

**TOP 5**  
**MIGRATION**  
**MYTHS**



**ANTI-RUMOURS**  
**LIMERICK**

The anti-rumours campaign aims to tackle the widespread myths about migrant integration and immigration, as a preventative measure against racism.

## Myth #1:

“Migrants are only here for hand-outs”

Migrants come to Ireland for many reasons including employment prospects and a better way of life, just like the Irish who emigrated to Australia, Canada and the UK.

Almost 80% of migrants in Limerick are of working age (15 – 65 years) and are highly educated – **60% of non-Irish nationals have completed third-level education.**



**60%**

**completed  
third-level education**

Asylum seekers come to Ireland as they fear persecution in their home country. **Asylum seekers do not receive social welfare** and they are not permitted to work.

**Migrant workers are only entitled to claim Jobseekers Benefit if they have paid sufficient PRSI contributions** through employment in Ireland. They are only entitled to claim Jobseekers Allowance if they can prove that they have lived in Ireland for some time and that they intend to stay in Ireland for the foreseeable future.

85% of people on the Live Register in Limerick are Irish nationals. Less than 4% were from outside the EU and 11% were from within the EU. **Non-Irish nationals also have a work force participation rate of 73%, much higher than the 57% rate of Irish nationals.**

While some migrant workers come to Ireland for employment, many have stayed for other reasons, such as family or way of life. Since 2008, over 80,000 people from over 100 countries nationwide became new Irish citizens. They have settled here and have made Ireland their home.

# workforce· participation rate



**73%**

non-Irish nationals



**57%**

Irish nationals



## Myth #2:

**“Migrants send all their money home”**

A conservative estimate for the amount paid in taxes and PRSI by non-Irish nationals in Ireland annually is upwards of €1 billion, though likely to be much higher.

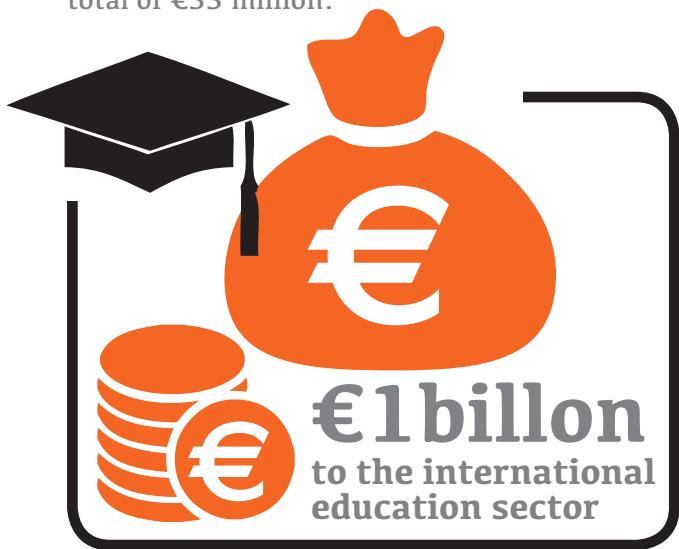
Personal consumption is by far the most significant portion of spending that individuals contribute to the economy. We can estimate that approximately €4.5 billion is spent by non-Irish nationals in Ireland annually on costs such as rent; food; travel; and utilities, €150 million of which is spent in Limerick.

**€4.5**  
billion spent  
in Ireland  
every year by  
non-nationals



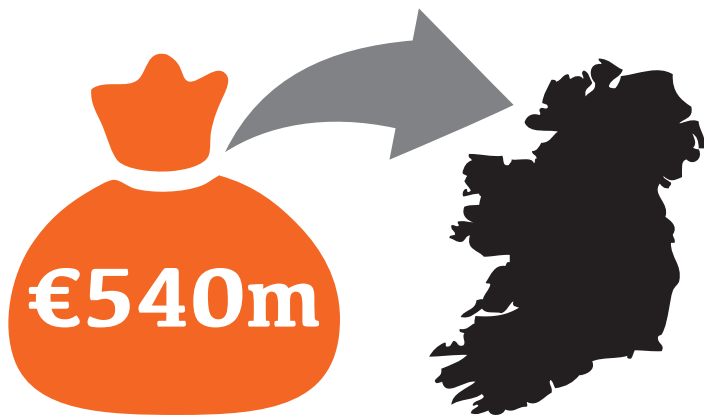
The education sector also requires migrants to pay substantial fees in order to participate in third-level education and English language tuition in Ireland. It is estimated that **the international education sector is now worth €1 billion to the Irish economy every year.**

Migrants are required to pay substantial immigration fees, including immigration registration fees; visa fees; nationality and citizenship fees; and work permit fees. In 2012, these immigration-related fees amounted to a total of €33 million.





Non-Irish nationals sent an estimated €1.8 billion in remittances from Ireland in 2011. This money is often a vital source of income for family members who remain in their home countries, particularly those in developing countries. In some developing countries, remittances can account for as much as 50% of the country's GNP. In 2011, **Irish nationals living overseas sent €540 million in remittances to Ireland.**

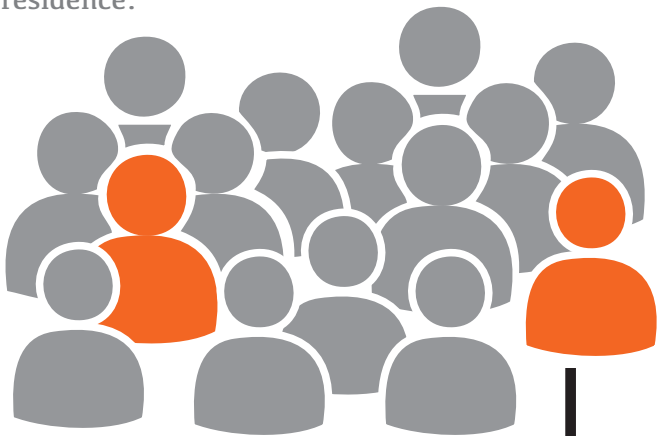




## Myth #3:

### “Asylum seekers live in luxury”

An asylum seeker is a person who is awaiting a decision on an application for refugee status. In order to be recognised as a refugee, it must be proven that the individual has a well-founded fear of persecution in their country of former residence.



asylum seekers make-up  
less than 0.09% total  
population in Ireland

There is a widespread perception that asylum seekers in Ireland receive an abundance of benefits and entitlements. There is also a common belief that Ireland receives large numbers of asylum seekers.

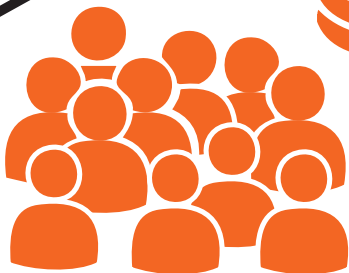
**In reality, asylum seekers make-up less than 0.09% total population in Ireland (4,000 – 4,500 persons). There are approximately 400 asylum seekers resident in four Direct Provision centres in the Limerick region.**

**Asylum seekers are not entitled to social welfare payments** and, unlike most EU countries, asylum seekers in Ireland are not permitted to work while their applications for refugee status are being processed.

Asylum seekers receive €19.10 per week. This rate has not increased since 1999 when it was first introduced. Basic accommodation is provided, which may consist of a whole family sharing a small room, or a single adult could share a room with up to 8 residents of different cultural backgrounds. All meals are provided at set times each day and residents are not permitted to cook for themselves.

Ireland has been heavily criticised by the United Nations and other international human rights bodies, for its treatment of asylum seekers. The length of time asylum seekers are required to wait for a final decision on their applications for refugee status is a major concern. 25% of asylum seekers have spent more than 6 years living in these conditions.

€19.10



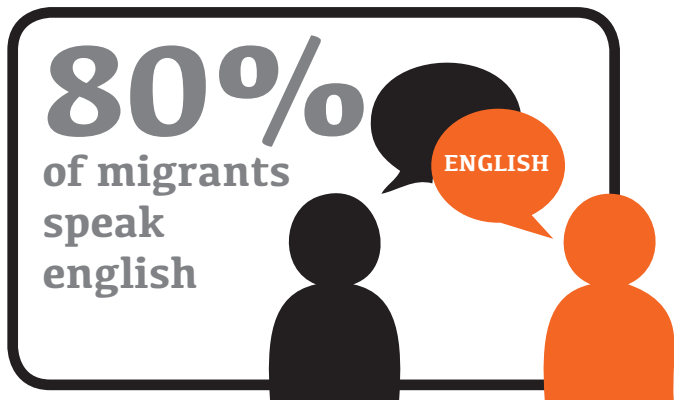
Asylum seekers receive €19.10 per week. This rate has not increased since 1999 when it was first introduced.



## Myth #4:

### “Migrants are not willing to integrate”

Ireland’s own history of emigration showed us that it can take some time for migrants to integrate into new communities. Barriers included prejudice, lack of knowledge of the local systems and poor social support networks.



Language is often a significant obstacle for migrants in Ireland. However, there is huge demand for English language classes among the migrant community nationwide and in Limerick.

Despite the abundance of English language providers in the city, the supply simply cannot meet the demand. Migrants in Limerick were asked about their English language abilities in the 2011 Census, with **80% claiming to speak English well or very well and only 4% had no English at all.**

In Limerick, the **migrant population is largely concentrated in the city centre**, only about 5% of the population of the suburbs is of a migrant background. However, migrants are beginning to move out of the city centre to the suburbs, in order to settle and have families, and are becoming more involved in suburban local groups and activities, such as Tidy Towns and Gaelic games.

From 2008 – 2013, over 80,000 people nationwide were granted Irish citizenship. **Becoming an Irish citizen through naturalisation is not a decision that is taken lightly.** It requires being resident in Ireland for 5 years, up to €1125 in fees, proof of the means to support oneself and taking an Oath of Fidelity to Ireland.



Integration is a two-way process, requiring an effort to be made on the part of the migrant as well as the host community in order for strong community relations to be formed. Extending a positive welcome to migrants can go a long way in improving relations between migrants and native populations.

Over  
**80,000**  
people have  
become new  
Irish citizens  
since 2008





## Myth #5:

### **“Migrants get free buggies on demand”**

Of all the misinformation around the topic of immigration and migrant integration, **the myth about free buggies on demand is by far the most advanced!** Broadly speaking, the myth claims that asylum seekers and/or migrants are entitled to a wide range of free goods, including: buggies, cars, plasma screen TVs; stereos; car insurance; and mobile phones amongst others.

The story goes as follow:

**“A migrant woman got out of the taxi with her two children at the bus station. She didn’t bother taking the buggy with her because she knew she could just pick up another one on arrival”.**

If we look at this myth historically, we know that at one point in time this woman was an Irish single mother; then an Irish Traveller, before becoming a migrant woman. That being said, this myth can be easily adapted to suit the case in point and as such, not only migrant women are affected by this rumour.

# free buggies



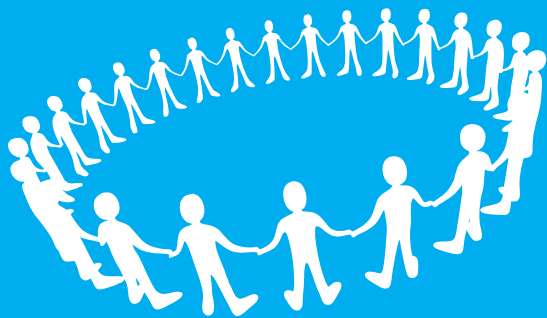
If proven to have an exceptional need for a buggy, some non-nationals may be deemed eligible to purchase a buggy up to the maximum value of €100

The social welfare system in Ireland provides emergency and once-off payments known as Exceptional Needs Payments (ENPs) to people in Ireland, of all nationalities, particularly vulnerable low-income families.

If an individual is deemed to have an exceptional need for a buggy and is approved by the Community Welfare Officer, they may purchase a buggy up to the maximum value of €100.

It is hugely unlikely that a second buggy would be approved within 5 years of the individual receiving the initial payment.

The total figure spent on buggies in 2012 nationwide to people of all nationalities amounts to just 0.004% of the social welfare budget.



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**FOR MORE INFORMATION ON  
THE ANTI-RUMOURS CAMPAIGN**

**visit [www . antirumours . net](http://www.antirumours.net)  
or contact us at Doras Luimní.**

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