain in a Comparative European Perspective, 1945-1981', MacLaughlin's 'Changing Attitudes to 'New Wave' Emigration? Structuralism versus voluntarism in the study of Irish emigration' as well as a chapter by Damian Courtney 'A Quantification of Irish Migration with Particular Emphasis on the 1980s and 1990s'. The latter supplies a useful overview of trends in emigration during the period, with an emphasis on migration statistics. Finally, Fitzgerald and Lambkin's *Migration in Irish History 1607-2007* provides a magisterial overview of four hundred years of immigration, internal migration and emigration in Ireland, including but not limited to the

‘contemporary’ period of migration. The breadth and depth of this work make it a significant addition to any study of migration in Ireland, while its truly exhaustive bibliography constitutes an impressive resource in and of itself. It is within the context of this body of literature on Irish emigration that the present work should therefore be seen. Building on the extant scholarship outlined above, it hopes to contribute new perspectives on the topic of emigration from Ireland in the twenty-first century.

This is perhaps also the place to comment briefly on the terminology used in this text. While the words ‘emigrant’ and ‘immigrant’ have fallen somewhat out of favour of late, with many in the academic community preferring the more fashionable term ‘migrant’, this work continues to use the terms ‘emigrant’ and ‘emigration’ to describe the topic under discussion. Although in sympathy with the view that such terms impose a unidirectional, unilinear form on processes of movement which may in reality be far more complex, nevertheless it seems sensible to retain them here. Given that the earlier literature cited on the subject refers to ‘emigration’ from Ireland, consistency urges the adoption of this usage throughout the present text. Moreover, as the thesis focuses explicitly on processes of leaving Ireland, the clarity inherent in the word ‘emigrant’ is in this case considered advantageous. The use of these terms is however not meant in any sense to imply that the emigration moves documented are permanent or immutable. Indeed, it is unlikely that they are so. It falls outside the remit of this work however to trace such movements going forward; rather the scope of this thesis is to provide an insight into emigration processes from Ireland at this present time.

Historical Background

The Census of 1841, regarded as the first accurate measurement of its kind, put the population of the island of Ireland at 8,175,000 people.⁶² This figure, the highest ever registered for the

⁶² National Economic and Social Council: *The Economic and Social Implications of Emigration*, p. 47.

island before or since, was a consequence of several centuries of virtually uninterrupted demographic growth. While the 1841 Census recorded 6,529,000 people living in the area of what is now the Republic of Ireland, the population had however fallen to just 2,818,000 a little over one hundred years later.⁶³ Famine, disease and emigration all contributed to this precipitous decline; during the late nineteenth century the emigration rate from Ireland was the highest in Europe.⁶⁴

The Great Famine of 1845-1852 was caused by the failure of the potato harvest, on which much of the population depended for sustenance. Kevin O'Rourke underlines the importance of the potato in pre-Famine Ireland, noting that "it was the chief food of the rural poor; it played the role of wage good; it was fed to farm animals, and played an important part in crop rotations"⁶⁵. As such, when potato blight struck the crop in 1845, 1846, 1848 and 1849 successively, devastation was unleashed. According to a contemporary observer, in a five-year period almost a quarter of the population emigrated either to the New World or to the 'next world'.⁶⁶ The death toll as a result of the Famine – as a consequence of both starvation and disease – is commonly estimated at one million. Emigration during and immediately after the Famine stands at 2.1 million, i.e. more people than had left Ireland during the preceding 2.5 centuries altogether.⁶⁷ Moreover, emigration flows continued unchecked with a further three million people leaving the country by the end of the century.⁶⁸ Emigrants were typically young and unmarried; the gender balance was remarkably even, with women comprising 49.2 per cent of emigration between 1852 and 1900.⁶⁹ The majority of men were characterised as labourers while the majority of women

⁶³National Economic and Social Council: *The Economic and Social Implications of Emigration*, p. 48.

⁶⁴ Fitzpatrick, David: 'Emigration, 1871-1921' in *A New History of Ireland Volume VI. Ireland under the Union II: 1870 – 1921* ed. W.E. Vaughan, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1996, p. 607.

⁶⁵ O'Rourke, Kevin: 'Emigration and living standards in Ireland since the Famine', *Journal of Population Economics* 8, 1995, p. 409.

⁶⁶ Ibid, p. 410.

⁶⁷ Fitzgerald, Patrick and Lambkin, Brian: *Migration in Irish History*, p. 172.

⁶⁸ Ibid, p. 190.

⁶⁹ Ibid, p. 191.

were described as servants.⁷⁰ Although emigration affected every part of the country, rates of emigration were higher from areas on the western seaboard. Net emigration flows ranged between 40,000 and 60,000 per year during the second half of the nineteenth century.⁷¹ The most popular destination was the United States, which until 1930 accounted for up to 90 per cent of emigration.⁷² The introduction of U.S. immigration quotas in the nineteen-twenties, together with the Wall Street Crash and ensuing economic depression exerted a significant negative influence however with the result that subsequent emigration flows were directed primarily towards the United Kingdom.

While emigration was not in itself a new phenomenon – emigration to both the United Kingdom and the Americas as well as to continental Europe occurred prior to 1845 also – Fitzgerald and Lambkin highlight the “massive distortion”⁷³ which the Famine and its aftermath imposed on patterns of Irish emigration. Henceforth ingrained in the social fabric of the country, emigration became accepted as a structural feature of Irish life. The newly-established national school system played an important role in equipping potential emigrants with crucial skills in English and literacy as generations of children were reared on tales of a brighter future abroad.⁷⁴ Letters from connections overseas provided both remittances and accounts of life in destination countries, while many emigrants were willing to sponsor family members to join them, creating processes of chain migration.⁷⁵ Further emigration was thus stimulated in line with cumulative causation theory; the pull exerted by familial and friendship networks facilitated the continuation of emigration long after the immediate trauma of the Famine had subsided.

⁷⁰ Fitzpatrick, David: ‘Emigration, 1871-1921’, p. 613.

⁷¹ National Economic and Social Council: *The Economic and Social Implications of Emigration*, p. 53.

⁷² Sexton, J.J.: ‘Emigration and immigration in the twentieth century: an overview’ in *A New History of Ireland Vol VII: Ireland 1921-1984* ed. Jacqueline R. Hill, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2003, p. 801.

⁷³ Fitzgerald, Patrick and Lambkin, Brian: *Migration in Irish History*, p. 182.

⁷⁴ Fitzpatrick, David: ‘Emigration, 1871-1921’, p. 616.

⁷⁵ *Ibid*, p. 623.

Emigration in the 1950s

“The coalition’s alternative to doing something about emigration is to have a commission go out to inquire.”⁷⁶

While emigration remained a feature of Irish life during the first half of the twentieth century, outward flows declined gradually to between 20,000 and 25,000 per year.⁷⁷ During the nineteen fifties however Ireland experienced a prolonged period of economic depression; slow growth and a stagnant national income were exacerbated by protectionist tendencies.⁷⁸ Employment in agriculture and in industry declined significantly while balance of payment crises and heavy taxation compounded the economic difficulties.⁷⁹ The economic situation precipitated increased emigration, further fuelled by the existence of significant employment opportunities in the United Kingdom.⁸⁰ Emigration figures during this decade stood at 14.1 per thousand,⁸¹ with an incredible 412,000 people leaving Ireland between 1951 and 1961.⁸² These figures, when viewed in the context of total population size, are almost as high as those from the post-Famine peaks of the eighteen eighties.⁸³ Emigration also contributed substantially to the ongoing population decline, with the census of 1961 listing the population of Ireland as 2,818,000, the lowest population level ever recorded.⁸⁴

The most comprehensive examination of emigration during this period is to be found in the 1954 *Reports* of the Commission for Emigration and Other Population Problems. Established in 1948, the Commission was composed of twenty-four members, chiefly drawn from the

⁷⁶ *Dáil Éireann debate*, CXXV, 19 April 1951, column 14, quoted in Delaney, Enda: ‘State, politics and demography: The case of Irish emigration, 1921-71’ *Irish Political Studies*, 13:1, 1998, pp. 25-49.

⁷⁷ National Economic and Social Council: *The Economic and Social Implications of Emigration*, National Economic and Social Council, Dublin, 1992, p. 54.

⁷⁸ Delaney, Enda: ‘State, politics and demography’, p. 36.

⁷⁹ Ferriter, Diarmaid: *The Transformation of Ireland 1900-2000*, Profile Books, London, 2004, p.466.

⁸⁰ National Economic and Social Council: *The Economic and Social Implications of Emigration*, p. 54.

⁸¹ Fitzgerald, Patrick and Lambkin, Brian: *Migration in Irish History*, p. 244.

⁸² Ferriter, Diarmaid: *The Transformation of Ireland 1900-2000*, p.465.

⁸³ National Economic and Social Council: *The Economic and Social Implications of Emigration*, p. 54.

⁸⁴ Sexton, J.J.: ‘Emigration and immigration in the twentieth century: an overview’, p. 796.

professional and academic strata of Irish society. It included four statisticians, two economists, a sociologist, two trade-union officials and two medical doctors as well as government officials, clergymen and writers.⁸⁵ Its terms of reference were: “to investigate the causes and consequences of the present trend in population; to examine, in particular, the social and economic effects of birth, death, migration and marriage rates at present and their probable course in the near future; to consider what measures, if any, should be taken in the national interest to influence the trend in population; generally, to consider the desirability of formulating a population policy”⁸⁶. To this end, the Commission conducted extensive surveys throughout the country, received written submissions from a wide variety of organisations and interviewed numerous witnesses, holding 115 meetings over a six year period. A supplementary census was also conducted in 1951 to provide up to date data for the Commission to draw on.⁸⁷

In its *Reports*, the Commission noted the difficulty of obtaining accurate figures relating to emigration, highlighting the lack of data on gross emigration flows. Remarking however that “it has been a characteristic of Irish emigration [...] that few emigrants have returned to their native land”⁸⁸, it opined that net emigration flows could thus be regarded as proximate to those of gross emigration. Nevertheless, while ruling out the implementation of border controls as unfeasible, it urged the CSO to develop other methods of collecting data on gross emigration flows. Furthermore, it recommended that censuses be carried out at five year intervals, considering a decennial census inadequate to capture the extent of emigration trends.⁸⁹ This practice was duly implemented and continues to this day.

⁸⁵ Connolly, Tracey: ‘The Commission on Emigration, 1948-1954’ in *The Lost Decade. Ireland in the 1950s* ed. Dermot Keogh, Finbarr O’Shea and Carmel Quinlan, Mercier Press, Cork, 2004, p. 87.

⁸⁶ Commission on Emigration and other Population Problems: *Reports 1948-1954*, p. 1.

⁸⁷ Delaney, Enda: ‘State, politics and demography’, p. 41.

⁸⁸ Commission on Emigration and other Population Problems: *Reports 1948-1954*, p. 111.

⁸⁹ *Ibid*, p. 114.

The Commission compiled data on i.a. the age, gender, occupation, origin and destination of emigrants. The crude birth rate in Ireland during the nineteen fifties stood at 21.2 births per 1,000 population annually,⁹⁰ a figure which was unexceptional among developed countries.⁹¹ It has been remarked however that Irish emigration has tended “to apply predominantly to young people”⁹². Statistics on wartime travel permits and other travel documentation issued between 1943 and 1951 confirm this, with over 55 per cent of male recipients and almost 75 per cent of female recipients under the age of twenty-five in 1951, the last year for which such figures exist.⁹³ With the discontinuation of travel permits after the war, statistics on emigration are less readily available; however using cohort depletion techniques it has been estimated that over half of those aged between ten and fourteen in the 1946-1951 period left the country over the following decade.⁹⁴ Moreover as the recession bit deeper, the numbers of those emigrating in the twenty-five to thirty-five age bracket also increased dramatically.⁹⁵

Since the nineteenth century emigration flows from Ireland have consisted of roughly equal numbers of men and women; however the gender balance has fluctuated over the years. Following a period of higher female emigration in 1946-1951, where the ratio stood at 1,365 female per 1,000 male emigrants, during the nineteen fifties the ratio fell to 876 female per 1,000 male emigrants. The NESC report explains this shift in the gender balance primarily in terms of the economic situation at the time, noting a drop in male employment of 135,000 compared to a drop in female employment of 37,000 over the same decade.⁹⁶ Those who emigrated during this period were predominantly unskilled, although as Delaney points out the designation of

⁹⁰ Figures from CSO birth rate statistics:

<http://www.cso.ie/px/pxeirestat/database/eirestat/Births/Births.asp>.

⁹¹ Commission on Emigration and other Population Problems: *Reports 1948-1954*, p. 84.

⁹² Sexton, J.J.: ‘Emigration and immigration in the twentieth century’, p. 808.

⁹³ Commission on Emigration and other Population Problems: *Reports 1948-1954*, p. 125.

⁹⁴ Delaney, Enda: *Irish Emigration since 1921*, Economic and Social History Society of Ireland, Dublin, 2002, p. 12.

⁹⁵ National Economic and Social Council: *The Economic and Social Implications of Emigration*, p. 73.

⁹⁶ Ibid, p. 68.

agricultural workers as unskilled merely meant that the skills they had were not of use in an urban industrial setting.⁹⁷ Statistics derived from travel documentation issued between 1943 and 1951 indicate that three quarters of male recipients gave their occupation as that of unskilled labourer, builders' labourer or agricultural worker while more than half of female recipients described themselves as domestic servants,⁹⁸ occupational profiles which are likely to have remained much the same over the following decade.⁹⁹ Emigration flows were higher from rural areas than from urban areas; the Commission noted that 68 per cent of the travel documentation issued was to those from rural areas while 13 per cent was to those from Dublin and 19 per cent to those from other urban areas.¹⁰⁰

Counties along the western seaboard experienced particularly high emigration rates, with more than half of total net emigration stemming from Cork, Kerry, Limerick, Galway, Mayo and Donegal in the 1945-1951 period.¹⁰¹ Commenting on characteristics common to areas of high emigration, the Commission concluded that emigration "tends to be heavy from densely populated areas, from areas where the land is poor [...], from areas where there is relatively little urbanisation and from small-farm areas"¹⁰². A shift in the destinations of emigrants was noted; from 1945-1951 nearly 83 per cent of emigrants went to the United Kingdom,¹⁰³ a pattern which continued through the nineteen fifties.¹⁰⁴ This marked a change from earlier periods when emigration was primarily to destinations outside Europe.¹⁰⁵

⁹⁷ Delaney, Enda: *Irish Emigration since 1921*, p. 14.

⁹⁸ Commission on Emigration and other Population Problems: *Reports 1948-1954*, p. 122.

⁹⁹ National Economic and Social Council: *The Economic and Social Implications of Emigration*, p. 82.

¹⁰⁰ Commission on Emigration and other Population Problems: *Reports 1948-1954*, p. 122.

¹⁰¹ Sexton, J.J.: 'Emigration and immigration in the twentieth century', p. 808.

¹⁰² Commission on Emigration and other Population Problems: *Reports 1948-1954*, p. 127.

¹⁰³ Sexton, J.J.: 'Emigration and immigration in the twentieth century', p. 801.

¹⁰⁴ National Economic and Social Council: *The Economic and Social Implications of Emigration*, p. 60.

¹⁰⁵ Commission on Emigration and other Population Problems: *Reports 1948-1954*, p. 113.

The Commission devoted some time to a consideration of the causes and consequences of emigration. Finding that the “fundamental cause of emigration is economic”¹⁰⁶ it nevertheless recognised the variety of motives inherent in a decision to emigrate, noting the influence of “outlook, temperament, family background, education, age, sex and conjugal condition as well as economic, social, domestic and other circumstances”¹⁰⁷ on such a decision. It cited an increased dissatisfaction with agricultural life, pointing to the long hours, heavy workload and comparatively low profit which such a way of life entailed. This dissatisfaction, coupled with high rates of seasonal unemployment within agriculture, led to a movement away from the land. Given few alternative forms of employment in rural areas and a lack of urbanisation, emigration was the natural result. The demand for higher standards of living, more readily obtainable in urban areas, further fuelled this tendency. The Commission highlighted the fact that it was not “actual want or poverty”¹⁰⁸ which induced people to emigrate, but rather a desire for services and amenities available elsewhere, i.e. a sense of ‘relative’ deprivation in Massey’s terminology.¹⁰⁹ Furthermore, destinations such as the United Kingdom promised employment with better conditions, more job security and higher wages than that available in Ireland, which functioned as a draw to prospective emigrants. The need for labour in such countries acted as a further ‘pull’ factor increasing emigration flows.¹¹⁰

In addition the Commission drew attention to the role of social and cultural factors, noting that in certain areas emigration had become “a part of the generally accepted way of life”¹¹¹. The existence of kinship and friendship networks abroad facilitated emigration, meaning that many emigrants essentially travelled “‘from the known to the known’ [...] from areas where they lived

¹⁰⁶ Ibid, p. 130.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

¹⁰⁹ Massey *et al.* ‘Theories of International Migration: A Review and Appraisal’, p. 452.

¹¹⁰ Commission on Emigration and other Population Problems: *Reports 1948-1954*, p. 132.

¹¹¹ Ibid, p. 133.

to places where their friends and relations awaited them”¹¹². The connections maintained by emigrants to their home country ensured the survival and growth of such networks while also increasing the possibility that others would follow them abroad. Moreover, an awareness of the opportunities available abroad was provided “by emigrants who return well-dressed and with an air of prosperity, by glowing accounts in letters of high incomes and easy conditions and by practical demonstration in the remittances which come from abroad”¹¹³. Such instances served as a further spur to emigration. As well as this, it was noted that a desire to travel and a sense of adventure were additional motivating factors for some young people who left in search of freedoms not available at home.

The Commission dismissed as groundless beliefs that emigration “deprives the country of the best of its people”¹¹⁴, or that processes of selection resulted in a difference in ‘quality’ between home and emigrant populations. It refused to be drawn on the issue of whether emigration constituted an economic loss or an economic gain to the country, taking the rather enlightened view that “matters involving human beings and human relationships cannot be approached from the standpoint of economics alone”¹¹⁵. In this vein it highlighted the intangible benefits associated with caring for ‘unproductive’ members of society such as children and the elderly. It rejected the idea of a ban on emigration as an infringement of freedom of movement, recommending instead the creation of economic and social programmes in order to alleviate the problem. It called for higher standards of living in rural areas and also for action to counteract ‘secondary’ causes of emigration, believing that churches, voluntary organisations and

¹¹² Ibid.

¹¹³ Ibid, p. 134.

¹¹⁴ Ibid.

¹¹⁵ Ibid, p. 137.

educational authorities could play a role in challenging both the view of emigration as inevitable and an increasing materialism which it perceived within Irish society.¹¹⁶

The Commission was of the opinion that emigration was chiefly “a reflection of the failure of the economy to provide [the] rising standards of living”¹¹⁷ sought by the population. It was not in sympathy with the perception of emigration as a necessary ‘safety-valve’ which, by providing an outlet for excess population, removed pressure on resources. Rather, it considered that the country would have the capacity to support this population if its resources were more fully developed. Moreover, it queried whether emigration had in fact retarded economic development by reducing the pressure towards a fuller exploitation of the economic resources available.¹¹⁸ It condemned the existence of involuntary emigration, deploring the fact that people were forced by circumstances to leave the country. Nevertheless, it acknowledged that emigration was advantageous for both emigrants and non-emigrants, allowing the former access to opportunities not obtainable in Ireland while the latter profited from a higher standard of living than would have been otherwise possible. Furthermore, emigrant remittances benefited families back home and also provided an important source of income for the national economy.¹¹⁹

The *Reports* of the Commission provide a valuable first hand source of information about emigration in the nineteen fifties; moreover they illustrate the way in which emigration was perceived at the time. While some of their concerns such as that for sexual morality seem dated now, much of their analysis on the functioning of emigration is still relevant today. The Commission concentrated on the economic and social environment which fostered emigration rather than attempting to provide quick-fix solutions for the problem; unfortunately despite their

¹¹⁶ Ibid, p. 139.

¹¹⁷ Ibid, p. 135.

¹¹⁸ Ibid.

¹¹⁹ Ibid, p. 136.

extensive merits, the *Reports* were “politely ignored by politicians and civil servants”¹²⁰ upon their publication. Nevertheless, the establishment of the Commission marked the recognition of emigration as a “structural feature of Irish society”¹²¹ by the government, an event which Delaney identifies as a significant shift in the political discourse of the time.¹²² Emigration flows continued unabated however until the end of the decade. It was only with the publication of the *First Programme for Economic Expansion* (1958 – 1963) that the Irish economy moved away from protectionism and towards an open and competitive economic model.¹²³ Export orientated production was encouraged by means of grants and tax concessions while efforts were made to attract foreign firms to Ireland.¹²⁴ A free trade agreement was signed with the United Kingdom in 1965, followed by Ireland’s entry into the European Economic Community in 1973. These initiatives, together with favourable international market conditions brought a measure of economic prosperity to Ireland. This was in turn reflected in a declining emigration rate, falling to 4.6 per thousand in the nineteen sixties. Moreover during the nineteen seventies a net inward flow of ten thousand people, primarily returning emigrants, was registered.¹²⁵ This was the first time in recorded history that Ireland had experienced net immigration; however it was not to last for long.

¹²⁰ Delaney, Enda: *Irish Emigration since 1921*, p. 35.

¹²¹ Delaney, Enda: ‘State, politics and demography’, p. 42.

¹²² Ibid.

¹²³ Keogh, Dermot: *Twentieth Century Ireland; Nation and State*, Gill & Macmillan, Dublin, 1994, p. 245.

¹²⁴ Kirby, Peadar: *Celtic Tiger in Collapse*, p. 20.

¹²⁵ National Economic and Social Council: *The Economic and Social Implications of Emigration*, p. 53.

“We can’t all live on a small island”: the story of the 1980s

“If emigration didn’t exist at present it would be necessary to invent it”¹²⁶

While Ireland enjoyed a period of economic prosperity in the nineteen sixties and nineteen seventies, the world-wide recession of the early eighties combined with deflationary government measures in 1983 impacted the Irish economy severely, leading to rising unemployment.¹²⁷ Unemployment figures jumped from 7.3 per cent of the working population in 1980 to 17.5 per cent in 1985.¹²⁸ Between 1980 and 1987 the number of people active in the Irish labour force fell by 76,000 or almost 6 per cent.¹²⁹ Emigration increased correspondingly, with an estimated 360,000 people leaving the country between 1981 and 1991,¹³⁰ amounting to 5.9 per thousand.¹³¹

In view of the resumption of large-scale emigration from the country, the National Economic and Social Council, an institution established by the government in 1973, undertook an assessment of the issue. It commissioned a report *The Economic and Social Implications of Emigration*, produced by four researchers from the ESRI and from academia on behalf of NESC. The scope of the report was wide; it aimed i.a. to examine levels of emigration, characteristics of emigrants, economic, social and personal factors affecting emigration, the experience of emigrants abroad and the social and economic impact of emigration on society. The data which it compiled on emigrants can usefully be compared with that collected by the Commission almost forty years earlier. The crude birth rate in Ireland during the nineteen eighties stood at 18.2 births per 1,000 population annually.¹³² Those leaving between 1981 and 1991 continued to be predominantly young, with emigrants aged between fifteen and twenty-five comprising 58 per cent of male and

¹²⁶ Lee, J.J.: ‘Emigration: A Contemporary Perspective’ in *Migrations: The Irish at Home and Abroad* ed. Richard Kearney, Wolfhound Press, Dublin, 1990.

¹²⁷ Fitzgerald, Patrick and Lambkin, Brian: *Migration in Irish History*, p. 246.

¹²⁸ Kirby, Peadar: *Celtic Tiger in Collapse*, p. 23.

¹²⁹ National Economic and Social Council: *The Economic and Social Implications of Emigration*, National Economic and Social Council, Dublin, 1992, p. 249.

¹³⁰ Ibid, p. 59.

¹³¹ Sexton, J.J.: ‘Emigration and immigration in the twentieth century’, p. 798.

¹³² Figures from CSO birth rate statistics:

<http://www.cso.ie/px/pxeirestat/database/eirestat/Births/Births.asp>.

66 per cent of female net emigration during this period;¹³³ however a sizeable increase in net emigration in the twenty-five to thirty-five age bracket also occurred. Data for both the nineteen fifties and the nineteen eighties demonstrate that female emigrants tended to leave at a proportionally younger age than males. The gender balance of net emigration during the eighties tilted once again towards male emigration with a ratio of 770.5 female to 1,000 male emigrants. The NESC report attributes this to the employment situation in Ireland, noting that from 1981 to 1988 the number of men at work fell by nearly 70,000 while the number of women at work increased by 14,000 during this time.¹³⁴ It should be noted that the increase in women at work was paralleled by an increase in female unemployment however, reflecting an overall increase of female participation in the labour force due to the elimination of restrictions on female employment and a shift in labour demand.¹³⁵

While data relating to the occupations of emigrants is lacking, the NESC report draws on information from the 1988 Labour Force Survey to identify their social background by grouping them on the basis of their parents' occupation. This tabulation shows that emigration was relatively evenly distributed across social class; an average gross emigration rate of 15.9 per thousand increased to between 17 and 18 per thousand for the children of professional and managerial classes and dropped to 12.4 per thousand for those of farmers. The rates for the offspring of both manual and non-manual workers hovered around the 15 mark.¹³⁶ Data on the emigration rates of second and third level graduates in 1988 indicate that almost 15 per cent of the former and more than 29 per cent of the latter emigrated within a year of gaining their qualification.¹³⁷ While earlier emigration flows tended to stem mostly from the western seaboard, the nineteen eighties were characterised by more balanced distribution patterns. Although

¹³³ Tabulation based on Table J of Vol II of 1991 Census results

http://www.cso.ie/census/census_1991_results/Volume2/AC%201991%20V2%20GD%20COMM.pdf.

¹³⁴ National Economic and Social Council: *The Economic and Social Implications of Emigration*, p. 69.

¹³⁵ Ibid.

¹³⁶ Ibid, p. 84.

¹³⁷ Ibid, p. 87.

detailed information on emigrants' counties of origin is not available, the 1988 Labour Force Survey data indicates an average gross emigration rate of 15.9 per thousand. The regional emigration rate remained highest in the west at 17.4 per thousand, followed closely by Dublin and the midlands at 17.2 per thousand, while it was lowest in the north-east at 12.1 per thousand.¹³⁸ These rates showed less regional variation than earlier periods, reflecting "emigrant outflows [which] appear to be broadly representative of all areas of the country"¹³⁹. The NESC report draws attention to internal migration flows during this period however, noting significant population movement towards Dublin and the counties surrounding it. Nevertheless it concludes that much of this may be transient, with such movements constituting what it describes as an 'intermediate step' on the way to eventual emigration for many.¹⁴⁰ Thus, although emigration from the greater Dublin area made up a large proportion of total emigration recorded, comprising over 30 per cent in 1987 – 1988, these statistics may conceal considerable regional variations.¹⁴¹

While the United Kingdom continued to be the primary destination for emigrants throughout the nineteen eighties, numbers going to other countries increased incrementally. Figures for the decade as a whole indicate that just over 60 per cent went to the United Kingdom, as compared to 83 per cent in the nineteen fifties. Meanwhile 14 per cent went to the United States and 25 per cent to other destinations overseas.¹⁴² This is corroborated by the more detailed breakdowns of gross emigration statistics available from 1987. These statistics for the first time also include a category on emigration to the European Union (other than to the United Kingdom) and document the growing popularity of EU destinations, rising from 4.6 per cent in 1988 to 8.8 per

¹³⁸ Ibid, p. 77.

¹³⁹ Ibid, p. 77.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid, p. 81.

¹⁴¹ Ibid, p. 76.

¹⁴² Ibid, p. 58.

cent in 1991.¹⁴³ The attraction of the EU also continued to increase during the nineteen nineties despite declining emigration rates, averaging a share of 18.5 per cent over the decade.¹⁴⁴

A number of factors influencing emigration are cited by the NESC report. It attaches importance to economic considerations, noting Ireland's relatively low level of economic development in comparison to other developed countries and the underperformance of the Irish economy during the nineteen eighties. The report presumes that Ireland's position as a 'low-income country' acted as a motive for emigration, while its slow economic growth during a period of faster growth in other developed countries compounded this.¹⁴⁵ Also mentioned are structural shifts including a decline in agriculture, a move away from economic protectionism and a curtailment of public sector employment, all of which contributed to unemployment and thus by implication to emigration.¹⁴⁶ The elasticity of labour supply occasioned by a youthful population, a possible increase in female employment and the potential return of recent emigrants is highlighted.¹⁴⁷ The report contrasts the situation of the Irish and British labour markets during the nineteen eighties in terms of employment and earnings, underlining the increasingly favourable conditions pertaining in the latter. Over this decade the unemployment rate in Ireland was on average 50 per cent greater than that in the United Kingdom, while by 1989 wages in the United Kingdom were between one quarter and three quarters higher than those in Ireland in terms of purchasing power parity.¹⁴⁸ While the NESC report assigns priority to economic incentives, it observes that relatively easy access to Anglophone countries and to the EU together with fluency in English facilitated the emigration process. In this context it notes the

¹⁴³ Courtney, Damien: 'A Quantification of Irish Migration with Particular Emphasis on the 1980s and the 1990s', p. 307.

¹⁴⁴ Central Statistics Office: *Statistical Release on Annual Population and Migration Estimates*, Central Statistics Office, Dublin, 2003, p. 6.

¹⁴⁵ National Economic and Social Council: *The Economic and Social Implications of Emigration*, p. 112.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid, p. 113.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid, p. 117.

existence of 'migration networks', which had weakened in previous years but which were revitalised by the heavy emigration flows of the nineteen eighties.¹⁴⁹

In addition to the quantitative data outlined above, the NESC report also draws on information collected in the framework of a Department of Labour study of second level school leavers. A national stratified random sample of those who finished second level education in 1981/1982 was surveyed in May 1983, with follow-up surveys of the same group conducted in November 1984 and November 1987. Five years after leaving secondary school, almost a quarter of the sample group had emigrated.¹⁵⁰ The NESC report utilises the results of these surveys to examine factors which influence emigration. The report notes that migration decisions on the individual level are "mainly determined by a set of socially influenced expectations and attitudes"¹⁵¹. In examining the data collated, it was observed that a considerable amount of movement had taken place. Seven per cent of the sample group living in Ireland had in fact emigrated and then returned to the country, while three per cent of those abroad had returned to the country and then re-emigrated at a later date. Moreover it was established that of the sample group remaining in the country a further seven per cent planned to emigrate in the future.¹⁵²

The report found that social class, parental education level and community of origin were correlated with emigration. Those from higher social classes demonstrated a greater propensity to emigrate, as did those whose parents were educated to second or third level. Equally the more remote the location of the community of origin, the more likely it was that emigration would occur. Respondents' own education level and occupational aspirations also had an impact on emigration decisions.¹⁵³ Of those who had emigrated, almost 90 per cent indicated that they had done so either to take up a job abroad or to look for a job abroad. 41 per cent of emigrants left a

¹⁴⁹ Ibid, p. 114.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid, p. 135.

¹⁵¹ Ibid, p. 126.

¹⁵² Ibid, p. 135.

¹⁵³ Ibid, p. 138.

position in Ireland to move abroad, while 42 per cent were unemployed prior to leaving the country.¹⁵⁴ The NESC report records a significant degree of ‘upward mobility’ in terms of employment and income opportunities, noting that of emigrants with Leaving Certificate qualifications over one-third improved their occupational status abroad while only 12 per cent were worse off. It was observed that those with higher educational qualifications were more inclined to have employment arranged prior to emigration, while those with lower educational qualifications were more likely to emigrate in search of a job abroad.

A desire for better employment and income prospects is regarded as an important factor in emigration decisions. The belief that occupational aspirations cannot be fulfilled locally increased emigration tendencies, as did the desire for a high-status occupation.¹⁵⁵ Of those planning to emigrate in the future, employment was given as the rationale by 45 per cent of respondents; however a range of other reasons were also indicated, chiefly a sense of adventure and wish to ‘see the world’. The latter was more significant among those with higher education levels while employment considerations were more important among those with lower education levels.¹⁵⁶ The report found that education played a major role in emigration decisions, with the likelihood of emigration rising proportionate to education levels. Previous migration experience was also influential, increasing the probability of further movement.¹⁵⁷ The report also highlights the effect of migration networks, observing that networks of emigrant friends and family meant that those at home were well-informed about conditions abroad while networks influenced their expectations as well as providing a resource for prospective emigrants to draw on.¹⁵⁸ In this context the impetus which the cumulative growth in migration contacts and experience in the nineteen eighties gave to emigration is noted; it is acknowledged that large scale migration

¹⁵⁴ Ibid, p. 142.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid, p. 154.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid, p. 143.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid, p. 151.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid, p. 160.

“creates much of its own dynamic and is to some extent self-perpetuating”¹⁵⁹. Marriage on the other hand exerted a negative tendency on emigration. Surprisingly, unemployment was also found to have a negative effect on emigration, explained largely in terms of lower material and network resources, while it was hypothesised that eligibility for social welfare benefits may also have been a factor.¹⁶⁰ In short, according to the NESC report the most emigration-prone respondents were “those who had previously emigrated, those who are single and unattached, with better levels of education, from higher socio-economic backgrounds, and from the more remote communities”¹⁶¹ while those least likely to leave were young people from the urban working classes, with poor education and employment prospects.

The correlation between education and emigration was reflected in increasing graduate emigration figures during the nineteen eighties. According to data from the Higher Education Authority (HEA), figures indicate that in 1982 8.1 per cent of third level graduates had emigrated nine months after graduating. By 1988 this proportion had risen to 26.1 per cent.¹⁶² Such statistics provoked both worry over a putative ‘brain drain’ as well as optimistic political and media rhetoric regarding so-called ‘new wave’ emigration.¹⁶³ Characteristic of the latter was then-Foreign Minister Brian Lenihan’s famous interview with Newsweek:

“I don’t look on the type of emigration we have today as being in the same category as the terrible emigration of the last century. What we now have is a very literate emigrant who thinks nothing of coming to the United States and going back to Ireland and maybe on to Germany and back to Ireland again. The younger people in Ireland today are very much in that mode ... It [emigration] is not a defeat because the more Irish emigrants hone their skills and talents in another environment, the more they develop a work ethic in a country like

¹⁵⁹ Ibid, p. 155.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid, p. 155.

¹⁶¹ Ibid, p. 149.

¹⁶² Shuttleworth, Ian: ‘Graduate emigration from Ireland: A symptom of peripherality?’ in *Contemporary Irish Migration* ed. Russell King, Geographical Society of Ireland, 1991, p. 83.

¹⁶³ Walter, Bronwen: *A study of the existing sources of information and analysis about Irish emigrants and Irish communities abroad*, p. 16.

Germany or the U.S., the better it can be applied in Ireland when they return. After all, we can't all live on a small island."¹⁶⁴

As a subset of Irish emigration in the nineteen eighties, the phenomenon of graduate emigration attracted academic attention, notably from Ian Shuttleworth and Russell King. Their 1989-1990 survey collected data on the employment and mobility of a sample of 383 graduates who completed third level education between 1983 and 1986. The graduates stemmed from five institutions, Trinity College Dublin, Dublin City University, University College Cork, University College Galway and the University of Limerick. While 60 per cent of those in Ireland found their first jobs in the Dublin region, 22.2 per cent emigrated upon first employment. Moreover, mobility patterns revealed a "cumulative drift abroad with each successive move"¹⁶⁵, so that between 40 and 50 per cent had been abroad or were abroad by January 1990.¹⁶⁶ The destinations of graduates reflected overall emigration patterns, although a higher proportion than average, almost 20 per cent, emigrated to continental Europe.¹⁶⁷

The survey noted that linguistic ability and previous work experience abroad increased emigration propensity, while subject of degree and grade of degree were not statistically significant factors in determining emigration. Career and/or employment remained the primary motivation for leaving Ireland according to 68.6 per cent of graduate emigrants while 12.6 per cent left for education reasons and 18.6 per cent left for other/personal reasons.¹⁶⁸ 'Job offer abroad' and 'problems of finding work in Ireland' were the most important employment/career factors cited, although the survey notes that 54 per cent of graduates whose first employment was outside Ireland did not try to find a job in Ireland before leaving. The offer of postgraduate

¹⁶⁴ "The New Emigrants", *Newsweek*, 10 October 1987, quoted in Fitzgerald, Patrick and Lambkin, Brian: *Migration in Irish History*, p. 246.

¹⁶⁵ King, Russell and Shuttleworth, Ian: 'The emigration and employment of Irish graduates: The export of high-quality labour from the periphery of Europe' in *European Urban and Regional Studies* 2:21, 1995, p. 27.

¹⁶⁶ Shuttleworth, Ian: 'Irish graduate emigration: the mobility of qualified manpower in the context of peripherality', in *Mass Migration in Europe: The Legacy and the Future*, ed. Russell King, Wiley, Chichester, 1993, p. 317.

¹⁶⁷ King, Russell and Shuttleworth, Ian: 'The emigration and employment of Irish graduates', p. 27.

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid*, p. 30.

places outside Ireland was a key ‘pull’ factor for those who left for education reasons. Lifestyle abroad was most important for those who left for personal/other reasons although the restrictive social climate in Ireland and links with friends and relatives abroad also played a role.¹⁶⁹

King and Shuttleworth observe that patterns of graduate mobility reveal a movement from geographic and economic peripheries towards ‘core’ labour markets with concentrations of higher-status employment. They posit that this explains both the comparatively high proportion of graduates employed in Dublin as well as providing a rationale for graduate emigration to destinations abroad. In this context emigration is seen as “an almost natural step in career-building”¹⁷⁰ as the Irish labour market is perceived as lacking the opportunities available in global metropolises such as London, an opinion echoed by survey respondents. Nevertheless the authors caution against an excessive emphasis on economic factors, noting that this perspective reinforces “a sanitised conception of Irish graduate emigration as a high-tech brain drain”¹⁷¹. Rather, they underline the role of a ‘culture of migration’ in determining emigration from Ireland.

This thesis is developed further by Shuttleworth; a 1991 article details a study conducted in England, Scotland and Ireland. For the purpose of the study, England was considered a country of the economic core while Ireland and Scotland were regarded as countries of the periphery. A questionnaire was distributed to undergraduates at the universities of Leicester, Glasgow and Trinity College Dublin to examine their attitudes to employment and emigration. It was found that both the Irish and the Scottish undergraduates were markedly more pessimistic than the English undergraduates about their future employment opportunities. As such, it was assumed that they would share a similar predilection to gravitate from ‘peripheral’ economies towards

¹⁶⁹ Ibid, p. 31.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid, p. 34.

¹⁷¹ Ibid, p. 34.

‘core’ labour markets. However the results of the questionnaire demonstrated that while 42 per cent of the Irish undergraduates planned to leave the country ‘for employment reasons’ after graduation, this figure dropped to 18.5 percent for the Scottish and to 11.5 per cent for the English undergraduates; Shuttleworth notes that the latter groups appeared “to be similarly ‘unmigratory’”¹⁷². Further data gathered in the questionnaire revealed a much higher level of ‘internationalisation’ among the Irish undergraduates than was the case for either the English or the Scottish undergraduates. Questions on personal, sibling and parental experience abroad revealed that 84 per cent of the Irish undergraduates had taken holiday jobs abroad during their time at university as compared to 22 per cent of the Scottish and 19 per cent of the English undergraduates. Similarly, 44 per cent of the Irish undergraduates had siblings currently abroad while 47 per cent of their parents had lived or worked abroad in the past. In comparison 19 per cent of the Scottish undergraduates and 14 per cent of the English undergraduates had siblings currently abroad, while 36 per cent of Scottish parents and 37 per cent of English parents had lived or worked abroad in the past.¹⁷³

The Irish undergraduates therefore had a greater family history of emigration, more international contacts overseas and wider personal experience abroad; a cross-tabulation of results showed that these factors were likely to increase emigration intentions. Shuttleworth notes that such ‘internationalisation’ may influence emigration decisions by means of a so-called “‘contagion’ effect”¹⁷⁴. Migration networks operate to disseminate information about opportunity abroad; however they also act to normalise the process of emigration as well to increase awareness of the emigration option. Shuttleworth observes that a large amount of Irish graduate emigration is relatively spontaneous, “shaped by social contacts among family members and peers, a kind of

¹⁷² Shuttleworth, Ian: ‘Graduate emigration from Ireland: A symptom of peripherality?’, p. 89.

¹⁷³ Ibid, p. 90.

¹⁷⁴ Ibid, p. 91.

‘emigration as walkabout’¹⁷⁵. Of interest in this context is also the manner in which emigration was perceived by the Irish undergraduates; Shuttleworth mentions that they themselves tended to believe that Ireland had a ‘migration culture’, emphasising Ireland’s overseas migratory connections. Furthermore they felt that the Irish “mix well with other nationalities and that they are ‘good Europeans’”¹⁷⁶. Such attitudes indicate a broad acceptance of emigration among the Irish undergraduates; moreover insofar as the phenomenon is seen as natural, continued emigration is facilitated.

Jim MacLaughlin on the other hand approaches the topic of Irish emigration from a different perspective. MacLaughlin objects to what he describes as the ‘sanitisation’ and ‘voluntarisation’ characteristic of scholarship on Irish emigration in the nineteen eighties. This is attributed to the influence of modernisation theory which portrays emigration as an “inevitable response to the progressive and persistent modernisation of Irish society since the late nineteenth century”¹⁷⁷. In this context emigration is viewed primarily as a ‘labour transfer mechanism’, with the decision to emigrate being made on the basis of a cost-benefit analysis of market forces. MacLaughlin notes that this reduction of emigration to economic causes omits consideration of socio-political factors, while a focus on decision-making at the individual level effectively rules out analyses of broader structural forces at work.¹⁷⁸ He is equally dismissive of behavioural explanations which posit emigration as resulting from “the ‘adventurous spirit’ of individualistic and upwardly mobile young adults”¹⁷⁹. Taking issue with ubiquitous depictions of emigration as a “voluntary movement of highly-qualified young adults to ‘benign taxfields’ and fields of opportunity

¹⁷⁵ King, Russell and Shuttleworth, Ian: ‘The emigration and employment of Irish graduates’, p. 35.

¹⁷⁶ Shuttleworth, Ian: ‘Graduate emigration from Ireland: A symptom of peripherality?’, p. 91.

¹⁷⁷ MacLaughlin, Jim: ‘Changing attitudes to ‘new wave’ emigration? Structuralism versus voluntarism in the study of Irish emigration’ in *The Irish Diaspora* ed. Andy Bielenberg, Longman, Harlow, 2000, p. 321.

¹⁷⁸ MacLaughlin, Jim: *Historical and Recent Irish Emigration. A critique of core-periphery and behavioural models*, Irish Studies Centre Occasional Papers Series No 5, University of North London Press, London, 1994, p. 10.

¹⁷⁹ MacLaughlin, Jim: ‘Changing attitudes to ‘new wave’ emigration?’, p. 322.

abroad”¹⁸⁰ in public discourse of the nineteen-eighties, he argues that the sanitisation of emigration in this manner precludes real critical engagement with the subject and with its consequences for Irish society.

Rather than assigning priority to economic or cultural factors, MacLaughlin instead proposes taking a world systems approach to emigration. According to him this has a number of advantages. In the world systems framework, while emigration is acknowledged as a geographical phenomenon, it is not assumed to be caused by the location of Ireland or by the geographic mobility of the Irish. Furthermore, it is not held to be due to the “social aspirations of Irish youth, or [...] their exposure to the fatal attractions of foreign fields of opportunity”¹⁸¹; although such factors can and do facilitate emigration, they cannot explain emigration flows. Rather, world systems theory traces emigration to the peripheral status of Ireland and to its incorporation into a world economy, with emigration “inextricably linked to the processes of core-formation abroad and peripheralisation at home”¹⁸². According to world systems theory, core and periphery are not fixed categories but rather come into being through “structuring processes of development and underdevelopment”¹⁸³. MacLaughlin emphasises the role which export-led agricultural production played in generating labour surpluses in Ireland, noting that emigration functioned as a solution to the problem of labour surpluses and unemployment.

In light of the sheer volume of emigration during the nineteen eighties he questions the ‘gentrified’ image of emigrants as upwardly mobile high achievers. While acknowledging the existence of well-qualified professionals among the emigrant flows he nevertheless points out that these make up a small fraction of the total. According to his own research on emigrants from the West of Ireland, 40 per cent of male emigrants surveyed were working in the

¹⁸⁰ MacLaughlin, Jim: *Historical and Recent Irish Emigration*, p. 11.

¹⁸¹ Ibid, p. 12.

¹⁸² Ibid, p. 13.

¹⁸³ Ibid.

construction industry, leading him to conclude that “while a minority of Irish male emigrants are climbing social ladders abroad, many more are still climbing ladders”¹⁸⁴. He also draws attention to the extreme youth of many of those leaving and the attendant difficulties they may face as a result; his research indicates that one-third of emigrants from the West of Ireland were still teenagers when they left home. In this context he notes the high rates of return visits to Ireland, observing that the majority of those who emigrated in the nineteen eighties returned home at least once a year, with 20 per cent visiting four or more times a year.¹⁸⁵ While this marks a difference from earlier periods when emigration frequently constituted a permanent and irreversible move abroad, MacLaughlin cautions against identifying frequent return visits as a sign that emigration has become less traumatic, underlining that it may rather indicate the involuntary nature of much recent emigration. He posits that emigration is more correctly perceived as an economic and political necessity rather than as a cultural and voluntary tradition.

A variety of models have thus been used to account for the phenomenon of emigration in the nineteen eighties, each of which possesses a certain explanatory power. Scholars have drawn on rational-choice, network and world systems approaches in order to examine emigration decisions at the micro, meso and macro levels. Nevertheless, as in migration scholarship in general, a ‘fragmented set of theories’ seems to be the rule, with a unified framework lacking. While economic, socio-cultural and political variables all play a role in the development of emigration it is doubtful that causality can be ascribed to any of these factors in isolation; rather they intersect in ways which prove conducive to emigration.

¹⁸⁴ MacLaughlin, Jim: *Ireland: the emigrant nursery and the world economy*, Cork University Press, Cork, 1994, p. 69.

¹⁸⁵ MacLaughlin, Jim: ‘The New Vanishing Irish. Social characteristics of ‘new wave’ Irish emigration’ in *Location and dislocation in contemporary Irish society: emigration and Irish identities*, ed. Jim MacLaughlin, Cork University Press, Cork, 1997, p. 147.

From boom to bust: the Celtic Tiger, the IMF and the new emigration

*“The country is run by high ranking civil servants who are merrily efficient at being inefficient”*¹⁸⁶

Beginning in 1994 the Irish economy experienced a period of remarkable growth, the so-called ‘Celtic Tiger’. From 1994 to 2000, GDP grew by over seven per cent annually;¹⁸⁷ Philip Lane refers to this as an ‘accelerated convergence phase’ during which Ireland swiftly caught up with more developed European countries.¹⁸⁸ Fiscal adjustment and social partnership agreements provided the framework for rapid growth while increased investment in education produced higher levels of human capital. Low corporate tax rates proved successful in drawing foreign direct investment (FDI) from international firms; access to EU markets as well as a youthful, skilled, English-speaking workforce added to the attraction of Ireland as a base for multinational companies.¹⁸⁹ FDI and export-led growth acted as the engine for increased productivity which also stimulated domestic demand. Employment grew quickly and average incomes rose by 57 per cent between 1994 and 2001.¹⁹⁰

After 2001 however, there was a shift towards domestic demand as the driver of economic growth. A boom in construction emerged, initially in response to a housing shortage, but later stimulated by property investment and fuelled by low cost finance.¹⁹¹ By 2006 export growth had declined from an annual average of 17.6 per cent to an annual average of just 4.9 per cent.¹⁹² The Irish construction industry on the other hand came to account for nearly a quarter of the country’s GDP; Ireland was building half as many new houses per year as the United Kingdom,

¹⁸⁶ Respondent 6, migration questionnaire.

¹⁸⁷ Kirby, Peadar: *Celtic Tiger in Collapse*, p. 32.

¹⁸⁸ Lane, Philip R.: ‘The Irish Crisis’, *Institute for International Integration Studies (IIIS) Discussion Paper*, No. 356, February 2011, p. 3.

¹⁸⁹ Lane, Philip R.: ‘The Irish Crisis’, p. 4.

¹⁹⁰ Kirby, Peadar: *Celtic Tiger in Collapse*, p. 32.

¹⁹¹ Bergin, Adele; Conefrey, Thomas; FitzGerald, John; Kearney, Ide: ‘Recovery Scenarios for Ireland’ *Research Series*, 7, Economic and Social Research Institute, Dublin, May 2009, p. 4.

¹⁹² Kirby, Peadar: *Celtic Tiger in Collapse*, p. 35.

a country whose population was fifteen times greater.¹⁹³ Borrowing from abroad made the property boom possible; net foreign liabilities of the Irish banking system rose from 10 per cent of GNP in 2003 to over 60 per cent of GNP in 2007.¹⁹⁴

With turmoil in the international financial markets in 2008, Irish banks found it more difficult to maintain funding however. Their exposure to the Irish property market could not be sustained and as they curtailed lending, a downturn in domestic consumption was evidenced. House prices dropped by more than 36 per cent from their 2008 peak and continue to fall.¹⁹⁵ A decline in spending also negatively affected the tax base, leading to the introduction of graduated income levies, a public sector pension levy, reductions in public sector pay and in social benefit levels as well as a contraction in spending commitments and a recruitment freeze.¹⁹⁶ In September 2008, in order to stabilise the banks and prevent a potential collapse of the banking system, the Irish government guaranteed the liabilities of six main banking institutions for a two year period. Liabilities covered under the scheme amounted to €485 billion.¹⁹⁷ Extra capital was provided to cover property-related losses and the National Asset Management Agency (NAMA) was established to manage property-related loans.¹⁹⁸ The extent of recapitalisation which the banks would require was consistently underestimated however; by 2011 five attempts at recapitalisation totalling €70 billion altogether had been undertaken.¹⁹⁹

On the expiry of the bank guarantee in September 2010, the Irish government was obliged to seek help from outside sources to maintain liquidity; in November 2010 a ‘bailout’ was

¹⁹³ Lewis, Michael: ‘When Irish Eyes are Crying’, *Vanity Fair*, March 2011, <http://www.vanityfair.com/business/features/2011/03/michael-lewis-ireland-201103?currentPage=all>.

¹⁹⁴ Bergin, Adele; Conefrey, Thomas; FitzGerald, John; Kearney, Ide: ‘Recovery Scenarios for Ireland’, p. 5.

¹⁹⁵ ‘IMF Approves €22.5 Billion Loan for Ireland’, *IMF Survey Magazine*, 16 December 2010, <http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/survey/so/2010/car121610a.htm>.

¹⁹⁶ Lane, Philip R.: ‘The Irish Crisis’, p. 13.

¹⁹⁷ ‘Bank Guarantee Scheme & Recapitalisation’, *National Treasury Management Agency*, <http://www.ntma.ie/IrishEconomy/bankGuaranteeScheme.php>.

¹⁹⁸ ‘The National Asset Management Agency, a brief guide’, *The Irish Times*, 30 March 2010, <http://www.irishtimes.com/focus/2010/namaguide/index.pdf>.

¹⁹⁹ Burke-Kennedy, Eoin: ‘Irish banks require an extra €24 billion recapitalisation’, *The Irish Times*, 31 March 2011, <http://www.irishtimes.com/newspaper/breaking/2011/0331/breaking5.html>.

announced. An €85 billion financial package comprising €22.5 billion from the European Commission's European Financial Stability Mechanism (EFSM), €22.5 billion from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and €22.5 billion from the European Financial Stability Fund (EFSF) and bilateral loans as well as €17.5 billion from domestic sources was introduced.²⁰⁰ Its aim is to "identify those banks that remain viable and return them to health through downsizing and reorganization; recapitalize banks and encourage them to rely on deposit inflows and market-based funding; strengthen bank supervision and introduce a comprehensive bank resolution framework."²⁰¹ Savings of €15 billion are also planned over four years through a combination of expenditure cuts and tax increases. The package has been controversial however; i.a. the interest rate of 5.8 per cent per year has been met with criticism.²⁰² Economists Simon Johnson and Peter Boone have predicted that every Irish family will be €200,000 in debt by 2015.²⁰³ Joseph Stiglitz points out that Ireland's debt to GDP ratio is anticipated to rise to a potentially unsustainable 125 per cent by 2013, in which case ten per cent of the country's GDP could be required just to service the debt; he advocates a policy of debt restructuring as a more meaningful way forward.²⁰⁴ The long-term effects of the financial bailout remain to be seen; however with five businesses closing per day in the first quarter of 2011²⁰⁵ and unemployment running at 13 per cent the spectre of emigration has returned to Irish life.

During the Celtic Tiger era, Ireland had the highest fertility rate in the EU.²⁰⁶ From 1994 to 2007 the crude birth rate stood at an average of 14.8 births per 1,000 population annually.²⁰⁷ Migration

²⁰⁰ Lane, Philip R.: 'The Irish Crisis', p. 19.

²⁰¹ 'IMF Approves €22.5 Billion Loan for Ireland', *IMF Survey Magazine*.

²⁰² Lane, Philip R.: 'The Irish Crisis', p. 20.

²⁰³ Leech, Harry: 'Ireland cannot afford debt, warns former IMF chief', *The Irish Independent*, 5 September 2010, <http://www.independent.ie/business/irish/ireland-cannot-afford-debt-warns-former-imf-chief-2325378.html>.

²⁰⁴ Cragg, Michael and Stiglitz, Joseph: 'ECB-IMF deal is a noose that will strangle economic recovery', *The Irish Times*, 9 April 2011, <http://www.irishtimes.com/newspaper/opinion/2011/0409/1224294304548.html>.

²⁰⁵ Molloy, Thomas: "Stress test' shows half of companies are experiencing difficulties", *The Irish Independent*, 4 April 2011, <http://www.independent.ie/business/irish/stress-test-shows-half-of-companies-are-experiencing-difficulties-2608235.html>.

²⁰⁶ 'Ireland has highest fertility rate in EU – CSO' *The Irish Times*, 6 June 2006, <http://www.irishtimes.com/newspaper/breaking/2006/0627/breaking37.html?via=rel>.

figures were also strongly positive during this period. This trend reversed sharply after 2008 however. For the year ending in April 2008, net immigration of 38,500 was recorded; just two years later net emigration flows of 34,500 were registered.²⁰⁸ The differential of 73,000 between these data indicates clearly the magnitude of the recent shift in migration patterns. The CSO *Statistical Releases on Annual Population and Migration Estimates* provide information on gross and net migration flows from 1987 onwards. The data covering the period 1987 to 2006 have been correlated with that collected in the relevant Censuses while the data from 2007 to 2010 are considered preliminary and will be adjusted in light of information gathered in the upcoming 2011 Census. This caveat notwithstanding, the data presented in the *Statistical Releases* are extremely useful as an indicator of overall migration trends.*

Ireland turned into a country of net immigration in 1996, becoming the last EU member state to do so.²⁰⁹ According to the figures given in the *Statistical Releases*, immigration to Ireland climbed over a period of two decades, rising from 17,200 in 1987 to an unprecedented high of 107,800 in 2006. Peak immigration occurred the following year with a gross immigration flow of 109,500.²¹⁰ Immigration flows were fuelled both by the country's booming economy and by the accession of ten new member states to the European Union in 2004. Ireland was one of only three countries, along with the United Kingdom and Sweden, to allow nationals from the new EU member states unrestricted access to its labour markets.²¹¹ From 2005 onwards immigration flows of EU accession state nationals are disaggregated in the *Statistical Releases*, which serves to highlight their scale. In the decade prior to 2005, return migration of Irish nationals constituted up to 50 per

²⁰⁷ Figures from CSO birth rate statistics:

<http://www.cso.ie/px/pxeirestat/database/eirestat/Births/Births.asp>.

²⁰⁸ Central Statistics Office: *Statistical Release on Annual Population and Migration Estimates*, 2010, p. 2.

* As previously noted, it should be borne in mind that data released by the CSO are for the year(s) ending in April; hence when CSO data are referred to here, years mentioned are intended to be understood in this context.

²⁰⁹ Ruhs, Martin and Quinn, Emma: 'Ireland: From Rapid Immigration to Recession', *Migration Information Source*, September 2009, <http://www.migrationinformation.org/USfocus/display.cfm?ID=740>.

²¹⁰ Central Statistics Office: *Statistical Release on Annual Population and Migration Estimates*, 2010 p. 2.

²¹¹ Ruhs, Martin and Quinn, Emma: 'Ireland: From Rapid Immigration to Recession'.

cent of immigration flows, while immigration from the ‘rest of the world’ (i.e. countries other than the then-fifteen European Union members and the United States) increased from just over a tenth to approximately a third of total immigration over this period. It is estimated that approximately 240,000 Irish-born emigrants returned to Ireland between 1996 and 2006.²¹² After the accession of the new member states, return migration dropped to around 20 per cent and immigration from the ‘rest of the world’ to around 15 per cent of the total while immigration from the accession states, averaging 42,600 per annum, comprised almost half of all immigration flows over the next four years. With the onset of recession, the number of immigrants from the accession states declined sharply however, falling to 13,500 by April 2009 and to only 5,800 by April 2010. This trend reflected an overall decline in immigration to Ireland; between 2008 and 2010 gross immigration fell by over 60 per cent, standing at 30,800 in 2010, the lowest figure recorded in almost twenty years.²¹³

While the collapse of immigration flows to Ireland naturally contributed significantly to the major shift in net migration trends evidenced, a notable increase in gross emigration from Ireland also played an important role. The greatest level of gross emigration attested by the *Statistical Releases* was recorded in 1989, when 70,600 people left the country; the figure in 1990 remained relatively high at 56,300. Following this it decreased noticeably, with an average of 31,182 people per annum emigrating from Ireland over the next seventeen years. While the number for the year ending in April 2008 at 45,300 stood rather higher than usual, this increased by 44 per cent to 65,100 by April 2009 and remained at this level in April 2010.²¹⁴ According to Eurostat,^{*} the rate of emigration from Ireland in 2009 was the highest in the EU at 9 per

²¹² Ní Laoire, Caitríona: ‘Settling back’? A biographical and life-course perspective on Ireland's recent return migration’, p. 196.

²¹³ Central Statistics Office: *Statistical Release on Annual Population and Migration Estimates*, 2010, p. 3.

²¹⁴ Ibid, p. 1.

^{*} Eurostat is the statistical office of the European Union.

thousand; almost double that of second-highest country Lithuania's 4.6 per thousand outflow.²¹⁵

The combination of declining immigration flows and rising emigration flows meant that net emigration was recorded in 2009 for the first time in over a decade.²¹⁶

Since their inception in 1987, the *Statistical Releases* have contained information on the age, gender and destinations of emigrants from Ireland. It is only since 2009 however that a table on nationality has been included, providing data for the period from 2006 onwards. The table consists of five categories according to which emigrants are classified on the basis of nationality: Irish, British, 'old' EU member states, EU accession states, rest of world. Unsurprisingly, Irish nationals and accession state nationals constitute the majority of emigration flows; together they comprise between 60 and 75 per cent of total emigration in the five years for which data on emigrant nationality are available. Emigration of accession state nationals grew from 7,200 in 2006 to a peak of 30,100 in 2009 before dropping back somewhat to 19,100 in 2010.²¹⁷ While emigration flows in the other categories remained relatively static, the emigration of Irish nationals, which stood at 15,300 in 2006, fell by approximately 2,000 over the following two years. In 2009 however it increased by a third to 18,400 before increasing again to 27,700 in 2010.²¹⁸ As such, the emigration rate of Irish nationals has risen by over 100 per cent in the two year period since the Irish economy entered into recession.

The nationality table is subdivided by gender; however the limited range of data available somewhat hinders analysis on this level. The ratio of emigration of Irish nationals over the three years prior to the recession stood at 949 female per 1,000 male emigrants. Female emigrants outnumbered male emigrants slightly in 2007, while male emigrants were in the majority in 2006 and in 2008. Male emigration averaged just over 7,000 per year from 2006 to 2008 before

²¹⁵ 'EU27 population 501 million at 1 January 2010' *Eurostat News Release*, 27 July 2010, http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_PUBLIC/3-27072010-AP/EN/3-27072010-AP-EN.PDF.

²¹⁶ Central Statistics Office: *Statistical Release on Annual Population and Migration Estimates*, 2009, p. 1.

²¹⁷ Central Statistics Office: *Statistical Release on Annual Population and Migration Estimates*, 2010, p. 4.

²¹⁸ Ibid.

increasing sharply to 11,500 in 2009 and to 15,800 in 2010. In contrast, female emigration averaged 6,775 per year from 2006 to 2009 before spiking to almost 12,000 in 2010.²¹⁹ While the data do not stretch back far enough to permit a nuanced comparison, it is interesting to note that male emigration rose steeply in 2009 and continued to rise in 2010, while female emigration fluctuated only slightly in 2009 and first exhibited a substantial increase in 2010. Walter has pointed out that in periods of heavy outflows such as ‘second wave’ and ‘third wave’ emigration, male emigration has been significantly higher than female emigration, while at other times the gender ratio has been more evenly balanced. From this she concludes that emigration rates for men are “closely related to employment opportunities [...] whilst the reasons for women leaving are more varied”²²⁰. However it could be posited that the current differential in rates of male and female emigration also reflects the impact of the recession on the traditionally male-dominated construction sector, which contracted earlier and more severely than other sectors of the Irish economy.²²¹ As such, the composition of emigration flows over the next few years may well shift to a more balanced gender ratio as the recession spreads throughout the economy.

While information on age and destination of emigrants is provided in the *Statistical Releases*, this data is unfortunately not broken down by nationality and is therefore of limited use to the present work. Nevertheless, it is perhaps worth observing that although traditionally emigration from Ireland has been heaviest in the 15-24 age group,²²² outflows from 2007 onwards have consistently been greater in the 25-44 age group. Emigration in the 15-44 age group generally accounts for 85 to 90 per cent of total emigration; in the last four years emigration from the 15-

²¹⁹ Ibid.

²²⁰ Walter, Bronwen: ‘From ‘flood’ to ‘trickle’: Irish migration to Britain 1987-2006’, p. 185.

²²¹ Smyth, Jamie and Stanage, Niall: ‘Emigration: the next generation’, *The Irish Times*, 8 January 2011, <http://www.irishtimes.com/newspaper/weekend/2011/0108/1224287020723.html>.

²²² Cf Barratt, Alan, ‘Irish Migration: Causes, Characteristics and Consequences’, *Institute for the Study of Labor* (IZA), 1999, p. 6 and Walter, Bronwen: *A study of the existing sources of information and analysis about Irish emigrants and Irish communities abroad*, p. 4; both authors draw attention to the characteristically youthful profile of Irish emigration, while noting that in times of heavy emigration increased outflows are also recorded in older age brackets. What is new in this context however is the fact that since 2007 losses in the 25-44 age bracket have actually outstripped those in the 15-24 age bracket.

24 age group comprised 41.5 per cent while emigration from the 25-44 age group constituted 46 per cent of gross flows.²²³ Without more accurate data on nationality however it is impossible to conclusively determine the extent to which this shift in age patterns may be indicative of a changing emigrant profile.

In terms of destinations, no clear trends are observable in the available data. The rise in emigration appears to be relatively evenly spread across destination categories with the numbers heading to the UK, 'old' EU states, EU accession states and 'rest of world' registering an overall increase in 2009-2010 while figures for the United States remained comparatively static overall, possibly as a consequence of its relatively strict visa regime.²²⁴ Although the destination statistics available from the CSO are not broken down by nationality, information on emigrant destinations has also featured in the two main Irish newspapers, the *Irish Times* and the *Irish Independent*. According to the *Irish Times*, 1,637 Irish people were granted legal permanent residence in the United States in 2009, a figure which represented a 12 per cent increase on the previous year.²²⁵ Canada's immigration department recorded 2,959 temporary immigrants and 503 permanent immigrants from Ireland in 2009, a rise of 13 per cent from 2008.²²⁶ Meanwhile, in the year to the end of June 2010, 3,041 Irish people obtained permanent residence visas for Australia, an increase of 22 per cent on the previous 12 months, although the numbers receiving one-year temporary visas dropped from 22,788 to 14,833 over the same period.²²⁷ While the *Irish Times* references CSO statistics in its articles, the *Irish Independent* draws on data from an investigation carried out by the paper. Its figures are however quite different from those provided by the CSO and the *Irish Times* as it rather misleadingly includes those on temporary

²²³ Central Statistics Office: *Statistical Release on Annual Population and Migration Estimates*, 2010, p. 6.

²²⁴ Smyth, Jamie and Stanage, Niall: 'Emigration: the next generation'.

²²⁵ Smyth, Jamie: 'Emigration on rise to U.S. and Britain', *The Irish Times*, 5 May 2010, <http://www.irishtimes.com/newspaper/ireland/2010/0505/1224269734931.html>.

²²⁶ Mallinder, Lorraine: 'Going to the Great White North', *The Irish Times*, 10 January 2011, <http://www.irishtimes.com/newspaper/features/2011/0110/1224287154382.html>.

²²⁷ Collins, Padraig: 'Things are looking up down under', *The Irish Times*, 12 January 2011, <http://www.irishtimes.com/newspaper/features/2011/0112/1224287322595.html>.

visas in its count. According to its research, during 2009 45,580 Irish people moved abroad to work, of whom 29,755 travelled on temporary working visas.²²⁸ It provides the following breakdown: 24,316 went to Australia, 11,050 went to the United Kingdom, 4,444 went to New Zealand, 3,462 went to Canada, 1,708 went to the United States and 600 went to Germany.²²⁹ Although destination figures thus may vary depending on the sources used and the way in which emigration statistics are calculated, it is clear that Anglophone countries remain among the most popular destinations for Irish emigrants.

Ireland's recent history demonstrates a clear correlation between economic performance and migration flows. While migration flows were strongly positive during the Celtic Tiger era, since the global financial crisis it appears that the pendulum is once again swinging in the other direction. Increased emigration of Irish nationals is emerging as a response to economic recession. An examination of the quantitative data and media reports available has facilitated an overview of broad emigration trends; the use of qualitative data will permit a nuanced analysis of the phenomenon.

²²⁸ Sheehan, Aideen: 'Number of emigrants moving to Australia up 80 pc', *The Irish Independent*, 28 December 2010, <http://www.independent.ie/national-news/number-of-emigrants-moving-to-australia-up-80pc-2475720.html>.

²²⁹ Molloy, Thomas and Sheehan, Aideen: '1,000 a week forced to emigrate', *The Irish Independent*, 20 January 2011, <http://www.independent.ie/national-news/1000-a-week-forced-to-emigrate-2503543.html>.

“Home is home” or is it? Qualitative experiences of 21st century emigration

“If given the choice, Ireland is where I want to be”²³⁰

“As far as I am concerned, Ireland has turned its back on me...”²³¹

While data available from the CSO provide insight into recent Irish migration trends from Ireland on a quantitative level, the preliminary and general nature of these data necessitate their supplementation. As such it was deemed advisable to garner complementary qualitative data on the subject of emigration from Ireland in order to enrich the present analysis. To this end a qualitative questionnaire on the topic was prepared. The questionnaire consisted of a total of thirty-eight questions covering a broad spectrum of issues related to emigration (see Appendix One for full text of the questionnaire). Questions were in a variety of formats, including free-text, multiple choice, and rating scales. All questions were optional, but respondents were encouraged to provide as much information as possible. The questionnaire was divided into nine sections, of which the first section elicited biographical information from the respondents. The subsequent sections dealt with respondents’ decision to leave Ireland, their decision to move abroad in general and to the destination country in particular, their employment history, their experience of life in the destination country and their interpersonal networks in Ireland and abroad. The penultimate section asked for opinions on economic and cultural issues related to Irish emigration while the final section provided a space for further remarks as well as a contact email address for questions, comments or feedback. The questionnaire was presented as part of research into a master’s thesis on migration from Ireland; as per QNHS practice the use of the term ‘emigration’ in the questionnaire itself was avoided, with reference instead being made to ‘living abroad’ or ‘moving abroad’. This is also in line with Courtney’s observation that a

²³⁰ Respondent 41, migration questionnaire.

²³¹ Respondent 24, migration questionnaire.

question on emigration in the earlier LFS was unsatisfactory; it was found that its replacement with a ‘softer’ question on living abroad yielded more accurate data.²³²

The questionnaire was designed as an internet-based application on the website SurveyMonkey.²³³ It was sent via email to personal contacts of the author, who were encouraged to distribute it further and it was also posted on the social networking site Facebook and on the Irish internet community Boards.ie.²³⁴ The questionnaire targeted Irish people who had left the country since 2008 and were currently resident abroad. It was made available online on 2 September 2010 and was accessible for a month before being closed on 2 October 2010. During this time 81 responses to the questionnaire were recorded. Eleven of these were incomplete and as such have been disregarded. Of the remaining 70 responses, twelve were from respondents who had left Ireland prior to 2008 and thus did not form part of the target group. As such, their answers have therefore not been included in the analysis. The following chapter is based on the answers received from the 58 respondents who conformed to the questionnaire criteria. Given that these data constitute unpublished primary sources otherwise unobtainable, extensive use of quotations has been made where this was considered relevant. All data used in the chapter has been derived from the responses to the questionnaire, unless otherwise indicated.

It goes without saying that the results of this questionnaire do not claim to be representative of recent Irish emigration. There are a number of practical constraints associated with gathering qualitative data, not least of which is the task of locating members of the target group. In this instance this particular issue was largely circumvented due in part to the mobilisation of the author’s network of personal contacts; however this may also have affected the characteristics of respondents somewhat. Moreover, there is also the likelihood of self-selection in respondents; a

²³² Courtney, Damien: ‘A Quantification of Irish Migration with Particular Emphasis on the 1980s and the 1990s’, p. 302.

²³³ Available at www.surveymonkey.com.

²³⁴ Websites can be found at www.facebook.com and at www.boards.ie respectively.

variety of factors such as length of time spent abroad, satisfaction or dissatisfaction with emigrant life and/or current situation, and state of personal circumstances may influence whether or not an individual chooses to respond to the questionnaire. Other variables which cannot be controlled such as ill-health or travel may also intervene. As such, any data collected is necessarily skewed to some extent. Time and resource constraints also constitute limiting factors on the present work. Given the time frame prescribed for writing this thesis, it was deemed unfeasible to run the questionnaire for longer than one month. Structural considerations regarding the amount of data which could adequately be handled within the thesis framework similarly indicated the advisability of imposing restrictions. Nevertheless it is felt that 58 responses is a satisfactory outcome for a questionnaire of this type in view of the constraints outlined above; it is believed that the data gathered will facilitate an examination of recent Irish emigration on a qualitative level.

The first part of the questionnaire comprised questions on the gender, education level, age, origin and destination of respondents, as well as establishing the date at which they left Ireland. These questions were answered by all respondents. The gender ratio of the questionnaire was evenly balanced with 29 male respondents and 29 female respondents, despite the higher emigration rate of Irish men than of Irish women in recent years. 95 per cent of respondents have some level of tertiary education, with almost 80 per cent holding either an honours bachelor degree or a masters' degree, while a further seven per cent possess a doctorate. The average age of respondents was just over twenty-eight, while the median year of birth for respondents was 1982. The most common year of birth was 1981 however, the year of birth for 11 respondents, followed by 1984, the year of birth for 7 respondents. 35 respondents altogether, or 61 per cent of the total, were born in the five year period from 1980 to 1984. The average age of male emigrants was just over twenty-nine while that of female emigrants was twenty-seven and a half. If births prior to 1970 (three per cent of the total) are not included

however then the average male age drops to just below twenty-eight, virtually identical to the average female age. 1981, the female modal year of birth, is in fact lower than 1983, the male modal year of birth. Interestingly, only 17 per cent of respondents fall into the 15-24 age category while 81 per cent of respondents fall into the 25-44 age category. The greater proportion of respondents in the 25-44 age category tallies with the pattern observed in the CSO data, although here the trend is even more pronounced. This differs significantly from earlier emigration waves where emigrants were characterised by their comparative youth. The proportionally higher age of recent emigrants is no doubt at least partly attributable to an increased amount of time spent in tertiary education; however it is believed that the age of the author and of her peer group may also have had some bearing on the age profile of questionnaire respondents. As such, while the questionnaire data provide interesting circumstantial evidence in this regard, they should nevertheless be treated with caution.

20 respondents identified themselves as coming either from Dublin city or County Dublin, while another six came from neighbouring counties regarded as part of the Greater Dublin Area.²³⁵ The proportion of emigrants from other major urban areas was substantially lower, with five respondents from Cork city and/or county, two from Galway city and/or county and one from Limerick city and/or county. In terms of regional distribution, the highest flows stemmed from the eastern province of Leinster with two-thirds of emigrants (of whom almost 70 per cent came from Dublin and the Greater Dublin Area), followed by the southern province of Munster with just over one-fifth of emigrants. 12 per cent and 2 per cent of emigrants originated from the western province of Connaught and the northern province of Ulster respectively. The high proportion of emigrants from Leinster is perhaps not surprising in view of Dublin's status as a primate city; as of 2006 almost 40 per cent of Ireland's population lived in the Greater Dublin

²³⁵ 'Regional Planning Guidelines – Greater Dublin Area', *Regional Planning Guidelines*, <http://www.rpg.ie/greater-dublin.html>.

Area.²³⁶ Nevertheless, the data appear to indicate a comparatively high outflow from the metropolitan area and from the eastern seaboard generally, compared to the more evenly distributed flows of the nineteen-eighties and in sharp contrast to the population haemorrhage from the west coast of earlier times.

Anglophone countries proved the most popular destinations for emigrants, with two-thirds of respondents moving to either the United Kingdom (14), the United States (10), Australia (7), Canada (5) or New Zealand (2). Of the remainder, 22 per cent went to other European destinations while ten per cent went to the Middle East and one respondent went to Japan. Women outnumbered men slightly in both Anglophone and European destinations, while men comprised the majority of those moving to the Middle East. The United Kingdom was the most common destination among both sexes, accounting for almost one quarter of emigration overall; this figure is however substantially lower than has historically been the case.

25 per cent of respondents left Ireland in 2008, 38 per cent in 2009 and 36 per cent in 2010; while this pattern reflects the increased emigration recorded by the CSO in the year ending in April 2009 and in the year ending in April 2010, as of yet no official figures beyond April 2010 are available. As such it cannot be determined to what extent the apparent levelling-off of emigration in 2010 which the questionnaire seems to indicate corresponds to broader emigration trends.

Employment emerged as the primary motivation for leaving Ireland; 47 respondents indicated that they left the country 'to work abroad'. Grounds such as education, travel, joining family/friends or other reasons played a largely secondary role, receiving between ten and twenty per cent of ratings. Two thirds of respondents indicated that the level of unemployment in Ireland, the availability of well-paid jobs, promotion and career opportunities abroad, the desire

²³⁶ 'Population of each Province, County and City, 2006', *CSO Statistics Office Ireland*, <http://www.cso.ie/statistics/popofeachprovcountycity2006.htm>.

to gain experience abroad and the desire to travel and/or see the world were either ‘very important’ or ‘somewhat important’ factors in influencing their decision. The presence of family or friends abroad was less vital; while 22 per cent of respondents indicated that having a partner or close family in the destination country played a ‘very important’ role in their decision to move abroad, 26 per cent considered the presence of friends in the destination country as only ‘somewhat important’, and for the majority of respondents their decision to emigrate was not affected by connections abroad.

Respondents displayed a notable degree of ‘internationalisation’, to use Shuttleworth’s terminology; almost two thirds of respondents indicated that they had previously spent ‘significant’ time abroad.* This also correlates with the findings of the NESC report that previous experience abroad increases migration propensity; indeed just over a third of respondents felt that their experience abroad directly influenced their decision to emigrate. That this occurred in a variety of ways is illustrated by the following extracts:

“I think it influenced my decision because I was confident that I could take my skills to a new country and be comfortable working in an environment with people who are not from the same place as me.”²³⁷

“I knew the benefits that could be gained from working in different job markets.”²³⁸

“Influenced my decision because I had lived abroad before and knew it wouldn't be a big deal.”²³⁹

“I had a positive experience, showing me that living abroad for a longer period would not be a problem either.”²⁴⁰

“This was certainly an influence – I had a good experience during that year and was very positive about moving again.”²⁴¹

“I had spent 4 months travelling in 2004 and I wanted to go back to Australia to work. I also visited much of Europe, Asia, US, Cuba etc and wanted to see more of the world.”²⁴²

* No attempt was made by the author to determine what constituted a ‘significant’ period of time; rather it was deemed more appropriate to leave this assessment to the respondents themselves.

²³⁷ Respondent 1, migration questionnaire.

²³⁸ Respondent 3, migration questionnaire.

²³⁹ Respondent 6, migration questionnaire.

²⁴⁰ Respondent 8, migration questionnaire.

²⁴¹ Respondent 14, migration questionnaire.

“This had a pretty big influence on my decision as I want to keep travelling and seeing other places.”²⁴³

“Yes, it had an influence due to the fact I built up confidence to go alone abroad and also from meeting others who conducted technical internships.”²⁴⁴

“Meant I wasn't particularly worried about moving to a new country.”²⁴⁵

“The only way that this influenced my decision to move abroad was the knowledge that a move like this does not have to be permanent.”²⁴⁶

“It was not a huge culture shock for me.”²⁴⁷

Moreover, given the evidence found by Shuttleworth and the NESC report that previous migration experience tended to act as a factor in increasing the probability of further movement, it seems likely that even where respondents did not directly credit their prior experience abroad with affecting their decision to emigrate it may nevertheless still have played a role in facilitating this.

Respondents' choice of destination country was influenced by a variety of factors. Of these, the most crucial consideration was the existence of general employment opportunities in the destination country, with 86 per cent of respondents indicating that this was either 'very important' or 'somewhat important' to them in making their decision. Almost 80 per cent of respondents viewed the language spoken in the destination country as either 'very important' or 'somewhat important', while for two-thirds of respondents a specific job, education or training offer was significant. Previous experience abroad was seen as comparatively less critical, with just 45 per cent of respondents perceiving it as important. Ease of travel to the destination country and positive feedback from friends or family on the destination country played a role for more than 60 per cent of respondents. Over half of respondents drew on advice or help from friends

²⁴² Respondent 21, migration questionnaire.

²⁴³ Respondent 26, migration questionnaire.

²⁴⁴ Respondent 40, migration questionnaire.

²⁴⁵ Respondent 42, migration questionnaire.

²⁴⁶ Respondent 54, migration questionnaire.

²⁴⁷ Respondent 56, migration questionnaire.

and family in preparing their move abroad; this was much higher than the amount (20 per cent) who sought advice or help from specialised emigration agencies. In a number of cases friends and family also facilitated respondents' search for employment and accommodation in the destination country. This suggests that while employment constitutes the primary motivation for moving abroad, the dissemination of information through friendship and familial networks nevertheless exerts a considerable influence on emigration patterns.

Just over half of respondents had jobs arranged abroad prior to leaving Ireland while two-thirds of respondents had accommodation organised before moving. Finding accommodation in the destination country was usually experienced as unproblematic by respondents. Opinions were relatively polarised on the subject of gaining employment however; although a quarter of respondents described it as 'somewhat difficult', one fifth characterised it as 'very easy'. Given the primacy assigned to employment considerations in the decision to emigrate, it is interesting to note that a relatively small number of respondents – 16 in total – were unemployed at the time at which they left Ireland. In comparison, 14 respondents moved abroad directly after completing education or training, while 18 respondents quit a job in Ireland to move abroad. 90 per cent of respondents were working at the time they completed the questionnaire, with three quarters of respondents employed in long-term work (defined here as a contract of longer than one year). The vast majority of respondents were working in the same field in which they qualified and/or in which they had been working in Ireland. While the questionnaire did not ask specifically about upward mobility as it was felt that this line of enquiry might be perceived as intrusive, respondents' answers nevertheless seem to indicate that moving abroad has by and large been of benefit to their career paths.

Life abroad was generally viewed positively; on topics such as the quality of life, health care systems, public transport systems and cultural and leisure amenities the destination countries scored highly. Conversely social welfare systems, educational systems and community spirit were

regarded as better in Ireland, while social life and societal openness were seen as being on a par at home and abroad. Two thirds of respondents did not face a language barrier in the destination country while a further 15 per cent encountered a 'minor' language barrier. Respondents were also asked about their social circle and romantic relationship(s) in order to gauge the extent of their integration in the destination countries. According to the results, a quarter of respondents associated mostly with Irish people or with other foreigners, one third mixed with both Irish people/foreigners and locals while 40 per cent moved in a social circle comprised mostly of locals. Of the 45 respondents in relationships, 17 involved a partner from Ireland, 16 included a partner from the destination country and 12 were with a partner from a third country. Asked to assess their own degree of social integration, 43 per cent of respondents considered themselves as 'somewhat integrated' into society in the destination country while 14 per cent considered themselves as 'very integrated'. In contrast 19 per cent considered themselves as 'somewhat un-integrated' whereas just 7 per cent considered themselves as 'very un-integrated'; 17 per cent expressed no opinion.

Although the data collected seems to point to a reasonable level of integration in the destination countries, participation in home networks remains high. The vast majority of respondents maintain close contact with friends and family in Ireland; 28 per cent are in touch daily, 29 per cent are in contact several times a week and 35 per cent connect on a weekly basis. Phone/skype calls, email and Facebook are the most common means of communication, used by over 80 per cent of respondents. Links are also maintained by means of travel, with respondents returning to Ireland on a monthly, quarterly, biannual or annual basis; just 5 per cent of respondents never visit home. 85 per cent of respondents similarly receive visitors from Ireland on a monthly, quarterly, biannual or annual basis. New technologies and an increasingly globalised world clearly facilitate the maintenance of interpersonal networks across distances; nevertheless, following MacLaughlin, it could also be posited that the strength of these networks is correlated with the

perhaps involuntary nature of recent emigration.

The economic situation in Ireland was viewed almost exclusively in negative terms. Respondents characterised it variously as ‘a mess’, ‘a complete disaster’ and ‘a shambles’. There was little hope that conditions would improve; sentiments such as ‘Ireland is screwed economically for the foreseeable future’, ‘it will get worse before it gets better’ and ‘[it’s a]black hole for ten years more, minimum’ were articulated more than once. Confusion, anger and resignation were variously expressed, with a number of respondents holding the government and/or institutions responsible for the crisis.

“We are reaping the reward of gross mismanagement of the country over the last 15 years and at least five years of austerity is in store.”²⁴⁸

“Don't keep up with it any more because everytime I look at rte news it's always the same.”²⁴⁹

“I would not have a hope of getting work in Ireland for the foreseeable future. The economic mess is getting worse, and there is so much doubt and uncertain about the future while the government prioritises the bailout of crooks like AngloIrishBank instead of helping to promote economic stimulus.”²⁵⁰

“The government has a lot to answer for.”²⁵¹

“To be honest my understanding of the economic situation is not great. I am quite confused as to what is really going on. All I know, is that personally I would have no job if I continued to live in Ireland.”²⁵²

“Very hard to consider living under the climate of economic treason and learned helplessness of the electorate.”²⁵³

“The central government are inept at managing the country. They have no idea how to get the country out of recession.”²⁵⁴

“Dreadful situation that I hope is resolved soon. I love Ireland itself, but not so many of the overall ethos of people who tend to run it. Much family & friends affected directly or indirectly. Situation needs to improve soon because otherwise there will be a deep scar left for many generations.”²⁵⁵

²⁴⁸ Respondent 10, migration questionnaire.

²⁴⁹ Respondent 18, migration questionnaire.

²⁵⁰ Respondent 21, migration questionnaire.

²⁵¹ Respondent 22, migration questionnaire.

²⁵² Respondent 28, migration questionnaire.

²⁵³ Respondent 32, migration questionnaire.

²⁵⁴ Respondent 37, migration questionnaire.

²⁵⁵ Respondent 40, migration questionnaire.

*"It's bad and will get worse. We have a corrupt government, that just cares about protecting themselves and the big businesses that got them into power."*²⁵⁶

*"Depressing how bad the country is run."*²⁵⁷

The economic situation in Ireland also emerges as a major 'push' factor in emigration decisions. In some instances it is cited as the sole reason for leaving the country, while in other cases it is one of several elements which contributed to this result. Occasionally it acted to facilitate a move which otherwise would have taken place some years down the line, if at all. In yet other cases it may have played no role in the initial decision to move abroad but serves to discourage thoughts of possible return. Unemployment, anxiety over potential future redundancies and limited opportunities for career development in view of the poor economic situation were recurring themes mentioned by respondents.

*"It [the economic situation] had a reasonably large impact on my decision, although it probably served more to speed up my decision rather than give me the idea to emigrate."*²⁵⁸

*"Knew given my field of work the only option to continue working at the same level was to move abroad and continue developing my skills."*²⁵⁹

*"No job. No prospects."*²⁶⁰

*"I was let go from my job due to the recession - so it influenced me greatly to go travelling."*²⁶¹

*"I wanted to move to experience something new, but the economic future of Ireland was a big help in pushing."*²⁶²

*"It was important as I left my job due to lack of advancement opportunities."*²⁶³

*"I had always intended to travel after my apprenticeship. Economic situation made me do it quicker."*²⁶⁴

*"I was unable to get employment in my desired field due to the current economic situation."*²⁶⁵

²⁵⁶ Respondent 46, migration questionnaire.

²⁵⁷ Respondent 53, migration questionnaire.

²⁵⁸ Respondent 1, migration questionnaire.

²⁵⁹ Respondent 3, migration questionnaire.

²⁶⁰ Respondent 4, migration questionnaire.

²⁶¹ Respondent 5, migration questionnaire.

²⁶² Respondent 8, migration questionnaire.

²⁶³ Respondent 10, migration questionnaire.

²⁶⁴ Respondent 18, migration questionnaire.

²⁶⁵ Respondent 19, migration questionnaire.

*"It was the reason, partner was being made redundant and was offered a transfer to Norway, I was free to follow after I finished my MSC. There was no choice in it, one or both of us might have ended up unemployed since this was almost two years ago when the major redundancies were just starting."*²⁶⁶

*"I left just before the crash, purely by coincidence. The current economic situation is definitely influencing my decision not to move back any time soon."*²⁶⁷

*"For me, no job means no freedom and no quality of life. I felt I would be held back in life if I continued to live in Ireland."*²⁶⁸

*"Very much so. I would have loved to have staying in Ireland but I had no luck getting a job, either in my field or in any other job area."*²⁶⁹

*"A small amount (job etc. more sensitive to global economy, not any single locality), but is a big element in me not moving back, except in a stoic defeat of middle age and retirement from industry, to teach in college and raise children, perhaps."*²⁷⁰

*"100%. Little prospects after graduation. Did a Fas course in construction (like a job) as an alternative to the dole for 10 months. Left for Canada then."*²⁷¹

*"My decision to move was based purely on the fact that my partner had moved from Ireland to the UK. However, she had moved because she could not find suitable employment in Ireland."*²⁷²

*"It was the only substantial reason for the decision."*²⁷³

*"It was the main reason for leaving. I couldn't stay at home and not be working, it would be very tough."*²⁷⁴

*"Was about 90% of the reason. Always wanted to go travelling so when I was laid off I said "Right time to go."*²⁷⁵

*"It did as there were no jobs available in my field."*²⁷⁶

*"It made the decision easier to make, because I felt the impact of the economic situation would live the country in a depressed state for the next 5 - 10 years."*²⁷⁷

*"it somewhat influenced it, but now I have no intention of moving home anytime soon... there's nothing left there for me now."*²⁷⁸

²⁶⁶ Respondent 20, migration questionnaire.

²⁶⁷ Respondent 21, migration questionnaire.

²⁶⁸ Respondent 28, migration questionnaire.

²⁶⁹ Respondent 29, migration questionnaire.

²⁷⁰ Respondent 32, migration questionnaire.

²⁷¹ Respondent 41, migration questionnaire.

²⁷² Respondent 42, migration questionnaire.

²⁷³ Respondent 45, migration questionnaire.

²⁷⁴ Respondent 47, migration questionnaire.

²⁷⁵ Respondent 48, migration questionnaire.

²⁷⁶ Respondent 50, migration questionnaire.

²⁷⁷ Respondent 54, migration questionnaire.

Five per cent of respondents envision returning to live in Ireland in the next six months to one year while approximately one-third plan to move back within the next five years. Another five per cent intend never to go back; a further third are unsure as to when or if they will return. The remainder see themselves moving back to Ireland at some point further down the line. Frequently cited preconditions for returning included an improved economic outlook, the availability of employment opportunities and/or the certainty of financial security. Respondents also referred to the presence of friends and family in Ireland as a factor which would influence their decision to return. Caitríona Ní Laoire has noted that return migration is often characterised by an emigrant's desire to spend a specific 'life stage' in the home country;²⁷⁹ this is also a feature of some responses. In this context returning to Ireland to settle down, to raise children or once children have grown up and/or completed education was mentioned. Equally however other respondents acknowledged that return was unlikely, especially if they were to settle down and/or start a family abroad.

Just over two-thirds of respondents believed that Irish people in general were more likely to move abroad than people from other countries. Ten per cent felt that this was not the case while 22 per cent expressed no opinion on the subject. The influence of Irish history and of Irish culture on emigration from Ireland elicited a variety of responses; the primacy of economic factors was stressed by some while others drew attention to the facilitating role played by tradition and networks.

*"I think that perhaps because of our history/psyche or simply because we are island-bound I believe we are a lot more likely to move."*²⁸⁰

"When almost every Irish person knows a friend or family member who has emigrated, and a previous government minister (Mr Lenihan senior) actively promoted it, it is absolutely ingrained in Irish culture."

²⁷⁸ Respondent 55, migration questionnaire.

²⁷⁹ Ní Laoire, Caitríona: 'Settling back'? A biographical and life-course perspective on Ireland's recent return migration', p. 208.

²⁸⁰ Respondent 4, migration questionnaire.

*A history of emigration means that people will have less of a problem in considering emigration themselves.*²⁸¹

*"Yes, there is a culture of emigration amongst young people, and even before the economic crash many of my friends (and myself) wanted to leave abroad for at least a few years of our 20s."*²⁸²

*"We have always been an outward looking country - due to the size of the country, external influences etc. More recently, in the 80's, the economic situation certainly played a role. Many still have contacts abroad due to that wave of migration."*²⁸³

*"I think it's more acceptable but at this stage everyone moves to find the jobs, be them Irish or not."*²⁸⁴

*"Moving abroad is very readily accepted. I believe it is almost expected, certainly now."*²⁸⁵

*"It's a cultural thing. It's a small island, and even the biggest place, Dublin, is a small town."*²⁸⁶

*"We have a significant history of migration in our culture which is far greater than most nations."*²⁸⁷

*"The Irish have a history of fleeing their homeland due to political, economic, social and other reasons. If an Irish person was presented with all the requirements they need to live at home they would not move abroad in the same frightening numbers"*²⁸⁸

*"Great extent - almost a romanticism about leaving the shores of fair Eire. Many have relatives abroad. And it can't hurt to have an Irish drinking oasis in every corner of the world"*²⁸⁹

*"It's definitely a factor - we have 'taken the boat' for a long time when things are bad."*²⁹⁰

*"I think it is certainly relevant although the Celtic Tiger in the 1990s - early 2000s meant that most people of my generation believed economic migration was a thing of the past and unlikely to be necessary for them. Nevertheless, most of us have relations living in the UK, North America, or Australia so it is not a new concept for us."*²⁹¹

*"I believe it has a huge part to play, because for decades people have left Ireland and settled abroad. Many Irish people have relations abroad and this is a big help when moving to a new place, having someone to help you out."*²⁹²

*"I think people move from necessity or because they went to travel & gain experience more than for historical or cultural reasons"*²⁹³

²⁸¹ Respondent 8, migration questionnaire.

²⁸² Respondent 10, migration questionnaire.

²⁸³ Respondent 14, migration questionnaire.

²⁸⁴ Respondent 20, migration questionnaire.

²⁸⁵ Respondent 28, migration questionnaire.

²⁸⁶ Respondent 32, migration questionnaire.

²⁸⁷ Respondent 34, migration questionnaire.

²⁸⁸ Respondent 37, migration questionnaire.

²⁸⁹ Respondent 41, migration questionnaire.

²⁹⁰ Respondent 42, migration questionnaire.

²⁹¹ Respondent 43, migration questionnaire.

²⁹² Respondent 47, migration questionnaire.

²⁹³ Respondent 50, migration questionnaire.

*"The 'Irish diaspora' cliché is so widespread there must be a grain of truth"*²⁹⁴

*"History repeating itself..."*²⁹⁵

*"It is ingrained in our psyche. I see the difference between me and my Irish friends as opposed to my friends in France. It is not a natural instinct, whereas for Irish people it definitely is."*²⁹⁶

*"To a large extent...we have so many connections all over the world."*²⁹⁷

This chapter has endeavoured to sketch a portrayal of current Irish emigration through the medium of individual experiences. Although each story is different, certain commonalities emerge. A dissatisfaction with the economic situation, a readiness to leave Ireland in search of better employment and career opportunities and a desire to gain experience abroad are recurring themes. Respondents are generally in their mid-twenties, well educated and relatively 'internationalised'. The majority are in long-term employment in the destination countries and have a positive opinion of life there. Reasonably well integrated abroad, they nevertheless maintain close links with friends and family at home. Many plan to return to Ireland at some point; others are unsure what the future holds. The qualitative dimension of this research permits a nuanced picture of the current emigration wave which complements that presented in official statistics. While economic considerations emerge as an important factor in driving emigration, this is mediated through the influence of personal circumstances and of friendship and familial networks. Moreover socio-cultural factors are perceived as playing a significant role in the facilitation of emigration. The use of primary data provides insight into the ways in which these variables intersect and overlap. Furthermore it facilitates comprehension of the rationale behind emigration decisions and allows for a focus on individual experiences of emigration.

²⁹⁴ Respondent 51, migration questionnaire.

²⁹⁵ Respondent 55, migration questionnaire.

²⁹⁶ Respondent 56, migration questionnaire.

²⁹⁷ Respondent 57, migration questionnaire.

Conclusion: A Fourth Wave?

“It’ll get better...right?”²⁹⁸

The role which emigration has played in Irish history is common knowledge. The ‘first wave’ of post-Famine emigration has been extensively researched; indeed the Famine itself has reached near-mythological status in constructions of Irish emigration history.²⁹⁹ While emigration from Ireland did not begin with the Famine, the massive exodus which it precipitated ensured that emigration became ingrained in Irish society. Prospective emigrants were able to draw on family and friendship networks which eased the difficulties associated with emigration and facilitated the transition to new lives abroad. Moreover the availability of information about life abroad, the remittances sent home by those who left and the readiness of emigrants to sponsor others to join them ensured that processes of emigration became self-perpetuating. Emigration remained a feature of Irish life during the twentieth century, with two further emigration ‘waves’ occurring in the nineteen fifties and in the nineteen eighties respectively. A range of approaches have been used to explain the prevalence of emigration from Ireland. Scholars have focused variously on economic, socio-cultural and political factors, drawing attention to persistently high unemployment levels, to overseas connections and to structural processes of core-formation. On the micro level, emigration has been interpreted as occurring on the basis of individual cost-benefit calculations; faced with poor employment opportunities in Ireland, emigrants leave to seek better economic circumstances elsewhere. Meso-level analyses have examined the context in which emigration occurs, drawing attention to its social impact while on the macro level emigration has been attributed to the consolidation of capital in certain core economic regions. The use of i.a. rational-choice, network and world systems theoretical models to analyse

²⁹⁸ Respondent 4, migration questionnaire.

²⁹⁹ Wonneberger, Astrid: ‘The Invention of History in the Irish-American Diaspora: Myths of the Great Famine,’ in *Diaspora, Identity and Religion: New Directions in Theory and Research*, ed. Waltraud Kokot, Khachig Tölölyan & Carolin Alfonso, Routledge, London, 2004, pp. 223-261.

emigration has however tended to produce a fragmented body of research literature; a holistic approach to the phenomenon of emigration has thus far been lacking.

This thesis set out to examine emigration from Ireland in the wake of the 2008 global financial crisis and the subsequent recession. Emigration from Ireland has increased drastically since 2008; according to CSO statistics over 130,000 people left the country between April 2008 and April 2010, of whom 46,100 were Irish nationals.³⁰⁰ A further 100,000 people are expected to leave between April 2010 and April 2012.³⁰¹ While a certain amount of information on emigration is available in the media, there is a dearth of academic literature on the topic given its recent provenance. The aim of this thesis was therefore to document current trends in order to provide a nuanced portrayal of the latest manifestation of the emigration phenomenon. To facilitate this it was considered advisable to describe the history of Irish emigration; as such the characteristics of earlier emigration waves were outlined. Furthermore, quantitative data on current emigration were garnered from official sources while qualitative data were obtained by means of a questionnaire on migration prepared by the author.

A definitive comparison between previous and current emigration is not possible as conclusive data on the latter are as yet unavailable; nevertheless drawing on the information gathered in the context of researching this thesis some preliminary observations may be essayed. Emigration patterns have clearly changed over time; emigrants can no longer be characterised as primarily young, unskilled and from rural backgrounds. Educational attainment, age and urbanisation levels appear to have increased, to the extent that current emigration flows as reflected in the questionnaire seem to consist largely of well-educated, comparatively mature individuals, often from urban areas. It can be posited that these changes are in turn reflective of an increasingly urbanised and educated society. Emigration destinations have also become more diverse; while

³⁰⁰ Central Statistics Office: *Statistical Release on Annual Population and Migration Estimates*, 2010, p. 1.

³⁰¹ Economic and Social Research Institute: *Quarterly Economic Commentary*, Winter 2010, p. 1

Anglophone countries continue to attract the majority of emigrants, within this category increasing numbers of emigrants are moving to less traditional destinations such as Australia and New Zealand as well as to the United Kingdom and the United States.

The qualitative research undertaken permitted a closer examination of emigration patterns. While the questionnaire does not claim to be representative of current Irish emigration, it nevertheless does provide insight into the phenomenon on a qualitative level. Gathering data on emigrants' current circumstances, it examined their level of integration and their attitudes to life abroad. The rationale behind individual emigration decisions is displayed, allowing commonalities to be located. Almost without exception respondents cited the current economic situation in Ireland as a major 'push' factor influencing their decision regarding emigration; other variables such as previous experience abroad and friendship and family networks emerged as facilitating factors. Socio-cultural factors were also felt to play an important role in encouraging emigration. The data gathered in this manner enabled a depiction of emigration as experienced first-hand by questionnaire respondents.

This thesis is of necessity limited in its scope. Time and resource constraints imposed restrictions on what could be achieved within the framework at hand. Nevertheless, its combination of qualitative and quantitative approaches lends it significant depth and breadth, facilitating a comprehensive yet nuanced portrayal of current Irish emigration. That emigration has reappeared is evident; both official statistics and individual testimonies bear witness to the fact. Once again it seems that Ireland is haemorrhaging people as its citizens look abroad for opportunities unavailable at home; once again emigration is frequently considered the only viable option. The present work is thus also intended to be understood as a contribution towards a broader research agenda on the issue. Although an amelioration of the economic situation may lead to declining emigration and/or return migration, recent emigration may also act to facilitate continued emigration. A holistic approach to the phenomenon is needed; further research will

help to clarify the nature, extent and significance of current emigration from Ireland. While its consequences remain to be seen, it is clear that the present exodus from our shores can justifiably be characterised as a 'fourth wave' of emigration.

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Appendix One

Irish Migration Survey

Purpose of Questionnaire

Hello. This online questionnaire is part of my master's thesis on migration from Ireland. I am looking for Irish people who are currently living outside the country to fill out this short survey. The target group is people who have left the country from 2008 to the current date. The questionnaire is anonymous. All questions are optional, but please consider providing as much information as possible. The survey should take approximately ten to fifteen minutes. Thank you for your time!

Basic Information

1. Your name? (optional)
2. Date of birth?
3. Where in Ireland do you come from? (name of home village/town/city, name of home county)
4. Gender?
Male/Female
5. Education level?
Junior Certificate or equivalent
Leaving Certificate or equivalent
National/Higher Certificate or equivalent
Ordinary Bachelors Degree or equivalent
Honours Bachelor Degree/Higher Diploma or equivalent
Masters Degree/Post Graduate Diploma or equivalent
Doctoral Degree/Higher Doctorate or equivalent
Other
6. When did you leave Ireland (month, year)?
7. Where are you living now?

Leaving Ireland

1. Please indicate the main reason(s) you left Ireland (select all that apply)
To work abroad
To do an education or training course abroad
To travel abroad
To join partner, family or friends abroad
Other (please specify)
2. Please indicate to what extent the following factors influenced your decision to leave Ireland:

Level of unemployment in Ireland
 Availability of well-paid jobs abroad
 Availability of promotion/career opportunities abroad
 Availability of educational opportunities abroad
 Desire to travel and/or see the world
 Desire to gain experience abroad
 Other (please specify)

Scale: Very important; Somewhat important; Neither important nor unimportant;
 Somewhat unimportant; Very unimportant; Doesn't apply

Moving abroad

1. To what extent do you think that the following factors played a role in your decision to move abroad?

Partner or close family living in destination country
 Partner or close family living in other countries abroad
 Other relations living in destination country
 Other relations living in other countries abroad
 Personal friends from Ireland living in destination country
 Personal friends from other countries living in destination country
 Personal friends living in other countries abroad
 Family friends from Ireland living in destination country
 Family friends from other countries living in destination country
 Family friends living in other countries abroad

Scale: Very important; Somewhat important; Neither important nor unimportant;
 Somewhat unimportant; Very unimportant; Doesn't apply

2. Had you spent significant time outside Ireland prior to this current move abroad (please give details)?
 If so, to what extent, if any, do you think this influenced your decision to move abroad?

Destination

1. Please indicate how the following factors influenced your decision to move to the country in which you are currently living.
 Previous experience in destination country
 Previous experience(s) in other countries abroad
 Nearness of destination country to Ireland
 Ease of travel to destination country
 Ease of getting a visa and/or travel documents for destination country
 Language spoken in destination country
 General employment opportunities in destination country
 Specific job or education/training offer in destination country
 Positive feedback from partner, friends and/or family on the destination country
 Positive depictions in the media of destination country
 Other (please specify)

Scale: Very important; Somewhat important; Neither important nor unimportant;
Somewhat unimportant; Very unimportant; Doesn't apply

2. Did you use any of the following when preparing for your move abroad? (select all that apply)
- Advice or help from partner/friends/family in Ireland
 - Advice or help from partner/friends/family in destination country
 - Advice or help from specialised agencies in Ireland (e.g. Crosscare/Emigrant Advice, USIT etc)
 - Advice or help from specialised agencies in destination country (e.g. London Irish Centre, Aisling Irish Center etc)
 - Please give details.

Employment

1. What was your employment situation when you left Ireland?
- Moved abroad directly after graduation/completion of education or training
 - Moved abroad as part of a new/continuing education or training programme
 - Moved abroad shortly after becoming unemployed
 - Moved abroad after six months or more of unemployment in Ireland
 - Quit a job in Ireland to move abroad
 - Took a leave of absence from a job in Ireland to move abroad
 - Was posted abroad by current employer
 - Other
2. What is your current employment situation?
- Unemployed
 - Not currently employed – travelling
 - In education/training
 - Employed in short term or temporary work (contract up to six months)
 - Employed in medium term work (contract of six months to one year)
 - Employed in long term work (contract of longer than one year)
3. If currently employed, are you working in the same field or profession in which you qualified and/or were working in back in Ireland?
(Please give relevant details)
4. Approximately what percentage of your Irish friends and/or family still living in Ireland are currently unemployed?
- 0%
 - 1% - 20%
 - 20% - 40%
 - 60% - 80%
 - 80% - 100%
 - Other/not applicable
5. Please indicate whether you:
- Had a job arranged before you left Ireland? Yes/No/Doesn't apply, other
 - Had accommodation arranged before you left Ireland? Yes/No/Doesn't apply, other
6. Please indicate your experience of the following:

Finding a job in the destination country
Finding accommodation in the destination country

Scale: Very difficult; Somewhat difficult; Neither difficult nor easy; Somewhat easy;
Very easy; Doesn't apply

7. Did you receive help from friends and/or family in finding job(s) or accommodation in the country in which you are currently living? If so, please give details.
(It would be helpful if you could indicate whether people concerned were from Ireland or elsewhere.)

Life abroad

1. Please indicate how you view the following issues:

Quality of life
Health-care system
Social welfare system
Educational system
Public transport system
Cultural amenities
Leisure opportunities/facilities
Quality of social life
Openness of society
Community spirit

Scale: Better in destination country; About the same; Better in Ireland; Don't know

2. Did you or do you experience any language barriers in the country you are currently living in?
Yes, a severe language barrier
Yes, somewhat of a language barrier
Yes, a minor language barrier
No, no language barrier
3. Did you or do you experience any cultural barriers in the country in which you are currently living?
If so, please give details.
4. Have you experienced any anti-Irish or anti-foreigner prejudice or discrimination in the country in which you are currently living?
If so, please give details.

Home and away

1. Would you say that your social circle in the country where you are now living is:
Mostly Irish people and/or other foreigners
A mix of Irish/foreigners and locals
Mostly locals
2. Are you currently in a relationship? If so, is your partner from:
Ireland

The country you are currently living in
A different country
Doesn't apply/not in a relationship

3. To what extent would you consider yourself integrated into society in the country in which you are currently living?
- Very integrated
 - Somewhat integrated
 - Neither integrated nor unintegrated
 - Somewhat unintegrated
 - Very unintegrated
 - Doesn't apply/other
- Please give any relevant details
4. How frequently are you in touch with friends and family in Ireland?
- Daily
 - Every 2 – 3 days
 - Weekly
 - 2 – 3 times a month
 - Monthly
 - Every 2 – 3 months
 - Every 6 months
 - Yearly
 - Never
5. Which method(s) do you most often use for keeping in touch?
- Phone calls and/or skype calls
 - Text messages
 - Email
 - Instant messaging (Skype, Gchat, MSN messenger etc)
 - Facebook
 - Twitter
 - Other
6. Approximately what percentage of your Irish friends are also living abroad at the moment?
- 0%
 - 1% - 20%
 - 20% - 40%
 - 60% - 80%
 - 80% - 100%
 - Other/not applicable/don't know
7. How often would you visit Ireland on average?
- Weekly
 - 2 – 3 times a month
 - Monthly
 - Every 2 – 3 months
 - Every 6 months
 - Yearly
 - Never

8. How often would friends and/or family come to visit you from Ireland on average?

- Weekly
- 2 – 3 times a month
- Monthly
- Every 2 – 3 months
- Every 6 months
- Yearly
- Never

Opinion

1. Do you have any thoughts on the current economic situation in Ireland?
2. To what extent, if any, did the current economic situation influence your decision to move abroad?
3. Do you believe that Irish people in general are more likely to move abroad than people from other countries?
 - Yes
 - No
 - Don't know/no opinion
 - Please give details
4. To what extent, if any, do you believe that Irish history or Irish culture plays a role in Irish people moving abroad?
5. Do you see yourself returning to live in Ireland:
 - Within six months
 - Within a year
 - Within the next five years
 - In five to ten years time
 - After ten years
 - After twenty years
 - After retirement
 - Never
 - Don't know/not sure/other
 - If so, under what circumstances?

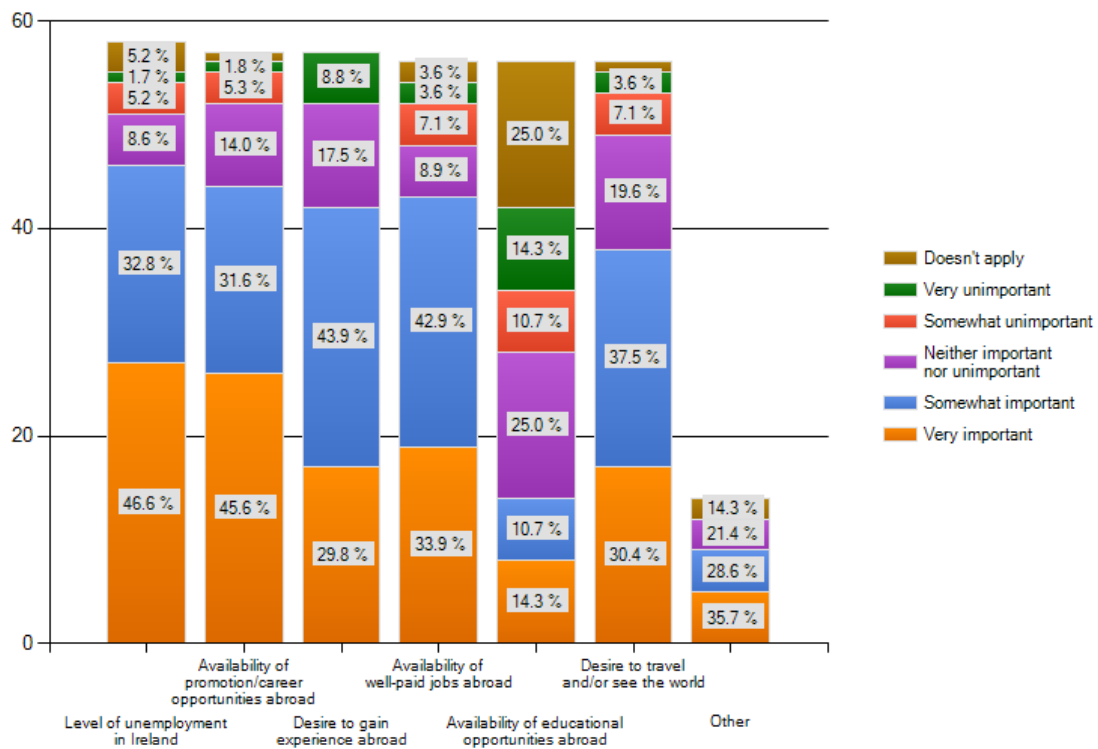
Thank you

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire. If you have any questions, comments or feedback on the questionnaire please enter them in the box below or contact irishmigrationsurvey@gmail.com.

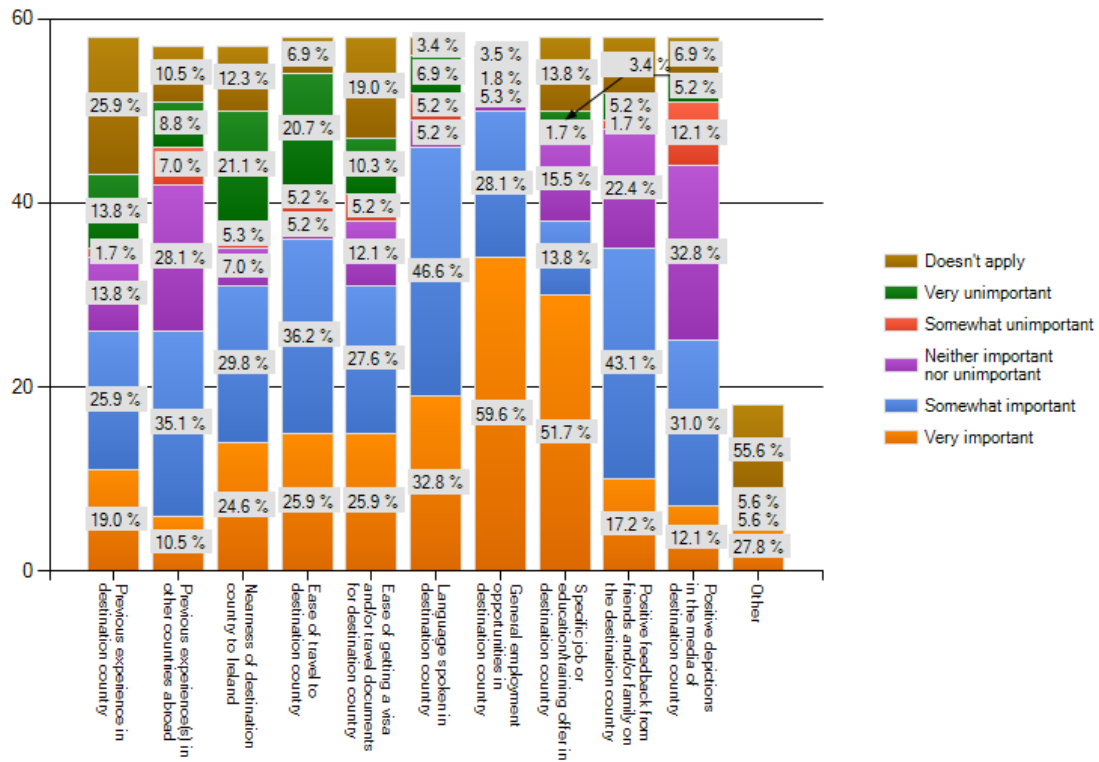
1. Any further information/comments/thoughts you would like to add?

Appendix Two

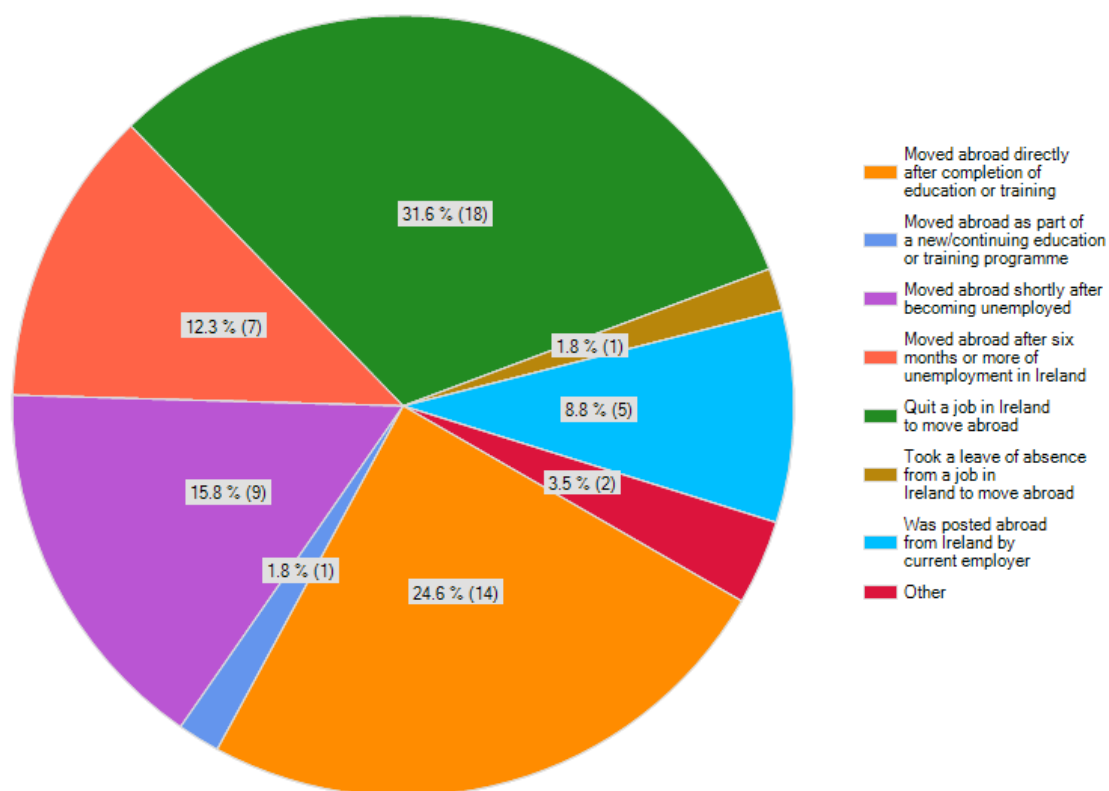
Please indicate to what extent the following factors influenced your decision to leave Ireland:



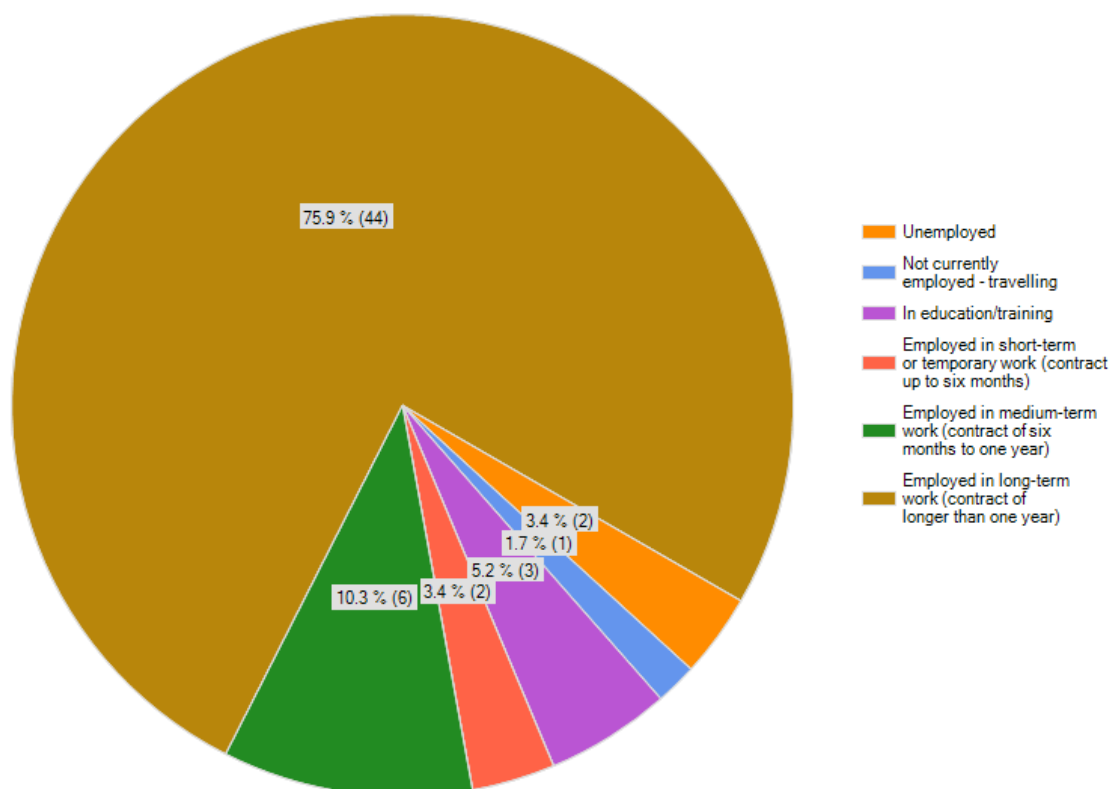
Please indicate how the following factors influenced your decision to move to the country in which you are currently living.



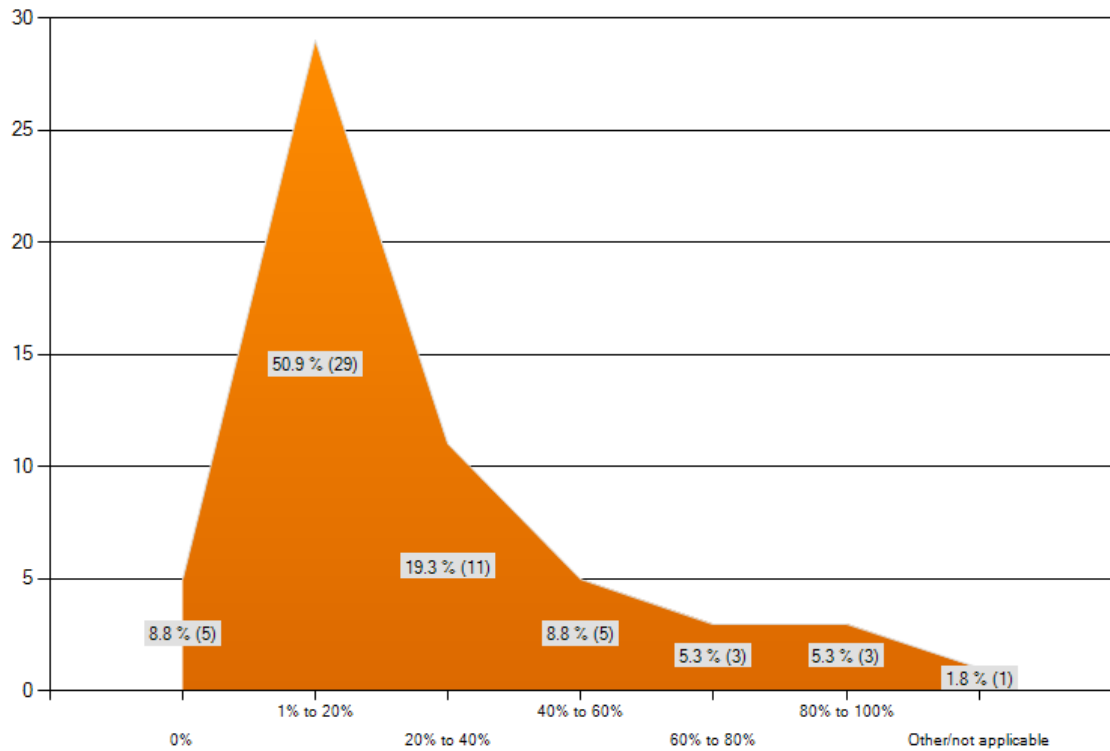
What was your employment situation when you left Ireland?



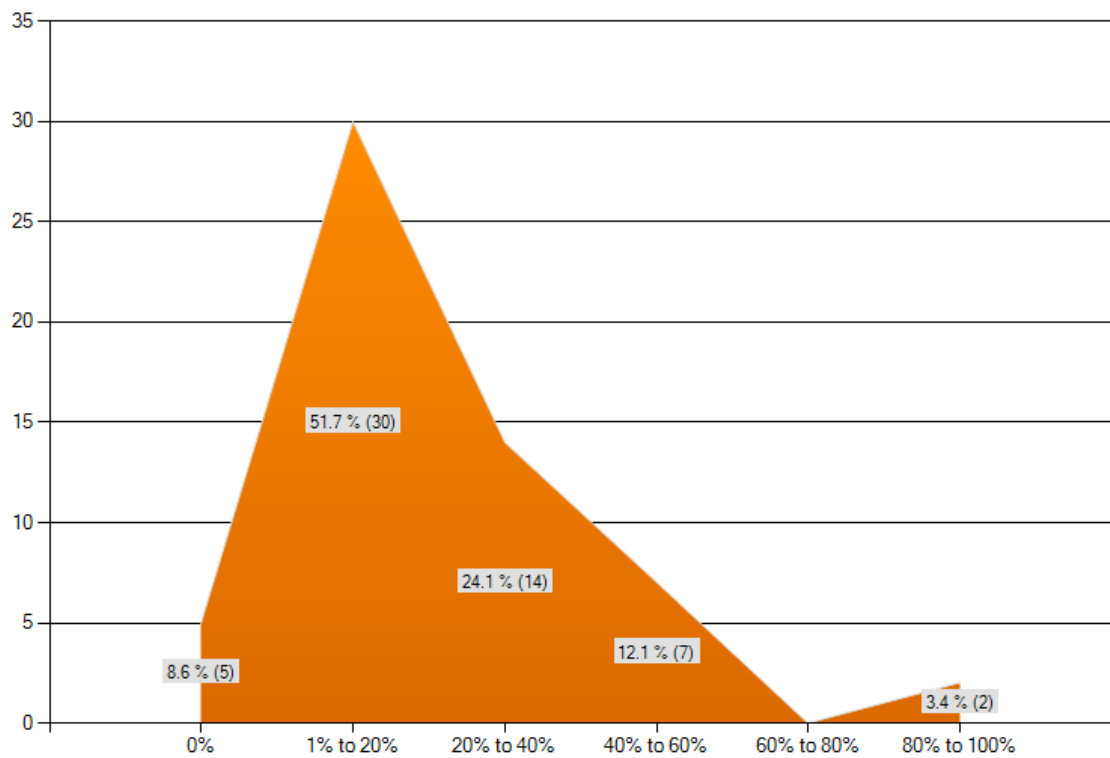
What is your current employment situation?



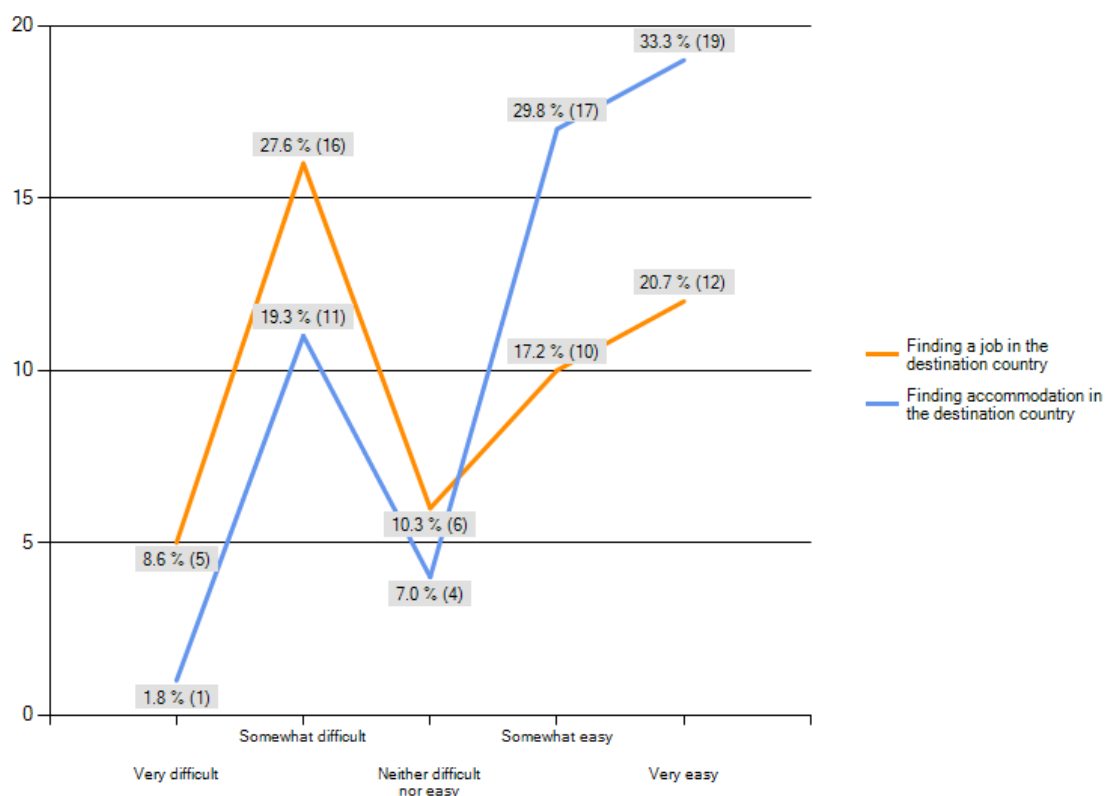
Approximately what percentage of your Irish friends and/or family still living in Ireland are currently unemployed?



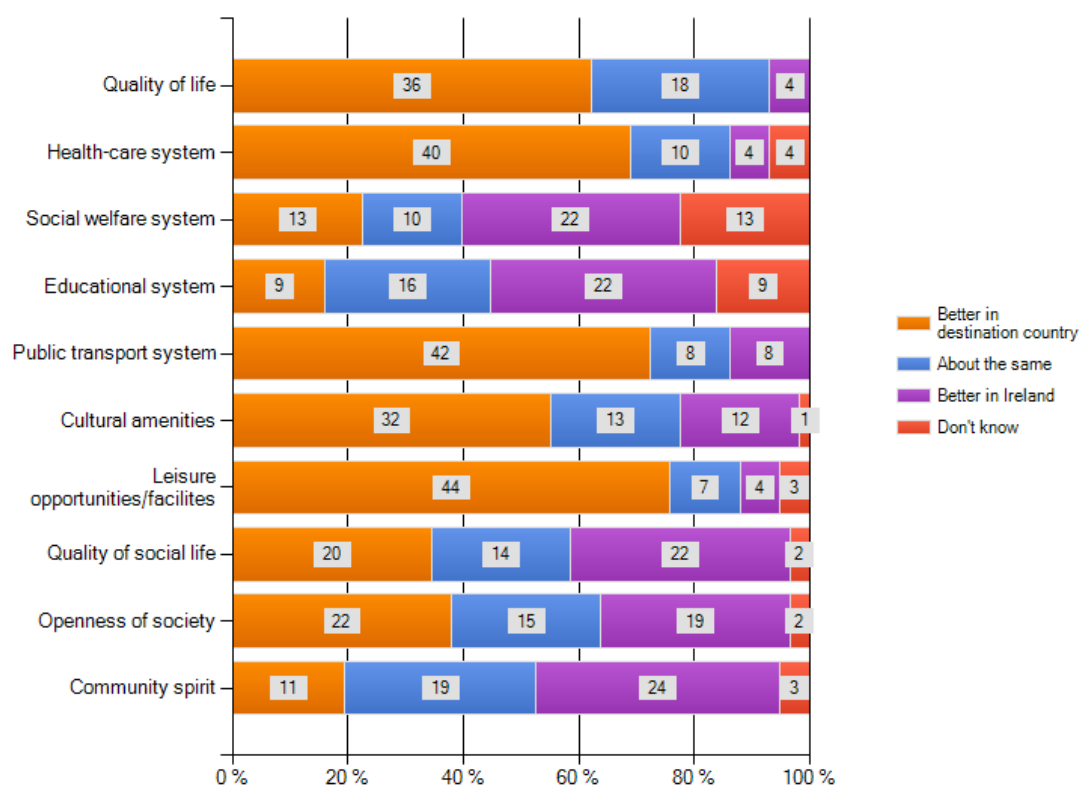
Approximately what percentage of your Irish friends are also living abroad at the moment?



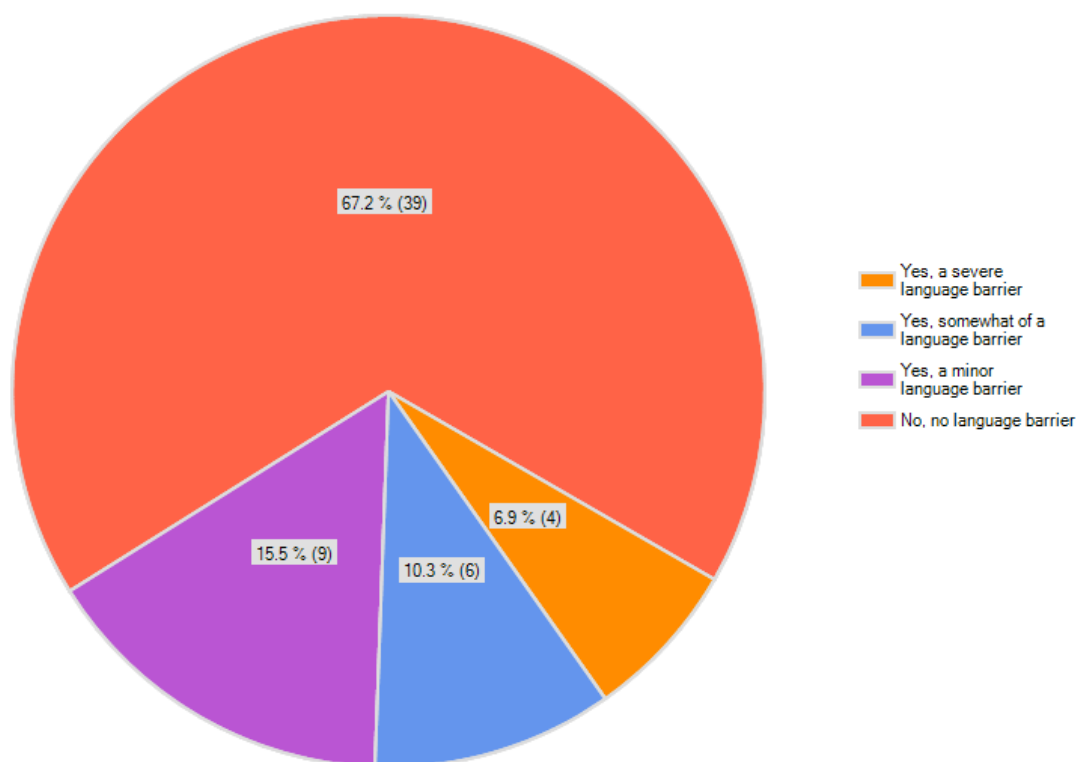
Please indicate your experience of the following:



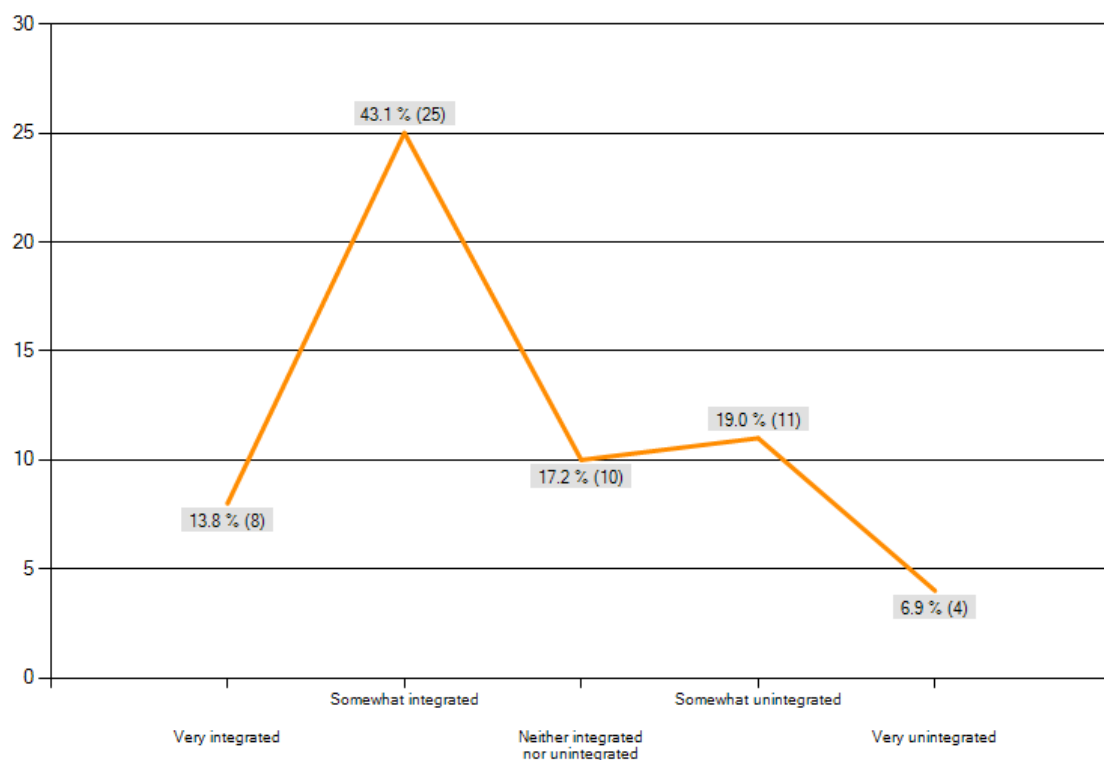
Please indicate how you view the following issues:



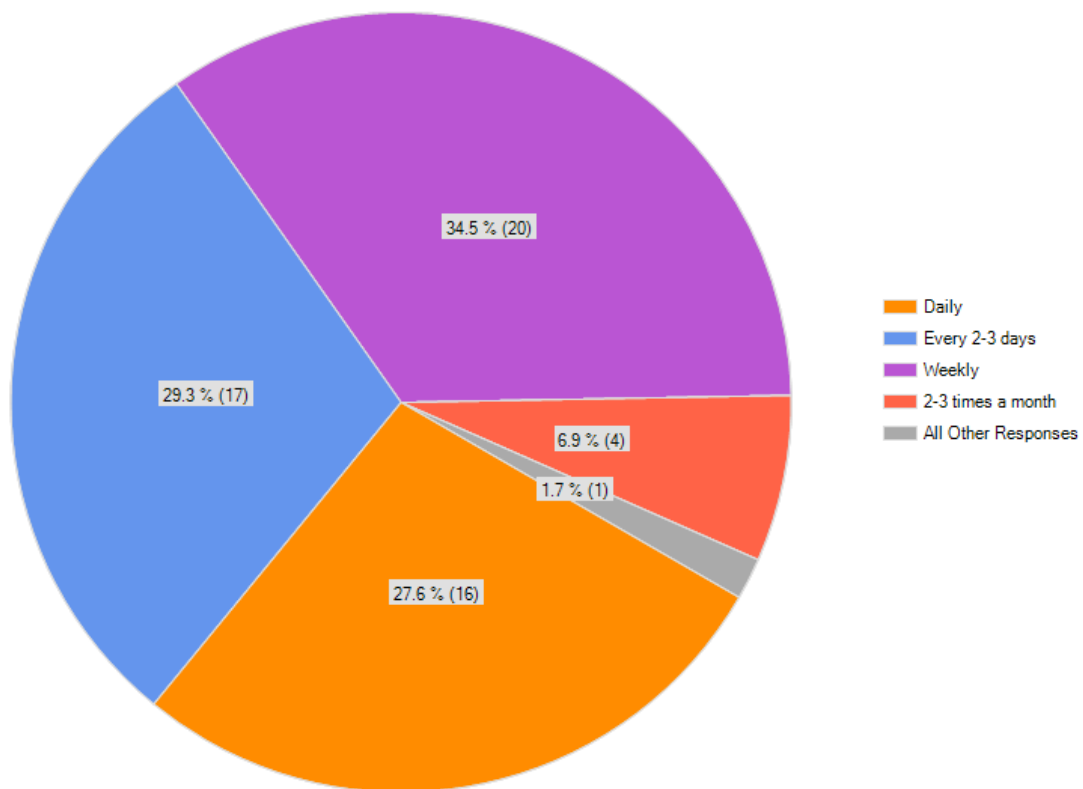
Did you or do you experience any language barriers in the country you are currently living in?



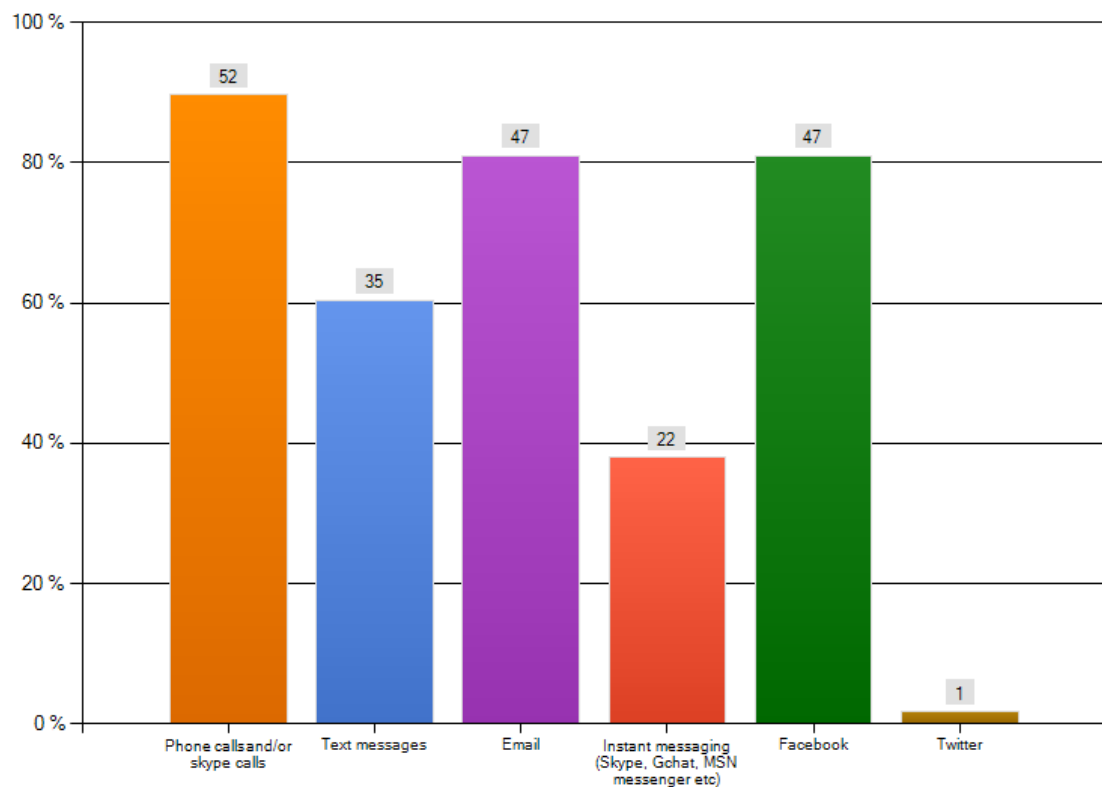
To what extent would you consider yourself integrated into society in the country in which you are currently living?



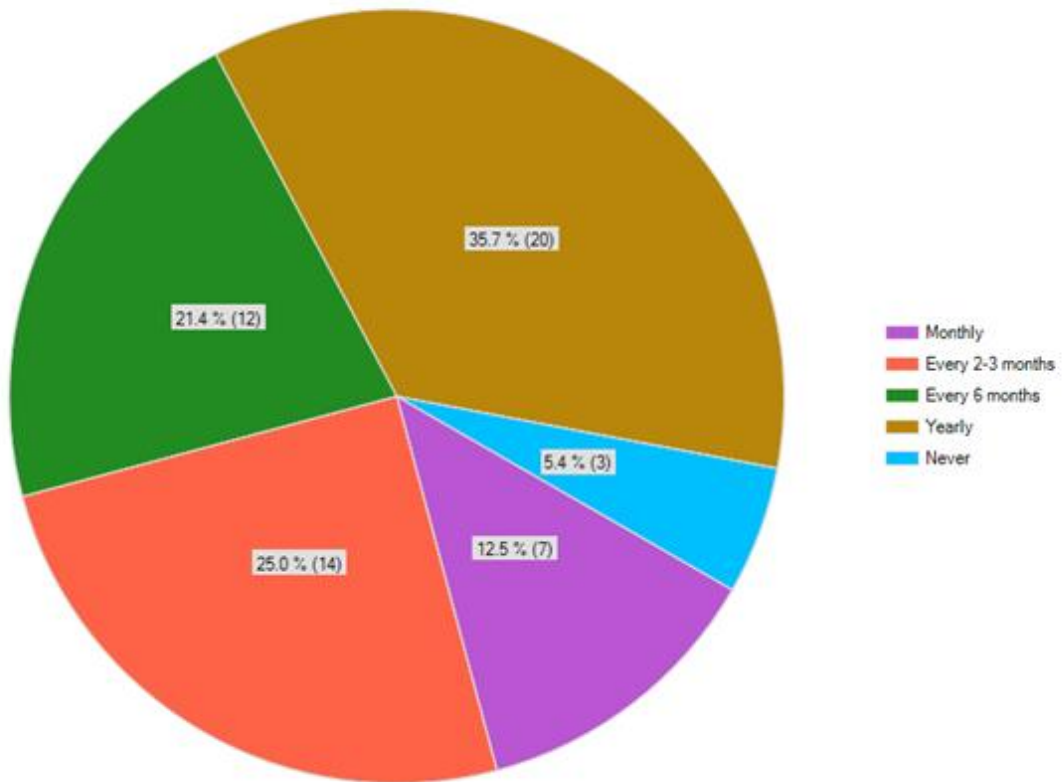
How frequently are you in touch with friends and family in Ireland?



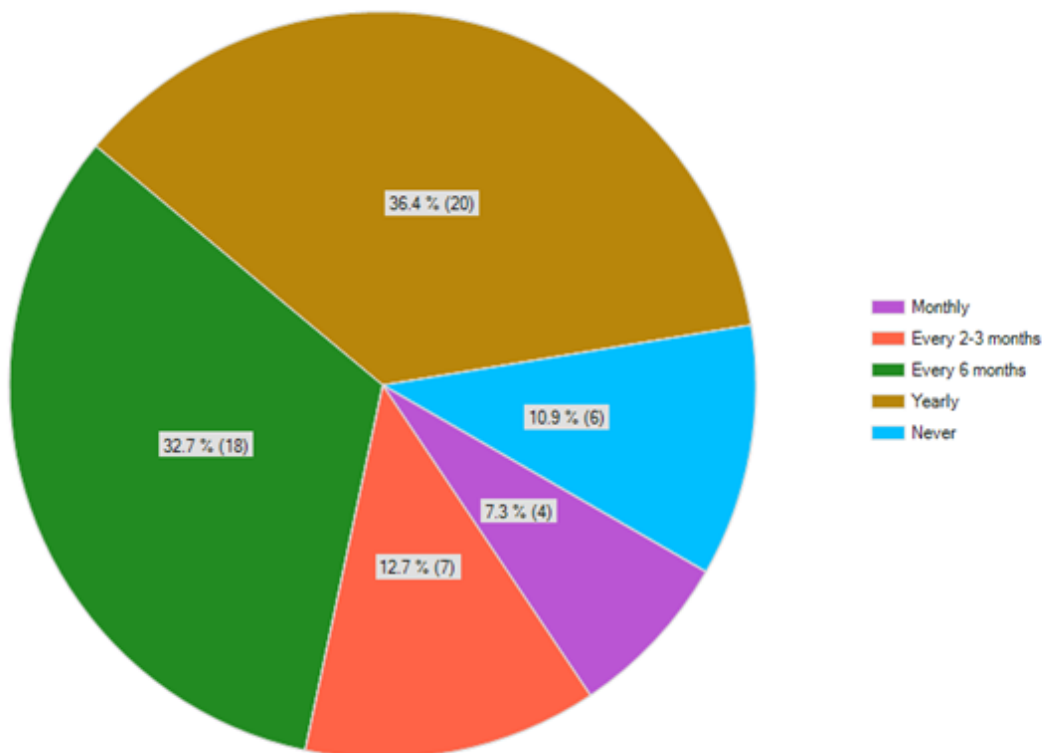
Which method(s) do you most often use for keeping in touch?



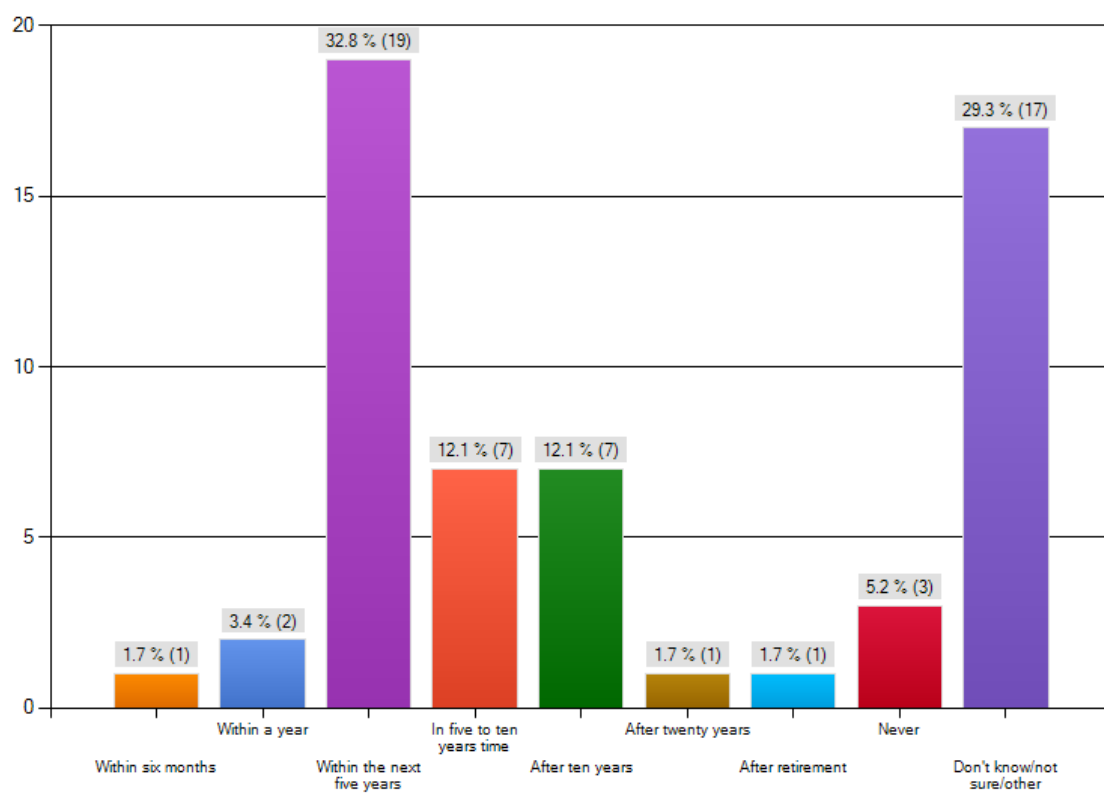
How often would you visit Ireland on average?



How often would friends and/or family come to visit you from Ireland on average?



Do you see yourself returning to live in Ireland:



Curriculum Vitae – Judith Corcoran

Personal Data:

Name: Judith Corcoran
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Education:

2008 – 2010 University of Leipzig, University of California Santa Barbara, University of Vienna
Double M.A. degree in Erasmus Mundus Masters Course: Global Studies, A European Perspective
2000 – 2004 University of Dublin, Trinity College
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November 2005 – January 2008 Administrative assistant/project coordinator position at the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, Paris.