A TOOLKIT FOR WORKING IN MULTICULTURAL SETTINGS

Margaret Murphy – Mary Immaculate College

1. My Own Phd Research
2. The Irish Context
3. The EDNIP Project
4. A toolkit for working in multicultural classrooms

1. My Own Research …

◦ The experiences of Asylum Seeking and Refugee adults and children in Irish Education

◦ Research with students from the Universities of Sanctuary

◦ Access to education for adult Asylum Seekers and Refugees is complex, and is often at the discretion of colleges and institutions.

◦ 'Our brain slips into chaos and confusion unless we constantly use it for work that seems worthwhile to us' (Seyle et al, 1985:28).

Barriers to Education

- **<u>Legal Barriers</u>**
- *'I was kept for like six years. I came when I was just 19 or so, taking six years out of my life. That's quite a lot of time…... I could be in my final year now but because of the system, because of the programme now, I couldn't progress (Aneche).*

- *Yah, even at the college, they ask you do you have stamp four, do you have this. I don't have. They are killing my children's life. They are killing my life as well' (Grace).*

- *You know, I have been doing some courses using my position as a volunteer, not as an asylum seeker. That's why I tell people there's always a way of doing stuff. Those courses I did, if I was going to tell them that I'm an asylum seeker, they would not let me do that, but because I went there as somebody working. …it was true. I was not getting paid, but I was working, so I went there as somebody working somewhere (Claude).*

- **<u>Financial Barriers</u>**
'The way how I did it is, they ask me to pay nine thousand euros. I don't even know where to start' (Greg).

- **<u>Physical Location of the DP Centres, the Dispersal System</u>**
'it's a bit more isolated to be honest, it's more isolated….you know this bus to Dublin is gonna take you two and a half hours' (Greg).

Experiences of Children

◦ By accessing education, both adults and children have an opportunity to move from a space that restricts to one that empower and motivates.

◦ *'They seem to like the school here. They seem to really like it. They come into their own when they are in school. I'm sure that is the only part, where they feel normal, you know when they are in school'* (Greg).

Education as a form of liberation and Recognition

◦ Education have long been regarded as a space which facilitates 'a flexible, emancipating process, which enables people to become more agentic in their own lives, and to bring about change in their worlds' (Connolly, 2003: 9).

◦ Anache describes going to college as a 'normal life'. '*But, the fact that we could just be ourselves and just pursue our dreams and just look forward into the future and say, you know, this is what I am supposed to be doing, this is what my life should be like, this is what my life will be like in the next four years or five years, but just to start to revive those dreams and those hopes that we can here with and have suppressed for so long. But, it was an amazing year, it was just beautiful*' (Anache).

2. Setting the Context

◦How may nationalities are present in Ireland?

In April 2016, there were **535,475 non-Irish nationals from 200 different nations living in Ireland**. This represents a 1.6 per cent decreased on the 2011 Census figure of 544,357.
The highest nationality grouping was:
- **Polish**: 211,515
- **UK nationals**: 103,113
- **Lithuanian**: 36,552
- **Romanian**: 29,186
- **Latvian**: 19,933
- **Brazilian**: 13,640

The Irish Context

◦ Irish society has undergone substantial change since the 1960's typified by membership of the European Union, a rapidly changing social and economic structure and competition within a global economy.

◦ Education is a key factor in the integration process for immigrant adults and children as it can play a key role in economic and social outcomes (OECD, 2017).

Graph A - Enrolment in Mainstream and Special Schools Classifed by Percentage from Each Nationality Group (excluding Irish) 2015/2016
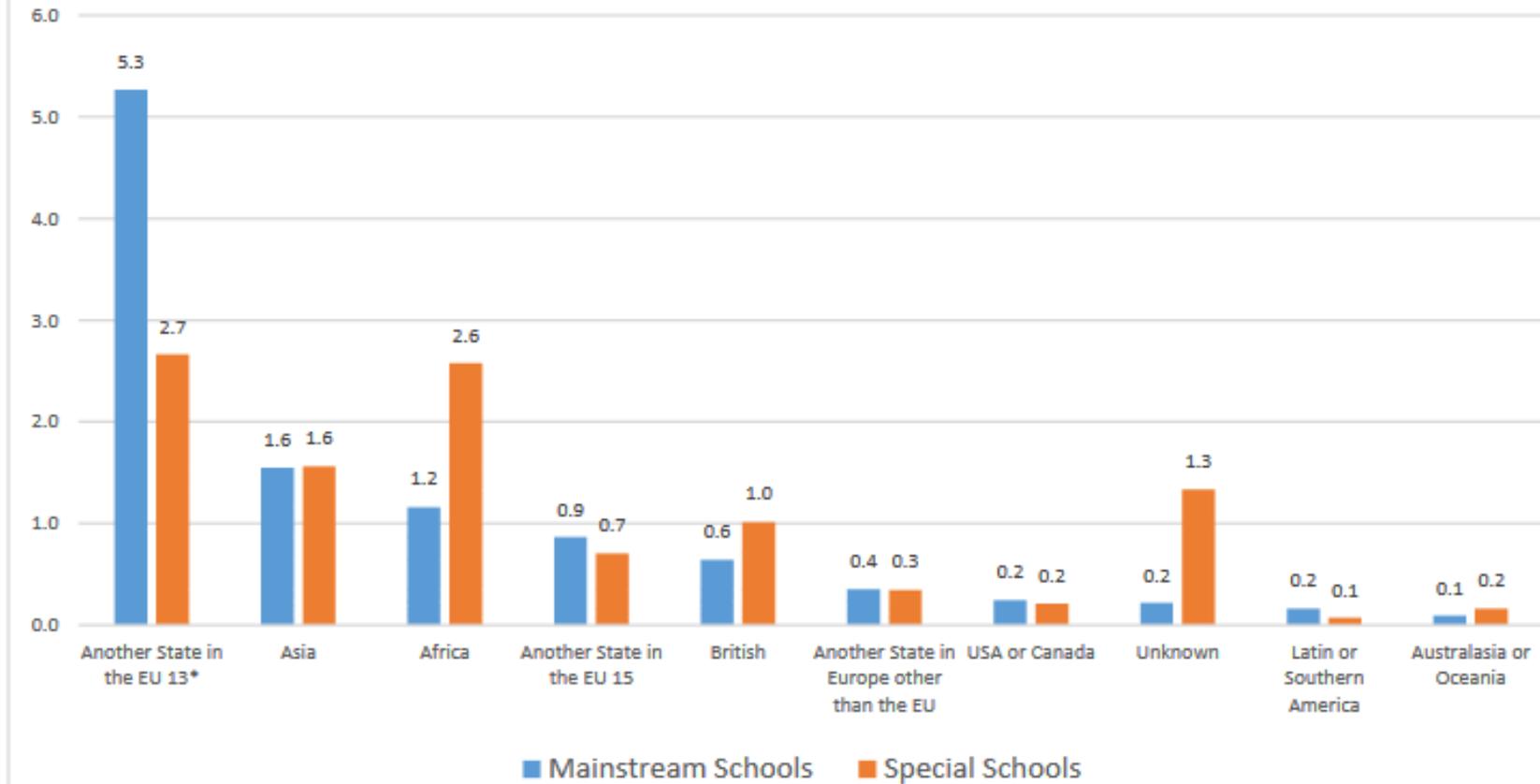
Nationality/Country of Birth in Schools (DES, 2017)

Graph B - Number of Pupils in Mainstream School Classified by Nationality Groupings (excluding Irish), 2010/2011 - 2015/2016

Nationality/Country of Birth in Schools (DES, 2017)
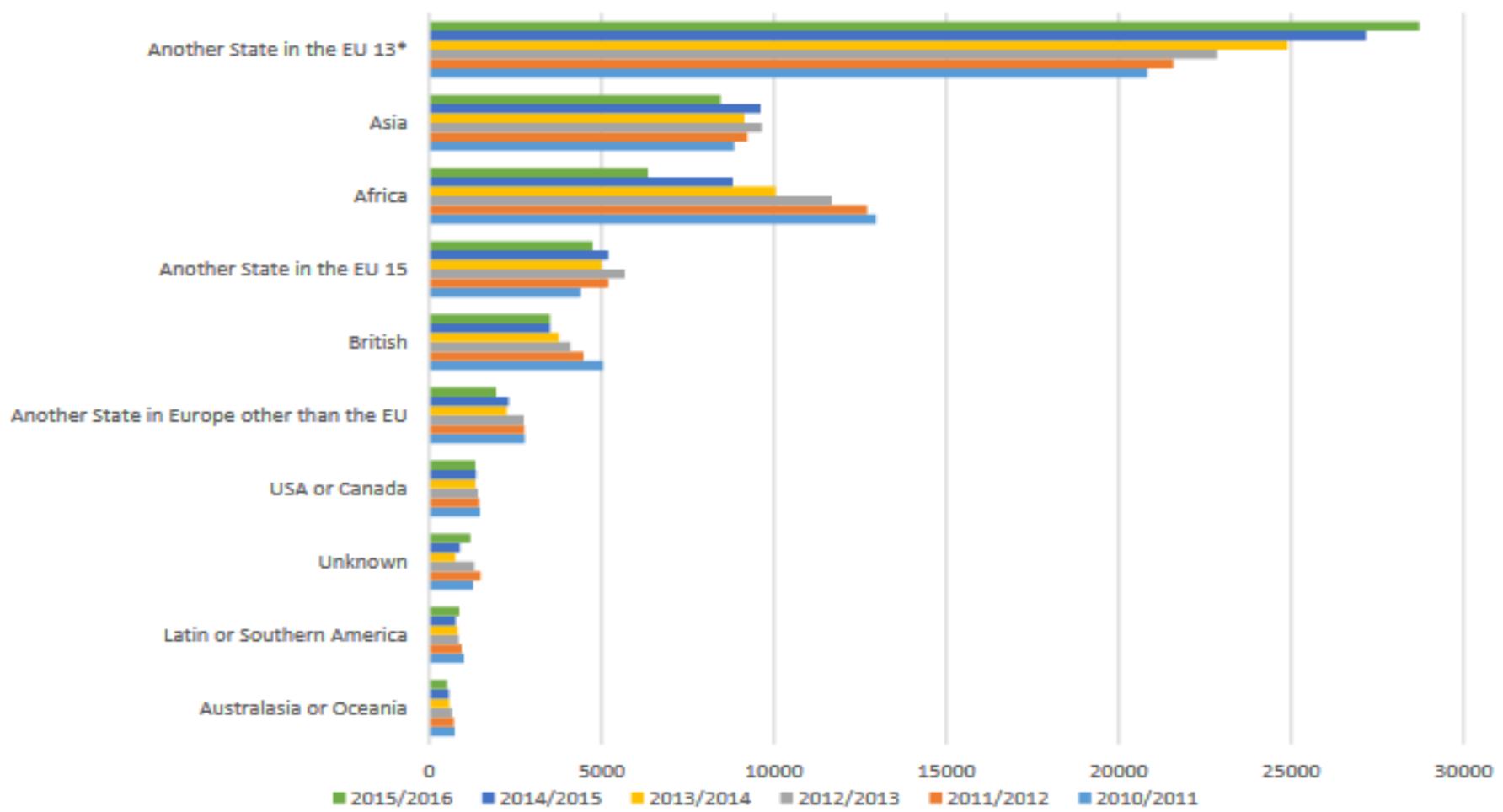
3. Embracing Diversity, Nurturing Integration: Learning for Life Project (EDNIP)

◦ Five DEIS Primary Schools in Limerick City

◦ Funded by the AMIF (Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund- Dept. of Justice and Equality

◦ Dr. Anne Higgins – Project Co-Ordinator/Director (TED Project, Mary Immaculate College Research with parents, children and teachers

◦ Aine Lyne (Project Leader), Sandra Power (Project Worker), Margaret Murphy (Project Worker)

◦ Research and Intervention/ Initiatives for parents, children and teachers

Where did the idea to develop this project come from?

◦ **Discussions in PLUS and OSCAILT**

Rationale

This project acknowledges the rapidly changing cultural diversity in schools and communities in Limerick city, and recognises the current humanitarian crisis linked to migration and the rise of racism, fear and terrorism

AMIF Fund – EU funding - the Dept. of Justice and Equality

◦ **Schools**: Scoil Iosagáin (CBS), St Michael's Infant School, Presentation Primary School, St John's Girls' and Infant Boys' , Our Lady of Lourdes National School.

◦ **Partners:** Mary Immaculate College, Department of Education and Skills, Limerick Education Centre, Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board, Limerick City and County Council and Tusla Education and Welfare Services

◦ **Application submitted**: November 2016

◦ **Provisional approval:** January 2017

◦ **Duration:** 23 month
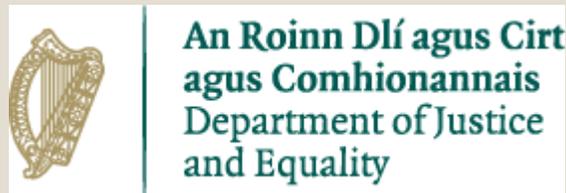
Some background information

◦ Across the five primary schools: 995 children from **40 nationalities**, **26 languages** spoken and **17 religions** practiced

◦ Across the five primary schools: **131 staff**

Aims of the Project

- Support schools in the process of integrating families and children
- Interagency collaboration in the promotion of integration
- Engage and promote understanding and capacity building for school staff
- Nurture and promote parent/carer and community engagement
- Be informed by both baseline data and the literature on integration and best practice
- Barriers to integration will be addressed

Project Structure

◦ Schools and partners will participate in governance. **A Project Management Committee (PMC)** formed and has responsibility for reporting to the funding agency

◦ Each school has set up a **School Integration Committee (SIC)** which will include staff, parents/carers, community leaders and the Project Leader.

◦ **Project base:** EDNIP is located within the TED project in the CDU in MIC

◦ **Staffing:** the Project employs one full time worker (Project Leader) and two part-time workers (Project support staff)

Baseline Research

◦ Baseline research was undertaken across the five participating schools in Autumn 2017 by the EDNIP staff.

◦ This comprised of questionnaires to all staff and focus groups with staff, children and parents.

◦ The data was analysed in December2017/January 2018, with preliminary findings presented to each school in January 2018 and final reports presented to each school in the Spring of 2018.

◦ Schools were informed of the findings relating to their own schools along with the overall findings across the schools.

School Strategies

◦ Support with filling out forms, welcoming parents at the school gate and being available to support them with their concerns about their children

◦ Using Interpreters

◦ Annual Intercultural day

◦ Student Council Representation

◦ Enrolment of students from diverse backgrounds

◦ School Programmes that involve parental involvement e.g. little voices

◦ The Parents Association is made up of people from different backgrounds and parents are encouraged to get involved in school events

◦ Facilitation of cultural and religious requirements such as diet and mosque visits

◦ School transfer programme

Classroom Strategies

◦ Seating new children with Irish children and the use of a 'buddy system' were useful strategies.

◦ Use of maps in the classrooms, cultural displays, signs in different languages, days dedicated to focusing on cultural diversity which includes fact sheets on each country and information, drawing attention to differences and similarities.

◦ One child noted that '*in our maths class they have a thing on the wall in that has, its multiplication and it says by and how many times and all that but they put it into different languages for the other kids'*.

◦ When a new child arrives the teacher will '*introduce them to everyone'*.

Staff preparedness to teach all children with reference to increased diversity in schools

◦ Majority of staff reported not feeling prepared

WHY?

◦ Language barriers
  ◦ Hard to communicate with parents
  ◦ More parental involvement would be helpful
◦ Mid Year Arrivals
  ◦ Difficult to meet outcome targets
  ◦ Challenges working with older children recently arrived in Ireland
◦ Children's Backgrounds
  ◦ Not knowing children's learning history or backgrounds is difficult.
  ◦ Some children have experienced significant trauma
◦ Cultural Understanding
  ◦ More information needed on best practice from Department of Education. E.g. when children are fasting for Ramadan and want to participate in intensive school sports.
  ◦ More information required on: religious beliefs and traditions, political and economic situation in child's country of origin, life in Direct Provision

Staff preparedness to teach all children with reference to increased diversity in schools

◦ Majority of staff reported not feeling prepared

WHY?

◦ Language barriers
  ◦ Hard to communicate with parents
  ◦ More parental involvement would be helpful
◦ Mid Year Arrivals
  ◦ Difficult to meet outcome targets
  ◦ Challenges working with older children recently arrived in Ireland
◦ Children's Backgrounds
  ◦ Not knowing children's learning history or backgrounds is difficult.
  ◦ Some children have experienced significant trauma
◦ Cultural Understanding
  ◦ More information needed on best practice from Department of Education. E.g. when children are fasting for Ramadan and want to participate in intensive school sports.
  ◦ More information required on: religious beliefs and traditions, political and economic situation in child's country of origin, life in Direct Provision

4. Toolkit for Working in Multicultural Classrooms

- Resources
- In-class-activities
- CDP for teachers and school staff
- Trips and outings during holiday periods
- Regular after school visit to local museums and galleries for parents and children
- EAL classes for parents
- Information sessions on local sports clubs
- Coffee mornings
- Intercultural days/ events
- Music and Drama workshops with children
- Inputs in homework clubs

Resources

Dual language books

Intercultural books
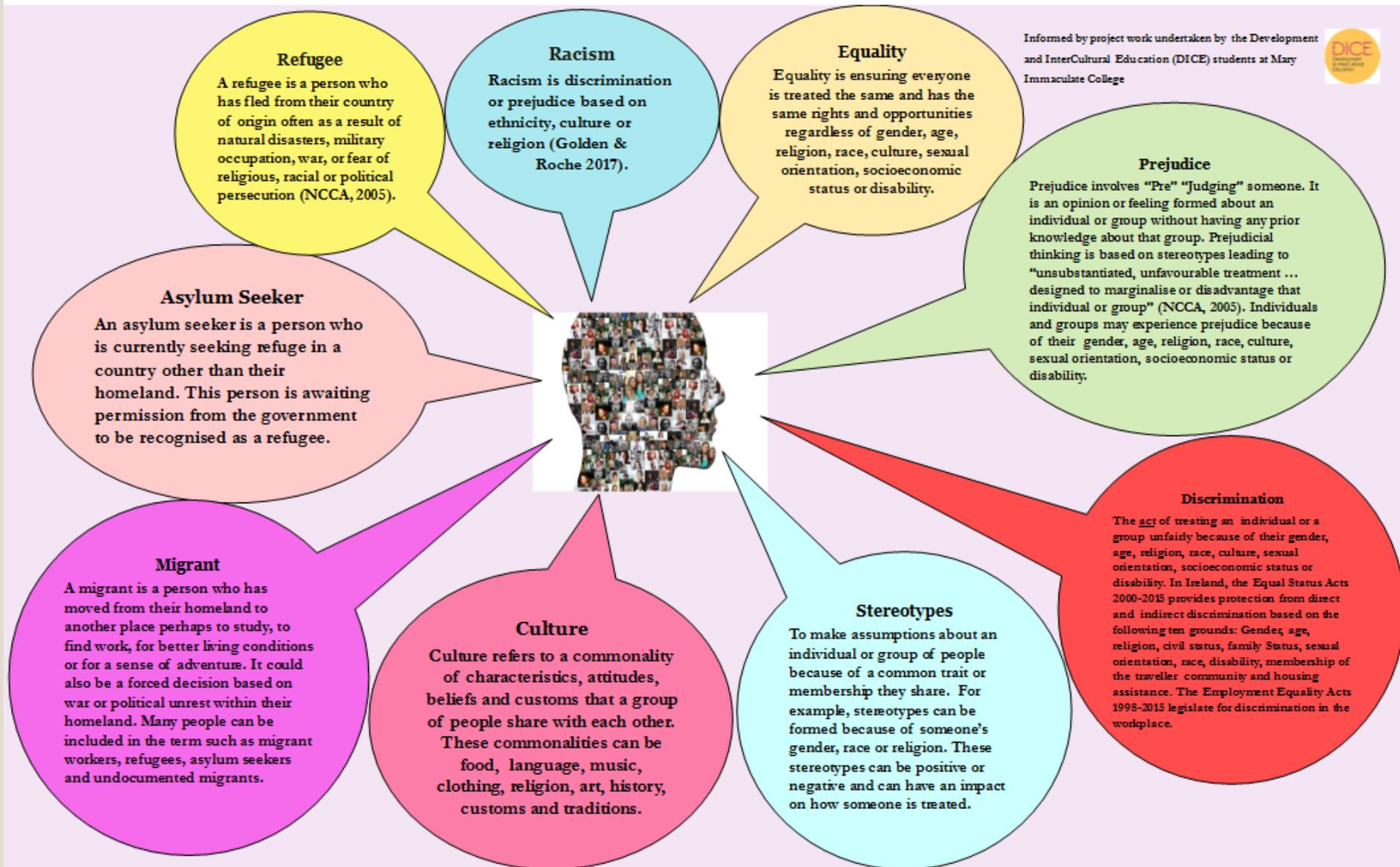
EAL resources

Interfaith resources

INTERCULTURAL DEFINITIONS

EMBRACING DIVERSITY, NURTURING INTEGRATION, LEARNING FOR LIFE PROJECT (EDNIP)

Refugee

A refugee is a person who has fled from their country of origin often as a result of natural disasters, military occupation, war, or fear of religious, racial or political persecution (NCCA, 2005).

Racism

Racism is discrimination or prejudice based on ethnicity, culture or religion (Golden & Roche 2017).

Equality

Equality is ensuring everyone is treated the same and has the same rights and opportunities regardless of gender, age, religion, race, culture, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status or disability.

Informed by project work undertaken by the Development and InterCultural Education (DICE) students at Mary Immaculate College

Prejudice

Prejudice involves "Pre" "Judging" someone. It is an opinion or feeling formed about an individual or group without having any prior knowledge about that group. Prejudicial thinking is based on stereotypes leading to "unsubstantiated, unfavourable treatment … designed to marginalise or disadvantage that individual or group" (NCCA, 2005). Individuals and groups may experience prejudice because of their gender, age, religion, race, culture, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status or disability.

Asylum Seeker

An asylum seeker is a person who is currently seeking refuge in a country other than their homeland. This person is awaiting permission from the government to be recognised as a refugee.

Discrimination

The act of treating an individual or a group unfairly because of their gender, age, religion, race, culture, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status or disability. In Ireland, the Equal Status Acts 2000-2015 provides protection from direct and indirect discrimination based on the following ten grounds: Gender, age, religion, civil status, family Status, sexual orientation, race, disability, membership of the traveller community and housing assistance. The Employment Equality Acts 1998-2015 legislate for discrimination in the workplace.

Migrant

A migrant is a person who has moved from their homeland to another place perhaps to study, to find work, for better living conditions or for a sense of adventure. It could also be a forced decision based on war or political unrest within their homeland. Many people can be included in the term such as migrant workers, refugees, asylum seekers and undocumented migrants.

Culture

Culture refers to a commonality of characteristics, attitudes, beliefs and customs that a group of people share with each other. These commonalities can be food, language, music, clothing, religion, art, history, customs and traditions.

Stereotypes

To make assumptions about an individual or group of people because of a common trait or membership they share. For example, stereotypes can be formed because of someone's gender, race or religion. These stereotypes can be positive or negative and can have an impact on how someone is treated.

致家长的入学指南

Scoil Eoin Naofa

圣约翰女校&

男童幼儿园

大教堂广场，利默里克

Eolas & Spraoi

☎ 061 416752

✉ johnsns@eircom.net

www.scoileoinnaofa.ie

د کورنیو لپاره د بنه راغلاست

Scoil Íosagáin

د CBS ابتدایی ښوونځی

Sexton Street

Limerick

☎ 061 413950 / 087 9299782

✉ cbslk@eircom.net

www.cbslk.ie

د فیسبوک پاڼه: 'د CBS ابتدایی ښوونځی لیمریک'

Pakiet powitalny dla rodzin

Presentation Primary School

Sexton Street

Limerick

Placówka edukacyjna z miłą i pomocną atmosferą

☎ 061 412494   **Text:** 087 2101903

www.preslimerick.ie   ✉ info@preslimerick.ie

Приветственный пакет

Детская школа

Св. Михаила

CBS Grounds, Sexton Street, Limerick

☎ 061 317672 / 085 177 66 56

✉ stmichaelsinfantschool@gmail.com

www.stmichaelsinfant.scoilnet.ie

Страница в Facebook : 'St Michael's Infant School

Russian

EDNIP Project (September 2017-September 2019)

This project is co-financed by the European Commission under the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund and supported by the Department of Justice and Equality.