Migrant Integration Policy: A Nationalist Fantasy of Management and Control?

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Abstract
Integration and how it is to be achieved have only recently become objects of policy and discussion in Ireland. Approaches to integration in Ireland are influenced by: the integration policies of those countries with longer experiences of immigration; EU policy; and the specificity of the Irish experience of migration. The Republic of Ireland is an interesting example of a state that is simultaneously involved in policy initiatives that promote the integration of Irish emigrants and their descendents as immigrant communities in their countries of destination and the integration of immigrants in Ireland, including return Irish migrants. This article challenges the assumption that non-integration is the main problem facing emigrants abroad and immigrants to Ireland and argues that the mode and degree of migrant integration (however understood) depends on a wide and changing range of factors and can take place, in spite of, just as much as because of integration policies and initiatives. Taking three policy reports as its focus, the discussion draws on Foucault’s notion of governmentality to make explicit the thoughts that are largely tacit in the language, practices and techniques of integration as defined and discussed in these reports. The article argues that integration policies as formulated by the EU and national governments can be seen as nationalist practices of belonging that reproduce national boundaries of inclusion and exclusion. They rely on assumptions about migration and the territorialized nation-state that cannot hold in the face of the speed of capitalist development, which demands a rethinking of the fantasy that national spaces, borders and populations can be managed and controlled.

Keywords: Emigration, Immigration, Integration, Governmentality, Tolerance, Neo-liberalism
Introduction

During the Irish Presidency of the EU, January - June 2004, the Department of Social and Family Affairs, with the support of the European Commission, hosted a conference on the topic of ‘Reconciling Mobility and Social Inclusion’ in Bundoran, Co Donegal. The Conference took place in April just before the accession of 10 new member states to the EU on May 1, 2004. It brought together experts and policy makers from the EEA countries, the EU Commission, academic institutions, social partners, and NGOs based in Ireland, Britain, USA and Australia. The aim was to address the EU goal of promoting the mobility of workers and consider policies for responding appropriately to the vulnerabilities that can arise in some cases as a result of this mobility. Most contributors focused, therefore, on the interconnections between a labour market policy that requires worker mobility and policies of social inclusion/integration.

Insofar as the conference was planned with a view to learning from Ireland’s history of emigration and services to emigrants abroad, the deliberations maintained a focus on the fact that immigrants are also emigrants. Implying a simultaneous concern with the integration of immigrants in receiving countries, and of emigrants abroad through the ongoing support of sending countries (sometimes the same countries), Gerry Mangan notes in the conference report that many EU countries, in addition to supporting immigrants, also need to support their own emigrants when leaving and returning, and to an extent when they are abroad, in liaison with NGOs and the authorities in the host countries (2005, p. 10).

The integration and well-being of migrants are identified here as the responsibilities of both the sending and receiving countries. Although the politics of migration have always been marked by relations between countries of emigration and immigration, it is only recently that sending countries have developed policy initiatives to include emigrants in the nation. This often involves a simultaneous redefinition of the nation in relation to both out and in-migration (Gray 2006). The development of policy initiatives directed at both emigrants and immigrants in the Republic of Ireland since the mid-1990s make it a particularly interesting case study for examining the contemporary dynamics of migration policy making. In this article I examine the potential of these migration policy trends and the focus on integration for challenging banal nationalist assumptions or territorialized notions of the nation state and belonging.

In the conference session for which I acted as Rapporteur, Antigone Lyberaki’s paper on Albanian migrants in Greece, raised questions about the social protection agenda in a way that I found both compelling and challenging. Noting the speed of global capitalist change and consequent shifts in labour market trends, she identified the centrality of informal support networks to migrant well-being, and argued that more formal modes of ‘social protection’ were of ‘lesser importance’
She emphasised this point by suggesting that despite their different entitlements to social protection, regular and irregular migrants often experienced similar problems (ibid.). Lyberaki’s contribution highlighted an absence of attention in policy documents and integration programmes to how migrants themselves adapt informally to rapidly changing labour market trends as well as shifts in local and global social conditions. Perhaps more significantly, Lyberaki’s intervention challenged the assumption that national and EU social policy initiatives impact greatly on the lives of migrants. The implication of her paper seemed to be that the mode and degree of migrant integration (however understood) depends on a changing range of factors and can take place, in spite of, just as much as because of integration policies and initiatives. Although an argument can be made that integration measures and policies improve the lives of some of the most vulnerable migrants, this is not a good enough reason to place such policies and initiatives beyond critique. Indeed, it is via critique that the taken for granted assumptions underpinning how migration matters are articulated and possibilities for alternative ways of thinking about the politics of migration are opened up.

Integration policies in Ireland are shaped primarily by EU guidance and by Ireland’s historical relationship to modernisation and migration. Although member states retain primary responsibility for immigration and integration policies, in recent years the EU has been active in trying to advance the integration agenda. Sarah Spenser summarises the EU position as follows:

The Greek and Dutch presidencies of the EU in 2003 –2004 oversaw progress towards acceptance by Member States that the EU has a role to play in advancing the integration agenda, even while primary responsibility remains at the national and local levels. It is accepted that there should be a common framework for integration policies and the first step, a document on Common Principles, has been agreed (2005, p. 26).

While these supra-national agreements set a broad agenda for integration, the focus and approach to integration varies between states. EU communications and position statements identify integration as ‘a matter of social cohesion and economic efficiency’ and expect member states to ‘create the conditions in which it is possible for the immigrant to participate in economic, social, cultural and civil life’ (Spencer, 2005, p. 18). During the Dutch Presidency (July – December 2004) all 25 member states agreed on Common Basic Principles for immigrant integration policy which are non binding, but which provide guidance on goals, priorities, and the measurement of progress (Spencer, 2005, p. 23). The eleven principles identify integration as ‘a multidimensional process of mutual accommodation’ requiring receiving societies to remove all barriers to integration and involving a process that respects the rights and obligations of migrants

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1 This view is set out in the communication from the Commission on Immigration, Integration and Employment published in 2003 and was endorsed later that year during the Greek Presidency.
As noted already, integration and how it is to be achieved have only recently become objects of policy and discussion in Ireland and are influenced by both the EU Common Principles and the specificity of the Irish experience of migration.

The Republic of Ireland is an interesting example of a state that is simultaneously involved in policy initiatives that promote the integration of Irish emigrants and their descendents as immigrant communities in their countries of destination and the integration of immigrants in Ireland, including return Irish migrants. The aim in this article is to critically engage with the assumption that non-integration is the main problem facing emigrants abroad and immigrants to Ireland. This is done by deploying Foucault’s notion of governmentality to examine the language, practices and techniques of integration in three policy reports - the Report of the Task Force on Policy Regarding Emigrants – Ireland and the Irish Abroad (2002), the Report of the Interdepartmental Working Group on the Integration of Refugees in Ireland – Integration a two way process (2003), and the NESC Report - People, Productivity and Purpose (2005). These reports were chosen because they set out systematic and rationalised sets of principles and procedures to be applied in migrant integration policies.

Following a summary of how Foucault’s notion of governmentality can be usefully deployed to open up the possibility of thinking and acting differently with regard to migration, nation and integration, this theoretical approach is adopted to discuss the policy recommendations for the support and integration of emigrants and immigrants outlined in these reports. My aim here is to interrogate some of the assumptions that surround integration policies (targeted at emigrants and immigrants) and to consider their constitutive power in reproducing ‘tolerant’ inclusive nationals and migrants in need of integration. I also examine the ways in which discourses of integration position the emigrant and immigrant (albeit in different ways) as always already excluded and in need of integration.

Governmentality, migration and neo-liberal governance

Foucault’s (1988, 1991) notion of governmentality is concerned with the many ways in which the conduct of individuals and groups is directed. Governmentality, therefore, involves governmental practices which address themselves to ‘life’ in the form of the individual detail of personal conduct including how the individual conducts herself in meeting her needs. The discursive practices surrounding any targeted population are seen as rationalities and technologies of governance by which specific individuals and groups are constituted as a problem in need of a particular policy response. For example, policies and practices of integration involve ‘ways of knowing’ or getting to know who migrants are and ‘how to recognise the problem’ (Titchkosky, 2003, p. 518). The construction of immigrants as a distinct population (group) makes possible the grouping together of people with very different social, economic, political,
cultural, gendered and racialised statuses and experiences into one problematic population in need of a coherent policy response. For example, emigrants and immigrants are repeatedly defined, surveyed and accounted for in order that integration, often based on multicultural programmes and human rights discourse, can be legitimized, organised and delivered. So, through the development of programmes for supporting and integrating migrants, the very categories ‘emigrant’ and ‘immigrant’, and emigration and immigration as phenomena, are constituted as populations and processes in need of governance. The contemporary production of migration as a problem of integration in the EU and Ireland involves coming to know migration and migrants through expert knowledges of demography, economics, human rights, equality and multiculturalism. Migrants come to matter then along continuums of population proportion, economic contribution, cultural difference, national tolerance and entitlement to individual and group rights.

Governmentality denotes historically and spatially specific modes of problematisation of particular populations; the forms of knowledge that inform the definition of such populations; and policy concerns about the individual’s ability to fulfil particular ‘processes of life’, for example, employment, which is based on an understanding of citizen as an economic contributor. Governmentality, then, does not refer to the government, but to the many heterogeneous and pervasive ways in which the conduct of individuals and groups is shaped and directed. The ‘conduct of conduct’ is central to the notion of governmentality and is about the ‘manner in which individuals, groups and organisations manage their own behaviour’ (Dean and Hindness, 1998, p. 2). Technologies of government involve those procedures and methods that shape the conduct of individuals and populations such as surveys, polls, economic and social policies, educational and health systems.

Individuals and groups do not exist in a vacuum but are imbricated with other things such as wealth, territory and resources. The state and other institutions depend on the cultivation of the proper disposition of individuals and groups and their relations to territory and resources, amongst other things. However, power here is not just vested in particular institutions such as the state because the regulation and supervision of conduct takes place across all social sites. Power works on the basis that all parties to the power relationship are free to reflect, act and make decisions. It operates in capillary ways as particular technologies (policies and programmes) of government deploy the agency and capacities of individuals and populations. Governing takes place then through subjectivities and the promotion of ‘the self-steering capacities of individuals’, groups, and organisations (Triantafillou, 2004, p. 11). The ‘tolerant citizen’ or ‘vulnerable migrant’ are ‘collective identities “made up”...through particular forms of reasoning and technologies so that they might be worked with and upon to different ends’ (Dean and Hindness, 1998, p. 11).
With regard to the ethos of governmental practices, many suggest that aspects of contemporary rule tend to reproduce a neo-liberal agenda and effects. Neo-liberalism, according to Mitchell Dean, is ‘a peculiar art of political invention that at once problematises the state by an invocation of choice as it multiplies the domains of life restructured according to the norms of a market’ (Dean, 1994, p. 193). Aihwa Ong argues that neo-liberalism is central to the shaping of ‘our notion of the deserving citizen’. (Ong 1999, p. 129). For her, it is not just ‘an ethos but a regime of normalizing whereby homo-economicus is the standard against which all other citizens are measured and ranked’ (ibid.). The economy and the market are seen as penetrating all aspects of life so that everything is evaluated in terms of economic outcomes and personal or communal advancement. Moreover, practices of governance are increasingly taking place ‘at a distance’ through organisations, networks and individuals thus blurring the boundaries between the state and civil society.

Nikolas Rose (1999) notes a recent rise in governmental practices that seek to promote choice, autonomy, efficiency and accountability by making individuals and specific communities responsible for their own behaviour, goals and outcomes. Individuals are invited to be active in promoting their own empowerment and participation in decision making, for example, through ‘active citizen’ and community programmes. A particular attraction of ‘the language of “community”’ in neo-liberalism, according to O’Malley, is ‘that it locates rule in the everyday, voluntary interactions or commonalities of interest of private individuals’ (1998, p. 158). Communities are enlisted into governmental programmes to govern problems that cannot be left entirely to individuals and this gives an impression of a retreat of the state from governance and interference (ibid.). In this way, community formation can be an artefact of rule.

Having located contemporary governmental practices in relation to the dominance of neo-liberal ideologies, it is important that neo-liberal ideology is not turned into a kind of totalising devise for understanding our contemporary moment in such a way that other rationalities such as social justice can only be read as in the service of neo-liberal agendas. Although policies directed at migrants cannot be made fully intelligible by reference to a neo-liberal logic (Lippert, 1998), the pervasiveness of this logic demands constant vigilance in order that other logics are not appropriated to neo-liberal ends.

Emigrant well-being and the re-integration of returning migrants

Despite Ireland’s long and much debated history of emigration, it is only recently that it has become a direct object of government policy.² The convergence of a

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² Although emigration had been a matter of public debate since the 1920s, government commissions and reports led to few significant policy outcomes. For example, following the 1937 Kirkintollich (a small village in Scotland) tragedy, in which ten migrant workers from Achill Island died in a fire in their sleeping quarters, an Interdepartmental Committee on Seasonal Migration was
number of events and initiatives (including an intellectual engagement with post-nationalist ideas that included the diaspora, Mary Robinson’s presidency, the Peace Process, more concerted emigrant organising and lobbying of the Irish government, lobbying by the Episcopal Commission for Emigrants, and the high levels of return migration since the 1990s) meant that the diaspora and emigration gained significance as objects of political attention and policy in recent years. For example, the Department of Foreign Affairs’ 1996 White Paper *Challenges and Opportunities Abroad* included a chapter entitled ‘The Irish Abroad’ which identified the 70 million throughout the world who can claim Irish descent as a ‘vast extended family [which] creates an immense reservoir of goodwill towards Ireland and is one of our most important assets as a nation’ (1996, subsection 12.1). This paper both embraced the diaspora as a resource (with kinship representing the central mode of Irish diasporic solidarity) and acknowledged that many ill-equipped and vulnerable people continue to emigrate. Moreover, it committed the government to preventing involuntary emigration and supporting vulnerable Irish abroad.

The Good Friday Agreement (1998) can be seen as a turning point with regard to policy regarding emigrants because it provided that the state should acknowledge ‘the Irish abroad’ as part of the nation. This was followed in 2000 by the passing of a constitutional amendment to Article 2 that formalised this recognition. Given this new context in which to view Irish emigration, the government established a *Task Force on Policy regarding Emigrants* 3 in 2001 to ‘recommend a long-term policy established. The committee’s report argued that the Irish state should not get involved in the welfare concerns of Irish nationals in Britain. The Catholic Church in Britain largely played this role. The establishment by the government of the twenty-four member *Commission on Emigration and other Population Problems* in 1948 could be seen as indicating that the state wanted to adopt an explicit policy with regard to emigration. However, the terms of reference and remit of the commission resembled closely that of the 1944 *British Royal Commission on Population*, which arose out of ‘population panic’ in Britain as a result of the aging population and declining birth-rate (Thane, 1999). The Report received considerable newspaper coverage and government departments prepared memoranda on the implications of the Commission’s findings for their departments, but no substantive recommendation was followed and its findings descended into obscurity (Delaney, 2000). COWSA (Committee on Welfare Services Abroad) was set up in the early 1970s to support those young people who were leaving for England with little preparation or money. This was superseded in 1984 by the London-based DION committee established by the then Minister for Labour Ruairí Quinn, who decided that a committee in Dublin was not adequate to the task of addressing the needs of vulnerable Irish migrants in Britain and established the London-based DION Committee (Dion meaning roof or shelter). These initiatives were all marginal to the national policy agenda. In the 1990s, the final Report of the *Commission on the Family* (1995) dedicated one full chapter to Family Networks and the Irish Diaspora. It noted that emigrants have strong kin networks with ‘their families back home’ and called for an examination of how kin networks might be strengthened and young people might be better prepared for migration, but offered no more specific policy recommendations.

3 The *National Action Plan against Poverty and Social Exclusion* (2003-5) also sets its agenda in relation to ‘migrants and ethnic minorities’ in the context of Irish emigration since the middle of the 19th century and argues for ‘[a] comprehensive framework policy on migration covering the regulation of inflows into the state, as well as integration issues, racism and interculturalism, [to]…be developed in respect of immigrants, emigrants and returning emigrants’ (p. 28).
approach to emigration and meeting the needs of emigrants’ (Cowen, 2001). According to its report:

The new approach to meeting the needs of emigrants should be rooted in the recently introduced Constitutional commitment to the Irish Abroad. This includes acknowledging the Irish Abroad as part of the Irish Nation and recognising their achievements (Task Force Report, 2002, p. 11).

Thus, emigrants (and their descendents) were officially named as ‘the Irish Abroad’ and identified as a constituency whose welfare, cultural, and other integration needs, should be considered, and, in some cases, responded to by the Irish government. The Task Force Report noted that the commitment to emigrants in the programme for government - *Programme for Prosperity and Fairness* (2000) was ‘based on a recommendation in the Harvey Report commissioned by the Irish Episcopal Commission for Emigrants and the Irish Commission for Prisoners Overseas in 1999’ (Task Force Report, 2002, p. 14). This report identified a ‘need for a Government commitment to a partnership approach to the subject of emigration and to the development of a coherent and effective policy, funding and service infrastructure’ (ibid.). Although the Harvey Report is identified as the trigger for establishing the Task Force, the Task Force Report locates this policy development in a context of current economic prosperity implying that it would not have been possible in a less healthy national economic climate:

Taking into account Ireland’s current prosperity, the Task Force recommends that an integrated strategy be adopted to provide effective support to our emigrants...For this to succeed, a partnership approach, involving the statutory authorities and the voluntary sector, in Ireland and overseas, as well as the Irish Abroad, is needed (2002, p. 10).

The report emphasised that such support services and ‘the relationship between the Irish at home and abroad...be developed on a partnership basis’ (2002, p. 70). Partnership is used in an ambiguous way here, but becomes more concrete with reference to the provision of support services to ‘emigrants abroad who are in need’.

The Task Force believes that the Government has a responsibility to assist and support Irish emigrants abroad who are in need and to ensure that, as far as possible, those who emigrate are properly prepared for the challenges and opportunities of living and working abroad. For this to succeed, a partnership approach, involving the statutory authorities and the voluntary sector, in Ireland and overseas, as well as the Irish Abroad, is needed. (2002 p. 10; emphasis added).

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* Programme for Prosperity and Fairness – Section 4.6: ‘Commitment to the Wider World’. 
The response of the Department of Foreign Affairs to this report was to establish a dedicated Unit for the Irish Abroad in 2004 ‘to work with the voluntary agencies at home and abroad to maximise the impact of our collective efforts’ (Cowen, 2004). This approach builds on Ireland’s ‘social partnership’ approach to economic and social policy since 1987 which represents ‘a new form of social and political regulation’ (Taylor, 2005, p. 50). Although identified as a neo-corporate approach to governance (ibid.; Boucher and Collins, 2003), partnership can also operate as a technology of advanced liberal governance (Lippert, 1998). Here the idea of partnership lines up with advanced liberal governance through the assumption that the state is ‘unfit to accomplish the “conduct of conduct” on its own’ (Lippert, 1998, p. 393). Indeed, the aim of developing integration policies is already identified in government documents as an element of the social partnership agreement. For example, the Social Partnership Agreement, *Sustaining Progress* (2003-2006), which set the policy agenda for this period stated:

Government and the social partners agree on the desirability for the development of a comprehensive policy framework on migration (immigration and emigration)...It will incorporate issues on which the Government will consult with the social partners, - specifically, economic migration and the labour market, integration issues, racism and interculturalism and issues affecting emigrants...Arising from the conclusions and recommendations of the Task Force on Emigrants Abroad (sic), a coherent set of initiatives will be developed in consultation with relevant interests. (2003: section 2.5).

Emigrants are identified as objects of governance in the ‘agreed’ terms of integration through the labour market; the removal of barriers to integration such as racism and discrimination; and the recognition of cultural difference. These are to be achieved via social partnership based on consultation and agreement which are identified as ‘investments where everybody wins’ (Lippert, 1998, p. 393). A ‘rosy’ partnership picture is ‘framed a bit in the future, slightly out of reach in time’, but in accordance with general agreement about the need for economic development, migrant integration and combating racism (ibid.). For Lippert, the term ‘partner’ has acquired moral overtones within neo-liberal agendas because to ‘ “partner” has become the proper, civilized way to relate’ (1998, p. 392). Indeed, one of the policy architects of social partnership in Ireland, commenting on the process itself, noted that ‘deliberation which is problem solving and practical produces consensus even where there are underlying conflicts of interest, and even where there was no shared understanding at the outset’ (O’Donnell, 1998, in House and McGrath, 2004, p. 49).

Both the Partnership Agreement *Sustaining Progress* (2003-2005) and the *Task Force Report on Policy regarding Emigrants* mark a new accommodation with migration insofar as it was no longer possible to discuss the topics of emigration and ‘the

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5 This unit had a budget in 2006 of over 12 million euro.
Irish abroad’ without locating these in the context of contemporary immigration to Ireland and vice versa. The Task Force Report noted that:

The Task Force is conscious that its consideration of the needs of Irish emigrants is taking place at a time of substantial inward migration to Ireland. Many of these are returning Irish emigrants but an increasing number are foreign nationals, embarking on a similar journey to a new and hopefully better life that so many Irish people have made in the opposite direction. While the subject of immigration into Ireland by non-nationals does not fall within its remit, the Task Force believes that the needs of Irish emigrants should be viewed in the context of the increasingly multicultural nature of Irish society that is emerging as the level of migration into Ireland continues to grow. The more we appreciate the needs of foreign nationals coming to Ireland, the better able we will be to respond to the challenges facing our own emigrants abroad. Conversely, we can learn from the successes and failures of our emigrants how best to assist the integration of foreign immigrants into our society (2002, para 1.15, p 14; emphasis added).

Migration is problematised here as both emigration and immigration. Returning migrants were a priority population for the Task Force, which was asked to recommend measures ‘to encourage and facilitate the return to Ireland and reintegration of emigrants and their families, especially the vulnerable and the elderly (2002, p. 54). The report recommended that housing, care and support in Ireland for elder returnees be funded and that employment and training services be provided for returning migrants needing help with joining the labour market. However, in the above section of the report, emigration and immigration become equivalent phenomena as ‘foreign nationals’ in Ireland embark on ‘a similar journey’ to Irish emigrants, and ‘the migrant experience’ becomes a homogenised object of national learning and governance. In the case of both immigrants in Ireland and the ‘Irish Abroad’, the governance of integration was to take place ‘at a distance’ via partnerships with NGOs and voluntary associations. Moreover, a pragmatic ‘economic imperative’ rationality of governing migration (emigration and immigration) becomes the basis for reproducing the fiction of consensus in the social partnership.

But even if O’Donnell argues that social partnership deliberation ‘has the potential to shape and reshape their (partnership players) understanding, identity and preferences’ (1998, p. 27 in House and McGrath, 2004, p. 49), the politics of migration, identity and identification cannot be totally contained by this rationality of governance, precisely because of the speed of change and

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6 The National Action Plan against Poverty and Social Exclusion (2003-5) also sets its agenda in relation to ‘migrants and ethnic minorities’ in the context of Irish emigration since the middle of the 19th century and argues for ‘[a] comprehensive framework policy on migration covering the regulation of inflows into the state, as well as integration issues, racism and interculturalism, [to]...be developed in respect of immigrants, emigrants and returning emigrants’ (p. 28).

7 Of course most immigrants do have a nationality although this may not be Irish.
contradictions of global capitalism, the extent to which cultural meanings now transcend borders, and how Irish society is increasingly differentiated. The Task Force Report and the government’s response to it constructs a population of ‘vulnerable emigrants’ in need of support so that their well-being abroad can be protected and/or they can be re-integrated into Irish society on their return. These migrants are constructed as already un-integrated in Ireland and their country of destination: ‘Many of them were ill-equipped to cope with the challenges of living abroad with the result that they failed to integrate well in their adopted countries, and in some cases, became marginalized or socially excluded’ (2002, p. 10). But the marginalized are balanced against those who ‘made it’ as migrants whose experiences of integration and multiculturalism can inform the development of tolerance and acceptance of difference ‘at home’. The experience of emigrants is also identified as a resource for developing policy on immigration:

The Task Force believes that Ireland can draw on the experience and concerns of its emigrants, in both EU and non-EU states, in relation to their needs and rights in helping to create just and transparent migration polices which can in time inform and enhance national policy…We need to learn more about our Diaspora – its sources, its extent, its influences on the history of both Ireland and other States, its triumphs and its failures. This in turn should lead to an understanding of multi-culturalism. It should raise awareness about the differences and similarities between home and abroad and promote support for diversity and tolerance (2002, p. 25).

The integration and tolerance of ‘diversity’ emerge as experiences and skills developed in the Diaspora that can be learnt from and transferred to a politics of migration in an Ireland now experiencing immigration and more obvious cultural differences. Interestingly, the relationships of Irish citizens living in Ireland to the ‘Irish Abroad’ (which includes Irish citizens) is not constructed in terms of tolerance, but as relationships that can inform us how experience can be different and similar. This collective transnational learning is a specifically ‘Irish’ resource because Irish ‘experiential capital’ can be mined in order to ‘inform and enhance national policy’ (at home). The question of tolerance arises only in the context of support and integration initiatives for immigrants in Ireland, which is examined in more detail in the following section.

**Immigration and integration**

In this section I examine integration as a governmental practice applied to immigration. The report *Integration a two way process* is a key document in which the government defines its position on integration. This report was presented to the Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform by the Interdepartmental Working Group on the Integration of Refugees in Ireland in 2003 and offers some insight into how integration is understood in policy making in Ireland. I focus on this report which is concerned mainly with the integration of refugees because of
its focus on the notion of integration, but I supplement this discussion with a consideration of a NESC Report (2005) which addresses migrant integration in relation to its themes of people, productivity and purpose.

In 1998 the report of the Interdepartmental Committee on Immigration, Asylum and Related Matters called for initiatives to facilitate the integration of refugees and those given leave to remain in Ireland. The government responded by establishing an Interdepartmental Working Group ‘to formulate a strategy for implementing the Government’s policy of responding positively to the needs of persons granted refugee status or leave to remain’ (Interdepartmental Working Group, 2003, p. 6). The report Integration a two way process notes that in ‘arriving at a definition of integration, the Working Group had regard to the working papers prepared by ECRE8 and the submissions received from Non-Governmental Organisations’ (2003, p. 9). The group also noted that while in some countries the goal was assimilation rather than embracing cultural diversity, they were guided more by countries ‘such as the Netherlands, Sweden, Finland and Denmark’ where empowerment, participation and a commitment to multiculturalism underpins integration policies and programmes (2003, p. 36). Integration is defined in the report as ‘the ability to participate in Irish society to the extent that a person needs, and wishes in all of the major components of society without having to relinquish his or her own cultural identity’ (2003, p. 42). This definition, which emphasises full participation and retention of cultural identity, gets nuanced in the body of the report which suggests other assumptions underpinning the notion of integration:

Integration is a two way process that places a real obligation on both society and the individual refugee. From the refugee’s perspective, integration requires a willingness to adapt to the lifestyle of Irish society without abandoning or being expected to abandon one’s own cultural identity. From the point of view of Irish society, it requires a willingness to accept refugees on the basis of equality and to take action to facilitate access to services, resources, and decision-making processes in parity with Irish nationals… (2003, p. 42; emphasis added).

Although the membership of the Working Group did not include refugees, the group takes it upon itself to define integration ‘from the refugee’s perspective’. Refugees are expected to work on themselves to make themselves amenable to integration and the Irish citizenry is invited to accept and include refugees as equal and entitled to services, resources and participation. Technologies of accountability are brought to bear on the process of integration as the report goes on to argue that the benefits of successful integration can be measured by the ability of refugees ‘to act independently in Irish society’; to use their own skills to

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8 ECRE is the European Council on Refugees and Exiles and is an umbrella organisation of 80 refugee-assisting agencies in 30 countries working towards fair and humane policies for the treatment of asylum seekers and refugees.
‘represent themselves and achieve self-sufficiency’; and ‘to recognise that integration is a two way process to which they need to be committed and in which they have an intrinsic role to play’ (2003, p. 42). In other words, integration policies must foster self-sufficient and autonomous immigrants, who must work on themselves in order to be independent, and committed to contributing to the Irish economy and society, in order that they may be integrated. The report is concerned here with what constitutes the most proper and efficient modes of conduct in promoting effective integration. In line with neo-liberal modes of governance, migration, individuals and groups are invited to be active and to take responsibility for their own integration. Refugees are imagined as choosing and advocating their way into neo-liberal citizenship in Ireland. This is not a totally natural process but requires the inculcation of skills in order to develop ‘self-governing entities that exercise choice’ (Lippert 1998, p. 382). In order for a national integration policy to succeed, the report suggests that Irish citizens need to bear in mind that refugees who come to Ireland have to build a new life in a new country and to come to terms with a new culture, and, in most cases, a new language. It must be recognised that refugees have special needs which must be met during the initial part of integration in order to enable them to avail, on an equal basis, of mainstream services generally available to the Irish population (2003, p. 43).

An apparently undifferentiated ‘Irish society’, which of course already consists of a multiplicity of coexisting life styles and groupings, is hailed as the enabler of integration based on equality. Refugees have ‘special needs’ that are assumed to disappear once they gain equal access to mainstream services. Although discussed as if it operated in a monolithic way in relation to an undifferentiated group of refugees, integration is necessarily segmented by the political and economic systems that are the global and national backdrops to integration policies (Portes and Zhou, 1993). Integration is segmented by a range of other factors too. For example, refugees and subsequent generations can become more or less integrated into a range of classes, regional cultures, and can be well integrated in relation to education and less well integrated in relation to employment and career progression. Individual refugees and migrants also maintain different levels of relationship to and connections with their country of origin. The report proceeds to invite Irish citizens to adopt a mindful and tolerant disposition towards refugees:

The objectives of an integration policy are to: ‘ensure equal rights and opportunities for everyone lawfully resident…; create opportunities that enable individuals to become economically active, participate in society in all respects and access to mainstream services as early as possible; support initiatives that encourage the preservation of the ethnic-cultural and religious identity of all individuals; promote the development of a tolerant inclusive society
Integration policies in the EU, North America and Australia invoke notions of cultural pluralism and tolerance\(^9\) to describe the kinds of societies in which social cohesion can be maintained in contexts of in-migration and cultural diversity. Tolerance implies good activity, but as Hage argues, practices of tolerance are nationalist practices and those who are tolerant assume the power associated with imagining the nation as ‘theirs’ (1998, p. 79). This report concludes that ‘[t]he development of a tolerant inclusive society has been identified in this report as a key prerequisite to the successful integration of refugees’ (2003, p. 44). This tolerant society is seen as being achieved by ‘creating a better understanding in Irish society of refugees and their reasons for seeking a new home…, promoting respect for differences and diversity, and developing an awareness of the positive contribution refugees can make to economic, social and cultural life’ (2003, p. 44). But despite the contributions of immigrants and refugees, tolerance is called for and those who are invited to be tolerant are being asked not to exercise the power in which they are invested by being national citizens (Hage, 1998). Meanwhile, the construction of integration as a two way process conceals the relations of power in which the discourse of tolerance is grounded (ibid.). Refugees and immigrants are to be unquestionably integrated and included by those who are invited to be mindful of, understand and recognise those in need of integration, who are thereby always identified as un-integrated. The invitation to be tolerant reinstates and disguises rather than changes these power relations and reconstitutes those to be integrated as outsiders.

Furthermore, there is no tolerance without setting limits. Referring to Locke and Voltaire’s appeals to tolerance, Hage (1998) notes how tolerance is defined not just as acceptance, but acceptance only within certain limits, or boundaries. One of the recommendations of the Interdepartmental Working Group’s report is that mainstream services are made more accessible through language training, information provision, interpretation services and training programmes for service providers. The limits of tolerance are set by the requirement that refugees and immigrants avail of these pre-ordained routes to integration. Although integration measures are defined primarily in terms of the above elements, the report recommends that integration programmes should be tailored to the individual refugee so that s/he can act independently in society (p. 40). Moreover, the report asserts that these ‘individual integration programmes place an onus on refugees to commit to integrating. In some countries there are financial incentives for participating, in others there are sanctions for not doing so’ (ibid.). Other recommendations are that research should be conducted on specific needs of refugees having regard to their different backgrounds and public attitudes, and

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\(^9\) Interestingly, Hage argues that tolerance emerged initially as ‘a political/practical state policy in the Muslim empires that followed Islamic expansionary wars’ and only later emerged in Enlightenment Europe (1998, p. 80). In both cases it emerged in response to religious intolerance.
that an in-depth analysis be done on how the state sector and NGOs work together in other EU member states to facilitate integration. The notion of public attitudes is a euphemism for those attitudes of the Irish citizenry, which set the limits of the scope of integration measures.

The NESC Report, *People, Productivity and Purpose* published in 2005 reviews ‘key economic, social and environmental developments in order to identify the major and novel trends which must inform policy in the coming years’ (p. xiii), and one of these developments is identified as demographic change including migration trends. A key finding of economic and social analysis identified in the report is that ‘the integration of migrants into the host society is a key determinant of whether immigration will be a success or a failure…[and] that measures to achieve integration should now play a prominent part in framing Ireland’s overall policy’ (2005, p. 139). Integration is defined in relation to academic and policy research, but this working definition of integration for the purposes of the report is relegated to a footnote:

The word ‘integration’ is used in international research and policy analysis to refer to the degree of involvement of migrants, and their families, in the social, educational, cultural and political life of the host country. It does not mean assimilation. Nor does it imply that ‘integration’ requires adjustment only on the side of migrants. Despite some reservation about the word integration the Council adopts it in this discussion because of its wide international usage…the role of quality services in achieving both social inclusion and the successful management of migration (ibid.; emphasis added).

Integration is adopted then, with some reservation about the word (which is not discussed), as a goal of a migration policy that involves the management of immigration and immigrant settlement. There is an implication that integration is about participation or involvement which takes place to a certain (undefined) degree.

In a discussion of how a long term national policy regime for migration should be framed the report recommends that a ‘managed approach to migration should be informed by a normative vision of how in-migration contributes to a society that is attractive as well as an economy that is successful’ (2005, p. 143). For this managed approach to happen three elements are considered necessary: first, that the scale and composition of in-migration support ‘Ireland’s long-term economic strategy with the clear objective of achieving an internationally competitive economy based primarily on learning and adaptability’; second, that migration policies ‘see the whole person and not just the unit of labour and foster social integration, social learning and trust between migrant communities and the indigenous population’; and third, that ‘the capacity, competence, efficiency and fairness of procedures for admitting people into Ireland…retain the confidence of the population and be seen to protect their security and well-being’. Underlying integration polices then
lie values associated with national economic competitiveness, trust between migrant communities and the indigenous population, and procedures that gain the confidence of and ensure the well-being of ‘the population’.

The population whose well-being is at stake is the unmarked national body against which the marked population and bodies of migrants are defined. This is yet another example of how discourses of integration act as implicit dividing practices while masquerading as progressive discourses of inclusion. Management becomes the instrument by which immigrants are organized and their ‘place’ within the nation is allocated. Moreover, the implied ‘impracticalities’ of thinking immigration in any other way reinstate nationalist assumptions about who belongs in the nation. Noting the centrality of civil society and civil society organisations ‘in ensuring successful integration’ (2005, p. 140), civil society is defined as now including ‘networks and organisations which migrant communities themselves generate and through which they “bridge” with the mainstreamed of Irish society as well as “bond” their own members’ (ibid.), reinstating again the dividing line between those who do the integrating and those who are defined by the act of ‘bridging’ – who are always already un-integrated and repeatedly defined by the promise of integration.

Concluding Comments

Migration as a modern phenomenon can be seen as central to processes of modernity including capitalism, Empire, industrialisation, nation-state formation, urbanisation and classification (Chamberlain, 1997). Mary Chamberlain locates migration at the heart of European and American history and global politics:

Migration and modernity, the nation-state and Empire, all came of age together. The great migrations which began in the sixteenth century from Europe and then Africa and Asia to the Americas and the Caribbean were central to the development of the European states involved, and formed the basis of those nations which subsequently evolved in the New World. The culture in which the nation-state was nurtured, and in which its defining characteristics matured, was a global and a migratory one (1997, p. 16).

Migration is represented here as a ‘precondition for capitalism, industrialisation and the emergence of the modern nation state’ (Chamberlain, 1997, p. 5). It was both forced and a mode of pursuing economic opportunity and freedom (ibid.). Although much migration continues to be involuntary and some continues to be about a search for economic improvement, or for political and religious freedom, its current scale suggests a need to move beyond perceptions of migration as ‘an aberrant act’ (ibid.).

The legacy of modern conceptions of migration lives on in recent national and supra-national formulations of integration policies in Europe, north America,
Australia and Ireland. These policies reinforce territorialized nation-state ideologies while simultaneously embracing neo-liberal ideologies of mobile and flexible capital and workers via thin discourses of integration, diaspora, transmigrancy and global mobility. So migrants continue to be ‘matter out of place’ while at the same time being represented as the flexible citizen/workers of a new global capitalist era. Indeed, the very title of the Irish EU Presidency conference referred to at the beginning of this article, ‘Reconciling Mobility and Social Inclusion’ signals the contradiction at the heart of an EU policy which actively promotes the migration of some while policing and controlling the migration of others. As at the height of modernity, migrants are differentiated into the tolerated and the unacceptable. For example, EU policy defines the migration of EU citizens within Europe as ‘mobility’ and of third country nationals as ‘immigration’, so that the presence of EU nationals is legitimised and the presence of third country nationals is identified as requiring regulation and surveillance. Furthermore, the intensifying capitalist labour market need for flexible and mobile workers produces a discourse of valorised mobility which clashes with the controlled and managed mobility of ‘immigrants’. Meanwhile, the EU labour market continues to require suitably qualified third country nationals and it is this need that produces pressures for effective integration strategies because, as Spenser notes, ‘if states are to compete for the “brightest and the best”, potential migrants must be confident that they will not face discrimination and exclusion’ (2005, p. 6). The figure of the migrant functions in a contradictory way here: she works both as a discursive figure in service of the ‘normal’ nationally bound society and as the sign of a globally attractive national labour market and mobile society.

If right wing and racist organisations make migration matter in order to maintain the boundaries of nation and ‘race’ by excluding migrants, integration policies make migration matter in order to integrate migrants and improve their positions as part of an intercultural and integrative national community and mobile labour force. Integration policies tend to focus on the process of integration so that integration is always located somewhere in the future – a promise of belonging once particular conditions are met. Moreover, integration is largely predicated on an agreed or to be agreed version of the nature of the usually national integrating community. Integration here is what Hage (1998) defines as a nationalist practice of inclusion. Obligations to care for the population arise from the state’s concern for maintaining social cohesion and avoiding conflicts that might adversely affect the prosperity of the country. While economic reason is represented as an impartial arbiter it serves to underpin an approach based on implicitly nationalist assumptions. Through integration policies immigrants and cultural difference are ‘domesticated, shaped, and harnessed to the yoke of the dominant sociocultural order and economy’ (Dijkstra, et al., 2001, p. 62).

Integration policies turn immigrants in all their diversity into a population that is documented, surveyed, subject to needs analyses, a target of service provision (or
not). Global and local labour market conditions, relations between countries of origin and destination, the inadequacy of socio-cultural infrastructure for the whole (already differentiated) population, remain outside the frame and thus beyond investigation. Integration policies make migration matter as a sense-making device that identifies certain individuals/groups as vulnerable, marginalized, temporary labour, necessary to economic progress and therefore in need of social support. Such policies reproduce migrant/non-migrant hierarchies of difference as if these existed asocially, that is outside of human interpretation and action and social policy (Titchkosky, 2003, p. 525). The very idea that migrants might not be integrated, or indeed need to be integrated, means that they are present within the national space as potentially un-integratable. Integration is never achieved but is a promise held out to migrants and reminds them of their status as matter out of place. In contrast, the national citizenry (including designated EU citizens) is invited to facilitate integration, which is in its gift. Indeed, every attempt to bring about integration brings migrants into being as in need of integration and therefore lacking the ‘natural’ qualities of national belonging, thereby reproducing unexamined assumptions about migrants and nationals as well as the national and global community and economy.

Hage (1998) suggests that migrants inevitably integrate, just as their cultures and practices inevitably change the society into which they are integrating. He points to the ‘inevitable integration of the majority of migrants regardless of what the state’s social policy orientation is’ (Hage 1998, p. 238-9). Noting that migrants integrated into Australia at the ‘Whitest times of the White Australia Policy’, Hage argues that residents of the receiving society find it hard to come to terms with ‘the idea that integration is not something one can usefully worry about, but is rather something that just happens and is happening all the time…it is part of the natural social process of settlement. Governmental policy can, at best, facilitate or partially slow down this integration…’ (1998, p. 239). White and nationalist worries and anxieties about how to facilitate integration, he suggests, are based on a subliminal fear of real integration and consequent desire to be the supervisors and managers of integration.

Integration policies pay little or no attention to the dividing practices of the politico-legal system which divide people into citizens, refugees, emigrant citizens, immigrants on visas and work permits, regular or irregular migrants. The racialised and gendered workings of the global labour market and economic policies by which nation-states are positioning themselves optimally in relation to globalising capitalism also remain outside of the integration policy frame. Moreover, integration policies as they are currently being formulated ignore the ‘dissimilar, heterogeneous, and unpredictable’ nature of identity formation and the fact that identities are produced in a context where cultural meanings and practices increasingly transcend national borders (Dijkstra, et al., 2001, p. 71). Integration polices as discussed in the three reports examined in this article can be seen as nationalist practices of belonging that reproduce national boundaries of
inclusion and exclusion. They rely on assumptions about migration and the territorialized nation-state that Mary Chamberlain identifies with a modernity marked by Empire, capitalism and industrialisation. However, as Lyberaki notes, the speed and globalised nature of capitalist development at present demands a rethinking of the fantasy that national borders and populations can be managed and controlled.

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