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## InÉire Report and Policy Recommendations

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# InÉire Report and Policy Recommendations

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Final Report

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# 1 Introduction

Over the years there has been an increased amount of immigration into Ireland leading to the formation of a multicultural society. More recently however immigration has become a controversial issue within Ireland leading to growing anti-immigrant sentiment and political conflict (Costa, 2023) reported as early as 2018 in a report by Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission and Economic & Social Research Institute (McGinnity, Grotti, Russell, Fahey, et al., 2018). This project aims to provide a comprehensive analysis of the factors behind such sentiment and its consequences by means of collecting comprehensive data on it and performing a quantitative and qualitative analysis of the data.

## 1.1 Background and Context

This research was commissioned by researchers at University College Dublin (UCD) and Technological University Dublin (TUD) with Immigrant Council of Ireland as external collaborators. The project itself was the result of a research grant by Irish Research Council under the Collaborative Alliances for Societal Challenges theme. The aim of the research was to obtain an assessment of various aspects concerning anti-immigrant views affecting Irish society in both offline and online settings. To achieve the research aim, a variety of methods was used, including questionnaire surveys, focus groups, and natural language processing methods. We covered all immigrant populations in Ireland in an attempt to cover gaps in existing research in relation to the causes behind anti-immigrant sentiment within Ireland. Furthermore, the nuances behind integration<sup>1</sup>

## 1.2 Explanation of the Work Carried per Work Package

This section provides an overview of the work carried out and results achieved per work package during the entire lifecycle of the project.

### 1.2.1 Work Package 1

The focus of this particular work package was on a thorough investigation into various relationships between immigrants' socioeconomic status and their experiences in relation to life in Ireland. Our special emphasis was on perceived discrimination and sense of belonging experienced by immigrants in Ireland. The investigation was mainly done by means of a linear regression, and logistic regression analysis over survey data gathered from immigrants in Ireland.

### 1.2.2 Work Package 2

The focus of this particular work package was on curating a collection of qualitative data describing the lived experiences of immigrants in Ireland. This was done by means of five different focus groups of groups of immigrants from various cultural groups identified from within the results of Work Package 2. Similar to recent qualitative research on immigrants' integration we focus on the ways and extent to which migrants 'feel settled' in the host society – a sense of 'belonging', and the extent to which they 'feel welcomed' - 'perceived discrimination'.

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<sup>1</sup>

### 1.2.3 Work Package 3

The focus of this particular work package was pursuing a case study of Ireland's Twitter landscape specifically with regards to migrant and native activists. Basically, a methodology to accurately isolate the Irish immigrants' voices with as little as 25 X posts (previously tweets) is presented. The proposed pipeline then distills (via sentiment analysis) polarities of views, and segments (via BERT-based topic modeling) and summarises (via ChatGPT) differentiated views in a consumable manner for policymakers. This approach enables policymakers to further their understanding of multicultural communities so as to inform their decision-making processes.

### 1.2.4 Work Package 4

The focus of this particular work package was on utilisation of YouTube video comments to study the intricate issue of immigration in Ireland. To achieve this, state-of-the-art natural language processing (NLP) models are used to dissect sentiments from YouTube video comments in near realtime. The chief problem with existing studies lies in their view of social media as a single location or region. This assumption can prevent us from understanding scenarios such as UK or the US view towards immigration; and similarly Irish view. To aid this understanding a dataset was curated by annotating comments from Irish specific videos on immigration related issues. Sentiment analysis over the dataset reveals that sentiments span a spectrum of emotions ranging from support and empathy to apprehension and dissent.

## 1.3 Impact

In addition to the focus on obtaining a collection of data on the situation of anti-immigrant sentiment in Ireland, the aim of the project was to explore how anti-immigrant sentiment plays out in people's everyday lives in Ireland. Immigration has been the focus of intense political debate lately, leading to growing controversies and fears associated with immigration trends [11]. Ireland particularly saw a rise in far-right rhetoric against immigrants, and more so after COVID-19 and Russian war on Ukraine. Such sentiment brings significant threats to Ireland's social cohesion and their prospects for economic stability and development with other diverse implications. It is for these reasons that this research can be considered as an impactful one with useful policy directions for Ireland's institutions. In summary, this project has implications beyond academia in terms of giving direction to policymakers to look for alternate sources (such as social media) to act as a lens on society.

## 1.4 Acknowledgements

This publication has emanated from research conducted with the support of the Irish Research Council under award no. COALESCE/2021/112 and with the financial support of Science Foundation Ireland under grant no. 13/RC/2106\_P2 at the ADAPT SFI Research Centre.

## 2 Work Package 01: Survey Linking SocioEconomic Status with State of Anti-Immigrant Sentiment

With a growing influx of immigrants from diverse backgrounds, understanding their integration and well-being is crucial for promoting social cohesion and inclusivity. As part of this work package we use a mixed-methods approach, and conduct quantitative surveys together with qualitative focus group discussions with a diverse sample of immigrants living in various regions of Ireland.

### 2.1 Survey

The survey examined demographic information, employment status, immigration status, income levels, and finally satisfaction level with respect to the assessment of socioeconomic status. From within this data a variable called "cultural distance" was extracted which essentially is a well-known socioeconomic factor emerging from within the theory of organisational culture (Hofstede, 2011).

We also gather data on immigrants' life satisfaction through the lenses of "perceived discrimination" and "belonging" (Safi, 2010). Chiefly, "perceived discrimination" refers to scenarios where individuals or groups feel subjected to negative attitudes, judgments, or unfair treatment based on their characteristics like gender, race, ethnicity, and social status (Banks, Kohn-Wood, & Spencer, 2006). On the other hand "sense of belonging," identifies individuals' feeling of being accepted, respected, included, and supported by the host country, consequently experiencing a dynamic sense of being part of a social group or place (Sigmon, Whitcomb, & Snyder, 2002).

We conducted an online survey between February and April 2022. The fundamental criteria for being a survey participant is to have lived in Ireland for longer than a year, aged between 20 and 50. Respondents were informed that their participation was voluntary and their responses would be confidential. A total sample size of  $N=330$  was collected with 57 percent females and 43 percent males.

#### 2.1.1 Dependent Variables

"Perceived discrimination" was measured by ten questions covering discrimination experience in multiple domains of life, such as job-related discrimination including job applications, treatment at work, career advancement, and day-to-day discrimination including renting and purchasing a house, racism in public places, and treatment in the shops. The questionnaire included questions such as: "How many times have you experienced any form of racial discrimination in Ireland?" "How many times have you been offered a position below your qualification?" "How many times have you been offered to volunteer, internship, or work experience with poor conditions and without genuine future opportunities?" "How many times have you been refused or turned down a job because it was not possible to balance personal expenses with the poor salary and conditions?" etc. The respondents answered the questions using the following scale: 0 = never, 1 = 1-2 times, 2 = 3-4 times, 3 = 5 times or more 5 = all the time.

"Sense of belonging" measures the extent to which immigrants feel a sense of social integration in Ireland. The questionnaire included eight questions such as: "I have a sense of belonging in Ireland", "I feel accepted for who I am in Ireland", "I feel easy fitting in an Irish Community (i.e.



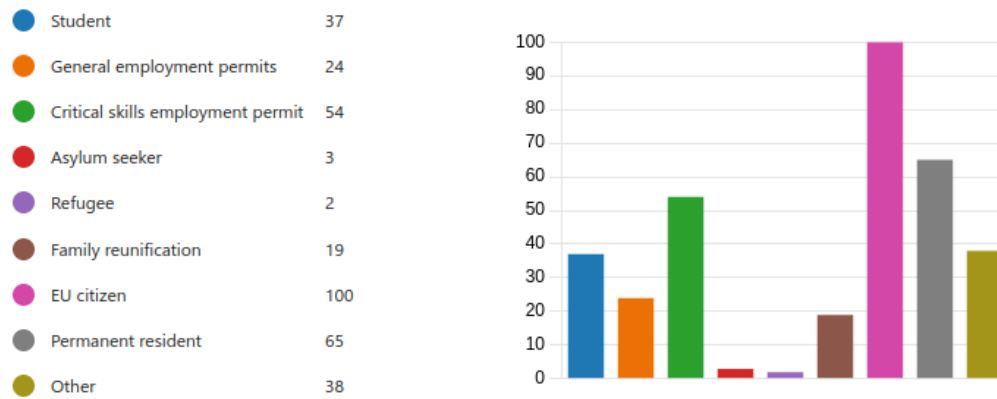


Figure 1: Survey Respondents (Immigrants) By Visa Type

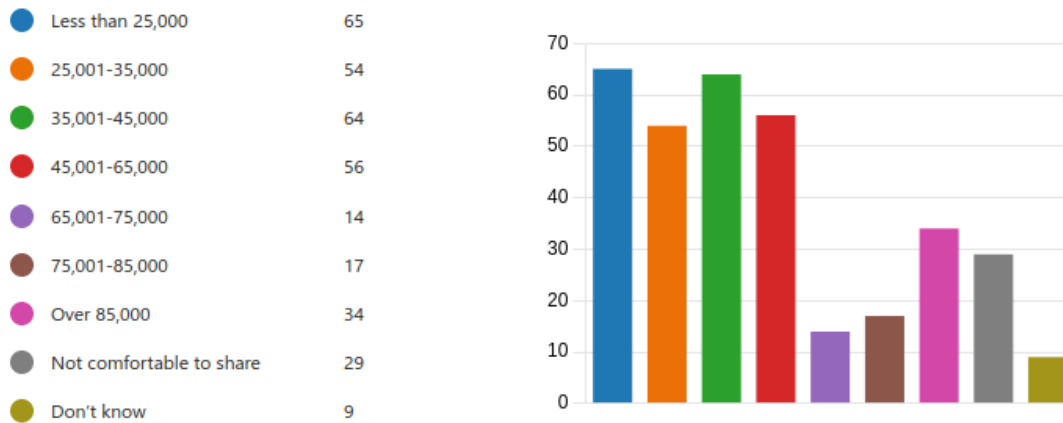


Figure 2: Survey Respondents (Immigrants) By Income

neighbours, local community, sports club)", "I feel easy making Irish friends", "I feel comfortable in the Irish community (i.e. neighbours, local community, sports club)", "I feel Ireland is my home", These items are measured by the level of agreement to a statement in five points from 1 (Strongly agree) to 5 (strongly disagree).

The question sense of belonging, and commitment to stay in the host country has traditionally been used as a measure of immigrants' sense of belonging to the host society (Chow, 2007). Accordingly, we included the questions about the intention to stay in Ireland. " how much longer do you now intend to stay in Ireland? ", "Do you plan to return to your country of origin," "Do you plan to leave for other countries,"

### 2.1.2 Independent Variables

Cultural distance measures the extent to which one country's culture is different from another country's culture (Clark & Pugh, 2001). Since the cultures of some countries are closer together, a country's culture is categorised using cluster approach into Anglo, Germanic Europe, Nordic Europe, Latin European, Eastern Europe, Latin America, Middle east, Southern Asia, Sub-Sahara Africa, Confucian Asia (House, Hanges, Javidan, Dorfman, & Gupta, 2004). How-

Cluster Name	No. of Respondents
Anglo	42
European	47
Eastern Europe	48
Latin America	32
Southern Asia	66
Sub-Sahara Africa	34
Confucian Asia	43
Middle East	19

Table 1: Number of Respondents per Cultural Cluster



Figure 3: Survey Respondents (Immigrants) By Visa Type

ever, due to the small sample number of people from Nordic culture, this study combined Nordic, Germanic and Latin Europe into one cluster.

Further socioeconomic factors include visa type, income, and sense of income security<sup>2</sup>. It is important to note that we had collected data on other aspects of socioeconomic information such as job title, occupation category, and education but on account of too much noise in this data we do not report the results on these.

## 2.2 Survey Findings

As mentioned earlier the immigrants surveyed were from a broad range of countries which we further categorised into cultural clusters as per GLOBE study (House et al., 2004). Table 1 shows the number of respondents per cluster; each of these clusters is then converted to a score representing cultural distance which basically implies a certain distance from the cultural context of Ireland. We do this in accordance with Hofstede's cultural value dimensions (Hofstede, 2009) whereby power distance, individualism, masculinity, uncertainty avoidance, and long-term orientation.

With respect to visa type, income and sense of income security Figures 1, 2 and ?? show the number of respondents by each type. Note that the sum of these exceeds N=330 on account of the removal of some data points during pre-processing.

Each question within the set of questions asking for "perceived discrimination" and "sense of

<sup>2</sup>To assess sense of income security the question "Which of the descriptions comes closest to how you feel about your income nowadays?" was asked, and the possible responses were Living comfortably on present income, coping on present income, finding it difficult on present income, finding it very difficult on present income, don't know

belonging" is analysed by means of linear regression across cultural distance scores. For visa type, income, and sense of income security logistic regression is used and we report the log-odds ratio corresponding to each of the questions.

In the following, we report the findings that were found to be statistically significant from within the linear regression analysis, i.e. for "perceived discrimination" vs cultural distance and "sense of belonging" vs cultural distance:

- A linear regression coefficient of 0.23 is obtained for cultural distance vs. the dependent variable of ease in making friends in Ireland. This essentially implies that immigrants with a higher cultural distance (lower down the cultural clusters) report that they find it easier to make friends in Ireland.
- A linear regression coefficient of 0.32 is obtained for cultural distance vs. the dependent variable of avoiding racial situations in Ireland. This essentially implies that immigrants with a higher cultural distance (lower down the cultural clusters) have a sense of "perceived discrimination" which is why they avoid such situations from arising. This is further confirmed by our focus group discussions with the cultural clusters lower down the order which we discuss in Section 3.5 and 3.6.

In the following, we report the findings that were found to be statistically significant from within the linear regression analysis, i.e. for "perceived discrimination" and "sense of belonging" vs visa type together with "perceived discrimination" and "sense of belonging" vs sense of income security:

- An odds ratio of 3.13 is obtained for those with a UK/EU visa type vs. the dependent variable of reporting Ireland as home. This essentially implies that immigrants with a UK/EU visa type are 3.13 times more likely to positively report Ireland as home.
- An odds ratio of 2.85 is obtained for those with a UK/EU visa type vs. the dependent variable of disagreement on returning home. This essentially implies that immigrants with a UK/EU visa type are 2.85 times more likely to disagree on returning home.
- An odds ratio of 2.83 is obtained for those with a UK/EU visa type vs. the dependent variable of having experienced discrimination. This essentially implies that immigrants with a UK/EU visa type are 2.83 times more likely to have experienced discrimination.
- An odds ratio of 6-8 is obtained for those with a high sense of income security vs. the dependent variable of reporting Ireland as home. This essentially implies that immigrants with a high sense of income security are 6-8 times more likely to positively report Ireland as home.

### 3 Focus Groups: Central Theme of Concern For Each Immigrant Cluster

Building upon the findings of the survey where cultural distance values and associated cultural clusters played a significant role in immigrants' sense of belonging to Ireland and in how discrimination was perceived we decided to perform focus groups separately with the important clusters. Six of these were identified, and below we report the findings from within reporting on a major issue of concern for each of these.

#### 3.1 Focus Group With Anglo Cluster

This cohort of people clearly mentioned about lack of "perceived discrimination" having been mostly identified as Irish for the most part, and thus having high "sense of belonging". All of the focus group participants in this cluster faced initial difficulties in terms of accessing the job market but once settled in most of them were happy with the situation. An aspect of Irish culture being a closed one with "natives" not knowing much about other cultures was particularly emphasised by one US-originated participant who said the following,

*Ireland has been small and it has been a locality just like a parish. Even though we have a huge history of immigration there wasn't a lot back in. Only for the last 20 or 30 years people start to come in from outside, so I think a lot of issues start from that. My mother in law, she is a lovely woman but I found a lot in the conversation with her that she does not quite understand immigration, and why would someone move here, her world is pretty much just a golf club, people go to the church, there is just really really local feeling when you have people outside coming in its like what am I going to talk about?*

#### 3.2 Focus Group With European Cluster

Similar to the Anglo cluster, this cohort of people have a very high "sense of belonging" in Ireland, and very low levels of "perceived discrimination". It's important to note that we only managed to recruit two participants for this focus group as there was no willingness to participate. The below quote from one of the participants from Netherlands emphasises that the chief difficulty lies in making "native" friends in Ireland,

*My husband is Irish, we live in Dublin in the suburbs and he knows a lot of people so it was much easier for me. It's kind of like if you have those links as I see it from my side it's easier whereas colleagues from the Netherlands that have come over they found trying to make friends much much harder. Dutch way of getting to know people is inviting people to your house and having dinners. But you get to do that once and you never get invited over.*

#### 3.3 Focus Group With Eastern European Cluster

In high contrast to the previous two clusters discussed, this cohort of participants experience low "sense of belonging", and a high "perceived discrimination". Furthermore, this is the first cultural cluster that emphasised strongly their reservations with respect to the difficulty of accessing the job market in Ireland, and the expression of these difficulties was unanimous among all participants.

*So I thought having a European passport, I don't need a work permit, and easy to find a job. Misconception if you wish you can easily find a job here in Ireland. Even before I moved I was looking for a job, they were quite a few. Now I came to realise it is very difficult because for various reasons.*

Two comments I get is you don't have local experience or you are overqualified, and no matter how I downgrade my experience, getting as low as possible it is hard to get a job.

Moreover, similar to European cluster the aspect about the difficulty in having "natives" as friends is again highlighted,

*When it became possible to meet people I start to realize Ireland is a really clannish country. On the outside, the Irish come across as very friendly, and very open, however, this is just a surface. If you try to penetrate or integrate it's very difficult, there is a very strong barrier, it is very difficult practically to get anywhere*

### 3.4 Focus Group With South and Confucian Asian Cluster

Unlike the clusters mentioned above, this cohort particularly emphasised street racism and discrimination aspects on a day-to-day basis. Each participant in this cohort had faced harrasment at one point or another. The following includes some quotes highlighting this,

*For example, when covid started they will say oh I don't want to open this package from China in case its covid, I just laugh, I was talking about how much I want to visit my family, they said how you don't get covid, joking, it is very normalised.*

*Typical one, was when I was on the bus going to IKEA, I am on the bus and two guys sitting behind me, like they saw me being asian whatever, started to say "chinchong dong?" they made their own sound trying to annoy me, they followed me continuedly doing it, I was being chased by a guy on the street and asked me where I am coming from? I nearly got hit by the guy on the motorbike, shouting at me "ching". Even at work, I got asked if I eat dog meat, very shocking examples, very sad to experience this, there were several teenagers shouting at me and friend of mine who is Asian American, half Chinese and Korean, she is like I am sorry we have to experience this*

### 3.5 Focus Group With Latin American Cluster

Similar to both Eastern European clusters and Asian cluster, this cohort of participants expressed their frustration at both job market difficulties in addition to having faced harassment in the open. In the following we include some quotes that emphasise these aspects,

*I finished when I was in (name of the place) and I was looking for a job there, I couldn't find a job there then my husband got a job here in a university so we came here, and I found a job here as a carer even though I have a Phd. I took care of elderly, I couldn't find the job in my area it was difficult, I found few positions and I called the people. I feel a little bit disappointed. I don't know it's for my curriculum itself or I don't know. And then I started to work as a carer like two or three months, and then I found a job in the call centre so that's what I do right now because I need money. Obviously, it is not like making me grow in my field but I need money so I have to.*

*I have encountered a few occupations the one I remember the most was a client who came and complained, the policy of the store is the customer is always right. You have to go and*

*change for her, after the third time she did this, I challenged her and ask her, we tried different foundations this is the third time and she start to shout at me "go back to your F country" - all the people in the store listened to this and I didn't know what to do. That woman came back next week and she keeps doing this. The store has to set up a policy for this kind of situation.*

*Clients say that they want to talk with someone who speaks English I heard this kind of comment*

### **3.6 Focus Group With Sub-Sahara African Cluster**

It was observed that this particular cluster found it somewhat difficult to open up about their difficulties in Ireland, and this is in line with the findings from our quantitative analysis in relation to cultural distance and avoiding racial situations. The cohort also emphasised lack of access to the job market, and most times having faced unemployment for years which is in tandem with findings by The Economic and Social Research Institute (Privalko, McGinnity, Curristan, & Enright, 2023). One striking aspect of this cultural cluster is the fear of speaking up against harassment where one participant said the following,

*Never use the racism card even if you feel you are being a target of racism.*

This is the only cluster within our entire set of clusters interviewed that emphasised difficulty in accessing the housing market

*I can see is that I have the situation, when I applied for the place (accommodation), I didn't get it, when I asked my Irish friend to do it, he got it. I sent emails they didn't reply to me, he (Irish friend) got the confirmation of view.*

Also, the point emphasised most strongly by this cluster is the feeling of being stereotyped on many occasions

*When there is an issue on the news (black people on there), people ask me! it is because I am black or Nigerian or ... so I will respond that don't ask me this question. ... things happen to both white and black people, but white people are not in the news, blacks are. It is racism. It is not acceptable.*

## 4 Online Indicator and Monitoring Tool

This chapter combines work packages 3 and 4 on account of being closely related in terms of applied methodologies and outputs. Primarily in this work package, we devise a methodology to utilise social media signals in a classification framework for extracting immigrants' voices.

Ireland has recently grown into a multicultural society (Fanning, 2018) with an increase in migration of migrant workers, international students, asylum seekers and refugees. There has also been a significant growth in online activism on popular social networks, such as Twitter (Michael, 2020). Hence, social media should be a valuable tool in trying to understand the non-native experience in countries like Ireland. We use these to try and ascertain a methodology that can be used to isolate (and later summarise) the voice of the non-native populations of Ireland to support more inclusive policy decisions.

*Table 2: The generated topics for each tweet set, ordered by size. We also show the number of tweets for each topic in brackets. To give context, there were about 30'000 tweets in this portion of the dataset.*

Topic Number	Migrants	Natives
<b>Positive</b>		
1	fans-liverpool-biggest-league ( $n = 291$ )	drivers-road-car-cycling ( $n = 202$ )
2	school-schools-teachers-students ( $n = 283$ )	bettermaternitycare-restrictions-maternity-partner ( $n = 161$ )
3	congratulations-congrats-seanad-delighted ( $n = 244$ )	ukraine-putin-russian-russia ( $n = 146$ )
4	new-stats-via-follower ( $n = 223$ )	read-book-piece-reading ( $n = 126$ )
5	women-traveller-choice-woman ( $n = 190$ )	communist-imperialist-imperialism-china ( $n = 126$ )
6	irish-ireland-people-the ( $n = 185$ )	beautiful-photo-lovely-pic ( $n = 98$ )
7	book-hani-books-read ( $n = 182$ )	energy-climate-treaty-charter ( $n = 96$ )
<b>Negative</b>		
1	ireland-irish-racism-traveller ( $n = 618$ )	russian-ukraine-war-putin ( $n = 361$ )
2	racism-white-racist-black ( $n = 191$ )	drivers-road-driver-dangerous ( $n = 247$ )
3	sri Lanka-sri-lanka-rajabaksa ( $n = 148$ )	bettermaternitycare-hse-vaccine-maternity ( $n = 135$ )
4	debt-climate-fuel-poverty ( $n = 109$ )	climate-biodiversity-energy-planet ( $n = 86$ )
5	lies-liar-threats-farright ( $n = 93$ )	traveller-travellers-suicide-racism ( $n = 80$ )
6	bettermaternitycare-maternity-restrictions-hse ( $n = 82$ )	housing-crisis-rent-the ( $n = 68$ )
7	muslim-muslims-islamophobia-attack ( $n = 81$ )	racism-ireland-racist-community ( $n = 54$ )
8	revolution-communism-struggle-socialism ( $n = 80$ )	-
9	ukraine-war-ukrainian-russian ( $n = 77$ )	-
10	asylum-seekers-deportation-centres ( $n = 76$ )	-

There has been limited quantitative analysis of immigrants' lived experiences. One step towards addressing this is a better means of data collection and automated tools to assemble anonymous aggregated data that shed some light on any lived experiences. Nevertheless, this is not so straightforward due to over-representation of English on social media platforms<sup>3</sup> In countries where English is not the dominant language, proficiency in the target language can be used as an indicator. This is not necessarily the case in English simply because its use is so widespread. Instead, researchers often focus on the meta-data of user accounts to help classify specific sociodemographic properties of users, for example, geo-tagged location data (Mazzoli et al., 2020) or other aspects of the user profile (Yunus, Qureshi, Jeon, Kazemi, & Caton, 2022). However, the main issue with this type of approach is that user metadata is often unreliable (due to issues such as self-representation where users present a socially stylised view of themselves (Hall & Caton, 2017), which can sufficiently distort metadata potentially biasing such approaches) or large amounts of user data are needed to perform classification, which can be time-consuming to gather at scale (i.e. many users to process).

<sup>3</sup>The proportion of content in English is extremely high. See: <https://www.statista.com/statistics/242606/number-of-active-twitter-users-in-selected-countries/> – last accessed 7th July 2023

This work package therefore makes use of telltale linguistic signs that can be used to differentiate natives from immigrants in English-speaking countries such as Ireland. This was achievable without the need for complex machine learning methods, large samples of data, or even user profile metadata. The latter (large data samples or user profile data) rather make models more accurate. We focus on the case study of the Twitter landscape in Ireland, specifically examining the perspectives of migrant and native populations. We introduce a methodology that can accurately isolate the voice of Irish migrants using as few as 25 English tweets. We then use sentiment analysis, BERT-based topic modeling, and ChatGPT, to segment and summarize diverse perspectives in a way that policymakers can easily comprehend. Our methodology empowers policymakers to better comprehend multicultural communities and utilize this understanding to inform their decision-making. Figure 4 shows an overview of the proposed approach capturing four key steps: 1) classification of social media users with simple and explainable supervised machine learning; 2) content segmentation via sentiment polarity to differentiate between positive and negative content; 3) clustering of content into topics to enable further segmentation of the data into positive vs negative topics of discussion; employing a human in the loop to review topics generated (i.e. remove meaningless topics or topics of no relevance); and finally, 4) we leverage ChatGPT as a summarisation tool to distill each topic into a brief summary of the main themes.

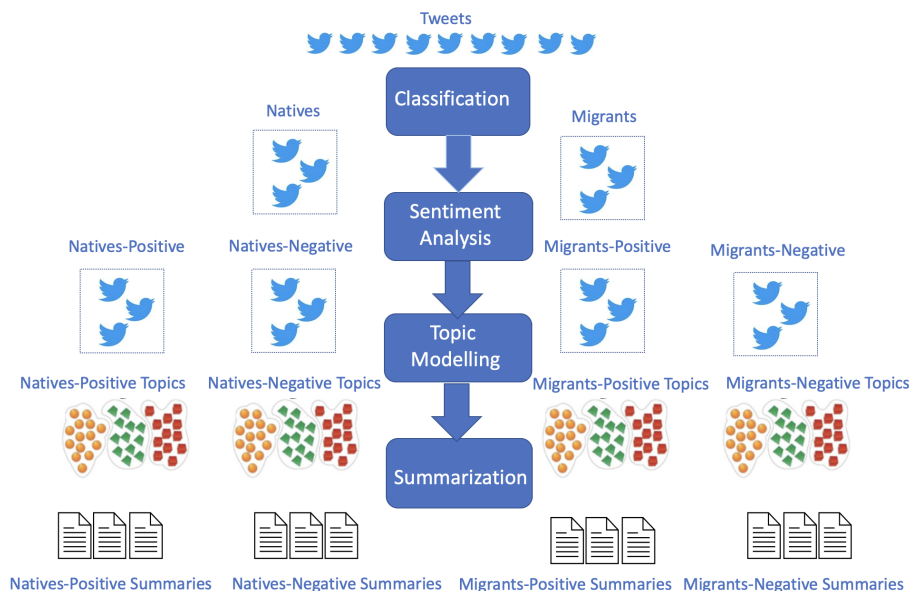


Figure 4: High-level overview of the approach showing the four key steps: 1) classification of tweets written by natives or migrants; 2) sentiment analysis of tweets; 3) topic modelling; 4) summarization

Table 2 shows the most sensible topics extracted by our pipeline for each subcategory: positive and negative polarity tweets for the Migrants and Natives sub-populations. We can already see some key differences in Table 2. The positive topics are a collection of largely hedonistic and eudaimonic topics, with some politically focused ones as well. Yet, there are quite striking differences in both the positive and negative topics. In terms of positive topics, migrants' focus lies on the day-to-day joys of life in Ireland, particularly evident from positive topics #1, #3 and #6 (from Table 2), whereas natives appreciated the creation of better cycling routes (natives' topic #1 from Table 2) along with Ireland's commitment towards Ukraine and its firm stance against Russia (natives' topic #3 from Table 2). On the other hand, in terms of negative topics by migrants, there is a clear focus on racism with diverse themes being covered, such as a comparison of their experiences to that of Ireland's travellers' community (migrants' topic #1



from Table 2), the life of black people in Ireland (migrants' topic #2 from Table 2), Islamophobia in Ireland (migrants' topic #7 from Table 2) and finally, living conditions of asylum seekers in Ireland (migrants' topic #10 from Table 2). From a policy viewpoint, migrants and natives care about justice and fairness. However, it is observed that natives are more concerned with a foreign sense of equality, while migrant voices focus more on domestic equality. Similarly, migrants discuss lived experiences, and natives tend to discuss more administrative issues that Ireland faces; both views offer insights into what Ireland means to both communities.

We also note migrant positive topic #7 (from Table 2) which is a discussion on the book *Hani and Ishu's Guide to Fake Dating* by Adiba Jaigirdar; a past pupil of a Dublin secondary school. Specifically, it is a discussion surrounding the LGBT themes of the book in a setting often viewed as taboo within its sociocultural setting. It is nonetheless interesting to see this discussion as more prevalent in the migrant than native communities, i.e. it not receiving the same levels of recognition given its successful delivery of a complex emotively charged aspect of adolescent life.

At the time of this writing a video is making rounds on Irish social media depicting a Black girl not having received a medal by an official from Gymnastics Ireland (Tighe, 2023). There is deep concern among Black immigrant community of Ireland in relation to this video; we however would like to emphasise the significance of social media content monitoring for policymakers to better streamline immigrants' integration policies. This is also demonstrated by means of our online system that employs machine learning techniques for sentiment analysis of YouTube comments over videos related to immigration in Ireland<sup>4</sup>.

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<sup>4</sup>Link available upon request to [atif.queshi@tudublin.ie](mailto:atif.queshi@tudublin.ie)

## 5 Policy Recommendations

Immigrants play a vital role in the Irish economy (on Future Skills Needs (Ireland)(EGFSN) Bridge Enterprise Development (Firm), 2005), and without their presence, certain sections may fail to function evidence of which we saw post-pandemic. Despite this certain cultural segments within Ireland's immigrant population experience immense difficulties not just in terms of integration but in day-to-day functioning and the levels of harassment they experience have increased significantly in post-pandemic Ireland (Brennan, 2023; McGinnity, Laurence, & Cunniffe, 2023). In line with the research undertaken as part of work packages, we make the following policy recommendations for mitigation of anti-immigrant sentiment in Irish society

- Immigrants need access to safe spaces to voice their concerns in relation to issues they face. When it comes to tackling racism there has been an immense failure of current policing mechanisms, and there is a strong need for further anti-racist measures.
- The proposed hate speech laws in Ireland can act as an effective safeguard for immigrants, and in line with Irish Network Against Racism's report (Racism, 2019) we propose firewall provisions for immigrants so as to improve their quality of life in Ireland.
- We recommend that the Irish Government creates a robust strategy for increased political integration so as to include a diverse range of voices for inclusive policymaking and better representation of concerns that immigrants face.
- Ireland needs to redefine its policy in relation to the integration of immigrants particularly in the job market to make full use of the valuable skills immigrants offer. This is in line with the policy recommendations of International Labour Organisation (Papers, n.d.).

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