

“Intercultural Education Strategy, 2010- 2015”

(2010)



Department of Education and Skills and the Office of the Minister for Integration



Executive Summary

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Executive Summary

Introduction:

This Intercultural Education Strategy (“IES”/ “Strategy”) aims to ensure that:

1. **all students** experience an education that “*respects the diversity of values, beliefs, languages and traditions in Irish society and is conducted in a spirit of partnership*” (Education Act, 1998).
2. **all education providers** are assisted with ensuring that inclusion and integration within an intercultural learning environment become the norm.

The origin of the IES lies in a Government commitment at the World Conference against Racism in Durban (2001) to develop and implement a National Action Plan Against Racism (“NPAR”) (See Appendix 1 for the glossary). One of NPAR’s ten outcomes for the education sector was the development of an intercultural education strategy. An extensive consultation process was undertaken by the Minister for Education and Skills and the Minister of State for Equality, Integration and Human Rights, involving:

1. An initial conference in October 2008, to which key stakeholders were invited
2. Seven sectoral¹ consultation meetings, at which over 200 delegates attended
3. The consideration of over 50 written submissions received
4. The consideration of national and international research findings, such as those from the ESRI² and OECD³

The IES is being developed in recognition of the recent significant demographic changes in Irish society, which are reflected in the education system. The Strategy builds on existing work in this area and seeks to be of relevance for all sectors of education, in line with the high level goal of the Department of Education and Skills (“DES”) to

“support and improve the quality, relevance and inclusiveness of education for every learner in our schools”.

Demographic Context:

The 2006 national census showed that of the 4,172,013 people usually resident in the State, 420,000 (10%) were classified as non- Irish nationals, representing some 200 nationalities. Compared with the 2002 census, this was an increase of 87%⁴.

Demographic and economic circumstances in Ireland have changed since 2006. Ireland is now perceived as a less attractive destination for new migrants, largely due to the economic downturn.

¹ Pre-school, primary, post- primary, higher education, further education, youth sector, and the community/ NGO sector.

² “Adapting to Diversity: Irish Schools and Newcomer Students” (2009)

³ “OECD Thematic Review on Migrant Education- Country Report for Ireland” (2009) and “OECD Reviews of Migrant Education - Closing the Gap for Immigrant Students: Policies, Practice and Performance” (2010).

⁴ The question “What is your nationality?” was first asked in the 2002 census.

The next census, due in 2011, will provide data on our evolving population profile. In the interim, there is evidence that:

- Some immigrants are leaving Ireland.
- The number of immigrants arriving in Ireland has also declined.
- There is still a significant inward flow of migrants.
- The recent profile of migrants is changing, with an increasing proportion in the 0-15 year old age category.

Whilst future trends for immigrants may also be downward, the fact remains that a significant proportion of the current and future population are and will be immigrants. It is to be expected that immigrants will remain a definite feature of Irish society and education into the future. For example, figures from the DES show that, over the past few years, the numbers of migrants are steadily increasing in the post- primary sector. The requirements of second-generation immigrants need to be kept in mind as this Strategy is implemented.

Legislation, policy, agreements:

There is much international and national evidence to support the adoption of an intercultural approach as an integral part of both formal and informal education in Ireland. Much of this evidence is linked with the principles of equality, non- discrimination, understanding and respect for diversity.

Over time, there has been a clear move towards ensuring that education systems are inclusive, respect diversity, and promote a learning environment where all students are encouraged and assisted to achieve their potential. The development of the Irish legislative and policy context in this regard has been influenced by the evolution of the international context.

Key components and goals:

Recent research in the area has concentrated on immigrant participation in education, particularly at primary and post- primary levels⁵. This specific research, taken with the entirety of the development of the IES, provides useful evidence based data for policy makers, institutional leaders and educators. It has informed decisions in relation to the development of the ten key components of intercultural education and the five high level goals of the Strategy.

These components and goals are complementary and interdependent, and are designed to:

- Encompass all participants in education (both education providers and students) – from both the immigrant and the host communities, based on the EU Principles of Integration, which state that integration is a dynamic, two- way process⁶.
- Be relevant to all levels of education.
- Ensure that everybody has a role to play in creating an inclusive, integrated and intercultural educational environment.

⁵ For example, the ESRI's report, the OECD's reports, the DES's value for money review of expenditure on English as an additional language (2010, forthcoming) and the DES Inspectorate's evaluation of the quality of the teaching and learning of English as an additional language (2010, forthcoming).

⁶ Such an approach will enhance the attractiveness of Ireland as a destination for international students.

Together, they provide a framework for students, parents, educators, communities and policy-makers when considering how to ensure that an intercultural learning environment prevails. See Figure A for this framework.

Figure A Framework for intercultural education		
	Key Component	Goal
1.	Leadership	Enable the adoption of a whole institution approach to creating an intercultural learning environment
2.	Mainstreaming of education provision	
3.	Rights and responsibilities	
4.	High aspirations and expectations	
5.	Enhance the quality of teaching	Build the capacity of education providers to develop an intercultural learning environment
6.	Knowledge of the language(s) of instruction	Support students to become proficient in the language of instruction
7.	Partnership and engagement	Encourage and promote active partnership, engagement and effective communication between education providers, students, parents and communities
8.	Effective communication	
9.	Data collection and research	Promote and evaluate data gathering and monitoring so that policy and decision making is evidence based
10.	Actions, monitoring and evaluation	

Monitoring:

Monitoring the implementation of the IES is based on:

1. the Department of Education and Skills' ("DES") Migrant Steering Committee. The DES will lead a group comprised of education partners, from relevant departmental sections and associated state agencies.
2. the Office of the Minister for Integration's ("OMI") inter- departmental committee on integration.
3. the OMI's Ministerial Council
4. An annual stakeholder forum.

Resource implications:

In the context of the current economic climate, the Strategy will have to be implemented within available resources, which are significant. These include, for example:

- some €100 million for English as an additional language in the primary and post-primary sectors, over and above regular educational resources in these sectors.
- some €10 million for English classes for adult migrants.
- AIM- "Accessing Intercultural Materials"- is an information portal on the topic of immigrants, for use by students and parents of all nationalities, educators and researchers at all levels, and policy-makers. It is a regularly updated comprehensive

data portal, available on the websites of both the DES and the Office of the Minister of State for Equality, Integration and Human Rights⁷.

Summary:

The IES is about thinking, planning and doing things differently, conscious of diversity and the need to create intercultural learning environments. It is not about radical change and is not resource intensive. It requires respect for difference, and a concerted and evolving change of attitude.

⁷ www.education.ie and www.integration.ie

Chapter One- Introduction and Context

1.1 Introduction

Ireland has undergone significant social, cultural, demographic and economic change since the mid- 1990s. Until that stage, the Irish population was heterogeneous, to a limited extent. The Traveller community was, and still is, the most distinct indigenous minority group.

Migration patterns have changed over time in Ireland (see Figure 2.1 for further details). The 2006 census showed that 10% of residents on the census date were non- Irish nationals, representing some 200 nationalities (Central Statistics Office (“CSO”), 2008). (See the glossary in Appendix 1 and bibliography in Appendix 2). Migration patterns are discussed in further detail in Chapter 2. CSO figures for the fourth quarter of 2009 show that there “*were an estimated 422,900 non-Irish nationals aged 15 years and over in the State*” in that period; “*a decrease of 41,500 or 8.9% over the year*”. This is in contrast to “*a decrease of 20,900 or 4.3% in the fourth quarter of 2008. The number of non-Irish nationals aged 15 and over in the State has been declining since Q4 2007 when the number peaked at 485,300*”. (CSO, 2010: 3). The next census, due in 2011, will provide more information on our evolving demographic composition.

Our new population profile presents us with both new opportunities and challenges. The White Paper on Adult Education, “*Learning for Life*”, notes that intercultural education provides the opportunity to view “*difference as something to be celebrated and which is enriching to the totality of the society*” (Department of Education and Skills (“Department”, “DES”), 2000: 34). Key benefits offered by migration are the opportunities now afforded to develop into both a multi-lingual and intercultural society. One of the challenges is how to deal with the rapid pace of change in a fully inclusive manner to ensure that no groups are marginalised. A simultaneous challenge and opportunity is to acknowledge, appreciate and celebrate the cultural heritage unique to each different group whilst at the same time realising that this is contributing to a shared collective awareness of Irish identity, which is constantly evolving.

Migrants in Ireland, representing some 200 nationalities, are a very heterogeneous group. They have different cultures, languages and levels of education. A minority may not have received a basic education prior to arriving in Ireland, whilst the majority are highly educated, many to post- graduate level (CSO, 2008). Some may not be working in jobs commensurate with their qualifications and experience (Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (“OECD”), 2008). They have arrived in the country at different times, for different lengths of stay, and their status could be one of many different types, such as asylum seeker, refugee, EU citizen, economic migrant or international student. Whilst some are struggling to adapt to life here, others are very well integrated and settled into Irish society.

1.2 Definition- Intercultural Education

Intercultural education, according to the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (“NCCA”) (2006: i), has the following defining characteristics:

- *It is education which respects, celebrates and recognises the normality of diversity in all areas of human life. It sensitises the learner to the idea that humans have naturally*

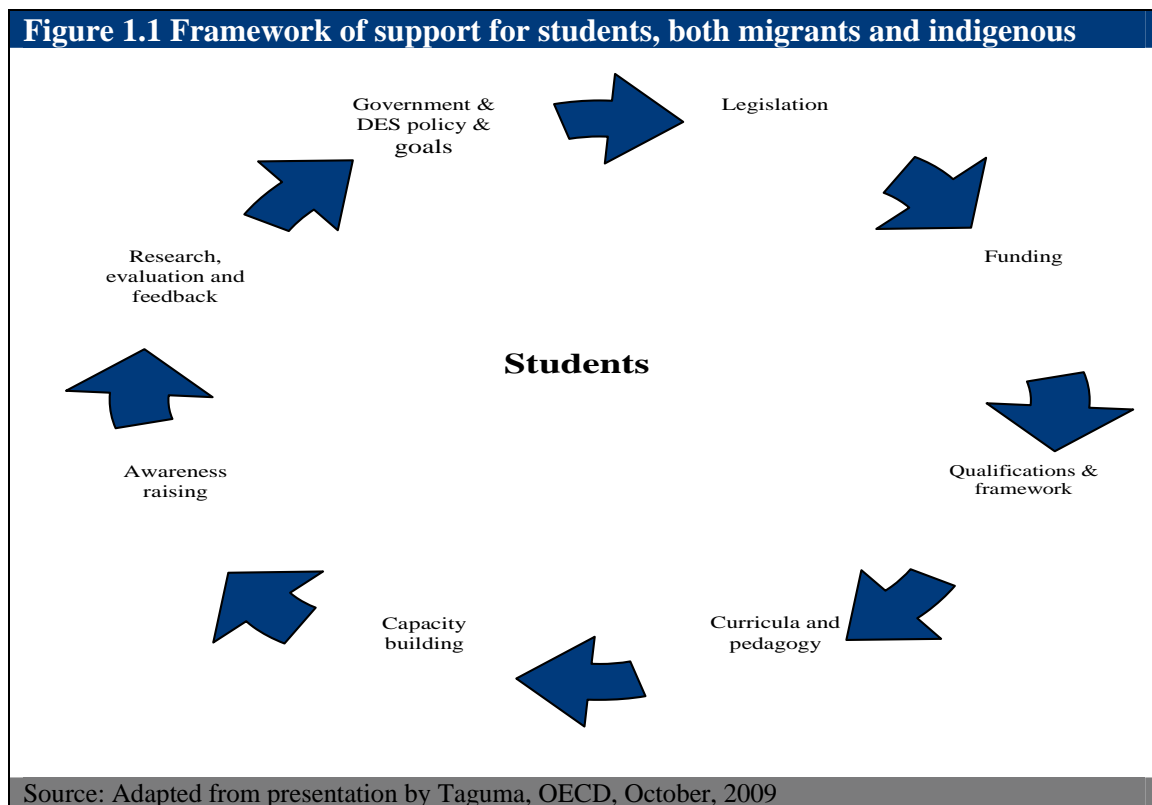
developed a range of different ways of life, customs and worldviews, and that this breadth of human life enriches all of us.

- *It is education, which promotes equality and human rights, challenges unfair discrimination, and promotes the values upon which equality is built.*

This Intercultural Education Strategy aims to ensure that:

1. **all students** experience an education that “*respects the diversity of values, beliefs, languages and traditions in Irish society and is conducted in a spirit of partnership*” (Education Act, 1998).
2. **all education providers** are assisted with ensuring that inclusion and integration within an intercultural learning environment become the norm.

Students are at the centre of this Strategy, regardless of where on the education spectrum they are engaged. The framework of support for students (irrespective of nationality) can be seen in Figure 1.1 below.



1.3 Origins of the Strategy

Following on from a commitment given at the World Conference against Racism in Durban in 2001, the Strategic Monitoring Group for the National Action Plan Against Racism (“NPAR”) was established. In January 2005, the Taoiseach and Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform launched their report “*Planning for Diversity- the National Action Plan Against Racism 2005- 2008*”, which, *inter alia*, contained ten outcomes for the education sector, one of which

was “to develop a national intercultural education strategy with reference to equality/ diversity policy” (See Appendix 3 for a full list of these educational outcomes).

1.4 Background and consultation process

The EU Council (2009: 4) notes that

Education has an important contribution to make to the successful integration of migrants into European societies. Starting with early childhood education and basic schooling, but continuing throughout all levels of lifelong learning, targeted measures and greater flexibility are needed to cater for learners with a migrant background, whatever their age, and to provide them with the support and opportunities they need to become active and successful citizens, and empower them to develop their full potential.

Successful integration and inclusion, as well as acknowledgement of diversity, is not the sole remit of the education sector alone, but of **all** sectors of society.

The Minister for Education and Skills and the Minister of State for Equality, Integration and Human Rights have been tasked with the development of an intercultural education strategy. In conjunction with the Office of the Minister of State for Equality, Integration and Human Rights (“OMI”), the National Consultative Committee on Racism and Interculturalism (“NCCRI”), and with NPAR funding, the Minister for Education and Skills and the Minister of State for Equality, Integration and Human Rights jointly hosted a conference on “The Development of an Intercultural Education Strategy” in October 2008. This was one of the major education events organised in Ireland for the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue. Approximately 150 stakeholders from across the education spectrum attended.

Proposed principles and actions for the Strategy were outlined. The principles were:

- Mainstreaming of education provision.
- Knowledge of English or Irish by all students (whichever is the language of instruction).
- Rights and responsibilities for all students.
- High aspirations and high expectations for all students.
- Partnership and engagement through dialogue with the wider education community.

It was recommended that these principles could be achieved through the following actions:

- **Proactive leadership;** leaders must believe that “*integration is a dynamic two way process of mutual accommodation by all immigrants and residents of Member States*”, including Ireland. This is one of the eleven EU Common Basic Principles for Integration (EU Council, 2004). (See Appendix 4 for a full list of the EU Principles).
- **Awareness raising** and recognition of the importance of diversity through training of teachers/ lecturers and the provision of information on the Irish education system to immigrants.
- **Research** to establish what progress is being made towards ensuring that all students, including immigrants, are achieving to their full potential.

Following the October 2008 conference, a series of seven consultation meetings were held with representatives from the different sectors of education- including students, parents and

researchers. A total of approximately 200 delegates took part in these meetings, and gave their views on the proposed principles and actions. Over 50 written submissions were also received. A summary report on the consultation process, as well as details of delegates and those who made written submissions are available in Appendices 5 and 6.

Further details on the findings of the consultation process and the views of the delegates are available in Chapter 4, which also summarises details of the main research projects which have influenced the development of the Strategy.

A key finding of the consultation process was that all the education sectors had broadly the same suggestions and concerns. In recognition of these similarities, the Strategy is being developed as a generic one which is relevant for all involved in education, irrespective of level or setting.

The development of the Strategy has been overseen by the Department's Newcomer Steering Committee, which is comprised of representatives from different sections of the DES (including those co-located with the Office of the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs ("OMCYA") and the OMI). The role of the Committee is to ensure the participation of all relevant sections across the Department so that a co-ordinated approach to the inclusion and integration of migrant students and host students is adopted. Representatives from the Higher Education Authority's ("HEA") National Access Office and the Advisory Council on English Language Schools ("ACELS")⁸ also attended meetings and advised the Committee.

1.5 Outline of the Strategy

- Chapter 2 sets out the demographic context, particularly over the last twenty years for the education sector in Ireland.
- Chapter 3 details the legislative and policy framework.
- Chapter 4 presents current policies and key research and consultation findings.
- Chapter 5 presents the key components of intercultural education.
- Chapter 6 provides the high level goals and actions for the Strategy.

Whilst each chapter stands alone, they collectively complement each other and clearly trace the development of the key components and goals of intercultural education, as discussed in Chapters 5 and 6.

1.6 Note on terminology used

As noted earlier, Appendix 1 contains the glossary, explaining the meaning of key terms as they are used throughout this document.

It is recognised that not all readers will agree with the terminology used. The debate about terminology has been ongoing for some time now. It is important that this continues, as the area is an ever evolving one.

⁸ ACELS merged with the National Qualifications Authority of Ireland ("NQAI") in January 2010.

1.7 Summary

There have been many demographic changes in Ireland in recent years. The lifetime of this Strategy is for five years; it will need to be reviewed at that point in light of contemporary circumstances. The development of an intercultural education strategy acknowledges these demographic changes, which are reflected in the education system. The Strategy builds on existing work in this area and seeks to be of relevance for all sectors of education, to ensure that all students, irrespective of their identity, nationality or background, are achieving their full potential in an inclusive, integrated and intercultural education environment.

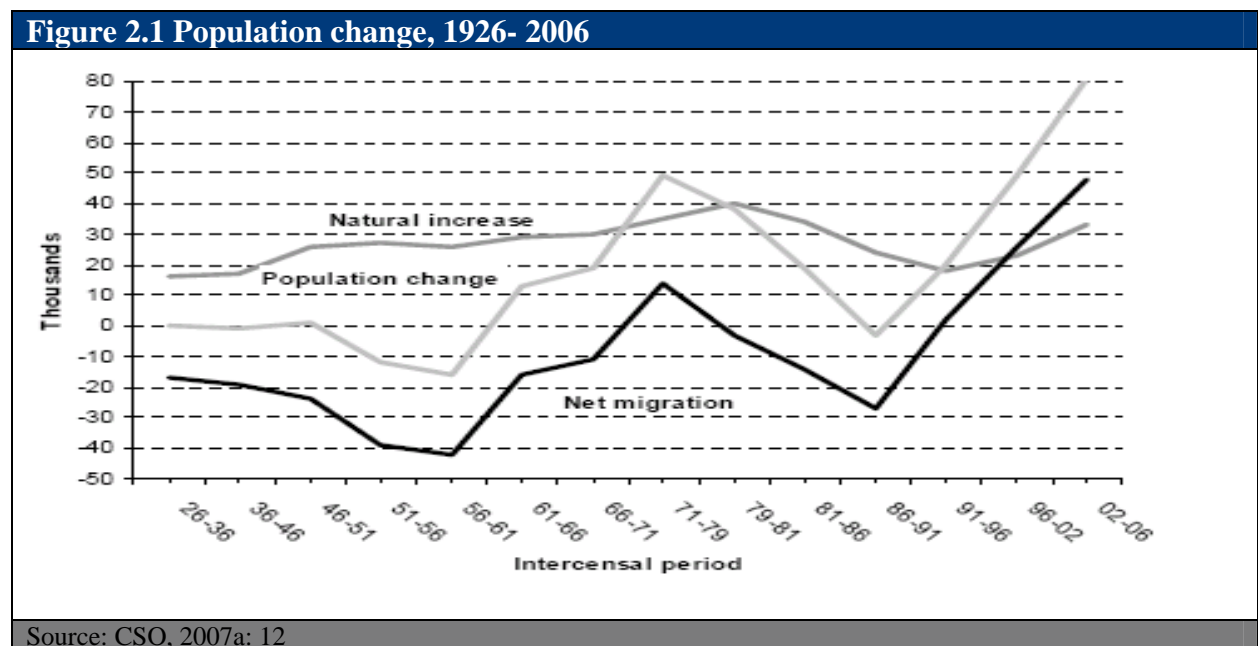
Chapter Two- Setting the demographic context

2.1 Introduction

This Chapter sets out the demographic changes which have taken place in Ireland over the last number of years. It traces these developments across several sectors of education and notes current relevant figures.

2.2 General Context

The profile of the Irish population has changed significantly over the past 20 years, as shown in Figure 2.1:



The Quarterly National Household Survey (QNHS) showed that in the fourth quarter of 2009, there “were an estimated 422,900 non-Irish nationals aged 15 years and over in the State ... a decrease of 41,500 or 8.9% over the year. This compares with a decrease of 20,900 or 4.3% in the fourth quarter of 2008” (CSO, 2010: 3).

2.3 Census 2002

The question “What is your nationality?” was first asked in the 2002 census. Resulting data showed that, of the usually resident population of 3,858,495, a total of 224,000 people, or approximately 6%, declared a nationality other than Irish⁹,¹⁰.

⁹ This was defined as Irish, Irish- English, Irish- American, Irish- European, and Irish- Other.

¹⁰ Further information about the different nationalities present in Ireland at the time can be found in the “Census 2002 Volume 4 - Usual Residence, Migration, Birthplaces and Nationalities” (2003) report, which is available at: <http://www.cso.ie/census/Vol4.htm>.

2.4 Census 2006

The most recent census was conducted in 2006. In 2004, the EU was enlarged to a total of 25 member states¹¹, thus easing travel and work restrictions on citizens from the new member states. The 2006 census shows that of the 4,172,013 people usually resident in the State, 420,000 were classified as non- Irish nationals (10% of the total population), representing some 200 nationalities. Compared with the 2002 figure for non- Irish nationals, there was an increase of 196, 000 non-Irish nationals in the four year intercensal period- an increase of 87%¹². The top ten nationalities of migrants in Ireland in 2006 are shown in Table 2.1 below.

Table 2.1 Top ten nationalities of migrants in Ireland in 2006

Nationality	Number
UK	112,548
Polish	63,276
Lithuanian	24,628
Nigerian	16,300
Latvian	13,319
US	12,475
Chinese	11,161
German	10,289
Filipino	9,548
French	9,046
Source: CSO, 2008	

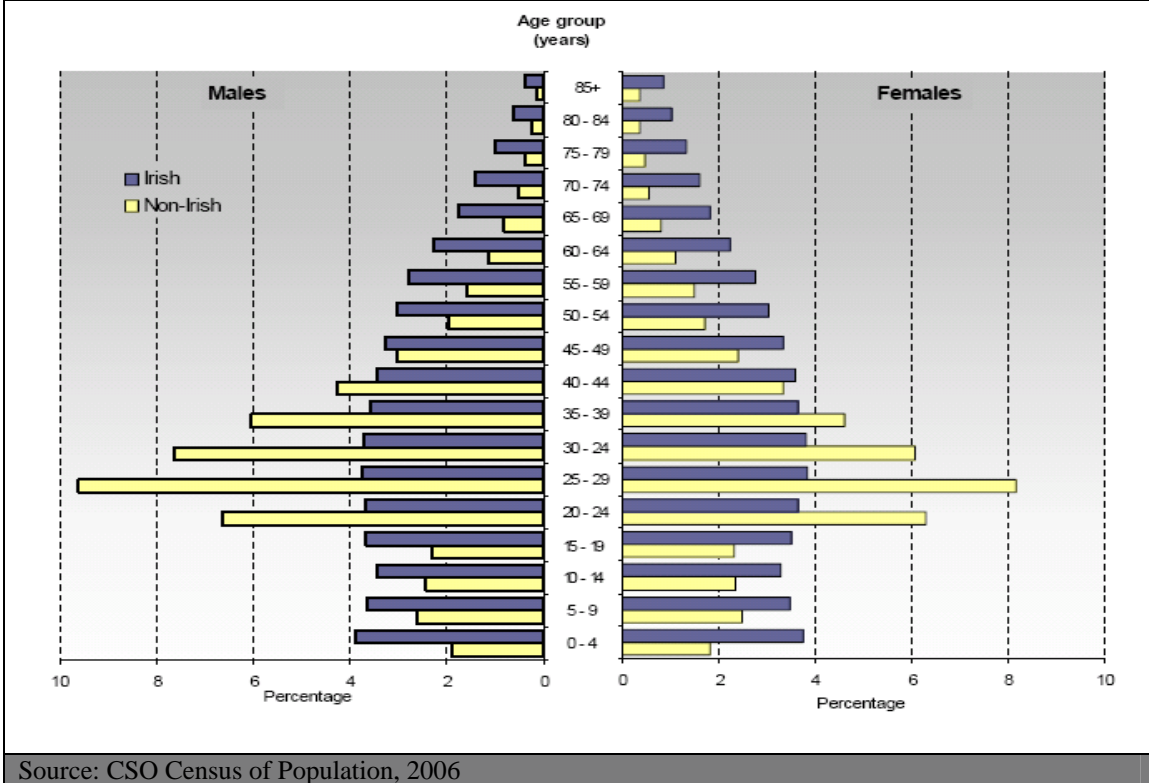
Figure 2.2 shows the age profile of the Irish and non- Irish nationals in 2006 and is taken from the CSO report “*Census 2006: Non- Irish Nationals living in Ireland*” (2008)¹³.

¹¹ Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia joined in 2004, whilst Bulgaria and Romania joined in 2007 so that the total number of member states is now 27.

¹² Further information about the different nationalities present in Ireland in 2006 can be found in the “*Census 2006 Volume 4 - Usual Residence, Migration, Birthplaces and Nationalities*” (2007) report, available at www.cso.ie/census/Census2006_Volume4.htm.

¹³ This is available at www.cso.ie/releasespublications/documents/population/non-irish/nonirishnationalscomplete.pdf?bcsi_scan_FC2E322A4AA2F5B3=0&bcsi_scan_file_name=nonirishnationalscomplete.pdf

Figure 2.2 Age profile of the Irish and non- Irish nationals, 2006



Disaggregated data from the 2002 and 2006 census¹⁴, in Table 2.2, compare the numbers of non-Irish nationals and the overall national population in certain age groupings, and the education sector most relevant to each age cohort in 2002 and 2006. This highlights the large increase in migrants to Ireland over a short period of time.

¹⁴ <http://beyond2020.cso.ie/Census/TableViewer/tableView.aspx?ReportId=76486> consulted 6 April, 2009, excludes “No nationality” and “Not stated”.

Table 2.2 Numbers of non- Irish nationals* and total overall population* in certain age groupings and the education sector most relevant to the age cohort in 2002 and 2006

Age	Numbers of non-Irish nationals		Overall numbers in total national population in this age cohort		Most relevant education sector
	2002	2006	2002	2006	
0- 4 years	8,457	13,549	276,149	300,683	Early Childhood Care and Education sector (“ECCE”); some in primary.
5- 9 years	13,045	20,253	263,258	287,313	Majority in primary; minority in ECCE.
10- 14 years	12,858	19,095	284,472	272,500	Approx. half in primary and half in post primary.
15- 19 years	10,777	18,821	310,540	287,121	Majority in post primary; some may be in further or higher education, or employment.
20- 24 years	23,782	57,045	318,820	331,344	Some may be in further or higher education; many may be in employment.
25+	156,189	292,288	2,385,277	2,664,913	Some may be in further or higher education; many may be in employment.
Source: CSO Census of Population, 2002 and 2006 *(excluding those not stating a nationality)					

2.5 Post Census 2006

Demographic and economic circumstances in Ireland have changed since the last census, most particularly since mid 2008. Ireland is now perceived as a less attractive destination for new migrants, largely due to the economic downturn. The next census, due in 2011, will provide data on our evolving population profile. In the interim, there is evidence that some immigrants are leaving Ireland, whilst the number of immigrants arriving in Ireland has reduced. Figures from the Department of Social and Family Affairs show that the figures for Personal Public Service (PPS) numbers allocated in 2008 and 2009 to non- Irish nationals decreased by 49% (down from 156,151 in 2008 to 79,986 in 2009).

The CSO released its “*Population and Migration Estimates*” in September 2009. These showed recent immigration and emigration rates (further details can be found in Appendix 7). They note that the “*number of emigrants from the State in the year to April 2009 is estimated to have increased by over 40% from 45,300 to 65,100, while the number of immigrants continued to decline over the same period, from 83,800 to 57,300. These combined changes have resulted in a return to net outward migration for Ireland (-7,800) for the first time since 1995*” (CSO, 2009a). It is worth noting that many of these emigrants are Irish nationals; it is not simply a case of nationals from other countries returning to their home states. It must also be noted from these figures that there is still a significant inward flow.

Whilst future immigration trends may also be downward, a significant proportion of the current and future population are immigrants. The requirements of second-generation immigrants will need to be kept in mind as this Strategy is implemented. CSO data show that in the year to April 2009, “*the number of births reached a new high of 74,500 (not seen since 1896)*” (2009). Of this figure, 20% of births were to mothers whose nationality was not Irish. This should be considered in conjunction with PPS numbers for immigrants in the age cohort 0- 14 years. CSO figures show that in 2005, 7.5% of PPS numbers issued to immigrants were to that age cohort. Over 2006, 2007 and 2008, the figure increased to 17.5%, showing that the proportion of younger immigrants within migrant communities is increasing. It is to be expected that immigrants will remain a definite feature of the Irish education system (2009b).

In 2009, there were 2,689 asylum applications in the State. This is a 30.5% decrease on a total of 3,866 applications received in 2008, and down from a peak of 11,634 asylum applications in 2002 (Reception and Integration Agency, 2010).

The population and migration estimates show that while some migrants are leaving, others are still arriving, with others choosing to stay here. For example, numbers of post- primary students declaring a non- Irish nationality continued to increase in 2009/2010, when compared to the previous two years (see *Section 2.6.4 Post- primary school nationalities* for further details). Many of these students would be transferring from primary school.

2.6 Education sector data

2.6.1 Pre-school sector

Since 2000, significant progress has been made towards the establishment of high quality ECCE provision in Ireland. Unlike other European countries, Ireland does not have a long tradition of young children attending pre-school services. Prior to the 1990s, Irish labour market participation rates of women, especially mothers of young children, were historically lower than in many other European countries. ECCE services were slow to develop and did so in an ad hoc manner, usually driven by local needs.

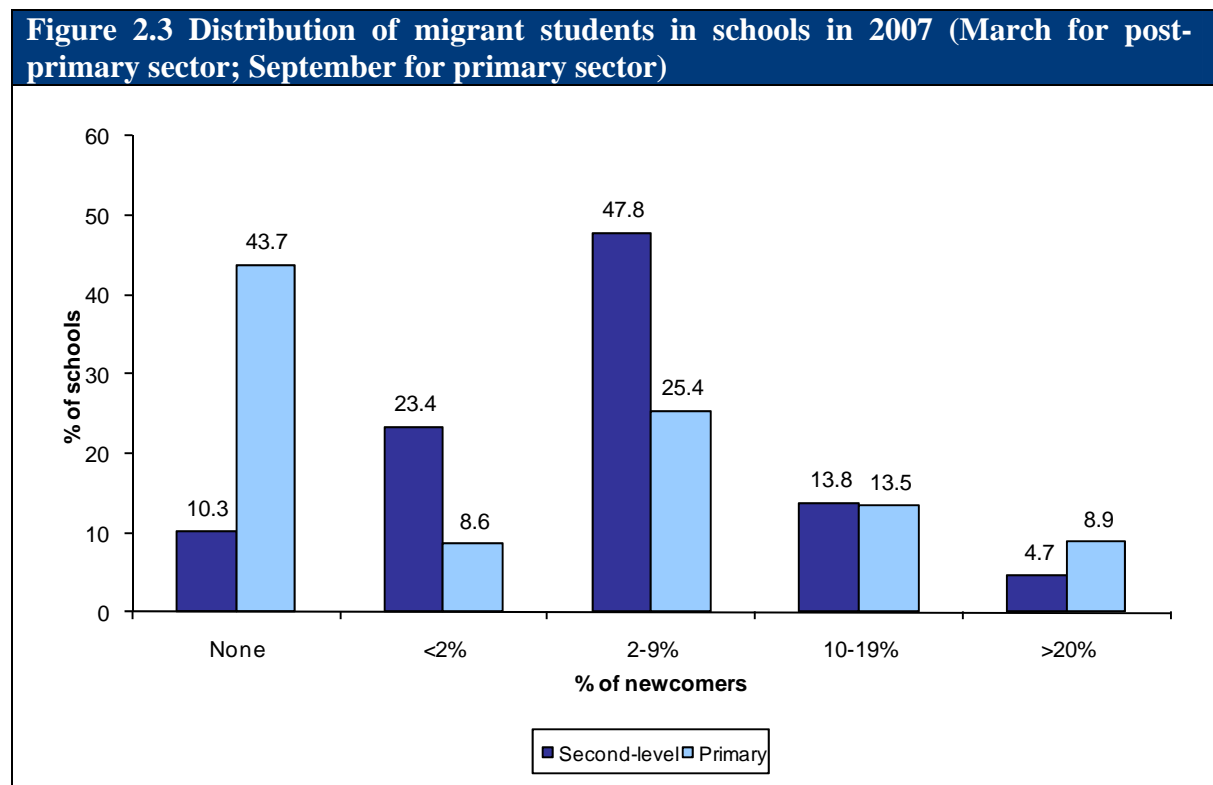
Two Departments are involved in provision in this sector:

- The DES has responsibility for early childhood education provision. This mainly incorporates infant classes in primary schools catering for children aged 4-6 years. The most recent statistics (2007/2008) show that nearly half of 4 year olds and virtually all 5 year olds are enrolled in infant classes in primary schools. The DES also provides for targeted initiatives for ‘at risk of educational disadvantage’ children aged 3-4 (for example, Early Start and Traveller preschools).
- Childcare provision for children aged from birth onwards is the responsibility of the OMCYA (part of the Department of Health and Children) which regulates and inspects a diverse range of private, community and voluntary service provision. Given the diversity of provision, it is difficult to obtain accurate figures for migrants who are in actual formal services at this level. However, it was estimated by practitioners and researchers who attended the consultations for the Strategy that approximately 10% of children availing of pre-school services are migrants. They also noted that many employees in this sector are migrants, so that there is diversity amongst the staff.

In January 2010, the Government introduced a new free pre- school year for children between three and four years of age. Regardless of income or ability to pay, all children will be able to avail of this service. The Department of Health and Children writes to all parents in advance of their child becoming eligible, to highlight the provision. This free pre- school year promotes equality of opportunity at the most important developmental stage. It is a major policy development for the Government and signals its recognition of the importance of pre- school education, for learning, socialisation and school preparation purposes. It is important that migrant children and their parents are encouraged to avail of pre-school opportunities on a par with their native peers. While the scheme is funded through the OMCYA, the DES has funded two practice frameworks (Sólta and Aistear¹⁵) to support the development of quality provision in participating services.

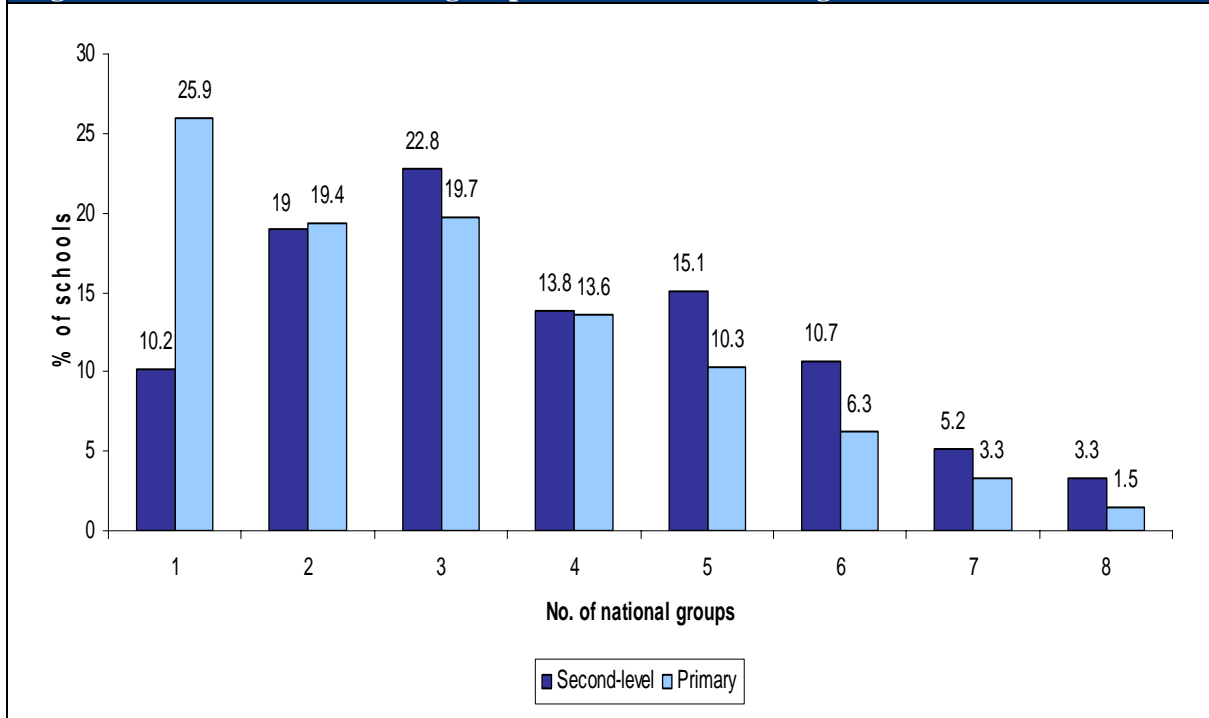
2.6.2 Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI) data- primary and post- primary sectors

The ESRI’s 2009 report, “*Adapting to Diversity: Irish Schools and Newcomer Students*”¹⁶ notes the distribution of migrant students in primary and second level schools across the country, as shown in Figure 2.3. Figure 2.4 shows the distribution of national groups in primary and second level schools in 2007. (Source for both is the ESRI’s report).



¹⁵ See Section 3. 3. 2 Irish context in Chapter 3, and Section 4.2.1 Current Situation in Chapter 4 for further details.

¹⁶ See Section 3. 3. 2 Irish context in Chapter 3 for further details. The report is available at www.esri.ie.

Figure 2.4 Number of national groups¹⁷ in schools with migrants

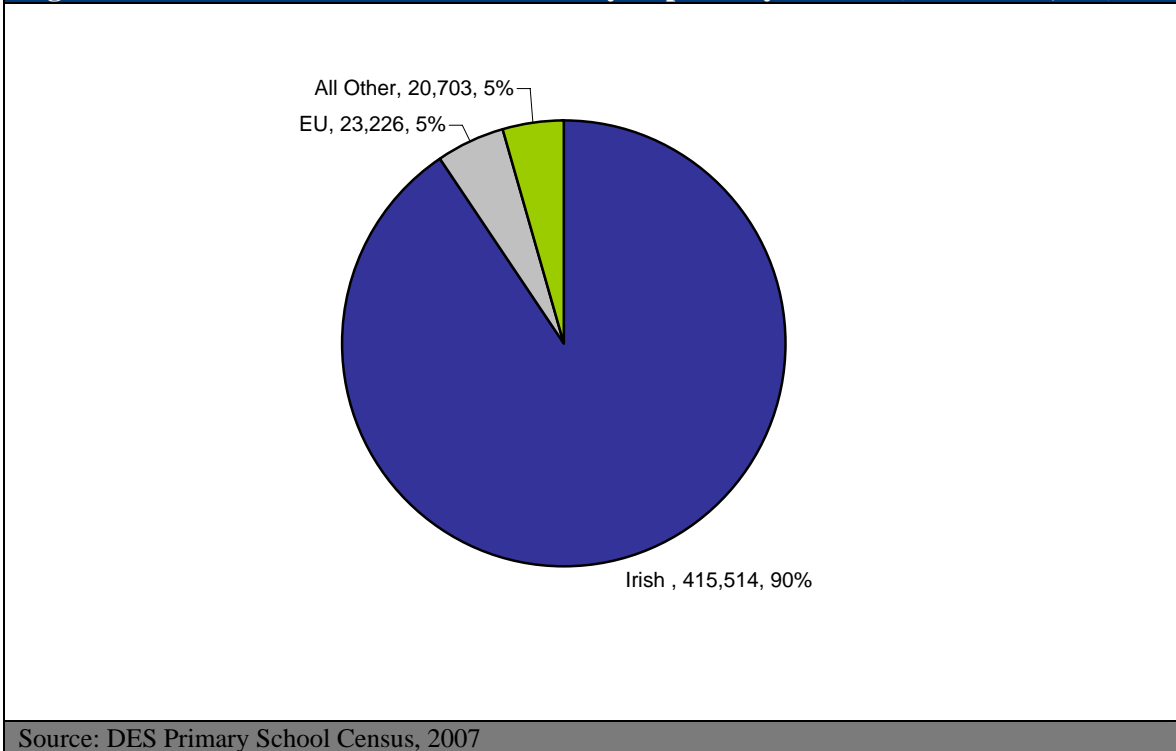
The ESRI found that urban schools and schools with designated educational disadvantaged status, at both first and second levels, are more likely to have migrant students than rural schools and schools with non-designated educational disadvantaged status.

2.6.3 Primary schools

In 2007/2008, the Department's annual primary school census asked a question on the nationality of students¹⁸. Whilst the results of this census must be treated with some caution- as they are based on self-declaration- they concur with those of the ESRI, in that almost 10% of students in primary schools had nationalities other than Irish. The overall results of the 2007/2008 census of primary school nationalities are shown in Figure 2.5.

¹⁷ Note: National groups are the following – 1- UK nationals; 2- Other EU15, excluding Britain and Ireland; 3- EU10 plus Romania and Bulgaria; 4- non- EU Eastern European nationals; 5- nationals of USA, Canada, New Zealand and Australia; 6- Latin American nationals; 7- Asians, and 8- African nationals.

¹⁸ This question was not asked in 2008/09, but was asked in 2009/10 and data are in the process of being collated.

Figure 2.5 Breakdown of student nationality in primary schools (Total= 459,443)

The broad pattern that emerges closely mirrors the 2006 national census results. It is intended to gather information on the nationalities of primary students annually from 2009/2010 onwards.

2.6.4 Post- primary schools

The Department maintains a post-primary pupil database (“PPPDB”) which provides a wide range of data on students enrolled in this sector. Table 2.3 provides data on students from the largest non- Irish nationalities, as well as overall migrant student numbers for 2006/2007- 2009/2010 and total student numbers in the post- primary sector.

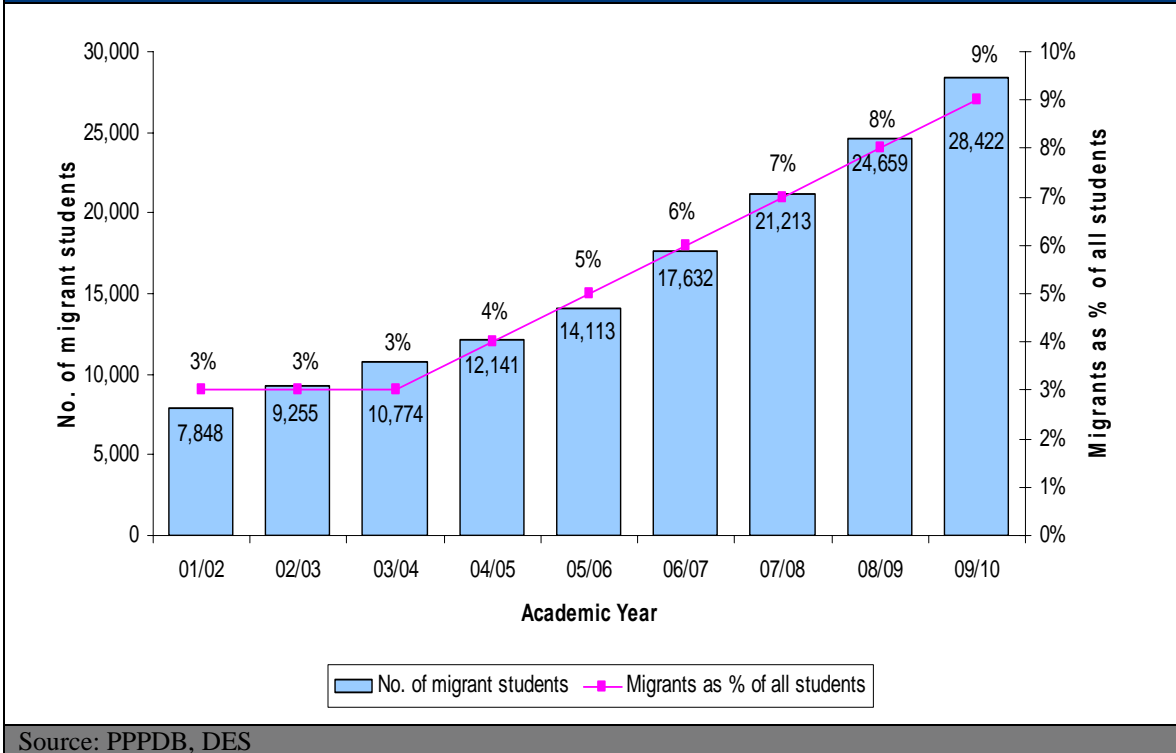
Table 2.3 Largest nationalities (other than Irish), total number of students (including migrants) and total migrant student numbers in post- primary schools (excluding PLC and VTOS courses) for 2006/2007-2009/2010

Ranking	2006/2007		2007/2008		2008/2009		2009/2010	
	Country	No.	Country	No.	Country	No.	Country	No.
1	UK	4,342	UK	4,690	UK	5,184	UK	6,359
2	Poland	1,263	Poland	2,442	Poland	3,347	Poland	3,861
3	Nigeria	1,013	Nigeria	1,258	Nigeria	1,549	Nigeria	1,819
4	Lithuania	924	Lithuania	1,196	Lithuania	1,399	Lithuania	1,608
5	USA	775	Spain	948	Spain	1,095	Spain	1,196
6	Spain	742	USA	849	Philippines	948	USA	1,188
7	Germany	733	Germany	789	USA	945	Philippines	1,152
8	Philippines	471	Philippines	718	Germany	892	Germany	884
9	Latvia	436	Latvia	547	Romania	690	Romania	802
10	South Africa	397	Romania	545	Latvia	653	Latvia	786
Sub- Total	11,096 (63% of total migrant students)		13,982 (66% of total migrant students)		16,702 (67% of total migrant students)		19,655 (69% of total migrant students)	
Total no. of migrant students	17,632		21,213		24,659		28,422	
Total no. of students	303,954		305,481		308,212		312,148	
Source: PPPDB, DES								

As with the primary school census, a recording of nationality in the database is based on self- declaration; if no nationality is provided by the student to the school, “Irish” is entered as the default response¹⁹. The number of migrant students in the post primary sector has been rising for the last number of years. Many of these students will be transferring directly from primary level. Only a small percentage will be arriving directly into post- primary education from their country of origin. Figure 2.6 shows the rising numbers of migrant students at post- primary level from countries other than Ireland since 2001/2002.

¹⁹ From 2009/2010, if no nationality is provided, then no nationality will be recorded.

Figure 2.6 Total numbers of migrant students, and migrant students as a percentage of total student numbers, at post- primary level (excluding PLC and VTOS courses) 2001/2002 – 2009/2010



According to these figures, approximately 9% of students at post- primary level in 2009/ 2010 are migrants.

2.6.5 Further Education

Migrants comprise a significant percentage of further education students, as shown in Table 2.4²⁰.

²⁰ Other important courses at this level are those offered through the Post- Leaving Certificate (“PLC”) programme. See http://www.citizensinformation.ie/categories/education/vocational-education-and-training/training-and-apprenticeship-programmes/post_leaving_certificate_courses for further information on courses available through this scheme.

Table 2.4 Migrant participants in selected further education schemes

Programme	No. of Migrant Students			Total student body		
	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09
VTOS ²¹ (full time)	1,005	1,113	1,057	5,384	5,377	5,403
BTEI ²² (part time)	2,771	2,625	2,785	24,728	25,860	27,104
English language-part of Adult literacy programme (part time)	12,133	13,166	12,597	40,678	45,812	49,962

Source: DES's PPPDB and estimations from the Further Education Section of the DES.

It can also be expected that throughout the country, there are a number of migrant students engaged in other further education programmes, such as the informal community sector²³, but data on their nationality and numbers are not currently available.

2.6.6 Private English language schools

In 2007, the estimated number of international English language students was 137,000, of whom 51,000 were under the age of 16. These students attended private English language schools regulated by ACELS²⁴, as part of the NQAI. Other students attend unregulated schools, but there are no numbers available from this sector.

2.6.7 Higher education nationalities

There is a long history of international students studying in Ireland, thus diversity is a well established feature of this sector. The HEA compiles data on the nationalities of students in the higher education institutes; these are available on its website²⁵. Over the past decade, growing numbers of students from other countries and cultures have come to study in Irish higher education institutions. In 2008/2009, nearly 12,100 students from outside the island of Ireland were enrolled in full-time undergraduate and postgraduate programmes in HEA institutions²⁶. This represents 8.3% of enrolments in that year, compared to 4% over a decade previously (1995/1996). Further information can be seen in Figure 2.7.

²¹ VTOS- Vocational Training Opportunities Scheme. See <http://www.vtos.ie/main/index.php> for further information on courses available through this scheme.

²² BTEI- Back to Education Initiative. See <http://www.accs.ie/government/circulars/BTEI.htm> for further information on courses available through this scheme.

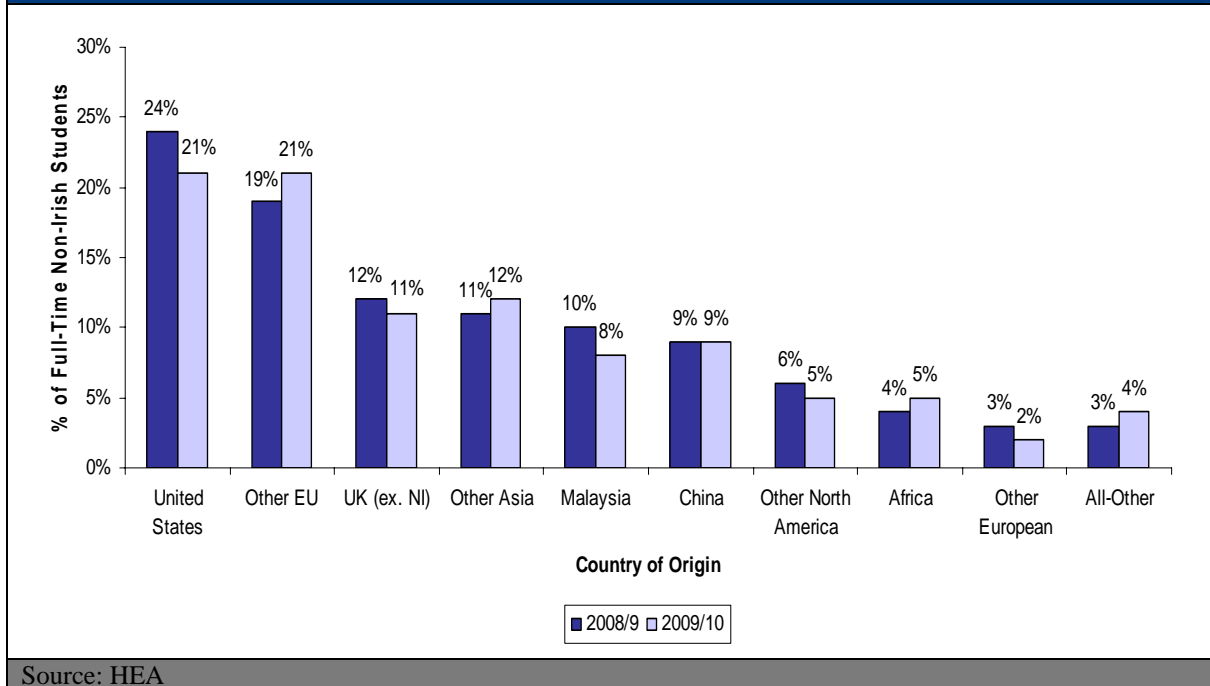
²³ Examples of this would include the "Fáilte Isteach" language classes, operated under the Third Age Foundation, and provided in various locations throughout the country. Further information is available at www.thirdagefoundation.ie.

²⁴ Information supplied by ACELS. Further information regarding ACELS and regulated schools is available at www.acels.ie and www.nqai.ie.

²⁵ www.hea.ie

²⁶ A detailed breakdown of the statistics is available on the HEA website (<http://www.hea.ie/en/statistics>).

Figure 2.7 Country/region of origin of all full- time non- Irish²⁷ national students in HEA institutions in 2008/2009 and 2009/2010



Compared to the top countries of origin for migrants at post- primary level (see Table 2.3 above), the top countries of origin at higher education level are very different. Currently, most migrant students at this level are international students who have decided to travel from abroad to pursue specific courses in Ireland; hence the profile varies from the profiles of migrants in post- primary schools, and in the general population.

The “*National Plan for Equity of Access to Higher Education, 2008- 2013*” (2008) was developed by the HEA in close cooperation with the Department to support greater access to third level education, particularly for under-represented groups. The plan identified recently arrived immigrants as a group traditionally under-represented in higher education institutions. The Plan aims to increase participation by under-represented groups. The Plan identifies the need for further work by the HEA, DES and other relevant departments to clarify the entitlements of recently arrived immigrants.

The HEA’s National Access Office also manages a number of access funding measures on behalf of the Department and reports on progress in the implementation of the Plan and the achievement of targets for increased participation and other key objectives, including the development of an access plan by each higher education institution.

2.7 Conclusion

There is little evidence to suggest that migrant students are leaving Ireland in large numbers. Ireland’s population changed significantly in the last 20 years and this is reflected in the student profile of the various education sectors. Immigrants will continue to be a key group within the population, as shown by the increased proportion of PPS numbers provided to migrants in the 0- 15 years old age cohort. Diversity in the education system

²⁷ The HEA classifies “Irish” students as including those from Ireland and Northern Ireland.

should be welcomed and respected as a benefit. It is clear that there are concomitant challenges, such as proficiency in the language of instruction, and providers must address these challenges, if they are to ensure that all students are integrated and receiving a quality education, in an intercultural learning environment.

Chapter Three –International and National Contexts

3.1 Introduction

This Chapter looks at the key points within international conventions and agreements, and national legislation. It also highlights key findings of international and national reports, to see how they relate to managing relationships between our diverse peoples through intercultural education.

The importance of placing the Strategy within such a context was particularly emphasised not only at the consultation meetings but also in many of the written submissions received in preparing for the development of the Strategy. It is hoped that the compilation of this information will also serve as a useful reference point for interested parties to obtain further information²⁸.

3.2 Legislation, conventions and agreements

3.2.1 International conventions and agreements

From the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948, the concept of intercultural education has been reinforced in international conventions. Many of these are outlined in detail in UNESCO's "*Guidelines on Intercultural Education*" (2003)²⁹. Table 3.1 refers briefly to international conventions and agreements relevant to this topic.

Table 3.1 International conventions and agreements

Universal Declaration of Human Rights (United Nations ("UN"), 1948)
Article 26 notes that education should be directed towards " <i>the full development of the human personality and the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship</i> ".
European Convention on Human Rights (Council of Europe, 1950)
Article 2 respects the rights of parents for determining that children receive an education " <i>and teaching in conformity with their own religions and philosophical convictions</i> ".
International Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination (UN, 1966)
Article 5 declares that all state parties shall " <i>undertake to prohibit and to eliminate racial discrimination... and to guarantee the right of everyone, without distinction as to race, colour or national or ethnic origin ... to education and training</i> ".
Convention on the Rights of the Child (UN, 1989)
Article 29 declares that states should ensure that " <i>all segments of society...have access to education</i> " and the education of the child shall be directed to " <i>the development of respect for the child's parents, his or her own cultural identity, language and values, for the national values of the country in which the child is living, the country from which he or she may originate, and for civilisations different from his or her own</i> ".

²⁸ Some of the documents are discussed further in Chapter 4 and are denoted by * when they are listed in the tables throughout this Chapter.

²⁹ These are available at <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0014/001478/147878e.pdf>

Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (EU, 1995)
Article 6 (1) declares that states shall “ <i>encourage a spirit of tolerance and intercultural dialogue and take effective measures to promote mutual respect and understanding and co-operation among all persons living on their territory</i> ”.
Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU (EU, 2000)
Article 14 concerns education and includes “ <i>the possibility to receive free compulsory education</i> ”.

3. 2. 2 Irish legal framework

The key Irish legal provisions relevant to the Strategy are noted in Table 3.2, in chronological order.

Table 3.2 Key Irish legal provisions

Constitution of Ireland (1937)
Article 42.1 provides that “ <i>The State acknowledges that the primary and natural educator of the child is the Family and guarantees to respect the inalienable right and duty of parents to provide, according to their means, for the religious and moral, intellectual, physical and social education of their children.</i> ”
Higher Education Authority Act, 1971
One of the functions of the HEA is to promote the attainment of equality of opportunity in higher education.
Universities Act, 1997
Key objectives of universities are “ <i>to promote the cultural and social life of society, while fostering and respecting the diversity of the university's traditions; [and] to promote gender balance and equality of opportunity among students and employees of the university.</i> ” Universities must develop and implement an access policy for economically or socially disadvantaged people, those with a disability and from other sections of society significantly under-represented in the student body, within the context of national immigration legislation. The HEA may review these policies and their implementation.
Education Act, 1998
The education system should be “ <i>accountable to students, their parents and the State for the education provided</i> ”, respect “ <i>the diversity of values, beliefs, languages and traditions in Irish society</i> ”, and engage in a “ <i>partnership between schools, patrons, students, parents, teachers and other school staff, the community served by the school and the State</i> ”.
Qualifications (Education and Training) Act, 1999
Aims at facilitating “ <i>lifelong learning through the promotion of access and opportunities for all learners; to promote recognition ... in the State of awards made by bodies outside the State; ... [and] to promote diversity in education and training between further education and training and higher education and training and within each of these</i> ” [sectors]. The Act led to the creation of the National Qualifications Authority of Ireland in 2001 (which developed the National Framework of Qualifications (“NFQ”) in 2003) and of its Qualifications Recognition facility.
Equal Status Acts, 2000 to 2004
Prohibit discrimination in the provision of, <i>inter alia</i> , services and access to education on any of nine specified grounds, including race and membership of the Traveller community. With certain exemptions, educational institutions should not discriminate in four respects: admission, access, terms or conditions and expulsion. Discrimination regarding admission is

allowed, once it is to ensure the maintenance of the religious ethos of the school, and such discrimination is publicised in the school's admissions policy. It should be noted that such provisions do not extend to all educational settings, such as the youth sector.

Education (Welfare) Act, 2000

Established the National Educational Welfare Board ("NEWB") to work with students, parents and schools where students exhibit problems relating to attendance at, and behaviour in, school. Schools must have policies for developing close links with parents in cases where there are attendance issues and should also develop "*programmes of activities designed to encourage the full participation of students in the life of the school*".

Youth Work Act, 2001

Defines "youth work" as "*a planned programme of education designed for the purpose of aiding and enhancing the personal and social development of young persons*" which is "*complementary to their formal, academic or vocational education and training; and provided primarily by voluntary youth work organisations.*" Thus, such programmes can assist all young people to enhance and develop their personal and social skills and competencies in an intercultural society.

Institutes of Technology Act, 2006

Each institute of technology is required to implement an access policy for economically or socially disadvantaged people, those with a disability and from other sections of society significantly under-represented in the student body, within the context of national immigration legislation. The HEA may review these policies and their implementation.

3.2.2.1 Relevant Bills

It should also be noted that there are two relevant Bills which should also be considered. These are noted in Table 3.3.

Table 3.3 Relevant Bills

Student Support Bill, 2008
Provides the legislative framework for reforming the administration of student grants and amalgamating the existing schemes into a single unified scheme. It sets out the categories of nationalities qualifying for a grant (these include, for example, EU/EEA/Swiss nationals, and those with official refugee status).
Immigration Bill
This Bill is to be drafted before the end of 2010 to replace the Immigration, Residence and Protection Bill, 2008. The latter Bill adopted an integrated approach covering visa, entry, residence and protection. It recognised the need for greater transparency and more information for students (in particular those from non-visa required countries). Due to the number of suggested amendments, the Minister for Justice and Law Reform will be replacing it with a 2010 Immigration, Residence and Protection Bill.

3.2.3 Access to educational provision

There are different categories of access criteria and education fees and supports³⁰ for migrants, depending on their status and length of residency in the country. The status could be one of many, for example EU/EEA national, a person with official refugee status, an asylum seeker, a long term resident, or a visa holder. In both the further and higher

³⁰ Such as student maintenance grants.

education sectors, for example, there are different fee structures and access routes, depending on a prospective student's status and length of residency in the country³¹.

3.3 Key Reports

3.3.1 International context

Some of the key reports related to this Strategy are referred to briefly in Table 3.4, in chronological order. Further information is provided in Appendix 8.

Table 3.4 Key international reports

EU Council's Common Basic Principles for Integration Policy (2004)
Assist Member States, in recognition of the fact that immigration is a permanent feature of Member States. See Appendix 4 for the 11 Principles.
UNESCO's "Guidelines on Intercultural Education" (2006)
Assist all those working, researching and interested in the area.
Council of Europe's "White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue" (2008)
Promotes respect for cultural diversity.
EU Commission's Green Paper "Migration and Mobility: Challenges and Opportunities for EU Education Systems" (2008)
Notes the leading role of schools in creating an inclusive society. The Paper's recommendations, based on its consultation process, were supported by the Council of Ministers in November 2009.
Eurydice Network's "Key Data on Teaching Languages at School in Europe" Report (2008)
Considers four main indicators: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Language diversity within schools. 2. The position of foreign languages in the curriculum. 3. The range of different languages taught. 4. The initial education of teachers and their qualifications to help " <i>in identifying trends related to certain aspects of language teaching in recent years and decades</i> " (page 7).
European Ministerial Conference on Integration, Declaration approved by the representatives of the Member States – Vichy Declaration (2008)
Deals with integration of migrants in general and highlights the importance of education.
* "Reviews of Migrant Education: Ireland Country Report" (OECD, 2009a)
Ireland was one of six countries to take part in the OECD's thematic study of migrant education which examined policy and practice at pre-school, primary and post-primary. The other countries are Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Austria and the Netherlands. The full report can be accessed at the OECD's website, www.oecd.org . This report is referred to throughout the Strategy.
Council of Europe's "Policies and practices for teaching socio-cultural diversity - A framework of teacher competences for engaging with diversity" (2009)
Assist the work of initial primary teacher education institutions.

³¹ Further information can be found on the website www.studentfinance.ie

3.3.2 Irish context

Irish reports which informed the development of the Strategy are referred to briefly in Table 3.5, in chronological order.

Table 3.5 Irish reports

“Charting our Education Future”, White Paper on Education (DES, 1995)
Sets out the principles for the State’s role in education which include: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The promotion of quality, equality, pluralism, partnership and accountability 2. The protection and promotion of fundamental human and civil rights 3. The rights and responsibilities of the partners.
“Report of the National Forum for Early Childhood Education” (Government, 1998b)
Emphasises the need for intercultural dimensions in teacher education courses and teaching materials which “ <i>respect the diversity of ethnic and cultural images</i> ”. It also emphasises the importance of intercultural efforts in the pre-school sector.
“Ready to Learn”, White Paper on Early Childhood Education (DES, 1999)
Aims to “ <i>facilitate the development of a high quality system of early childhood education</i> ”. This requires “ <i>progress across a wide spectrum of areas, including curriculum, training and qualifications and the quality and quantity of inputs (staff, equipment and materials)</i> ”.
“Learning for Life”, White Paper on Adult Education (DES, 2000)
An intercultural education system “ <i>must work towards a view of difference as something to be celebrated and which is enriching to the totality of the society rather than as the basis for enmity.</i> ”
“Guidelines on Traveller Education in Primary Schools” and “Guidelines on Traveller Education in Second Level Schools” (DES, 2002)
Notes that “ <i>Young people should be enabled to appreciate the richness of a diversity of cultures and ...to recognise and to challenge prejudice and discrimination</i> ”.
* “Planning for Diversity- The National Action Plan Against Racism 2005- 2008” (Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform, 2005)
Notes that developing “ <i>a more inclusive and intercultural society is about inclusion by design</i> ”. The Plan was underpinned by five objectives: protection, provision, recognition, inclusion and participation.
“Schools and the Equal Status Acts” (DES and Equality Authority, 2005)
Notes that “ <i>the inclusive school ... is one that respects, values and accommodates diversity [and] seeks positive experiences, a sense of belonging and outcomes for all students</i> ”.
“Towards 2016: Ten- Year Framework Social Partnership Agreement 2006- 2015” (“Towards 2016”) (Government, 2006)
Specifically refers to migrants, regarding provisions at first and second level and support structures for adult migrant English language learners. It also provided for the development of “ <i>a comprehensive strategy for all legally resident immigrants following consultation with relevant stakeholders</i> ” (page 57).
* “Síolta – National Quality Framework for Early Childhood Education” (Centre for Early Childhood Development and Education, 2006)
Supports the development of quality in practice within a wide range of ECCE settings where children aged from birth to six years are present.
“Guidelines for Schools on Intercultural Education in the Primary School” (2005a) and “Intercultural Education in the Post- Primary School” (NCCA, 2006)
Assist schools to enable their students “ <i>to respect and celebrate diversity, to promote</i>

<i>equality and to challenge unfair discrimination”.</i>
* “Report and Recommendations for a Traveller Education Strategy” (DES, 2006)
Highlights “inclusion” as a core principle and a central theme of the report. Inclusion incorporates equality and diversity.
* “Diversity and Equality Guidelines for Childcare Providers” (OMCYA, 2006)
Developed by a sub-group of the National Childcare Coordinating Committee (NCCC), as part of the National Childcare Strategy 2006- 2010. They support and equip childcare managers and practitioners with the insights and skills to recognise and work with diversity and equality issues within their settings.
“Transforming Ireland – A Better Quality of Life for All- the National Development Plan 2007- 2013” (“NDP”) (Government, 2007a)
Outlines two key actions to assist in the integration of migrants into society- developing a national strategy to achieve integration and providing an additional 550 language support posts in the education sector. Both actions have been achieved.
“National Action Plan for Social Inclusion, 2007- 2016”, (Government, 2007b)
Builds on the commitments contained in the NDP, and contained a goal of improving access to other public services, through the provision of translation of information and supports for migrants.
“Together Towards Inclusion: Toolkit for Diversity in the Primary School”, (Integrate Ireland Language and Training and the Southern Education and Library Board, 2007)
This joint North- South initiative provides assistance to schools in creating an intercultural learning environment, and was distributed to all schools on the island.
“Migration Nation, Statement on Integration Strategy and Diversity Management” (OMI, 2008)
Set out four key principles for the integration process: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A partnership approach to deepen and enhance the opportunities for integration 2. A strong link between integration policy and wider state social inclusion measures, strategies and initiatives 3. A clear public policy focus on a mainstream approach to service delivery 4. A commitment to effective local delivery mechanisms.
* “National Plan for Equity of Access to Higher Education 2008- 2013” (HEA, 2008)
Highlights the importance of supporting the increased participation of groups who are under represented or who experience significant barriers in accessing higher education, including those experiencing educational disadvantage and social exclusion, recent immigrants and Travellers.
“Department of Education and Skills - Statement of Strategy for 2008- 2010” (DES, 2008)
The DES aims to provide a high-quality education, so that individuals develop their full potential, participate fully in society and contribute to Ireland’s social, cultural and economic development. One of the Department’s high level goals is to <i>“support and improve the quality, relevance and inclusiveness of education for every learner in ...schools”</i> and see <i>“an inclusive and intercultural environment ... developed in schools.”</i>
* “Aistear: the Early Childhood Curriculum Framework” (NCCA, 2009)
Ireland’s early childhood curriculum framework for children from birth to six years sets out broad goals for children’s learning and development and provides practical information, ideas and suggestions to help practitioners, childminders and parents.
“Renewed Programme for Government” (Government, 2009)
Reiterates the Government’s commitment to maintaining language support funding for

schools.
* “Adapting to Diversity: Irish schools and newcomer students” (ESRI, 2009)
Examines migrant students’ progress in schools, and how their presence impacted on schools. It was based on both quantitative data (from a survey sent to all post-primary principals, and principals in 1,200 primary schools, with a response rate of over 60%) and qualitative data (from interviews conducted in 16 schools). The report is available at www.esri.ie and is referred to throughout the Strategy. See Appendix 9 for further information on the report’s recommendations.
“Access All Areas- A Diversity Toolkit for the Youth Sector in Ireland” (National Youth Council of Ireland (“NYCI”), 2009)
For use with several key cohorts within the youth sector, including migrants, to <i>“look at the supports that are needed - at a personal and organisational level - to make sure that all young people in a community feel they belong and are actively participating”</i> (page 7).
* “Value for Money (“VFM”) Review of English as an additional language (“EAL”) Expenditure in Schools” (DES, 2010)
Examines expenditure on EAL support at primary and post-primary levels for the education of students who do not have English or Irish as a first language. It measures the effectiveness of that spending by considering the outcomes it produced, over the period 2001/2002- 2008/2009. See Table 4.3 in Chapter 4 and Appendix 10 for further details on the report’s findings and recommendations.
* Department’s Inspectorate EAL Evaluation (DES, 2010)
An in- depth evaluation of the quality of the teaching and learning of EAL in 30 primary and 15 post-primary schools was conducted in 2008. See Table 4.3 in Chapter 4 for further details on the report’s findings and recommendations.

3.4 Conclusion

This Chapter has briefly outlined the international and national policy context for supporting intercultural education as an integral part of both formal and informal education in Ireland. Links to many of the documents referred to are available on “AIM”- Accessing Intercultural Materials³². Over the years, there has been a clear move towards ensuring that education systems are inclusive, respect diversity, and promote a learning environment where all students are encouraged and assisted to achieve to the best of their abilities. The development of the legislative context in Ireland has been influenced by international developments.

³² AIM was developed as an information portal on the area of migrants and newcomers, for students and parents of all nationalities, educators and researchers at all levels, and policy-makers. The goal is to host a regularly updated comprehensive data portal. The launch of the initiative was covered in media specifically catering for teachers and migrant communities and an information booklet has been widely distributed. AIM is available at: <http://www.education.ie/home/home.jsp?pcategory=10856&ecategory=30941&language=EN> and <http://www.integration.ie/website/omi/omiwebv6.nsf/page/usefullinks-irish-DepartmentEducationportal-en>

Chapter Four- Research and consultations

4.1 Introduction

The examination of the documentation outlined in Chapter 3 provides evidence-based data required for the development of the Strategy. This Chapter provides a summary of the research and consultation findings within each sector of education. (Table 4.8 provides a summary of the main research and policy conclusions). This information is used to determine how the education system can further enhance an intercultural learning environment. The main themes arising from the research and consultations detailed in this Chapter form the basis for the selection of the key components of intercultural education and the high level goals of this Strategy, as well as the actions required to achieve this, as detailed in Chapters 5 and 6.

It is important to note, at the outset, that the research highlighted the fact that education sectors are already responding very positively to the increased diversity of learners.

4.2 Pre- school (ECCE) sector

4.2.1 Current situation

Provision is currently guided by several key documents, as shown in Table 4.1:

Table 4.1 Key documents concerning ECCE

Síolta- the National Quality Framework for Early Childhood Education (2006)
<p>Comprises three distinct but interrelated elements: Principles, Standards and Components of Quality. The Principles provide the overall vision of the Framework whilst the Standards and Components allow for the practical application of this vision across all aspects of ECCE practice. There are 16 Standards, accompanied by Research Digests, which cover all areas of everyday practice. The Digests summarise the key messages from research and make practical suggestions for implementation.</p> <p>Standard 14, “Identity and Belonging”, notes that the promotion of <i>“positive identities and a strong sense of belonging requires clearly defined policies, procedures and practices that empower every child and adult to develop a confident self- and group- identity, and to have a positive understanding and regard for the identity and rights of others”</i> (pg. 107). It also notes that if <i>“children form positive attitudes towards difference from a very early age, they are more likely to grow up appreciating diversity as a normal part of their lives”</i> (pg. 108). Practical suggestions are made for the implementation of Standard 14, including materials, staff behaviour and interaction with parents³³.</p>
Diversity and Equality Guidelines for Childcare Providers (2006)
<p>Aim to support practitioners, managers and policy makers in their understanding and development of diversity and equality practice. Developed as part of the <i>“National Childcare Strategy, 2006-2010”</i>, they allow individuals to explore their own attitude to diversity and give practical ideas on how to make initial changes in their setting. The guidelines can help to:</p>

³³ See www.siolta.ie for further information.

- Improve knowledge and understanding of diversity, equality and discrimination issues.
- Challenge one's own thinking, assisting critical reflection and the development of new thinking.
- Create policies and procedures on equality and diversity.
- Further understand why diversity and equality policies and practice are important and relevant to childcare services.
- Develop ideas to tackle discriminatory or difficult issues that arise in practice.
- Advise on how to access information on racism, equality and diversity approaches in childcare.
- Find out how to source and/or develop resources and activities.
- Gain new skills to support all levels of work on diversity and equality issues.

Aistear- The Early Childhood Curriculum Framework (2009)

This is the outcome of many years of research, consultation, planning and development by the NCCA in partnership with the ECCE sector. Three main pillars of research inform Aistear:

- findings from an extensive consultation³⁴
- a portraiture study³⁵
- a series of research papers³⁶.

A common theme throughout the research is the importance of positive learning outcomes for children. Critical contributing factors include quality interactions with other children, adults, objects and places; a language-rich environment which encourages play and interaction; and supportive relationships between parents and settings. *“To achieve this, you need adults who respect children as young learners; are confident and knowledgeable about how children learn and develop; are aware of the impact of their own beliefs and perceptions on children; and respect diversity amongst children and their families”* (NCCA, “Aistear- User Guide”, 2009a: 6).

This message underpins Aistear and is particularly evident in its foundational principles and four key themes. The theme of “Identity and Belonging” focuses in detail on this important aspect of children’s early experiences as young learners:

Giving children messages of respect, love, approval, and encouragement enables them to develop a positive sense of who they are and a feeling that they have an important contribution to make wherever they are. Positive messages about their families, backgrounds, cultures, beliefs, and languages help children to develop pride in who they are. These messages also give them confidence to voice their views and opinions, to make choices, and to help shape their own learning (NCCA, “Aistear- Principles and Themes”, 2009b: 25).

Éist Project

³⁴ The NCCA used the document, “Towards a Framework for Early Learning” (2004) as the basis for an extensive consultation with the early childhood sector. The findings from the consultation are published in “Towards a Framework for Early Learning: Final Consultation Report” (2005) on the NCCA website at http://www.ncca.ie/en/Curriculum_and_Assessment/Early_Childhood_and_Primary_Education/Early_Childhood_Education/How_Aistear_was_developed/Consultation/Towards_a_FW_for_E_Learning_Report.pdf

³⁵ The study is published on the NCCA’s website at http://www.ncca.ie/en/Curriculum_and_Assessment/Early_Childhood_and_Primary_Education/Early_Childhood_Education/How_Aistear_was_developed/Portraiture_Study/

³⁶ The research papers are published on the NCCA’s website at http://www.ncca.ie/en/Curriculum_and_Assessment/Early_Childhood_and_Primary_Education/Early_Childhood_Education/How_Aistear_was_developed/Research_Papers/

Supports the inclusion of a diversity and equality focus in ECCE, and adopts a holistic approach, focusing on majority and minority children, and promoting social justice. It works to support policy at national and local levels, and influence the diversity and equality content of Aistear and Síolta. At a practical level, Éist builds capacity of both trainers and practitioners through a specially designed training and professional development programme.

Equality and Diversity Early Childhood National Network (EDENN)

EDENN is facilitated through Éist, and supports and promotes an equality and diversity based approach in ECCE.

4.2.2 Research

The OECD's "*Reviews of Migrant Education: Ireland Country Report*" (2009a) highlights the importance of ensuring effective early interventions for all children. The Report welcomed the provision of the new free pre-school year, and emphasised the importance of continuing professional development ("CPD") for ECCE providers. Some of the main recommendations in this Report for the sector include those outlined in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2 Main ECCE recommendations from the OECD (2009a)

Prioritise disadvantaged children, in order to successfully implement the free pre-school year for all.
Concentrate efforts on implementing the Síolta and Aistear frameworks, with special attention to language development and socio-cultural competencies of immigrant children.
Concentrate/ prioritise efforts in junior and senior infants, with an emphasis placed on the importance of communication in the host language, whilst also acknowledging the importance of mother tongue.
Socialise children in an inclusive, integrated, intercultural setting.
All teachers (EAL and mainstream) should have the knowledge, skills, understanding, attitude and confidence to teach in a diverse classroom.

4.2.3 Consultations for the Strategy

Delegates from the ECCE sector stressed the need for:

1. A partnership approach with parents.
2. Ensuring that people confront their own prejudices so that these are not passed on to children.
3. Evidence based actions.
4. Clearly determined expected outcomes.

4.3 Primary and post-primary sectors

4.3.1 Current situation

Several recent research projects combine to create a comprehensive picture of the current situation in these sectors. Some of the findings are summarised in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3 Summary of findings from research projects

ESRI's "Adapting to Diversity: Irish Schools and Newcomer Students" (2009)
<p>This large scale national study highlights the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Many schools are successfully integrating migrant and native students. 2. CPD was a key need prioritised by teachers. 3. The main barrier for many migrant parents and students was identified as a lack of proficiency in the language of instruction. 4. Schools must be clear about the fact that racism will not be tolerated. This should be specified in existing (and required) anti- bullying policies. 5. 80% of schools take all students who apply for enrolment. For the 20% which do not, it is because they are over-subscribed and must employ selection procedures, such as requiring an older sibling to be/ have been a student in the school. Such procedures can discriminate against all those who are new to an area, regardless of nationality.
Department's Inspectorate EAL Evaluation (2010)
<p>Found that there was a pronounced difference between provision at primary and post-primary levels, largely due to the nature of teaching at both levels; students in primary schools are mainly taught by a single class teacher, whilst post- primary students are taught by several subject teachers. Most schools recognised their responsibilities with regard to EAL learners although they may lack specific expertise. However, a greater culture of planning exists in schools than previously (including planning to address additional educational needs), and materials and resources to support EAL learners are more plentiful and available.</p>
DES's VFM Review (2010)
<p>Showed that the current concentration of expenditure is not enhancing the capacity of the whole school team to address EAL needs. It also highlighted the dearth of specific data on migrant students. It emphasised that migrant students should be encouraged to maintain a connection with their mother culture/language, as enhancing their mother tongue proficiency also enhances their ability to speak English³⁷. Key relevant findings from the Review are outlined in Appendix 10.</p>

The OECD's "*Reviews of Migrant Education: Ireland Country Report*" (2009a) made several suggestions for the two sectors; these are shown in Table 4.4. In addition, key points to note are the importance of having high expectations and aspirations for all students, to ensure that they achieve their potential, and the fact that all learners have rights and responsibilities. The matter of school patronage, raised by the OECD, has been subject to much discussion. As society is becoming more diverse, there is a greater demand for education provision to reflect this. Consequently, the current patronage model is being examined. "*The question that emerges in this context is whether the relative share of schools operated by the different patron bodies reflects the changing composition of society in Ireland*" (OECD, 2009a: 56).

The matter of patronage is currently being examined in collaboration with the education partners, and is beyond the remit of this Strategy.

³⁷ For example, educators could allow students to speak amongst their peers in their mother tongue and encourage native Irish students to engage with migrant students in this practice.

Table 4.4 Main suggestions arising from the OECD review (2009a)

Schools (first and second level)
Place a priority on providing initial training and CPD to all teachers in EAL ³⁸ and cultural diversity.
Support a whole school approach to migrant education.
Strengthen initial and ongoing learning opportunities for EAL teachers and learners.
Build a one-stop point of networks for school (practitioners and managers) to be connected with researchers and policy makers.
Prepare to take more preventive measures against early dropouts (currently not common amongst migrant students in Ireland).
Partnership and engagement
Encourage the involvement of immigrant parents.
Enhance the HSCL ³⁹ scheme, through CPD, to support immigrant families in need of additional support.
Encourage cooperation with local community services for immigrant families.
Equal access to quality education
Obtain data on applicants and enrolments by immigrant status to further encourage patron bodies to adopt diversity and inclusive education in their admission practices. This will also assist with determining whether the current patronage model is still well-suited to respond to the increasingly multicultural character of children in Ireland.
Ensure that immigrant parents can make better informed decision about their children's education.
Data collection and evaluation for feedback
Set up a coherent framework for continuous feedback, to incorporate: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Student assessment for learning in the classroom 2. School evaluation through strengthening the role of the Inspectorate 3. Extension of national assessments to provide regular data on the performance of various immigrant groups and assist with policy evaluation
Source: OECD (2009a)

Devine, Kenny and Macneela (2008) examined the extent and forms of racism experienced by students in schools. Their research found that students took advantage of periods of minimal adult supervision (including the journey to and from school) to display racist behaviour such as name calling. This can be combated by addressing the subject of identity formation and development, with both teachers and students, and ensuring that schools have defined procedures for tackling such behaviour. These findings have been augmented by the ESRI's findings (2009)

4.3.2 Consultations for the Strategy

Delegates from the primary and post- primary sectors noted that:

1. Partnership and engagement need to be key principles; this encompasses working together with parents, and developing targeted policies and resources, in conjunction

³⁸ Educators must recognise the importance of both language as subject and language in subject.

³⁹ The Home School Community Liaison ("HSCL") Scheme is available to all designated disadvantaged schools and provides an additional support mechanism for such schools, aiming to enhance student performance and attainment through establishing and maintaining good relations between schools, students, parents and the local community. It encompasses a variety of services and resources.

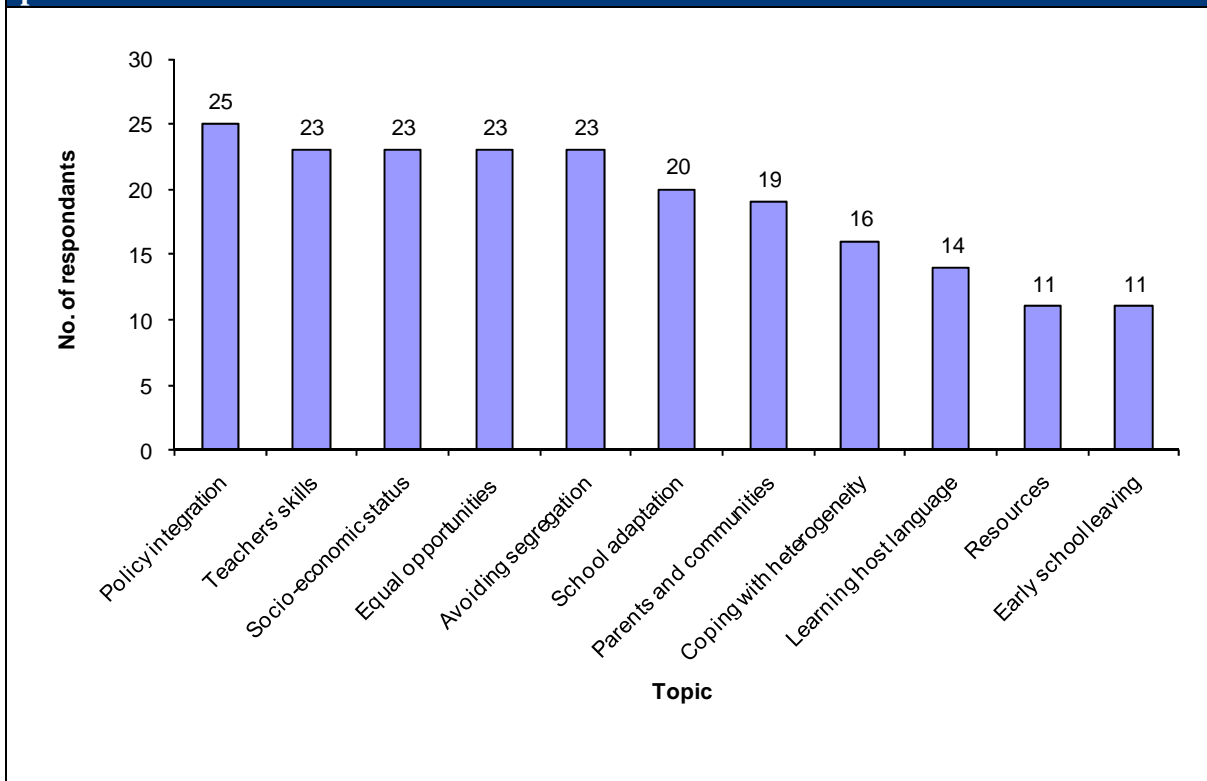
with other Departments, agencies, communities (host and migrant) and Non Governmental Organisations (“NGOs”). The HSCL Scheme could be partly used as a model in this regard.

2. A whole- institution approach must be taken to promoting intercultural education.
3. There is a need for training for all educators, as well as targeted research, to fill identified data gaps. Education providers must be very clear that bullying, racism and stereotyping will not be tolerated, and this must be stated by all providers.
4. There is a need for a more equal distribution of schools across patron bodies, to reflect social diversity.

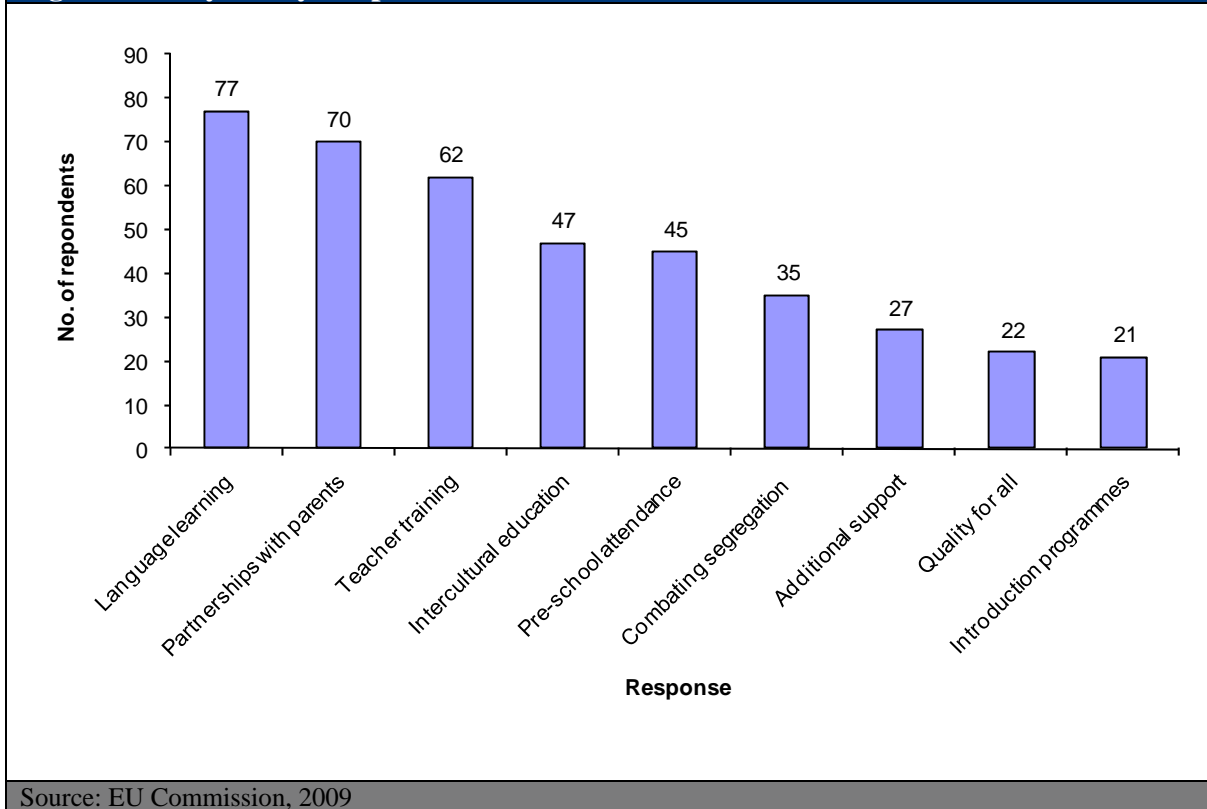
4.3.3 EU Commission Research

The Commission invited feedback on its Green Paper, “*Migration and Mobility: Challenges and Opportunities for EU Education Systems*” in the second half of 2008. The results of the 101 Europe- wide contributions to the consultation process are summarised below in Figures 4.1 (which highlights the challenges identified) and 4.2 (which highlights the key policy responses initiated by member states). The results reflect many of the findings noted in other research projects discussed in this Chapter.

Figure 4.1 Challenges identified by respondents to the Commission’s consultation process



Source: EU Commission, 2009

Figure 4.2 Key Policy Responses of Member States

These responses relate closely to the underlying principles and actions proposed for this Strategy (see *Section 1.4 Background and consultation process*), which will be discussed further in Chapter 5. The responses also show that equity-based policies, such as quality for all, are the most utilised for promoting intercultural education and migrant educational attainment. Whilst the responses to the EU Commission place intercultural education behind language learning, partnership with parents, and teacher training, this Strategy is concerned with combining these factors, along with other important considerations, to create a comprehensive Strategy, which can be used by all sectors of education.

4.4 Further Education Sector

4.4.1 Current situation

This is a very diverse sector; the number of different providers and variety of settings means that it is not possible to get confirmed details on participants. The diversity of provision in the sector offers a valuable route for those who are not able to access “traditional” routes to continue their education. An example of services at this level is the EAL learning opportunity offered to adult migrants through the literacy classes provided by the national network of VECs. Providers at this level have conducted research and key points from some of the projects are outlined in Table 4.5.

Table 4.5 Research in the sector

“Towards a National ESOL⁴⁰ Strategy- Lessons from a Survey of ESOL Provision in the VEC Sector” (Irish Vocational Education Association (IVEA)) (2008)
This was based on an examination of VECs working in the area of EAL provision, on what they identified as their main impediments and how these can be overcome. Of the 181 respondents, 84% provided EAL tuition. The Report noted that <i>“there is a clear acknowledgement of the need for greater proactivity in the promotion of ESOL training to adults”</i> (page 31).
FÁS Guidelines on Interculturalism (2006)
FÁS is the national training and employment authority and it produced these guidelines to <i>“provide information and sources for all FÁS staff now working in an ethnically diverse environment from two perspectives: (a) knowledge of ourselves with a cultural heritage and varying social identities; and (b) knowledge of other cultures”</i> (page 4). Ten specific guidelines for good practice are explained, as well as information on specific communities.
Horwath Report (2008)
The Minister for Education and Skills and the Minister of State for Equality, Integration and Human Rights commissioned consultants to assist in the development of a national English language training policy and framework for legally-resident adult immigrants. The study involved extensive stakeholder consultation and benchmarking with seven countries. Its findings were presented at a time when there was uncertainty regarding the demographic and economic circumstances of the country. The development of this Strategy has been informed by the research findings presented in the report.

4.4.2 Strategy Consultations

Delegates from the further education sector stated that:

1. There must be coherence amongst service providers regarding the services they provide.
2. The principles for the Strategy should be grounded in ensuring equity and access for learners in a coherent manner.
3. The needs of individual learners should be at the centre of the Strategy.
4. The Strategy must be clear about the responsibilities of educational providers and learners.
5. The need to make information on the sector easily accessible for host and migrant communities is paramount.

4.5 Youth Sector

4.5.1 Current situation

There are many different organisations and agencies active in this sector, throughout the country. These include the NYCI, Foróige, Sport Against Racism Ireland and the Irish Traveller Movement. The demographic composition of local communities should be evident in youth groups; however feedback from the consultations found that this varies from area to area. Learning environments vary; it is a less formalised sector than others.

⁴⁰ English for speakers of other languages. The term is commonly used for adult learners.

This can provide it with a distinct advantage- activities tend to be participant- led and offer many opportunities for learning and working with young people with mother tongues other than Irish and English. As volunteers form a key component of staff in this sector, there are many opportunities for parents and young adults of all nationalities to participate in activities and work with young people. There is widespread good practice in evidence already, such as youth groups forming strong links with local schools and communities. This Strategy aims to build on these foundations of best practice, to assist in furthering an intercultural learning environment within the sector.

Key developments in the sector are briefly outlined in Table 4.6.

Table 4.6 Key developments in the sector

Minority Children Fund: Evaluation report (One Foundation, 2009)
<p>This report was designed to encourage the development of new and existing practices in the area, to increase the numbers of minority children involved in youth activities, and to learn from such experiences. The challenges in this area can be twofold: some migrant children need help to “<i>overcome their nervousness about participating while also overcoming the tendency for “majority” young people to “stick together”</i>” (pg. 14). Some of the key findings arising include the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. There is a desire in the sector for more training on diversity, and to develop the skills base of staff. 2. There is a need for an integrated approach, for maximum impact and to ensure that integration is not marginalised. 3. Parental support is crucial for getting young people involved and actively participating. 4. Schools are generally supportive of activities in this sector. 5. The sector is not yet fully familiar with the needs of young people whose key challenges are “<i>caused by barriers such as language, culture and racism</i>” (pg. 46). 6. Sport and fitness offer excellent opportunities for integrating people. <p>The Report highlights organisational and contextual characteristics which both promote and hinder integration, and its findings can assist providers at all levels.</p>
NYCI training programme
<p>The youth sector provides a wide variety of training in the area of youth work, with particular emphasis on diversity and anti- racism. The NYCI provides courses catering for individuals that have an ongoing professional relationship with young people, and youth and community workers who work with young people in out- of- school/ institutional settings. Further information can be found at www.nyci.ie.</p>
Consultations for an intercultural strategy for youthwork
<p>The NYCI commissioned a report, “<i>Report on Consultations for an Intercultural Strategy for Youthwork</i>” which was published in 2009 and is available at www.intercultural.ie.</p>

4.5.2 Consultations for the Strategy

Delegates from the youth sector recommended that:

1. Ireland looks to the experience of immigration and integration in other countries.
2. The Strategy must include everybody; intercultural education is not merely concerned with migrants. Some learners may need special support initially, and the youth sector can act as a conduit to accessing a mainstream academic environment.

3. Service providers in all sectors must work together.
4. The actions contained in the Strategy must be precise, measurable and evidence based.

4.6 Higher Education Sector

4.6.1 Current situation

This section briefly summarises some developments of note, and some of the main research projects in the sector.

Table 4.7 Main research projects and other relevant developments

Work of the HEA and the National Access Office
<p>The Department of Education and Skills established the National Access Office in the HEA in 2003, based on research⁴¹ identifying under-represented groups in higher education. The work of the Office includes managing several access funding measures on behalf of the Department, advising the Department on access issues and reporting on progress in the implementation of the National Access Plan and achieving set targets and outcomes.</p>
<p>The current national access plan, the “<i>National Plan for Equity of Access to Higher Education, 2008-2013</i>” (2008), was developed in close consultation with the Department and adopts a comprehensive approach, advocating retention and completion, and not simply entrance to higher education courses. The Plan notes that “<i>At present, 50-55 per cent of 17-18 year olds enter higher education. The National Skills Strategy has set a target of 72 per cent by 2020</i>” (pp 14- 15). Specific groups identified in the Plan as requiring special attention include recently arrived immigrants. They may have received some, all, or none of their previous education in Ireland, and it is important that they are encouraged to attend higher level courses, on a par with their native peers. One of the Plan’s action points concerns the need for further work by various bodies to clarify the entitlements of minority group students, including refugees and recent immigrants. The Plan notes that the main barriers to migrant participation include language barriers and the recognition of prior qualifications.</p>
<p>The Plan aims to support the lifelong learning agenda in Ireland, through developing broader entry routes, the expansion of part-time/flexible courses and student support measures. The promotion of equality in higher education will be emphasised in the HEA’s allocation of funds to institutions, as well as through the development of student financial supports to better address financial barriers. The HEA’s website contains a section to help students gain the information they need regarding attending higher education- see www.heai.ie and also www.studentfinance.ie</p>
<p>This Plan is underpinned by the NDP, which notes that specific development needs must be met in the higher education sector. These include increasing participation and improving access to courses, as well as encouraging “<i>a greater flexibility of course offerings to meet diverse student population needs in a lifelong learning context</i>” (2007:</p>

⁴¹ The Office was established following a recommendation of a DES Action Group on Access, which identified the need for a single agency to co-ordinate policy and funding measures to increase access and participation in higher education.

201).

Education in Employment (EINE)

EINE (which is led by Cork Institute of Technology) aims to provide relevant education and progression opportunities to employees and to provide access routes for traditionally under-represented students. Nine higher education institutes acted in partnership on the project, which produced a report on its work in 2008, *“Migrants and Higher Education in Ireland”*. This outlined some key challenges for increasing migrant participation in the sector, including:

1. Information provision.
2. English language skills.
3. Recognition of qualifications and prior learning.
4. Fees and other financial considerations.

It made several recommendations, such as the need to:

1. Ensure that information is widely distributed and available in accessible formats.
2. Provide standardised guidelines on requirements for English-language competencies for all third-level institutions.
3. Ensure that there are clear equivalences for international awards. These should be mapped onto the NFQ.
4. Require institutions to provide clear and consistent information regarding their fees.

Work of the sector promoting access to higher education

Since the mid 1990s, mature student offices and adult and lifelong learning departments of higher education institutions have implemented programmes and activities to increase adult access to, and participation in, higher education. Examples of activities include:

1. Working with local community initiatives.
2. Providing information and guidance in conjunction with area partnerships, adult education organisers, and locally representative groups.
3. Delivering courses to adults from their local communities, both on-campus and on an outreach basis.
4. Linking with the further education sector⁴².

Access personnel in higher education institutions report that increasing numbers of mature students from migrant backgrounds are participating in these programmes. As well as developing a highly skilled workforce to meet economic needs, increasing lifelong learning participation brings significant social benefits, such as improving the ability and confidence of adults to further both their own and their childrens’ educational development and integration.

Pilot Transition Unit on Further and Higher Education

This Unit was developed by the HEA and NCCA with input and advice from a working group of teachers, guidance counsellors and access officers. It was established in 2009 and involved seven post-primary schools. It aimed at encouraging transition year/senior-cycle students, including those from migrant backgrounds, to explore options in further and higher education. The Unit is being assessed in 2010.

Dedicated research in higher education institutions

Many institutions in this sector are actively researching the impact of migration, and raising awareness of the particular needs of migrants. Examples include the work of the Trinity Immigration Initiative (www.tcd.ie/immigration), the Irish Centre for Migration Studies in

⁴² The National Access Office estimates that 9% of higher education entrants in 2007 (or over 3,000 students) had a FETAC (“Further Education and Training Awards Council”) level 5 or 6 major award. 33% of this group were mature students.

University College Cork (www.migration.ucc.ie) and the Lóchrann Centre in Coláiste Mhuire, Marino Institute of Education (<http://www.mie.ie/Colaiste-Mhuire-Marino/Lochrann.aspx>).

4.6.2 Strategy Consultations

Delegates from the higher education sector stated that:

1. Cultural diversity should be clearly recognised as an educational resource.
2. The Strategy must be learner- centred.
3. Diversity training is essential for education providers.
4. Current curricula for learning programmes in the sector should be evaluated to ensure that they fully address the needs of all students, who can properly access and identify with them.
5. There should be coherent action in the sector, on the part of all stakeholders, and this requires proactive leadership.
6. New ways of liaising with migrant communities living in Ireland and international students coming to study in Ireland, particularly at this level, should be sought.
7. The specific needs of unaccompanied minors who achieve refugee status must be considered.

4.7 NGO / Community Sector

4.7.1 Current situation

Given the relatively informal nature of education measures in this sector, it is hard to gain a comprehensive picture of the full extent of the measures in place. It is known, however, that many organisations throughout the country provide an invaluable service in promoting integration. An example of this is the work of the Fáilte Isteach project, operated by the Third Age Foundation, through which older people teach conversational English to migrants in their area. The benefits exceed language learning, as the lessons provide a way for migrants and local people to meet and integrate, as well as to share information on local services and facilities.

AONTAS, Ireland's national adult learning organisation, hosted a conference entitled "Creating Intercultural Communities" in 2008. This aimed to explore intercultural dialogue in the context of a rapidly changing Europe, and provide a forum for discussion on intercultural dialogue in an Irish context. A full report on the conference, "*Creating Intercultural Communities Conference 08 Report*", can be found on AONTAS's website, www.aontas.com. The conference found that adult and community education can facilitate intercultural dialogue through respectfully working with identity and experience, facilitating equality of access and participation, and providing flexible, needs based learning.

4.7.2 Consultations for the Strategy

Delegates from the NGO/ community sector recommended that:

1. The Strategy must contain high level goals, whilst also recognising that these must be locally implemented.
2. The importance of partnership and engagement should be emphasised.

3. The role of parents is crucial to the education of young people.
4. An emphasis must be placed on the fact that rights come with responsibilities.
5. Minority groups should be involved in the delivery of the actions. For example, they could assist by actively supporting students' mother tongues and cultures.

4.8 International Experience

The experience of migration varies from country to country. Some European countries are former colonial powers and some of their migrant populations come from countries which they previously occupied. Others are traditionally viewed as countries of immigration, and yet other countries invited migrants to come as “guest workers” to address labour shortages. Almost all countries have refugee and asylum seeker populations.

Migrants who have settled in Ireland tend to be well qualified and highly skilled, although not always in employment commensurate with their qualifications and experience (OECD, 2008).

Set out below, in summarised form, are *some* of the policy responses implemented to meet the educational needs of migrants in other countries involved in the OECD's thematic review:

- All provide support in learning the language of instruction and many emphasise the importance of teaching language, not just in language classes but throughout all subjects in the curriculum.
- Many provide support at pre-school and early childhood stages.
- Some provide support in mother tongue tuition.
- Some have found that systems which divide students into vocational and non-vocational streams early work against integration and academic success for migrants since there tends to be a disproportionate over- representation of migrants in the vocational sector, as found, for example, in the OECD's studies of Denmark and Austria (forthcoming and 2009b).
- Some have put in place incentives to attract immigrants into the teaching profession, particularly at primary and post- primary levels.

Much of the information on policies and in Appendix 11 (which contains a more detailed analysis of these and other international policies) is drawn from the country background reports prepared for the OECD's thematic review of migrant education and the OECD's composite report, “*OECD Reviews of Migrant Education - Closing the Gap for Immigrant Students: Policies, Practice and Performance*” (2010). It is, therefore, primarily focused towards preschool and first and second level policies. When examining these policy responses it is important to remember the different migration patterns which Ireland has experienced, compared to the other countries. The predominantly centralised nature of Irish education also means that (often decentralised) policies in other jurisdictions are not readily or entirely transferable to Ireland, nor would it be appropriate to adopt some of these approaches. Ireland is unique, and practices need to reflect this uniqueness, whilst learning from the success and weaknesses identified for other countries.

4.9 Summary of main research and policy conclusions

Table 4.8 Conclusions from research and consultations

Key areas of concern	Conclusions	Research source(s)
ECCE	Emphasis should be placed on the importance of the sector, particularly for disadvantaged and for immigrant children.	OECD “ <i>Reviews of Migrant Education: Ireland Country Report</i> ” (2009a), Nusche (2009)
	Close attention should be paid to the development of language and socio- cultural competencies of very young immigrant children.	OECD “ <i>Reviews of Migrant Education: Ireland Country Report</i> ” (2009a), Sfolta research digests (2007)
Language	All educators must be aware that they are all teachers of language and have a key role to play in developing and enhancing the language competence of all learners. This is not to be regarded as the sole remit of EAL teachers.	OECD “ <i>Reviews of Migrant Education: Ireland Country Report</i> ” (2009a), VFM review, Inspectorate report, Strategy consultations (2008- 2009), NPAR (2005), ESRI (2009), Council of Europe (2009a and b)
	There must be a wide range of teaching and learning methods used to support the acquisition of the language of instruction, with a focus on both communicative and cognitive language development.	OECD “ <i>Reviews of Migrant Education: Ireland Country Report</i> ” (2009a), ESRI (2009), VFM review, Inspectorate report, Strategy consultations (2008- 2009), IVEA “ <i>Towards a National ESOL Strategy- Lessons from a Survey of ESOL Provision in the VEC Sector</i> ” (2008)
	EAL support at primary and post-primary levels should be reviewed to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be more responsive to identified language needs. • Ensure that students are not marginalised from mainstream environments by the sole use of withdrawal for EAL learning. 	ESRI (2009), VFM review, Inspectorate report, Strategy consultations (2008- 2009)
	The Department should issue guidelines on best practice for institutions on the teaching and learning of the language of instruction as an additional language.	Inspectorate report, VFM review, Strategy consultations (2008- 2009)
	To enhance existing, and develop, new skills on the part of the whole school team regarding EAL and integration, there must	Inspectorate report, VFM review, Strategy consultations (2008- 2009)

Key areas of concern	Conclusions	Research source(s)
	be a re- apportionment of EAL expenditure, to allow for CPD for all educators.	
	Educators should give due cognisance to the importance of mother tongue. Migrant students should be encouraged to maintain a connection with their mother culture/language to assist with their proficiency in the language of instruction, and support the development of their identity and self- esteem.	OECD “ <i>Reviews of Migrant Education: Ireland Country Report</i> ” (2009a), ESRI (2009), VFM review, Inspectorate report, Strategy consultations (2008- 2009)
Mainstreaming Inclusion and integration Whole team approach	All staff should adopt a whole institution approach to creating an intercultural, positive learning environment where all students can achieve to their full potential (both socially and academically).	OECD “ <i>Reviews of Migrant Education: Ireland Country Report</i> ” (2009a), ESRI (2009), VFM review, Inspectorate report
	Education providers should accommodate cultural diversity, inclusion and integration, through particular reference to equality policy.	NCCA (2005, 2006), “ <i>Report and Recommendations for a Traveller Education Strategy</i> ” (2006), NPAR (2005)
	All learning environments, both formal and informal, should have specific anti- bullying policies, as is required of primary and post- primary schools. These policies should specify that racism, discrimination and stereotyping are unacceptable.	ESRI (2009), Strategy consultations (2008-2009), “ <i>Report and Recommendations for a Traveller Education Strategy</i> ” (2006), NPAR (2005)
	“Assessment for learning” should be an integral part of quality teaching and learning, and experienced by all students.	OECD “ <i>Reviews of Migrant Education: Ireland Country Report</i> ” (2009a), VFM review, NCCA (2007b)
	Students, teachers and parents should have high expectations and aspirations for educational outcomes which reflect students’ capabilities.	VFM review, OECD “ <i>Reviews of Migrant Education: Ireland Country Report</i> ” (2009a), ESRI (2009), “ <i>Report and Recommendations for a Traveller Education Strategy</i> ” (2006)
	Everyone involved in education- both providers and learners- should be aware that they have rights and responsibilities.	UNESCO (2006), OECD “ <i>Country Background Report for Sweden</i> ” (2009c), “ <i>Report and Recommendations for a Traveller Education Strategy</i> ” (2006)
	Migrants should be encouraged to become teachers, either through applying to have their foreign teaching qualifications recognised in Ireland or undertaking Irish teacher education	OECD “ <i>Reviews of Migrant Education: Ireland Country Report</i> ” (2009a), Strategy consultations (2008- 2009)

Key areas of concern	Conclusions	Research source(s)
	programmes for all sectors of education.	
Skills enhancement and development	The capacity of the whole team in the areas of EAL, intercultural education and diversity should be enhanced and developed, across the continuum of teacher education.	OECD “ <i>Reviews of Migrant Education: Ireland Country Report</i> ” (2009a), ESRI (2009), VFM review, Inspectorate report, One Foundation report (2009)
	Post-graduate EAL/ ESOL qualifications for teachers should be identified.	VFM review, IVEA “ <i>Towards a National ESOL Strategy- Lessons from a Survey of ESOL Provision in the VEC Sector</i> ” (2008), Inspectorate report
Partnership and Engagement	All parents including migrant, disadvantaged and Traveller parents should be encouraged to become involved in education, both by furthering their own learning and assisting with their child’s learning experience. For example, the HSCL Scheme at primary and post- primary levels, as well as third level access officers should continue to assist in this regard. All education providers have a role to play in this context.	OECD “ <i>Reviews of Migrant Education: Ireland Country Report</i> ” (2009a), ESRI (2009), Strategy consultations (2008- 2009), NPAR (2005), NYCI strategy consultations, AONTAS conference 2008
	Local community services should engage with migrant parents and encourage reciprocal engagement in order to enhance mutual understanding and assist integration.	OECD “ <i>Reviews of Migrant Education: Ireland Country Report</i> ” (2009a), Strategy consultations (2008- 2009), IVEA “ <i>Towards a National ESOL Strategy- Lessons from a Survey of ESOL Provision in the VEC Sector</i> ” (2008)
Awareness raising	Migrant parents and learners may need to have information provided in formats/ languages which can enable them to make better informed decisions about their children’s education. This should involve personal outreach efforts by education providers.	OECD “ <i>Reviews of Migrant Education: Ireland Country Report</i> ” (2009a), Strategy consultations (2008- 2009), “ <i>Migrants and Higher Education in Ireland</i> ” (EINE, 2008)
Research and data collection	The Department must continue to conduct evaluations of EAL provision, and the quality of teaching and learning in this area.	OECD “ <i>Reviews of Migrant Education: Ireland Country Report</i> ” (2009a), VFM review, NPAR (2005)
	A contact point for institutions, connected with researchers and policy makers, should be developed, so that they and education providers can access relevant data.	OECD “ <i>Reviews of Migrant Education: Ireland Country Report</i> ” (2009a), Strategy consultations (2008- 2009)
	Data on learners and their achievements must be collected for	OECD “ <i>Reviews of Migrant Education: Ireland Country</i>

Key areas of concern	Conclusions	Research source(s)
	evaluation and feedback (within a coherent framework) to provide a comprehensive picture of diversity and track policy development progress.	<i>Report</i> ” (2009a), VFM review, Strategy consultations (2008- 2009)
	National assessment tools must provide differentiated data on the access, transfer and progression performance of various student groups.	OECD “ <i>Reviews of Migrant Education: Ireland Country Report</i> ” (2009a), VFM review

4.10 Conclusions

This summary of research concentrates on migrant participation in education. Similar research is available on, for example, Traveller participation, on students and schools in disadvantaged areas and on learners who have other “different” characteristics. These different perspectives provide useful benchmarks for policy makers, institutional leaders and educators, and have informed decisions regarding the development of this Strategy.

It is clear that there are gaps in the information available. Several key themes are continually highlighted across all sectors of education. These are:

1. Adopt a whole institution approach to creating an intercultural learning environment.
2. Enhance and develop intercultural education skills across the whole education team.
3. Support students to become proficient in the language of instruction.
4. Encourage and promote active partnership and engagement between education providers, students, parents and communities.
5. Promote effective communication.
6. Promote and evaluate data gathering and monitoring so that policy and decision making is evidence based.

These common themes highlight the fact that all educational sectors are facing similar challenges and opportunities, due to immigration and increased social and cultural diversity in Ireland today.

Through addressing these common themes, all stakeholders will be enabled to play their part in promoting and ensuring that an intercultural education is an integral component of all learning environments.

Chapter Five- Key Components of Intercultural Education

5.1 Introduction

This Chapter discusses the key components of intercultural education. It is based on the findings of the research and consultations carried out to assist with the development of the Strategy. Having identified the components there is a discussion of what exactly is meant by each of them.

5.2 Basis of the Key Components

Following on from the findings of the consultation and research process undertaken to develop this Strategy, the principles and actions as originally proposed (see section 1.4) have evolved. To ensure the successful development of an intercultural ethos and practice in education, ten key components have been identified, as shown in Table 5.1:

Table 5.1 Key components of intercultural education

Key component	
1.	Leadership
2.	Mainstreaming of education provision
3.	Rights and responsibilities
4.	High aspirations and expectations
5.	Enhancing the quality of teaching
6.	Knowledge of language(s) of instruction
7.	Partnership and engagement
8.	Effective communication
9.	Data collection and research
10.	Actions, monitoring and evaluation

These ten key components are now discussed.

5.3 Key components of intercultural education

5.3.1 Leadership

Leadership is necessary at all levels. Internationally, both the EU and the UN designate specific topics of interest as matters to be highlighted in any one given year. For example, 2008 was the “*European Year of Intercultural Dialogue*”, whilst 2010 is the UN “*International Year for the Rapprochement of Cultures*”. Focussing attention on specific topics helps leaders to highlight them and encourage the engagement of all actors with such relevant topics.

On a national level, the OECD notes that, “*the professional capacity of the management team and teachers is complemented by a political climate that has provided strong leadership*” (2009a: 38). At a strategic level, it involves government (political) leadership, as demonstrated by the appointment, in 2007, of a Minister of State with Responsibility for

Integration⁴³. The Government, through the Minister of State, is responsible for leading the national agenda. “*Migration Nation- Statement on Integration Strategy and Diversity Management*” (2008) sets out the national framework for integration policy. It highlights four principles for the integration process (see table 3.5, in section 3.3.2) and emphasises that all stakeholders are responsible for ensuring successful integration and diversity management.

Other examples of national leadership regarding integration include the NDP (2007a), *Towards 2016* (2006), the “*Renewed Programme for Government*” (2009), the “*National Action Plan for Social Inclusion, 2007-2016*” (2007c) and “*Migration Nation- Statement on integration strategy and diversity management*” (2008).

This leadership is filtered to all departments and agencies developing and implementing strategic measures in the area of integration and diversity. An example of this is the Health Service Executive’s “*National Intercultural Health Strategy 2007– 2012*” (2008). Specific examples within the education sector include the White Paper on Adult Education, “*Learning for Life*” (2000) (one of the principles of which is interculturalism) and the “*National Plan for Equity of Access to Higher Education 2008- 2013*” (2008), which aims, *inter alia*, to increase participation rates of newly arrived immigrants.

National leadership must be supported by local leadership at community level, by parents, businesses and NGOs. Examples of local leadership include ongoing work in Dublin City. The “*Towards Integration: a City Framework*” (2008) report outlines a vision of the City as one “*of welcome that creates trust, appreciation and protection for all its people, all its communities and consciously celebrates diversity*” (page 10). This is to be accomplished through stakeholders acting to promote “*integration in a co-ordinated, coherent and co-operative manner*”. It is recognised that this “*can offer significant benefits, and help to create a dynamic, inclusive, integrated city*” (page 13).

Leaders of education institutions should continue to proactively adapt to the challenges and opportunities presented by increased diversity in Irish society. They should promote intercultural education so that it becomes the norm.

Leadership in this context requires a proper planning process; it is necessary to ensure that appropriate strategic whole team planning occurs and is then implemented and evaluated. The Council of Europe’s “*Policies and practices for teaching socio-cultural diversity - A framework of teacher competences for engaging with diversity*” (2009)⁴⁴ is designed to inform and guide the work of institutions working in the area of initial teacher education. See Appendix 8 for further details. At school level, the ESRI (2009) highlights the importance of a whole school “positive climate” approach: migrant “*students seemed to settle in better in schools that were generally supportive and took a whole school approach in assisting migrant students in getting used to the new learning environment*” (pg. 114). An example of the implementation of leadership can be found in SÍolta, which promotes the development of positive identities and a strong sense of belonging within the pre- school educational setting. Educational institutions can learn from the NCCA’s intercultural guidelines (2005a and 2006) and the NCCC’s “*Diversity and Equality Guidelines for Childcare Providers*” (2006); and adapt them, as appropriate, for use in their own settings.

⁴³ The Office is now titled the Office of the Minister of State for Equality, Integration and Human Rights

⁴⁴ These have been prepared on a draft basis, and have not yet been presented to the Council of Ministers.

5.3.2 Knowledge of the language(s) of instruction

Language is acknowledged by education experts as the key to social integration and academic progress (Council of Europe, 2009, UNESCO, 2006). More particularly, proficiency “*in the language of instruction is a vital condition for success at school*” (EU Commission, 2008: 8).

The objectives of the EAL expenditure by the Department of Education and Skills for schools are as follows:

- to meet the needs of EAL students so that they can
 - acquire the knowledge, skills, understanding, attitude and confidence to become proficient in social and academic English (or Irish)
 - participate fully in their education (both social and academic), on a par with their peers
 - maintain a connection with their own culture and language through school life.
- to enable the whole school team, including Boards of Management, to build capacity so as to
 - create a quality, relevant, inclusive and respectful school environment for all students, including EAL students and their parents, irrespective of their nationality, language, religion, culture or other differences
 - promote sharing of expertise and good practice
 - engage in CPD that will
 - support the principal, class/subject specialist teachers, EAL teachers and guidance counsellors in meeting the particular needs of their EAL students
 - make all teachers aware of the language dimension of their subjects and of their role, among others, as teachers of language.

It is essential that providers and learners are able to communicate effectively with each other in the language of instruction. This requires proficiency in both social and academic (cognitive) language proficiency. In the Irish context, communicating means having sufficient proficiency in either English or Irish- whichever is the language of instruction. Gaining such proficiency will allow migrant students to access the curriculum/ programme on a par with their native Irish peers. The language skills needed are more than communicative skills developed for everyday life. “*Academic language has to be taught and learnt deliberately*” (Council of Europe, 2009a:3)

The EU’s integration principles note that “*acquiring the language and culture of the host society should be an important focus*” for migrants (2004). Progressing from this, “*formative strategies of teaching, learning and assessment have to be coherent and lead to developing autonomous individuals that may use their knowledge and competences in the most beneficial ways*” (Council of Europe, 2009b:8). “*Teachers have to accept and start with what learners bring into school – what they have to offer as concepts and as communication forms*” (Council of Europe, 2009a:11). **All** teachers need to acknowledge the fact that each subject has its own

language- *“Language learning is always part of subject learning, or to put it more radically, subject learning is always language learning at the same time”* (Council of Europe, 2009a: 4).

Efforts in this regard are not confined to primary and post- primary levels. Other education sectors, such as further and higher education, have an important role to play in the development of new strategies to enable those requiring additional support with academic English. There are examples of partnership within these sectors, which assist language acquisition. For example, some institutions offer EAL tuition and preparation for students sitting English language proficiency exams. It must be emphasised that all staff in education institutions have a responsibility with regard to inclusion and integration, irrespective of which education sector they work in.

Valuing the mother tongue of migrants “can be an essential component of intercultural education, ensuring that migrant [students] feel that their cultural and language background is appreciated as much as that of the majority” (Nusche, 2009: 29). Drawing on the work of the NCCA, the OECD notes that a student’s “first language continues to be important in their linguistic, social and cognitive development” (2009a: 43). Educators at all levels should recognise students’ prior learning, and value this experience. Mother tongue is an asset and not a hindrance. Accordingly, it should be utilised in learning environments. Speaking at the Forum on Minority Languages in November 2009, the then Minister of State for Integration, John Curran, TD, noted that aspirations must be grounded in reality- “Measures which can be achieved by a shift in thinking are more likely to be implemented than those which require significant extra financing. We must seek to apply existing resources more effectively.” Given the diversity of cultures now present in Ireland, it is not possible to commit to teaching all mother tongues in mainstream education provision; communities, however, can adopt their own measures for teaching their language to interested parties.

5.3.3 Mainstreaming of education provision for all students

Mainstreaming (as opposed to segregation) is a fundamental concept that is linked to equity, equality and diversity. Equal opportunity and respect require catering for the identified educational needs of each student. From this starting point, educational provision, based on identified educational needs, should allow for all students to learn together, regardless of their nationality.

A high-level goal of the Department is to *“support and improve the quality, relevance and inclusiveness of education for every learner”* (Strategy Statement, 2008: 11). All students, irrespective of nationality or other diversity grouping, should, as far as is possible based on their identified educational needs, learn in the same classroom, access the full curriculum/ education programme, and attain on a par with their peers. This is one of the key findings specified in the *“Report and Recommendations for a Traveller Education Strategy”* (2006). The *“National Plan for Equity of Access to Higher Education 2008- 2013”* has identified the need for access for recently arrived immigrants to be incorporated into the wider strategies of higher education institutions. This is being achieved through the requirement for each institution to develop and implement an access plan.

International support for this position is found in OECD research on migrant education. This shows that the use of *“pull- out programmes” that are not closely integrated with the curriculum...requires students to miss parts of the normal curriculum [and] it may have a stigmatising effect”* (Nusche, 2009:27). According to the European Commission, all forms of

segregation will weaken the ability of education to deliver on one of its main objectives- to build social inclusion, friendships and societal bonds between children....In general, the more the school policies counteract all forms of de facto segregation...the better will be the educational experience
(2008: 9).

The ESRI's study found that schools using separate intensive provision classes were more likely to report absenteeism and difficulties in social interaction among migrants, "*which may reflect the potentially negative impact of being in a separate classroom on student morale and engagement*" (2009: 129). This may impact on educational outcomes.

There is diversity within the host community- Traveller students may be the most obvious grouping in this regard. All educators have an inclusion and integration role. This is a key part of preparing all learners for full participation in society, and life in an intercultural and inclusive setting in Ireland and worldwide.

It is recognised that a small minority of students from both host and migrant communities may have identified education needs that require additional assistance to enable them to participate fully in mainstream education at all levels, as noted by Toohey and Derwing (2006) and the OECD (2009a). There is already a range of supports available for students in education settings to facilitate their access to the curriculum. Other students may come from particularly vulnerable backgrounds which mean that they cannot immediately enter a traditional and formalised learning environment. In such cases, mainstreaming, as soon as possible, should be a goal sought for each learner, through progression by stages to a mainstream learning environment. Through participation in mainstream education, students can fully develop the knowledge, skills, understanding, attitude and confidence to succeed both academically and socially, commensurate with their abilities.

Some students may need to gain proficiency in certain aspects of their learning programme, which may not have been addressed in their prior learning experience. This may involve catering for students with very low literacy and/or numeracy skills, or those with poor proficiency in the language(s) of instruction. In other cases, it will need to be acknowledged that some students have a greater knowledge of particular aspects of the curriculum than their peers. Other students may not have appropriate qualifications, but through recognition of their prior learning and competences, they may gain exemptions and access education programmes which reflect and acknowledge such prior learning. It is through understanding the spectrum of needs presented by students that a quality education can be successfully delivered.

5.3.4 Rights and responsibilities

Social diversity is the norm and we should respect and accommodate this where it contributes to the social good. Diversity is an opportunity for communities to learn from each others' cultures and traditions (UNESCO, 2006). Migrants must feel a sense of belonging to the new society in which they are living.

Successful integration has a two- way dynamic, with "*mutual respect for cultural differences, as long as these do not conflict with the fundamental democratic values of society*" (OECD, 2009c: 41). It is therefore important to respect and preserve cultural and identity values as

long as they do not infringe on the overall good and wellbeing of Irish society. Rights and responsibilities are inextricably linked. As noted in “Migration Nation” (2008),

We cannot focus on “rights” to the exclusion of “responsibilities”- If a single concept has emerged from other countries’ experiences, it is that integration is about both rights and responsibilities. Clarifying civic responsibilities, for example, has been a major component in international intercultural dialogue events (pg. 36).

Where compulsory education is concerned, the responsibilities are clearly laid out in the “*Education (Welfare) Act, 2000*” and the “*Education Act, 1998*”. Parents have a particular responsibility to assist with their child’s learning. Students in all sectors should fully engage with the education being provided, and respect, as well as learn from, their peers. In schools, parents and students agree to the codes of conduct, which clearly set out what is and is not acceptable behaviour.

Adult education providers have similar acceptable behaviour policies, which are expected to be adhered to by all students. The responsibility of higher education institutions to develop and implement policies to increase access by socially excluded and under-represented groups is set out in legislation and in the “*National Plan for Equity of Access to Higher Education 2008-2013*” (2008).

All teachers need to acknowledge the fact that each subject has its own language- “*Language learning is always part of subject learning*” (Council of Europe, 2009b: 4). Educators, regardless of their subject speciality, have a responsibility as teachers of language, and this responsibility needs to be fully appreciated and practiced.

It is important to note that education is concerned with “*the strengthening of respect for human rights and freedoms*” (UNESCO, 2006: 22). It is equally important that students and education providers recognise and accept the responsibilities which accompany such rights.

5.3.5 High aspirations and high expectations

International research has shown the importance of educators having high aspirations and expectations for all their learners, irrespective of their background. Being “labelled as a “low-ability student” at an early age may lead students to internalise low expectations and lose motivation for, and interest in, education” (Nusche, 2009:12). Students themselves must believe that they can achieve their goals and be supported and encouraged by their teachers, parents and communities. If they receive support and encouragement at home, in their communities and in the classroom, it will contribute towards a sense of self- belief, which in turn will positively impact on their learning outcomes. Otherwise, being labelled a “low-achiever” will become a self- fulfilling prophecy (OECD, 2009a). A joint ESRI/ NCCA study, “*Moving Up: The Experiences of First Year Students in Post-Primary Education*”, highlighted the importance of having self-confidence to assist with a successful transition from primary to post-primary level. The study found that students with low self-confidence were at a greater risk of experiencing difficulties in making the transition (2004). These difficulties can take time to resolve and may diminish the education experience of the student, by putting student progress and retention at risk.

One of the expected outcomes for Traveller children attending primary education, as noted in the *“Report and Recommendations for a Traveller Education Strategy”* (2006) is that *“Schools should have high expectations for the educational outcome for Traveller children”* (page 47). For the post-primary sector the same report recommends that *“Schools should continue to have high expectations of all their pupils, including Traveller pupils, and should encourage them to be ambitious and to achieve to the highest level possible, reflecting their capabilities”* (page 56).

Such a positive outlook should be adopted by all education providers and be accepted as the norm for all students. Students should not be stereotyped because of their background, their identity or their language capabilities. The core objective of the work by higher education access programmes with schools and communities is to raise expectations among students and their parents (particularly newly arrived immigrants) about accessing higher education.

It is particularly important that all education partners acknowledge their role in establishing and sustaining high aspirations and expectations. This is not simply confined to the classroom, is applicable to both host and migrant communities, and must begin as early as possible to assist in providing students with the best chance in life. Cost benefit analyses show that investment in ECCE *“is relatively more effective and less costly than remedial programmes later on.....benefits gained from ECEC programmes may “fade out” over time if they are not continuously nurtured”* (Nusche, 2009:21).

Ireland has previously not imposed immigration controls along the lines of those imposed by countries such as Australia, New Zealand and Canada. Notwithstanding this, immigrants here are mainly well educated and are often working in highly skilled jobs: *“The education background of families of immigrant students in Ireland is, on average, slightly higher than that of their native peers, which is a contrast to many other immigration countries”* (OECD, 2009a: 21).

Parental education levels are good indicators of the value placed on education in the home. This should translate into home supports for students, with associated high expectations and aspirations. It is essential that education is valued in students’ homes and communities, regardless of the level of education they are participating in. The effect of such support is positive in all sectors, especially in cases where the language of instruction is not the mother tongue of students. This is linked to encouraging and supporting parental participation in their childrens’ education, and furthering their own education.

5.3.6 Enhancing the quality of teaching

All staff working in education, regardless of whether or not there are migrants in their schools or institutions, must be aware of their responsibility regarding the creation of an inclusive, integrated and intercultural learning environment. Some work has already been undertaken across the education sectors in this regard, as well as work with parents and communities. Awareness raising is particularly important in the context of teacher education, both in initial teacher education and in CPD. Educators *“must know how to include all students in the learning process”* (Cummins, 2007: 3).

As large scale immigration has been a relatively recent phenomenon in Ireland, many teachers qualified at a time when intercultural education did not feature in initial teacher education. Thus there is a need to build the capacity of service providers at all levels. Colleges of

Education in particular are now taking an active role in this matter. All educators must be aware of the potential to systematically infuse language into their lessons and subject areas. They have a key role to play in developing and enhancing the language competence of all learners. This is not to be regarded as the sole remit of EAL teachers. Efforts are being made to address this, particularly through CPD, the provision of information and broader programmes now offered by initial teacher education providers.

For example, in the ECCE sector, Síolta (2006) and Aistear (2009), as well as the Éist and EDENN initiatives, are being used by service providers. The Primary Professional Development Service (“PPDS”) and the Second Level Support Service (“SLSS”) have worked with EAL teachers to provide specific training on EAL acquisition, and with school leaders to promote a whole-school approach to intercultural education. The two services are being merged and, from September 2010, will constitute a new regional, cross-sectoral, multi-disciplinary service which will work to provide a coordinated response to the professional development needs of schools and teachers. The Professional Development Support Team (“PDST”) will deal with EAL at both regional and national levels. The English Language Support Teachers Association (“ELSTA”) provides valuable peer professional development for teachers of EAL. As a networked structure it also provides opportunities for the sharing of good practice amongst all teachers, including mainstream and subject teachers.

The Teaching Council of Ireland aims “*to establish and promote the maintenance and improvement of standards of teaching, knowledge, skill and competence of teachers*” (2007: 8). The Council is currently conducting a review of initial teacher education to ensure that it is responsive to the current and future education needs of all students, given increased diversity amongst the student body. This review is currently examining education programmes offered by four providers and this phase will be completed in the academic year 2009/2010. The next and final phase will involve examining the findings of this pilot review phase and submissions received, as well as consultations with education partners.

The Council of Europe’s “*Policies and practices for teaching socio-cultural diversity - A framework of teacher competences for engaging with diversity*” (2009), as previously mentioned, should provide guidance to Colleges and Schools of Education with their work in this area. Many higher education institutions offer modules in intercultural education as a component of courses, at varying levels of qualification. Intercultural guidelines for certain parts of the further education sector have been drawn up and piloted. Funding is available to provide training in the implementation of these guidelines. In addition, many VECs provide equality and diversity training to their staff.

The “*National Plan for Equity of Access to Higher Education 2008- 2013*” aims to develop the capacity of the higher education sector to support increased access and participation by all groups within society. From 2011, the HEA will revise its funding model to better reflect the costs to institutions of access programmes. Funding allocations for each institution will be based on the number of students from each national target group whilst other funding streams will continue to assist the development of new access and lifelong learning strategies by institutions, including strategies supporting students from migrant backgrounds.

In relation to teacher CPD, research and best practice would suggest that programmes should include the following:

- Directly support education institutions in building whole team capacity to cater for the varied and complex needs of their diverse cohort of students and thereby create learning organisations which have an inclusive, intercultural and integrated ethos.
- Offer opportunities for networking and peer training amongst colleagues.
- Deliver a high quality service and build on existing staff expertise.
- Utilise existing resources effectively.
- Make optimal use of online access and digital media to disseminate good practice. Practitioners should also use and contribute to *AIM*, so that the portal is a relevant national resource, providing access to up to date materials and resources.
- Provide teachers with the knowledge, skills, understanding and confidence to incorporate the language dimension of their subject into their teaching, and to adapt their teaching methodologies so that they see their role as teachers of language in subject.

5.3.7 Partnership and engagement

Actions in the area of education alone will not result in integration. Partnership and engagement with as many actors as possible, including parents and communities, is required if it is to become a reality for all of society. This is also particularly vital when making a transition from one level of education to another, starting with pre-school, and continuing along the education spectrum, through to further and life-long learning. The community sector is best placed to respond to specific local needs and to utilise locally available resources as a means of enhancing the capacity of adults in the area.

In addition to traditional classrooms, learning takes place in non-formal and informal learning environments. These latter two categories involve activities such as socialising with friends and acquaintances, work experience, being with family members, and interacting with other people/organisations in the community. The scope of the learning arena allows for the creation of respect for and dialogue between, different cultural and social groups (UNESCO, 2006).

Co-operation and collaboration between all institutional team members is the key to successful integration of migrant students with the host students. In particular at the higher and further education levels (and in post-primary senior cycle programmes such as Transition Year), providers could work closely with their local communities, particularly businesses, to ensure that all learners are offered similar opportunities. Currently, higher education access programmes all systematically work with students from migrant backgrounds.

International students are actively encouraged to study in Ireland. The Irish Council for International Students (ICOS) was established in 1970. It is an independent network of education institutions, NGOs and individuals interested in international education and working with government and other agencies. ICOS aims to promote best practice in relation to the recruitment, access and support of international students in Irish education.

Community facilities such as libraries and museums can work together. For example, to celebrate the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue in 2008, the Chester Beatty Library and

Draíocht Arts Centre in Blanchardstown came together with primary school children from the Dublin 15 area to “*Tell your story*”. Young people from multi-ethnic backgrounds were able to enhance their language skills, grow in confidence, arts awareness and multicultural understanding through highlighting commonality and celebrating difference (Irish Library News, July 2008).

An example of communities engaging with integration can be found in Cork City. The Cork Integration Forum (“CIF”) was established in June 2009, to provide a platform whereby issues affecting the integration and social inclusion of immigrants in the City can be addressed and progressed. The CIF aims to bring about an integrated and cohesive community in Cork City by being a medium for dialogue regarding issues affecting the lives of migrants and facilitating migrants’ contribution to integration and social inclusion.

The examples cited above are just some of the many initiatives already taking place across the country.

5.3.8 Effective communication

Individuals, parents and communities must be aware of the education services available, so that they can be enabled to make informed decisions. Immigrants will not have an inherent knowledge, and may not have gained knowledge, of the Irish education system. Much of the research into migrants and education has identified effective communication as a key challenge. The EU Commission noted that “*the lack of accessible information on the educational system of the country of residence can pose considerable obstacles*” (2009: 13). Speaking from a school perspective, the OECD noted that “*the greatest obstacle to engaging immigrant parents includes a lack of knowledge of the educational system*” (2009b: 45). It is important to provide “*information and logistical support to migrant parents in order to strengthen their capacity*” (Nusche, 2009:11). The EINE project noted that while “*migrant interviewees acknowledged that some information regarding access to third- level education was available, they all agreed that it was difficult to find what was particularly relevant to their own individual contexts*” (2008: 105).

New “*ways of building bridges with migrant families and communities need to be developed*” (EU Commission, 2008: 7). This involves information being supplied by education providers through easily accessible media, to encourage widespread participation in education. Personal contact can be very important, particularly if migrants feel isolated.

At a school level, institutions “*need to find new ways of communication that appeal to parents with different levels of education, language skills and understanding of the school system*” (Nusche, 2009: 33). At third level, the National Access Office has developed a comprehensive web-based information resource for students on how to access higher education provision and support. Comprehensive information on entitlements continues to be communicated to students and their families through the previously mentioned website www.studentfinance.ie. Existing initiatives such as the Pilot Transition Unit on Further and Higher Education assist with disseminating information on access options.

Many areas within the further education sector are effective at communicating information on their services to a wide audience. Examples include:

- VECs, which “*advertise, attend exhibitions and undertake outreach activities to highlight ESOL services as part of their Further and Adult Education provision*” (OECD, 2009a: 48).
- Several VECs (County Dublin VEC, County Laois VEC and City of Dublin VEC) have collaborated with Dublin South FM Community Radio Station to produce a community radio documentary series entitled “How to Learn English in Ireland”. This four part series highlights practical steps which people can take to learn English as a second language in Ireland. It also provides guidance on the practical advice, support and encouragement Irish people can offer someone who is learning English or struggling to communicate in the English language. It has been distributed to every Vocational Education Committee in Ireland and every Community Radio Station in Ireland.

The role of the HSCL Scheme Co-ordinator at primary and post- primary levels and Access Officers at third level is also very important in this regard.

5.3.9 Data collection and research

There is a need for data collection and analysis so that, for example, relevant demographic trends are available. This is essential for evidence based decision making to ensure that policies and practices cater for all learners, both migrant and host. The importance of longitudinal studies must be emphasised, to track long- term outcomes.

There are, as yet, few second and third generation migrants in Ireland, unlike other countries. As noted in Chapters 1 and 2, large scale immigration is a recent demographic development. However, it is clear that the needs of second generation migrants should be considered in future policy making and service delivery processes. Accordingly, data are required on the numbers within this cohort.

Research will provide evidence based data for consideration for future policies and practices, based on analysis, evaluation and adaptation (where necessary). Through tracking access, transfer and progression outcomes, it would be possible to examine if objectives are being met, and if changes need to be made, for both host and migrant students.

As acknowledged in Chapter 4, publicised research on intercultural education in Ireland to date has predominantly concentrated on the primary and post- primary sectors. At higher level, institutions gather data on students’ nationality and cultural backgrounds. This information is gathered annually, to provide a consistent evidence base for the development of national policy. The information will also inform institutional access plans, including intercultural education strategies.

Whilst it is acknowledged that other countries have different experiences of immigration, their experiences could assist the research process in Ireland and facilitate the establishment of benchmarks for good practice.

Education, inclusive of intercultural education, is an evolving and dynamic area. It requires regular examination to ensure that it reflects societal changes and the changing relationships between cultural groups (UNESCO, 2006). The OECD’s “*Reviews of Migrant Education-Closing the Gap for Immigrant Students: Policies, Practice and Performance*” (2010) could serve as a useful reference tool in this regard.

5.3.10 Actions, monitoring and evaluation

To ensure that the Strategy is executed, actions have been developed (and are detailed in Chapter 6) which complement and take on board the ten key components outlined in this Chapter. The actions are based on the refinement of the key components into five high level goals, for all sectors of education, as outlined in Chapter 6, and details expected outcomes. Over the five year lifetime of the Strategy, the actions will be monitored, and performance evaluated against the expected outcomes.

5.4 Conclusion

The key components discussed above are complementary, compatible and interlinked. This was noted by many of the participants in the consultation process. They are designed to encompass all participants in education (both education providers and students) and members of society, both in the host and migrant communities. Everybody has a role to play in creating an inclusive, integrated and intercultural educational environment. This is reflected in the high level goals of this Strategy, which are discussed in Chapter 6.

Chapter Six- High Level Goals and Actions

6.1 Introduction

Five high level goals have evolved from the common themes which emerged from the findings of the research and consultation process undertaken for the development of this Strategy (see Section 4.11). They are a further refinement of the 10 key components, and provide a concentrated focus for students, parents, educators, communities and policy-makers when considering how to ensure that an intercultural learning environment can prevail.

These high level goals are:

1. Enable the adoption of a whole institution approach to creating an intercultural learning environment
2. Build the capacity of education providers to develop an intercultural learning environment
3. Support students to become proficient in the language of instruction
4. Encourage and promote active partnership, engagement and effective communication between education providers, students, parents and communities
5. Promote and evaluate data gathering and monitoring so that policy and decision making is evidence based

This Chapter outlines the framework for intercultural education, as well as detailing specific actions through which the goals can be attained, and identifying the key actors responsible for these actions. The actions and goals take cognisance of the overarching national policy on integration, as detailed in “*Migration Nation- Statement on Integration Strategy and Diversity Management*” (2008).

6.2 Framework for Intercultural Education

Integration, inclusion and the development of an intercultural learning environment must be viewed as societal norms, not just as optional developments. This involves a number of different actors across the education spectrum, all of whom have a part to play in creating an intercultural learning environment.

A high level goal of education, as specified in the DES’s Statement of Strategy 2008- 2010, is to “support and improve the quality, relevance and inclusiveness of education for every learner in our schools” (page 11).

As previously noted, this Strategy aims to ensure that:

1. **all students** experience an education that “*respects the diversity of values, beliefs, languages and traditions in Irish society and is conducted in a spirit of partnership*” (*Education Act, 1998*).
2. **all education providers** are assisted with ensuring that inclusion and integration within an intercultural learning environment become the norm.

Such an approach will be “based on a commitment to inclusion by design, not as an add-on or after thought and based on policies that promote interaction, equality of opportunity, understanding and respect” (NPAR, 2005: 27).

Everybody, therefore, has a role to play in contributing towards the creation of an inclusive, intercultural and integrated society. The “successful integration of migrants into society remains a precondition for Europe’s economic competitiveness and for social stability and cohesion” (EU Commission, 2009: 3). The Intercultural Education Strategy is focussed on “the learning environment as a whole” (UNESCO, 2006: 19), whether or not it has migrant students or practitioners.

Education providers, in particular, have a leading role to play “in creating an inclusive society, as they represent the main opportunity for young people of migrant and host communities to get to know and respect one another” (EU, 2008:3).

It is possible to see the relationship between the key components of intercultural education and the high level goals of this Strategy. This relationship provides the overall framework for intercultural education and is shown in Table 6.1:

Table 6.1 Framework for intercultural education for all students and educators

	Key Component	Goal
1.	Leadership	Enable the adoption of a whole institution approach to creating an intercultural learning environment
2.	Mainstreaming of education provision	
3.	Rights and responsibilities	
4.	High aspirations and expectations	
5.	Enhance the quality of teaching	Build the capacity of education providers to develop an intercultural learning environment
6.	Knowledge of the language(s) of instruction	Support students to become proficient in the language of instruction
7.	Partnership and engagement	Encourage and promote active partnership, engagement and effective communication between education providers, students, parents and communities
8.	Effective communication	
9.	Data collection and research	Promote and evaluate data gathering and monitoring so that policy and decision making is evidence based
10.	Actions, monitoring and evaluation	

6.3 Implementing the goals and actions

The actions outlined below aim to ensure the implementation of the five high level goals of this Strategy, in the context of available resources. They build on existing practices in learning environments across all sectors, and will embed best practice for the future. This is about thinking, planning and doing things differently, conscious of diversity and the need to create intercultural learning environments. It is not about radical change and is not resource intensive. It requires respect for difference, and a concerted and evolving change of attitude.

6.3.1 Enable the adoption of a whole institution approach to creating an intercultural learning environment

This goal incorporates several of the key components, such as mainstreaming for all students; rights and responsibilities for everyone; and high expectations and aspirations for all students.

Leadership is essential for the development and enhancement of an institution's intercultural learning environment. Whilst the importance of the leader's role is true for all of the recommendations, it is most pronounced in regard to promoting the overall approach adopted. It must be reiterated that research by the OECD, ESRI and Inspectorate found widespread good practice throughout various sectors; this Strategy is designed to build on and enhance this strong foundation.

At a national level, the Government, through the Minister of State with responsibility for integration matters, is responsible for leading the national agenda. *"Migration Nation- Statement on Integration Strategy and Diversity Management"* (2008) sets out the national framework for integration policy. It highlights four principles for the integration process (see table 3.5, in section 3.3.2) and emphasises that all stakeholders are responsible for ensuring successful integration and diversity management.

Action	Stakeholder(s)
Emphasise and promote (in, for example, their development plans and strategy statements) the opportunities afforded by integration so that the education sector continues to benefit from it.	Relevant Government departments (led by the Minister of State with responsibility for integration and including DES, associated bodies and agencies), education providers, educators and community groups and organisations
Disseminate information on the rights and responsibilities, of learners, educators and parents, regarding intercultural education. In the case of migrants, their rights regarding education will be in the context of national immigration legislation and policy.	DES and associated bodies and agencies such as the NEWB, education providers and educators
Create an intercultural learning environment and accommodate cultural diversity, inclusion and integration with particular reference to equality and diversity policy.	Education providers, CPD trainers, education centres and initial teacher educators
Include racism, stereotyping, discrimination and bias as unacceptable behaviour in behaviour policies (such as anti- bullying policies) in all learning environments, both formal and informal.	Education providers
Implement, as resources permit, the <i>"National Plan for Equity of Access to Higher Education 2008- 2013"</i> (within the context of national immigration	DES, HEA, and further and higher education providers

legislation and policy).	
Actively encourage parents to be involved in both their own and their children's education.	Education providers and educators, National Parents' Council (Primary and Post- Primary), and Boards of Management
Actively encourage communities (both host and migrant) to value education, and to provide a supportive intercultural environment in which learning institutions can operate.	DES and associated bodies and agencies, education providers and community groups and organisations

Expected outcomes:

- **All learning environments continue to welcome diversity and appreciate the opportunities it affords.**
- **Institutions are accommodating cultural diversity, inclusion and integration with particular reference to equality and diversity policy.**
- **All actors are aware of their rights regarding supports and access, and of their responsibilities in the education sector and in wider society.**
- **All students are educated with their peers and enabled to achieve to their full potential, based on identified education needs.**
- **All students, as well as their teachers and parents, have high expectations and aspirations for their education outcomes.**

6.3.2 Build the capacity of education providers to develop an intercultural learning environment

This goal is primarily concerned with the key component of enhancing the quality of teaching, through building on existing good practice. Much of the research on which this Strategy is based highlighted the importance of CPD and a strong desire on the part of educators to engage in capacity building in the area of intercultural education. This is particularly the case as many practising teachers, in all sectors, qualified at a time when Irish society was less diverse and when their initial and CPD education did not address intercultural education. Colleges of Education today are making provision for intercultural education in their courses, and in a cross-curricular manner. At a national level, the Teaching Council is the primary body with responsibility in this area for primary and post-primary levels. As previously noted, it is currently engaged in a review of initial teacher education programmes.

Action	Stakeholder(s)
Teacher educators and researchers examine research findings and assess the capacity of existing training programmes to create an intercultural learning environment across the education arena.	DES and associated bodies and agencies, researchers, teacher educators and education providers
Identify CPD needs and gaps in provision, and, within the context of available resources, develop measures to address these.	
Provide modules on intercultural education, in programmes of initial teacher education and in CPD and ensure the quality and effectiveness of such training.	DES and associated bodies and agencies, education providers, CPD providers, initial teacher educators, professional networks and subject associations at post-primary level
Teacher education programmes reflect the principle that all teachers are teachers of language and specifically of the language required to access the curriculum; this is especially relevant to meeting the needs of EAL students.	
Focus capacity building on the full team of an education institution.	Education providers, their leaders, and educators
Implement the knowledge and skills acquired in capacity and awareness training programmes, and liaise with colleagues to share good practice and create local, regional and national support networks. (The work of ELSTA could be used as an example).	Educators, management associations, subject associations, ELSTA, professional networks and education centres
In order to provide expertise and support capacity building in schools a post-graduate qualification in EAL is developed and approved.	DES, associated agencies and bodies, initial teacher educators, other higher education providers, CPD providers, and education providers

Expected Outcome:

- **All providers are enabled, through their initial education and CPD, to ensure that all learners receive a quality, relevant and inclusive education through the creation of an intercultural learning environment.**

6.3.3 Support students to become proficient in the language of instruction

This goal is vital. If students are not proficient in the language of instruction, they cannot fully access the curriculum. Integration concerns more than just the education sector- students must be capable of interacting with society. Education should be concerned with both students' academic and social development. Accordingly, students should be proficient in the social and academic elements of the language of instruction. Language support should be provided in cases of identified need⁴⁵.

Actions	Stakeholder(s)
Educators at all levels gain awareness of the fact that they are also teachers of language and have a key role to play in developing and enhancing the language competence of learners.	Educators, education providers, ELSTA, CPD providers, initial teacher educators, and researchers
Continue to use a wide range of teaching methodologies to support the acquisition of the language of instruction, with a focus on cognitive language development.	Educators, CPD providers, initial teacher educators, and DES
Teaching and learning strategies in higher education institutions include measures for students requiring additional support with the academic aspects of the language of instruction to ensure that they can fully access their learning programmes.	
Distribute available EAL expenditure/ resources at primary and post- primary levels so as to enable and enhance whole- school capacity. Approaches adopted at other levels of education reflect specific education needs at these levels.	DES and education providers
Issue guidelines on best practice for the teaching and learning of the language of instruction as an additional language.	DES
Give due cognisance to the importance of mother tongue by encouraging migrant	Educators

⁴⁵ To assist with identification, the DES has provided language assessment kits at both primary and post- primary levels. Proficiency tests are also available in many higher education institutions, whilst ESOL classes are offered by VECs in the further education sector.

students to maintain a connection with their mother tongue and culture to assist in the development of their sense of identity, belonging and self- esteem, as well as their proficiency in the language of instruction. Mother tongue proficiency assists additional language acquisition. Associated with this, the option of non- curricular languages at Leaving Certificate level should be actively promoted.	
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Expected Outcomes:

- **All students are proficient in the language of instruction, on both an academic and cognitive level.**
- **Migrant students are enabled to maintain a connection with their mother tongue and culture.**

6.3.4 Encourage and promote active partnership, engagement and effective communication between education providers, students, parents and communities

As previously noted, responsibility for integration is not confined simply to the education sector. It is important that this is recognised and that everyone, in both host and migrant communities, plays their part. This is facilitated through partnership, engagement and effective communication. Information regarding the education system and education opportunities, and the ease of access to such information are key considerations for all parents, particularly for those parents not proficient in the language of instruction. Whilst Irish people, having lived and worked here will understand to a greater or lesser extent how the education system works, migrants will not have all of this information and may not have support networks in place to assist them with accessing knowledge about the education system. Disseminating accessible information is thus especially important for migrants. In particular, knowledge of the informal education system and further and higher education opportunities should be highlighted. The DES's AIM portal will assist in this regard but it is not sufficient on its own- all sectors of education must build on existing outreach and inclusivity measures to ensure that information is disseminated as widely as possible.

Actions	Stakeholder(s)
Recognise the social and economic value added to society by diversity.	Community groups and organisations, DES (via its website), VECs, education providers, and NGOs
Engage with migrant parents through personal contact, to enhance mutual understanding and assist integration.	Community groups and organisations, VECs, education providers, and NGOs
Use existing projects, such as Fáilte Isteach, as models for other community groups throughout the country to engage with migrants.	

Engage volunteers from host and migrant communities to assist with matters such as liaising with parents to increase awareness of the education system and promote participation in it.	
Engage with all parents in both host and migrant communities to promote active participation in the sector. This entails parents furthering their own education where possible, in particular with regard to language competency, and being actively involved in their child's education.	Education providers (particularly in the further and community education sectors), libraries, NGOs, and National Parents' Councils (Primary and Post- Primary)
Continue to develop and make available information on the education system, including participation opportunities, in easily accessible formats (with attention paid to language and media). Promote and highlight the availability of this information.	DES, education providers, community groups and organisations, and researchers
Minimise duplication of effort.	DES, education providers, community groups and organisations, and researchers
Continually update AIM, the central information portal of resources, as new material becomes available. Constantly highlight the availability of this resource, so that migrants, students, parents, policy-makers and researchers gain maximum benefit from it.	DES, education providers, educators, students, parents, community groups and organisations, and researchers
Make concerted efforts to engage with both the host and migrant communities to promote active participation, particularly by adult migrants, in education. Personal contact may be needed as a key outreach measure for those who are marginalised.	Education providers, and host and migrant communities
Continue to focus guidance services on increasing the awareness and the continued participation of all communities– both host and migrant, in all sectors of education.	
Advertise language learning opportunities for adult migrants, and encourage potential learners to avail of such programmes.	
Build further on media serving local and migrant communities, to assist in promoting all aspects of education.	Community groups and organisations, libraries, NGOs, and Citizens Information Centres
Publicise local education services and informal education opportunities, available through NGO and community groups.	

Expected Outcomes:

- **The existing good foundations of community work and education provision are built on to increase and enhance migrant participation in education.**
- **Information is available, in accessible formats, for all users and service providers in the education sector so that informed decisions can be made by all, regarding access, transfer and progression through the education system, irrespective of whether the users belong to the host or migrant communities.**

6.3.5 Promote and evaluate data gathering and monitoring so that policy and decision making is evidence based

It is acknowledged that there are gaps in the information available on all students. A particular consideration for intercultural education is ensuring that migrant students are achieving on a par with their native peers. Data facilitate comparisons in this regard. Over time, there will be a need to ensure that data on second and third generation migrants are gathered. Policy and decision making must be firmly based on tangible evidence and the actions below seek to ensure this.

Actions	Stakeholder(s)
Disseminate research findings and use them in policy- and decision-making.	Relevant Government departments (led by the Minister of State with responsibility for integration), including DES, associated bodies and agencies, and researchers and education providers
Determine a research agenda and facilitate its implementation, to determine if education resources are being correctly targeted and utilised, so that programme objectives are met.	DES
Enhance existing data collection practices to allow the collection and retention of anonymised data on students, their attainment levels and their progression patterns. Data gathered ensures that migrants are a specific entry.	DES, and associated bodies and agencies, education providers, CSO, ESRI, and researchers
Centralise this anonymised data within the DES on a learner database, which ensures that migrants are a specific entity.	DES
Assist with research.	Parents, community groups and organisations, and education

	providers
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Expected Outcome:

- **Data are collected which identify both host and migrant students so that comparisons can be made, gaps identified and where necessary, interventions are modified and/or initiated, to ensure a quality inclusive, intercultural and integrated education service for all students.**

6.4 Structures to monitor implementation

It is important that the implementation of the five high level goals is monitored and evaluated. This will happen at three levels:

1. The DES will lead a group comprised of education partners, from relevant departmental sections and associated state agencies. This group will meet regularly to monitor the implementation of the actions and ensure that an intercultural education environment is being further developed. This will be facilitated through appropriate reporting. The group will engage in a partnership process to ensure that progress is made in implementing the actions recommended.
2. DES will regularly update the OMI's inter-departmental committee on progress, as well as formally updating the group on an annual basis. In this way, a co-ordinated approach will be promoted towards policy and decision making in the area of the national integration policy.
3. A Ministerial Council on Integration will be established by the end of 2010, and will meet at regional level several times a year. The Council will be composed of immigrants from different nationalities and provide a forum for members to articulate their views on integration, including views on the education sector. Service providers and central and local government will engage with the Council. Effective communication and partnership and engagement are some of the goals of the strategy, and the work of the Ministerial Council will support their development.
4. An annual meeting with all stakeholders (internal and external) will be held to provide updates on progress and developments in their particular areas. The aim of this annual meeting is to encourage partnership and participation. People must feel a sense of ownership of the Strategy and realise that intercultural education is a continually evolving process.

Although intercultural education deals with issues cutting across sections, departments and agencies, it is important that direction and focus are maintained. Through a clear partnership process, involving government departments and agencies, as well as other key stakeholders, progress can be facilitated, with the DES's internal committee overseeing the process.

As previously noted, integration is not the sole responsibility of the DES; it involves numerous stakeholders from many different sectors. Inter-agency co-operation is required to adopt a leadership role across the whole of Government and throughout society.

6.5 Summary

The goals:

- Are firmly based on the key components underpinning the Strategy.
- Take account of the recommendations of the key reports and consultations that fed into the development process.
- Take account of their influence in each of the proposed action areas.

- Highlight the overlap between the key components.

It is essential that everyone in the education sector recognises their role in the process of creating an intercultural learning environment.

The actions and specification of responsible actors and expected outcomes will enable monitoring and evaluation to happen. Any identified problems can be swiftly addressed.

This Strategy has concentrated on first generation migrants, as, currently, many migrants are in fact first generation, that is, they were not born in Ireland. In the future, the needs of more and more second and third generation migrants should be considered. This highlights a number of unanswered questions. Should they be considered “migrants” at that stage? What about children born here to migrant parents, or of a mixed heritage? Or those who moved here at an early age and wish to develop and maintain two cultures/ identities? Regardless of any questions surrounding identity, the OECD (2009a: 45) advises that

in several countries second-generation migrants fare less well than those of the first generation and in other countries second-generation children perform better than their parents. Ireland will want to take advantage of the potential of its migrants by ensuring that they fall into the latter category.

It is beyond the remit of the Strategy to fully address all of these questions. However, it must be acknowledged that they are important considerations, not only for the education sector, but also for service delivery across the public sector. As noted above, the area of migration and integration is an ever evolving one, as evidenced by the dramatic population profile changes of the last 10- 15 years in Ireland. The lifetime of this Strategy is five years; it will need to be reviewed in five years’ time to establish the contemporary context.

6.6 Conclusion

It is important that the actions are viewed holistically, and that the link with each high level goal is clearly established. Integration is the responsibility of everyone, based on inclusion and respect for differences; all of society (both host and migrant) has a role to play in promoting an intercultural ethos, integration, inclusion and diversity. Likewise, all educators, regardless of whether or not they work with migrant students, have a responsibility to develop an intercultural learning environment. Parents and communities have a key role to play in the process. This role extends to rejecting racism, bias, stereotyping and discrimination. This approach is not solely the remit of the education sector; it is the responsibility of Irish society

An intercultural learning environment must be brought about by intentional design, and not left to develop on an *ad hoc* basis. This Strategy is a key tool to enabling this vision to become a reality. Leadership and CPD are vitally important in this regard.

It is acknowledged that the country is currently facing challenging economic times. However through making full use of the research and resources already developed, and taking on board the high level goals and key components of intercultural education, the challenges presented by inclusion, diversity and immigration can be effectively addressed, so that the opportunities they afford can be fully enjoyed in an integrated Ireland, both now

and into the future. Intercultural learning environments can become the established norm, to the benefit of all members of society.

In summation:

It is the efforts of the single school/ institution which matter

(adapted from Network of Experts in Social Sciences of Education and Training, 2008).