

# **Polonia in Dublin**

Preliminary Report of Survey Findings  
Report No.1  
Demographic overview

Trinity College Dublin  
Trinity Immigration Initiative  
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**IRCHSS**

## Foreword

Ireland has changed rapidly in the recent past by becoming a country associated with high levels of immigration rather than emigration. Whilst the numbers arriving in Ireland have certainly declined, and more people again are leaving the country in search for work elsewhere, there is no denying that Irish society has been transformed profoundly as the result of becoming the home of immigrants from varied backgrounds. Especially after the enlargement of the European Union in 2004, immigrants from countries that previously did not feature as countries of origin began to arrive in large numbers. Out of these new arrivals, Poles are the most sizeable group and also the most visible and talked about community amongst New Member States immigrants.

Yet, our knowledge of this group is very patchy and most of it dates back to the Census of 2006. We know roughly how many Poles came to Ireland and in what regions they lived. We have estimations about how many left, and we know some of the factors that motivated Polish people to leave Poland and come to Ireland. We also know that Poles are quite young and well educated in comparison to the native population, and that they frequently work in jobs that do not match their qualifications.

This, however, seems to be a quite limited description of a group that is now a sizeable part of the population and an important part of Irish society. The study 'Polonia in Dublin' aims to fill some gaps in our knowledge of one of Ireland's newest communities, and provide a better basis for understanding Irish society. 'Polonia in Dublin' is the first survey of the Polish community in the wider Dublin area. It will look at the work lives of Poles living in Dublin and how it has been affected by the recession, but also their social networks and leisure time activities.

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## Summary of main findings

- There are more women than men in the sample.
- Respondents are relatively young, with over half being under 30 years of age. Women are on average younger than men.
- Polish respondents in Dublin are concentrated in postcode areas 1, 7, 8 and 15.
- The vast majority rent their accommodation and only very few are owner occupiers. Most share their accommodation with others, and many also share a room.
- Some share their accommodation with (extended) family, but a larger proportion live with friends and housemates. A sizeable proportion also lives together with both family and housemates.
- Over half of respondents live with their partner, husband or wife, but most do not have children.
- Men are more likely than women to have a partner living in Poland and to have children who they do not currently live with.
- Respondents are very highly educated. Women on average have higher educational achievement than men, with almost two thirds holding third level qualifications.
- The vast majority of respondents are currently working, and this proportion is even larger for women. Unemployment is roughly twice as high among men than women.
- Most respondents arrived between 2005 and 2007, mirroring the peak of migration inflows from the New Member States to Ireland.

## 1. Introduction

### *1.1 About 'Polonia in Dublin'*

Polonia in Dublin is a research project developed by the Department of Sociology and 'Parallel Societies of Overlapping Identities' project as part of the Trinity Immigration Initiative. It consists of a survey of Polish migrants in the Greater Dublin Area conducted in late 2009 and 2010. The aim of the survey was to study the working conditions, occupational mobility, networks and leisure activities of the Polish community in Dublin. A further aim was to test the suitability of respondent-driven sampling for the Polish community in Dublin as a basis for the Irish contribution to the NORFACE funded study 'Causes and Consequences of Early Socio-Cultural Integration Processes among New Immigrants in Europe (SCIP)', for which data collection takes place from late 2010 to 2011. The study was financed by the Irish Research Council for the Humanities and Social Sciences (IRCHSS).

A series of reports and working papers will be published in this series to summarise the findings and analyse the various strands of the survey. This first report provides an overview of Polish migration in Ireland, followed by a brief explanation of sampling methods. It then sums up demographic characteristics such as age and gender, and provides an overview of accommodation, education and employment of Polish migrants, as well as showing the time of arrival of respondents. Future reports will focus on the networks of immigrants, working conditions and leisure time amongst others.

### *1.2 Polish migration to Ireland*

Ireland only relatively recently became a country of immigration, but this changed very rapidly over the last decade, and today the country is home to around ten percent of non-Irish citizens (CSO, 2007). Out of these, Polish nationals are one of the largest groups, having arrived mostly after EU accession of Poland in 2004. Inflows peaked in 2006 (Krings, 2010) but remained relatively high until the economic downturn. Within only a few years Polish immigrants became an important presence in Ireland, and are likely to remain so, even if

some may chose to return or move elsewhere as the economic situation in Ireland worsens (MCA, 2008).

Various factors have been cited to motivate Polish people to come to Ireland. The main push factors are linked to the process of economic and political transition in Poland that was accompanied by falling living standards and rising unemployment (Grabowska, 2003). The goal of Polish migrants was earning and saving money to provide better futures for them and their families back in Poland (Kropiweic, 2006). Many saw no opportunities for professional developments and improvements, and university graduates in particular were often quite disillusioned about the opportunities available for them in Poland (Grabowska, 2003).

Pull factors that led to Ireland becoming a popular destination for Poles who were willing to migrate are largely linked to Ireland being one of the few countries to allow immediate access to its labour market after EU accession of Poland. Immigrants are well aware of their rights as European citizens, and legal status is certainly a key aspect (MCA, 2010). In a survey conducted before accession, Polish people indicated a high willingness to migrate to Western European countries for work, but Ireland did not feature significantly as a destination country (Grabowska, 2003). Ireland's decision to open its labour market must therefore be considered as a decisive factor.

A further important pull factor was the favourable economic climate in Ireland with relatively high wages and easy availability of work, as well as the better conditions within workplaces, although the latter seemed to primarily emerge as a reason for staying rather than moving in the first place (Grabowska, 2003). English language is a further factor in favour of Ireland as a destination, as it is widely taught in Poland, and many migrants see spending time in Ireland as an opportunity to improve their level of English as well as gaining other occupational skills (Kropiweic, 2006). Whilst Polish immigrants are largely Catholic, which may attract them to a majority Catholic country like Ireland, this was not cited as a motivation by immigrants who were interviewed by Kropiweic (2006). Bushin (2009) also notes that the small population, environment and friendliness of Irish people attracted them to Ireland, and that quality of life was an important concern. Also, social

networks with friends and family who have already migrated are important, as many immigrants needed immediate access to jobs (Kropiwiec, 2006).

### *1.3 Numbers of Polish immigrants*

Before EU accession, Polish people required work permits to legally take up employment in Ireland. Numbers were quite low, but growing from 188 work permits in 1999 to 3142 in 2002 (Irish Department of Social and Family Affairs, 2008). Applications for social insurance numbers were also quite low until 2004, remaining below 4,000 per year (Department of Social Protection). Nowadays, immigrants from Poland are by far the largest group of immigrants from the New Member States in Ireland, with a figure of 63,276 in the 2006 Census (CSO, 2008), which is likely to be an underestimation. The inflow of New Member States migrants peaked in 2006 and has declined since then. The improvement of the Polish labour market and the already diminished pool of potential migrants may account for this decline (MCA, 2008). PPS (social insurance) numbers are the only relatively reliable source of immigration flow data divided by origin country. In 2004, 27,295 Polish nationals applied for one, 64,731 in 2005, 93,787 in 2006, 79,816 in 2007 and 42,553 in 2008. In 2009, 13,794 PPS numbers were issued to Polish nationals and between January and September 2010 further 6,983 (Department of Social Protection). PPS numbers are required to work, and for some other purposes, but they do not represent all immigrants. They remain valid so that a return migrant would not have to reapply for one.

Polish immigrants have a higher level of education on average than the Polish population overall, so that emigration is certainly selective (Barrett and Duffy, 2008). Also, Polish immigrants are relatively young and more likely to be male (CSO, 2008). Out of all immigrant groups, Poles had the most one sided gender distribution, with only 36 percent being female in 2006 (CSO, 2008). This, however, has changed more recently, with the gender balance becoming more equal (CSO, 2010). Women are likely to join male partners who went to Ireland first in order to get established there, particularly if there are children present, as migrating together is often perceived as too risky (Bushin, 2009).

#### *1.4 Regional Concentration*

Immigrants live in every town in Ireland, but the majority are concentrated in cities and large towns. Whilst in 2006 58.4 percent of Irish citizens lived in urban areas, 76 percent of non-Irish did (CSO, 2008). Overall, most immigrants live in or near the capital, with over one third of the total non-Irish national population living in Dublin city or country, and well over half living in the Munster region according to Census 2006 figures (OMI, 2008). Polish people, together with UK born, are the only nationality that is represented in every town in Ireland (CSO, 2008). As with other immigrants, most Poles live in Dublin and surrounding areas, but are also present in smaller towns and more rural locations, which is largely due to the type of employment they engage in (CSO, 2008). The Polish Embassy in Dublin estimates that around 100,000 Poles live in Dublin, which is roughly half of the current Polish population in the country.



## 2. Sampling<sup>1</sup>

### *2.1 Respondent-driven sampling*

Respondent-driven sampling was used for this study. It was developed by Heckathorn (1997, 2002) and is used primarily to study ‘hard-to-reach’ populations where no sampling frame exists. Some other studies have applied it to migrants, and specifically for Polish groups in Oslo (Friberg and Tyldum, 2007) and Copenhagen (Hansen and Hansen, 2009). It is in some sense similar to snowball sampling, but aims to avoid and mitigate the known weaknesses of other chain referral methods. Preconditions are that the population has to form one network that is sufficiently dense to support recruitment, and that members of the population are able to recognise others as members of the target population.

To achieve that the sample is a good representation of the Polish population in Dublin, every person can only refer a small number of other persons and long chains of referral should be achieved. Respondents are rewarded for their participation in the interview and for referring others who subsequently participate. This provides a compensation for their time and effort but also motivates respondents to act as recruiters and encourage others to participate. This secures that the study gains the cooperation of a broad cross-section of the population.

### *2.2 Sampling in ‘Polonia in Dublin’*

In the ‘Polonia in Dublin’ study, the target population was Polish migrants living in the Greater Dublin Area. The fieldwork took place between November 2009 and July 2010. 17 Polish interviewers were recruited and trained, and 623 interviews were conducted. Respondents were rewarded with 20 Euro for participation in an interview, and 10 Euro for each respondent they successfully recruited. Recruitment was restricted to 2 to 3 respondents.

The study had 55 seeds, out of which 37 were active recruiters. The longest recruitment chain was 15 respondents long, but the median was around 5 respondents. Of the

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<sup>1</sup> The sampling method and the sampling process will be described in detail in a technical report.

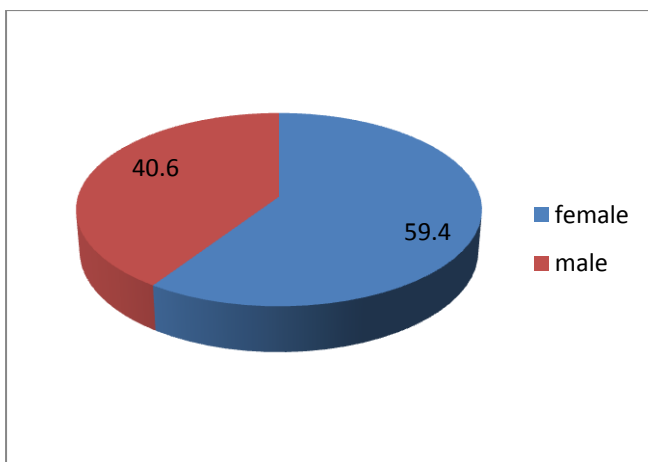


### 3. Demographic composition<sup>2</sup>

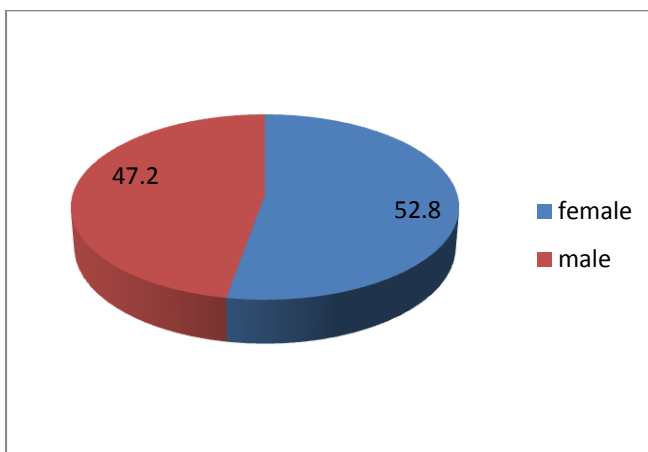
#### 3.1 Gender

Out of all respondents, 59.4% were women and 40.6% were men. If we include also the household members the respondents reported, we arrive at a figure of 52.8% of female Polish household members and 47.2% of male household members. This is a higher percentage of women than one would expect from the census information of 2006 for Ireland.

Graph 3.1- Gender (Respondents)



Graph 3.2 – Gender (Polish household members)



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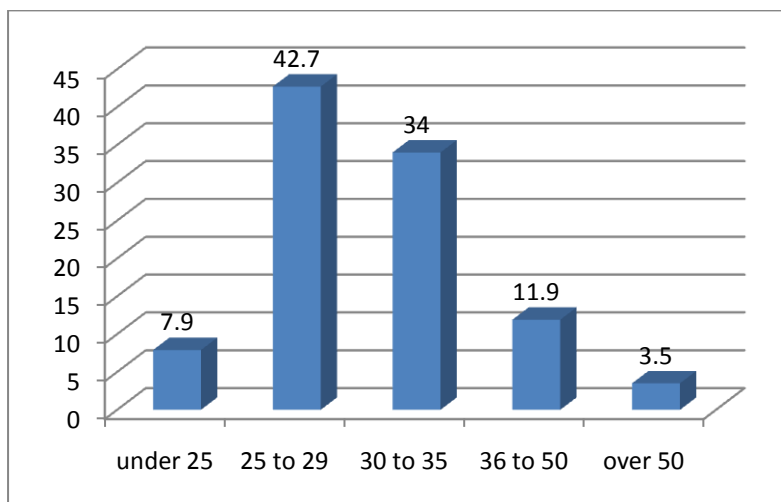
<sup>2</sup> All figures refer to sample and are not corrected for likely biases in the sampling process. Population estimates on the basis of the sample composition and the contact and network information of the sampling process will be published at a later stage.

This discrepancy is likely to reflect in part that since 2006, more Polish men than women have left Ireland, while more Polish women than men have migrated to Ireland (see also Graph 3.25). The main reason, however, appears to be that the job structure of Dublin is less 'male' than Ireland overall with a low concentration of construction and manufacturing jobs, and that Dublin is a particularly attractive place to be for young, well educated women.

### 3.2 Age

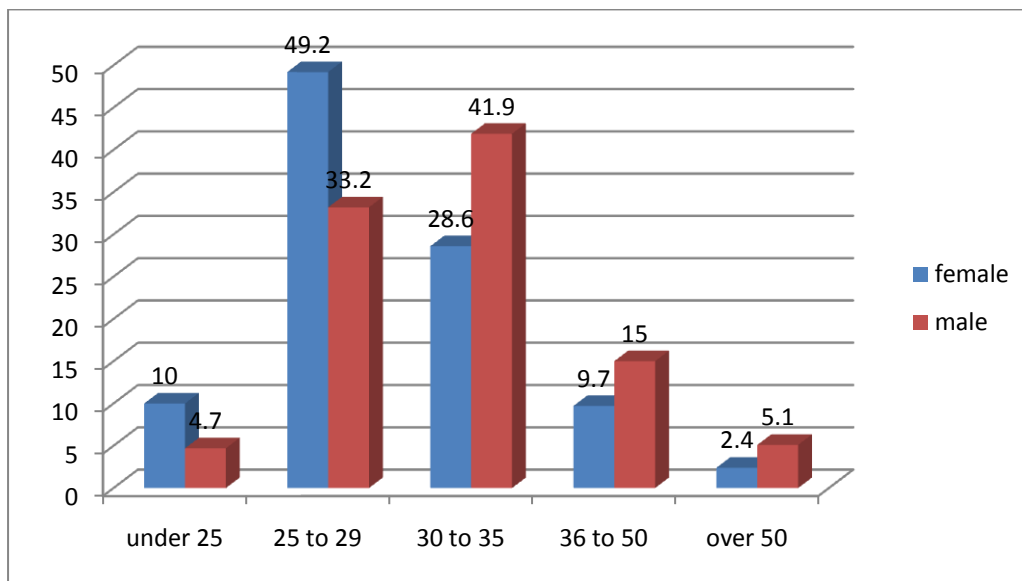
Respondents were relatively young, with the majority being between 25 and 35 years of age. 7.9% were under 25 years, 42.7% were between 25 and 29 years, and 34.0% were between 30 and 35. Only 11.9% were between 36 and 50 years old, and 3.5% were over 50.

Graph 3.3 – Age groups



The age distribution differs for men and women, with women being younger on average than men. 10.0% of females are under 25, compared to only 4.7% of men. 49.2% of women are between 25 and 29 years of age, but only 33.2% of men are in this age group. For respondents between 30 to 35, men are overrepresented, with 41.9% in this group compared to 28.6% of women. 9.7% of female respondents are between 36 and 50 years old, whereas 15.0% of male respondents fall into this age bracket. Only 2.4% of women and 5.1% of men are over 50 years old.

Graph 3.4 – Age groups by gender



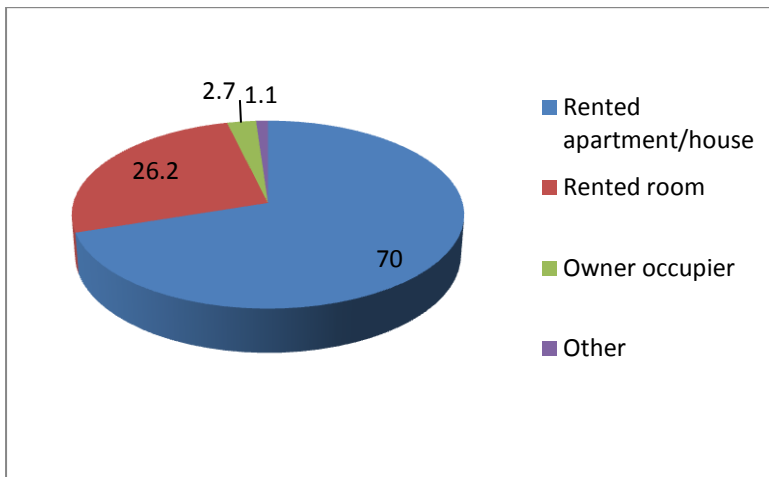
### 3.3 Place of residence in Dublin

86.8% of respondents lived in Dublin City, and 12.0% in County Dublin, but outside of Dublin City. 0.6% of respondents lived outside of Dublin City and Country. This distribution does not differ between men and women. When looking at the most popular postcode areas, Dublin 8 was the most commonly cited one (15.4%), followed by Dublin 15 (12.4%), Dublin 1 (12%) and Dublin 7 (10.6%). This reflects findings by Fahey and Fanning (2010) who note that immigrants tend to settle unevenly within the city, and can be found largely in the inner city and North-Western suburbs, reflecting the availability of rented accommodation.

### 3.4 Types of accommodation

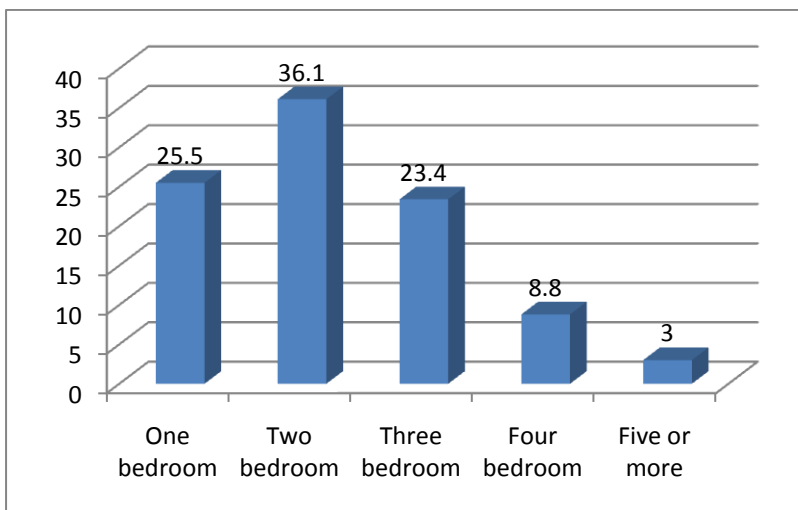
The vast majority of respondents live in rented accommodation, either renting an apartment or house (70.0%) or renting a room (26.2%). Only 2.7% of respondents own the place they live in. The remaining respondents live in hostels, student accommodation or other types of housing. Slightly more men than women live in rented rooms (29.2% compared with 24.2%). These findings reflect previous findings in the Census in 2006, where Poles had the highest proportion of all immigrant groups with 93% that lived in rented accommodation (CSO, 2008).

Graph 3.5 – Types of accommodation



25.5% live in one bedroom, 36.1% in two bedroom and 23.4% in three bedroom houses or apartments. 8.8% of apartments or houses respondents live in have four bedrooms, and 3% have five or more. Women are more likely to live in one bedroom apartments or houses than men (28.6% compared to 23.0%), and men are more likely to live in larger apartments or houses.

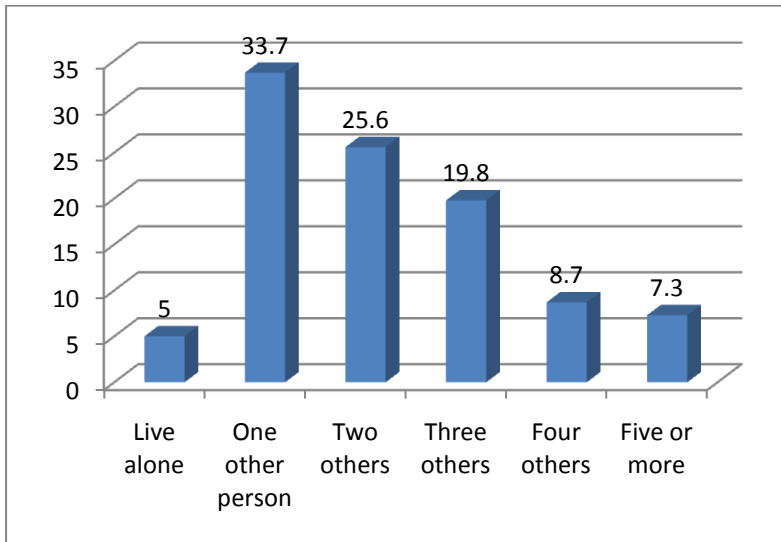
Graph 3.6 – Numbers of bedrooms



Very few respondents live alone in a house or apartment (5.0%). 33.7% live with one other person, and 25.6% and 19.8% live with two or three others respectively. 8.7% of respondents live with four others, and the remaining 7.3% live with five or more other people. Women are more likely to live in two person households (37.8% compared to

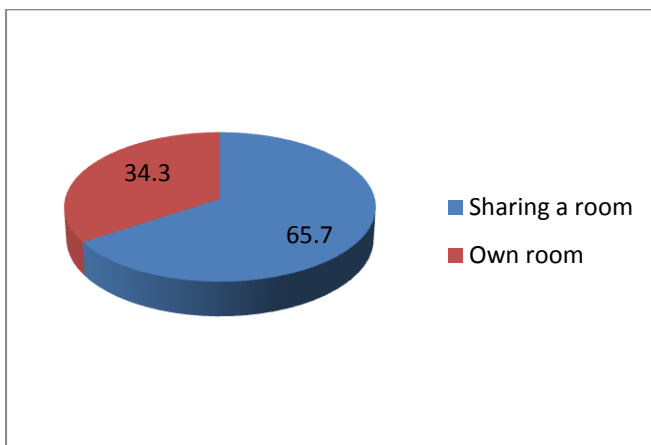
27.7%), whereas men are more likely to live in accommodation that is shared between four or five people (21.7% compared to 18.5% for four persons and 12.6% compared to 6.0% for five persons living in the same house or apartment).

Graph 3.7 – Number of people living in apartment/house



About two thirds of respondents are sharing a room (65.7%); mostly with a partner, family members or friends, and about one third have their own room (34.3%). This does not differ between men and women.

Graph 3.8 – Sharing versus own room

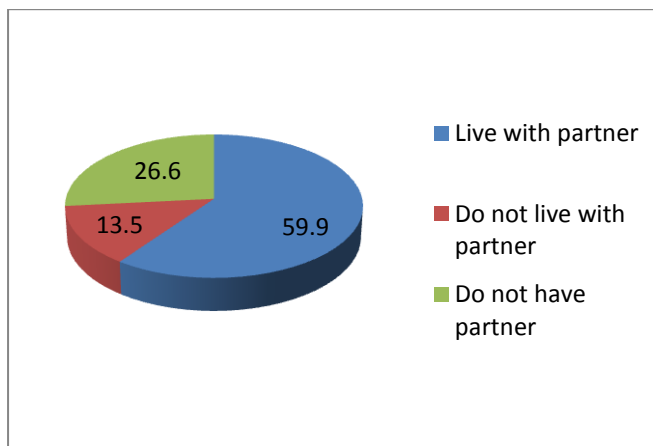


### 3.5 Household composition

#### 3.5.1 Partner

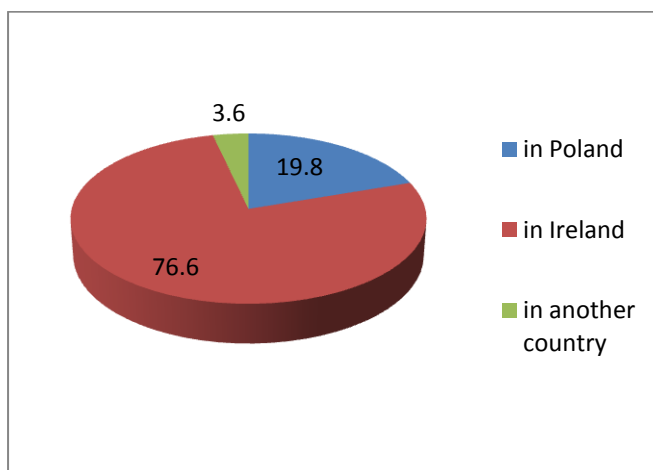
59.9% of respondents live with a partner, husband or wife, and a further 13.5% report having a partner who they do not live with. The proportion of respondents living with a partner, husband or wife does not differ between male and female respondent, but slightly more males than females (15.8% versus 11.9%) report having a partner or wife/husband who they do not live with.

Graph 3.9 – Partner



Out of those who do not live with their partner, 19.8% report that their partner, husband or wife lives in Poland, and 76.6% have a partner, husband or wife living in Ireland. 3.6% have a partner, husband or wife living in another country.

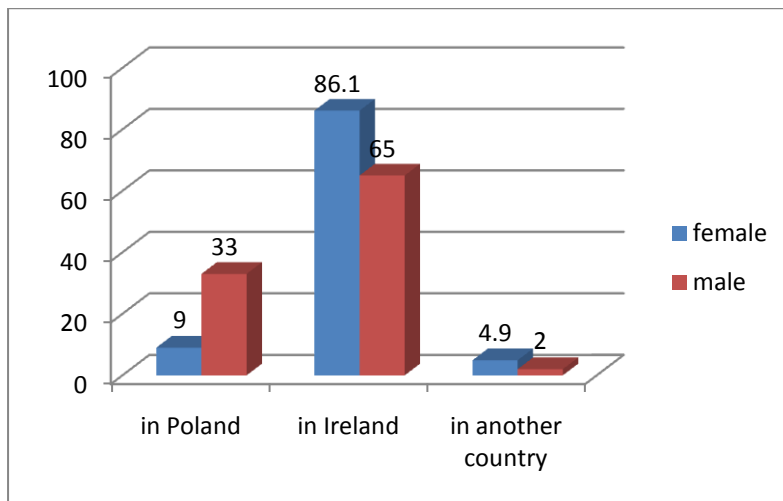
Graph 3.10 – Country of residence of partner outside of household





There is a striking gender difference regarding the place of residence of partners who do not live in the same household, with 33% of men reporting to have a partner or wife in Poland compared to only 9.0% of women who have a partner of husband in Poland.

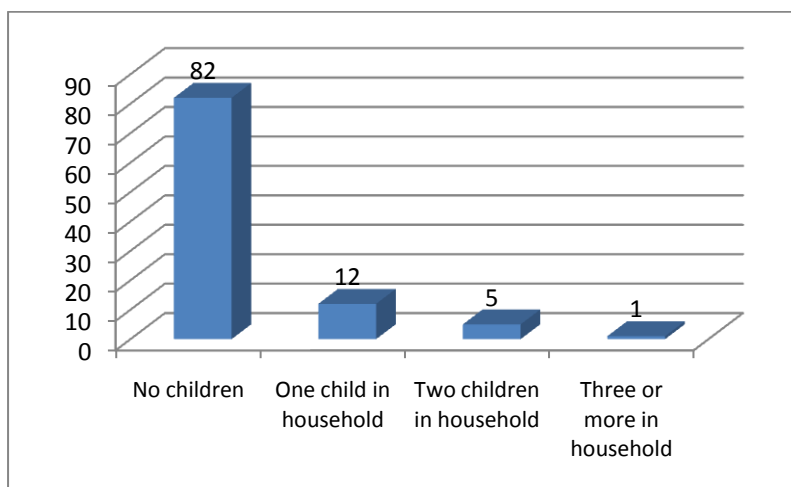
Graph 3.11 – Country of residence of partner by gender



### 3.5.2 Children

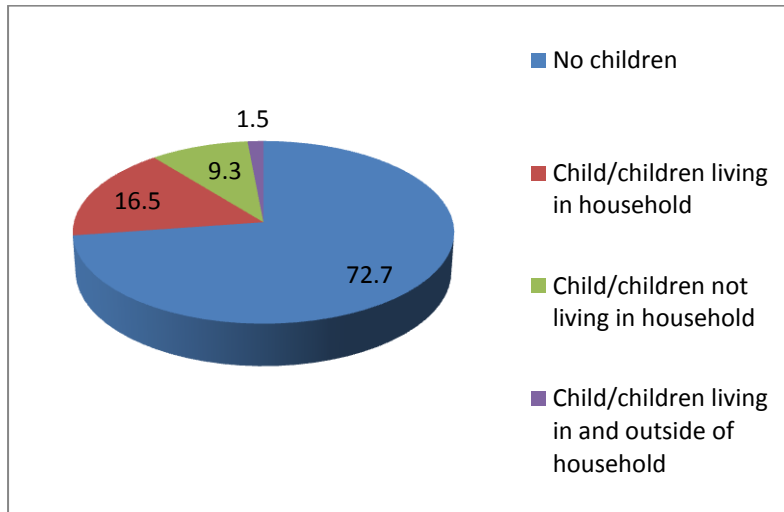
The vast majority of respondents (82.0%) do not live with children in their households. 12.0% have one child, 5.0% have two, and 1.0% have 3 or more. This pattern is very similar for male and female respondents.

Graph 3.12 – Number of children living in household



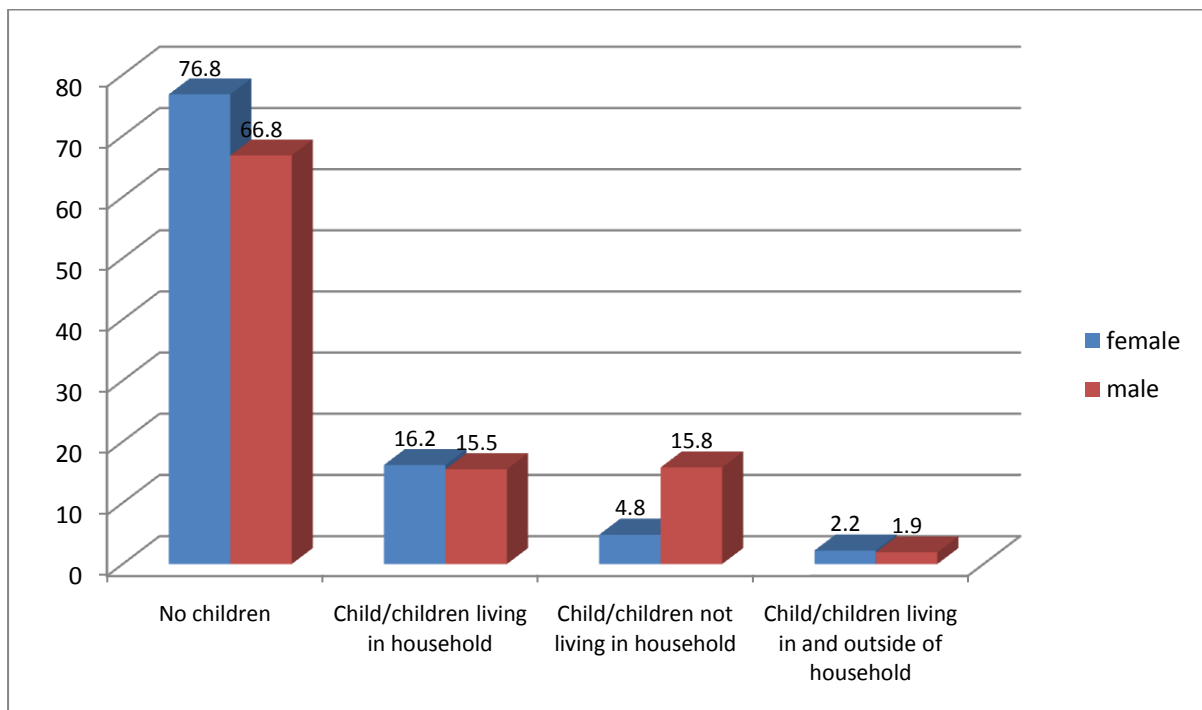
Some respondents have children who do not live in the household (10.8%) but only 1.5% of respondents have both children living in their household and children not living in their household. 72.7% report having no children at all.

Graph 3.13 – Children living in and not living in household



Large gender differences exist regarding the amount of children outside of the household. Only 7.0% of women have children who do not live with them, whereas this is the case for 17.7% of men.

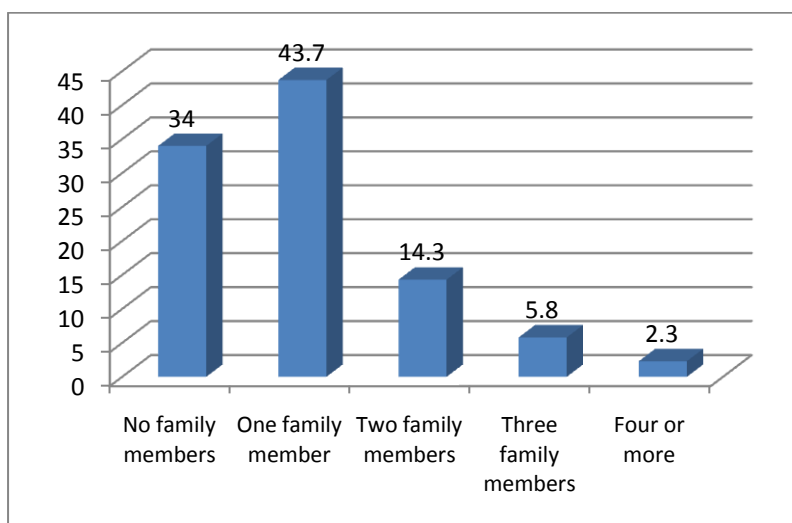
Graph 3.14 – Number of children living in and not living in household by gender



### 3.5.3 Other family members

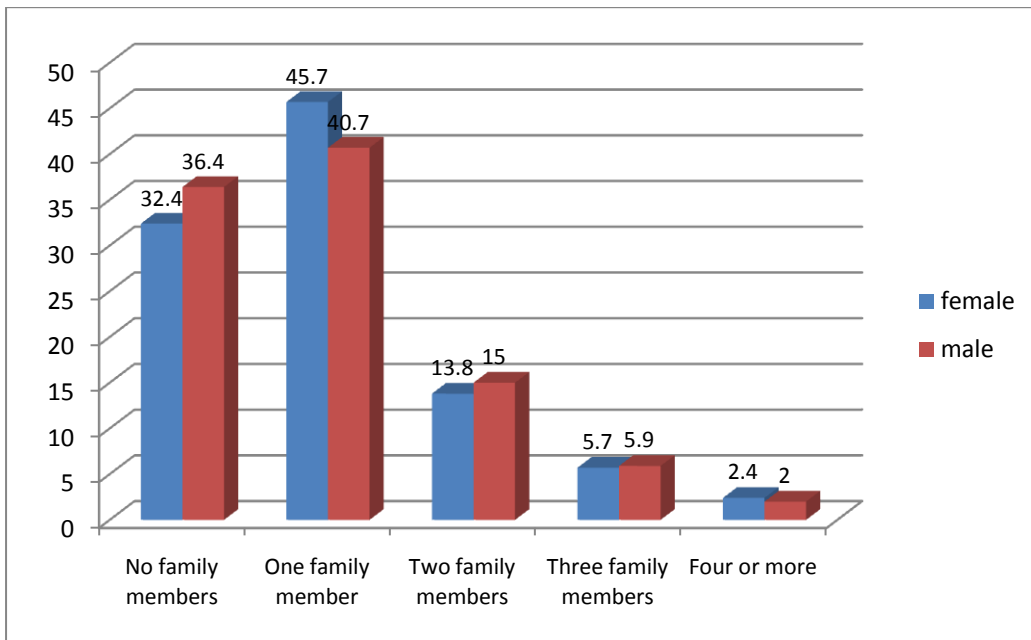
A small proportion of respondents live with one of their parents (2.2%) or two parents (0.6%), and even less (0.3%) live with their a grandparent. 1.0% have one or more grandchildren living in the same household, and 7.0% live with one or more siblings. When looking at the total number of family members respondents live with (including partner), it is clear that family households are relatively small. 43.7% live with only one other family member, and this is most often the partner. 14.3% live with two other family members and 5.8% live with three. 2.3% of respondents live with four or more other family members.

Graph 3.15 – Number of family members living in household



Female respondents were less likely to live with no family members than male respondents (32.4% compared to 36.4%). They more often than men live with one other family member (45.7% compared to 40.7%). Patterns are very similar for males and females with regards to living with two or more family members.

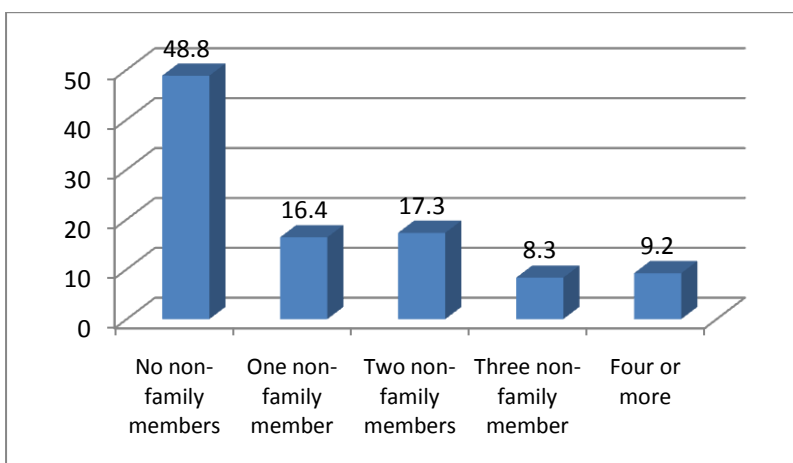
Graph 3.16 – Number of family members in household by gender



### 3.5.4 Living with friends and roommates

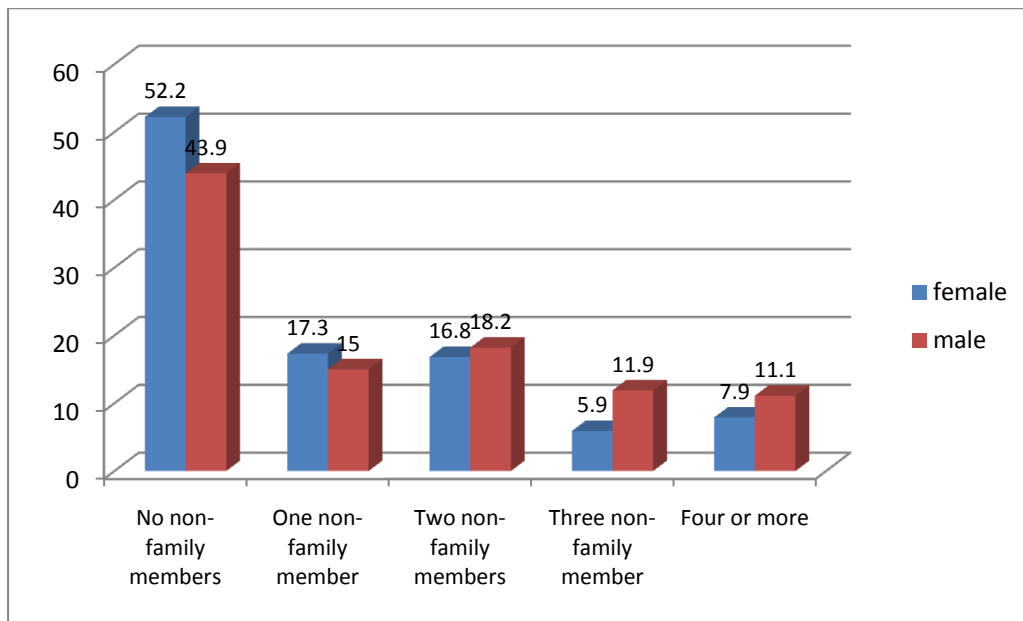
Out of all respondents, 16.2% share their accommodation with one or more friends, and 41.7% have one or more roommates. The total number of non-family members people live with varies, with 16.4% living with one other person, 17.3% living with two, 8.3% living with three, 5.5% living with four and 3.7% living with five or more friends or roommates.

Graph 3.17 – Number of non-family members living in household



Men are less likely than women to live in homes without any non-family members (43.9% versus 52.2%). Numbers for living with one or two non-family members are comparable, but more men live with three (11.9% versus 5.9%) and four or more (11.1% versus 7.9%) non-family members.

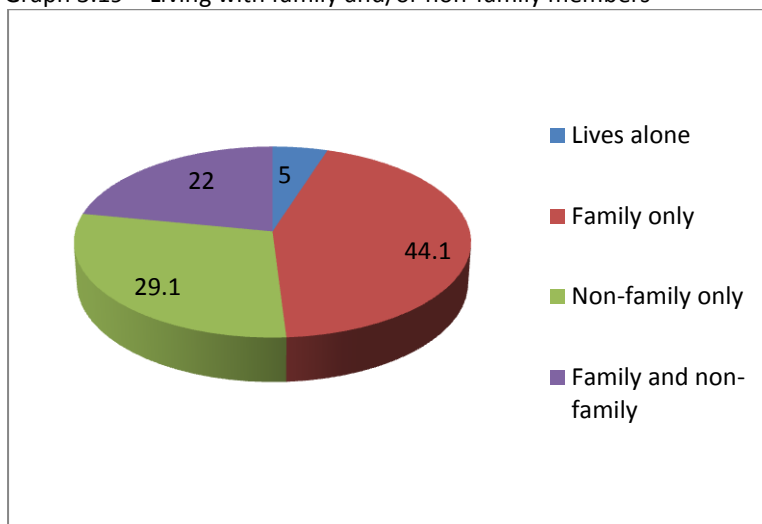
Graph 3.18 – Number of non-family members in household by gender



### 3.5.5. Family and non-family living together

Interestingly, living with family members does not exclude living with friends or roommates or vice versa. 29.2% of respondents live with only non-family members, and 44.0% live only with family members. 22.0%, however, live with both non-family and family members.

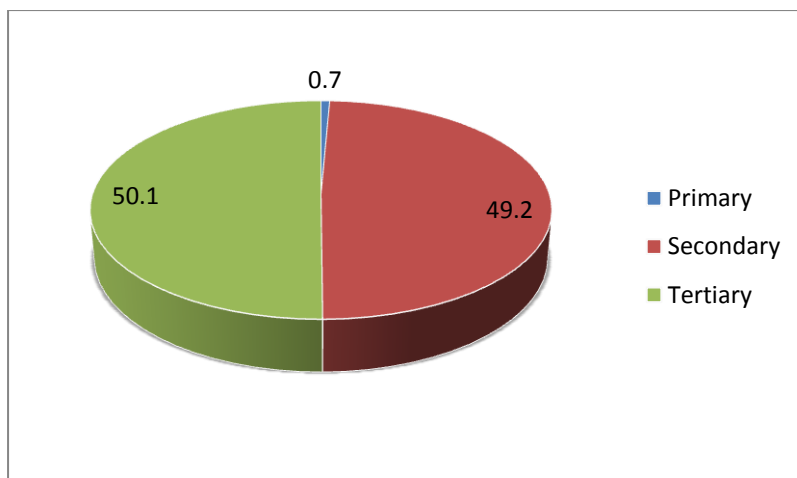
Graph 3.19 – Living with family and/or non-family members



### 3.6 Educational profile

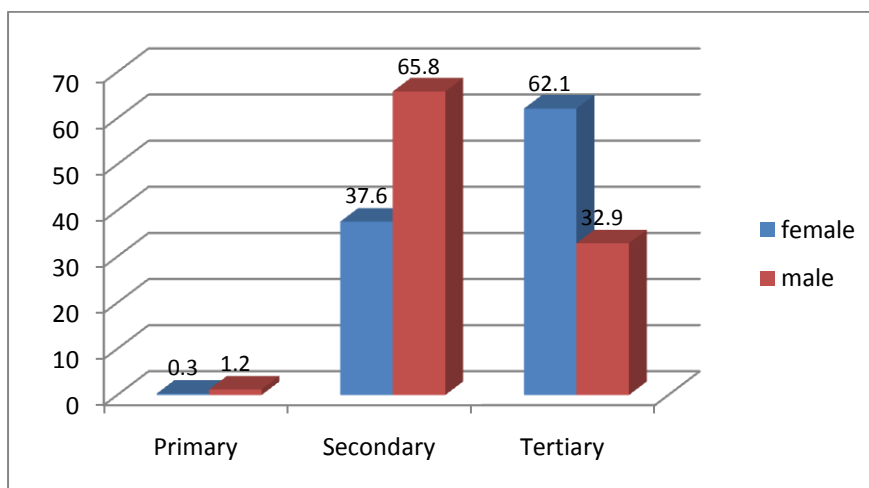
Only 0.7% had incomplete primary or complete primary education. 49.2% had some form of secondary education, and over half (50.1%) had a third level degree. Out of those with a third level degree, 31.5% (14.8% of all respondents) have a 3 year degree comparable to a Bachelor degree, and 58.6% (27.5% of all respondents) have a 5 year degree, which is comparable to a Master degree. Most respondents had completed their education in Ireland, with only 6.0% completing some form of educational qualification in Poland.

Graph 3.20 – Educational level achieved



There is a marked gender difference in levels of education reported, with men more often having secondary education than women (65.8% compared to 37.6%). Women more frequently have third level education (62.1% compared to 32.9%).

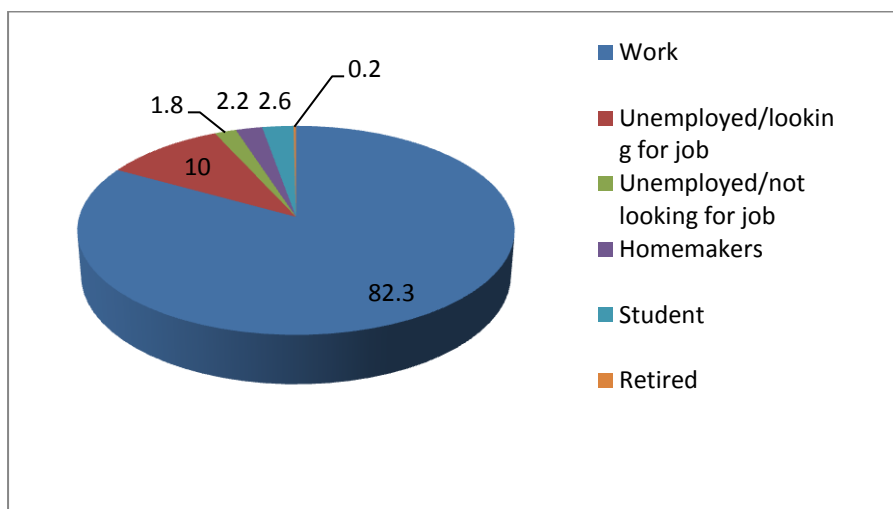
Graph 3.21 – Educational level achieved by gender



### 3.7 Employment

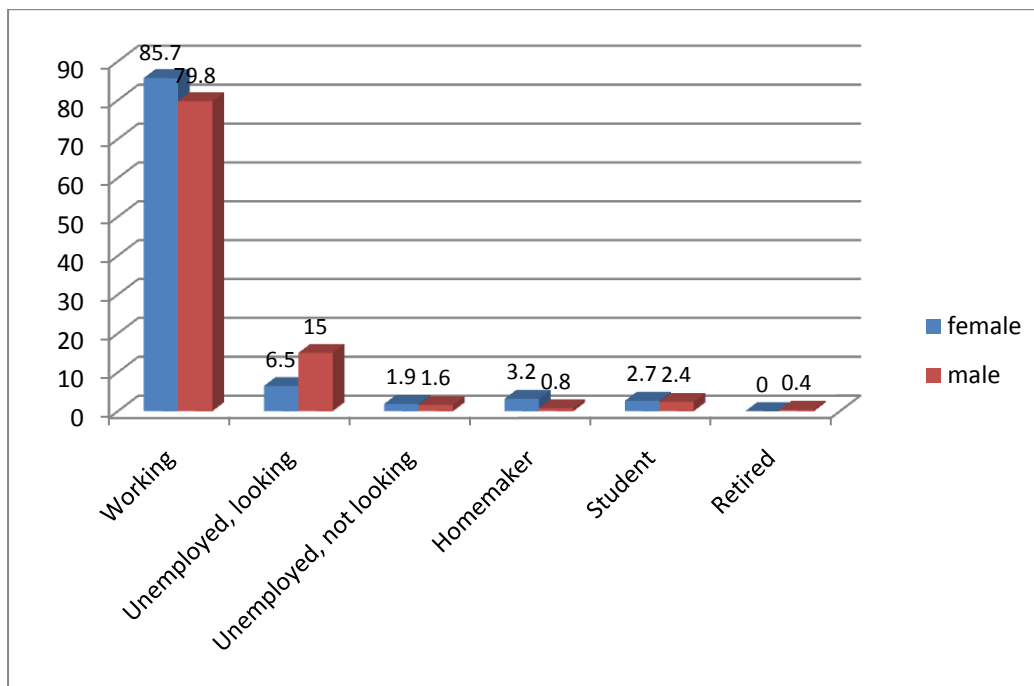
Most respondents worked at the time of the interview (82.3%). 10.0% of respondents reported to be unemployed and to be looking for a job, and 1.8% reported being unemployed and not looking for a job. 2.2% were homemakers, 2.6% students and only 0.2% were retired. Further information on job conditions, satisfaction and experiences will be published in a separate report.

Graph 3.22 – Current employment status



Female respondents were more likely to work at the time of the interview (85.7%) than male respondents (79.8%). Out of those not working, women were more likely to be homemakers than men (3.2% of total compared to 0.8%), whereas men were more likely to be unemployed and looking for work (15.0% of total compared 6.5%). Men and women were equally likely to be unemployed and not currently looking for work, with 1.9% and 1.6% indicating this. 2.7% of females are currently students, and 2.4% of men. Only one male respondent and no female respondent indicated being retired

Graph 3.23 – Current employment status by gender



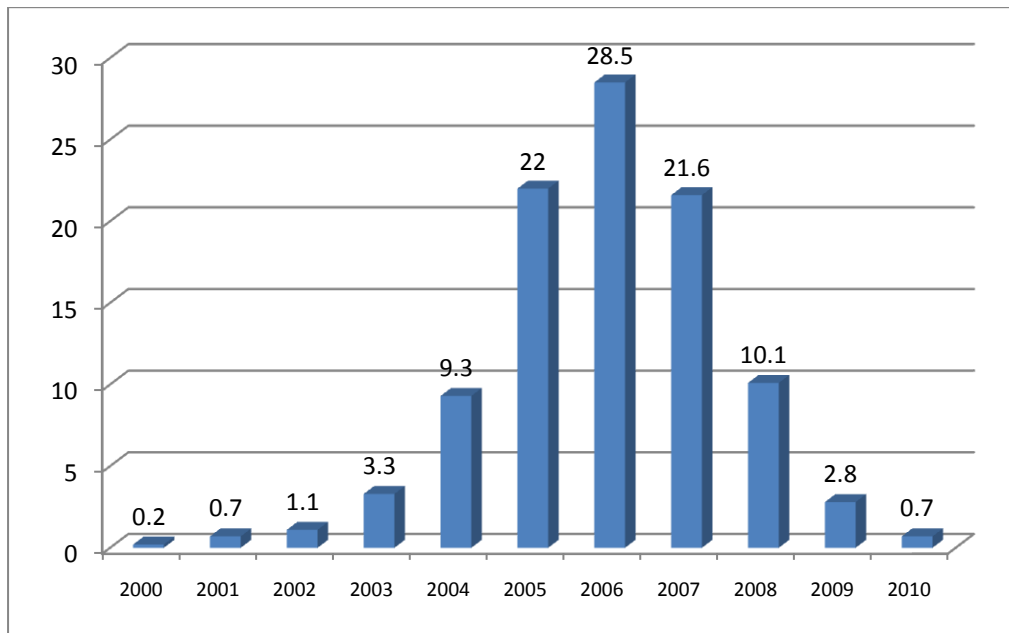
### 3.8 Year of arrival in Ireland

Most respondents arrived between 2005 and 2007, illustrated by the graph below. Nobody reported arriving before the year 2000, and very few arrived in the last two years. Only 0.2% arrived in 2000, 0.7% in 2001 and 1.1% in 2002. In 2003, 3.3% percent arrived, increasing to 9.3% in 2004. A large increase is found in 2005, where 22.0% of respondents reported their arrival to Ireland. In 2006 the number peaks with 28.5%, dropping slightly to 21.6% in 2007. In 2008, it falls further to 10.1%, and decreasing substantially in 2009 and 2010, with only 2.8% and 0.7% reporting arrival in those years respectively.

These figures largely reflect the numbers of PPS numbers issued to Poles, which peaked in 2006 (Krings, 2010). However, numbers should not be compared directly, as the measurement of PPS numbers does not account for the amount that have since left the country. The sample here reflects Poles present in Dublin in 2009 and 2010.

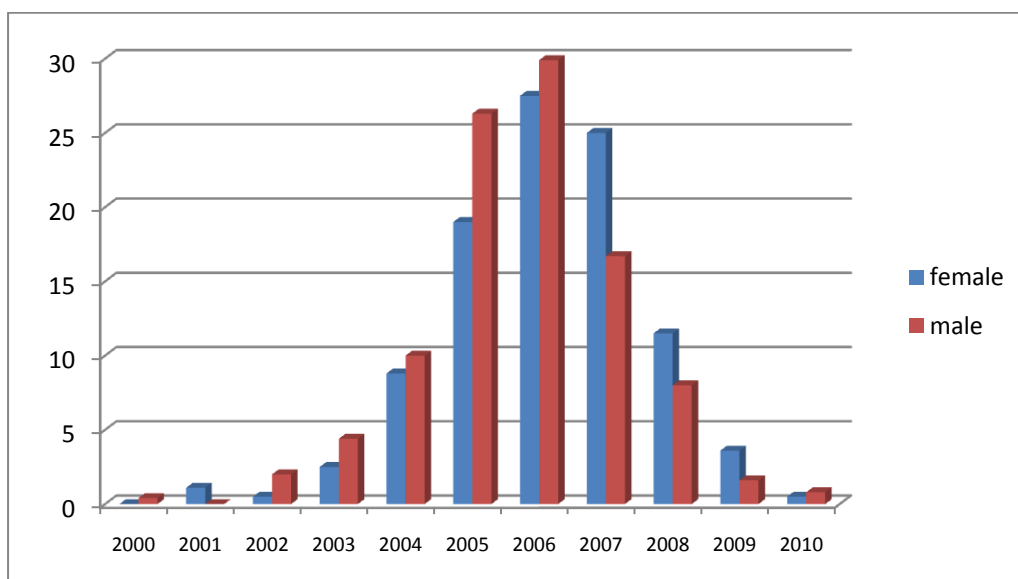


Graph 3.24 – Year of arrival in Ireland



When differentiating by gender, it appears that men tended to arrive earlier than women, with numbers slightly higher for males in 2002 (2% compared to 0.5%), 2003 (4.4% compared to 2.5%), 2004 (10.0% compared to 8.8%), 2005 (26.3% compared to 19%) and 2006 (29.9% compared to 27.5%). From 2007 onwards, numbers are comparatively higher for females, with 25% of women arriving in that year compared to only 16.7% of men. In 2008, 11.5% of women arrived and 8% of men. In 2009, 3.6% of female respondents arrived, compared to 1.6% of males. In 2010, numbers are very low for both groups.

Graph 3.25 – Year of arrival in Ireland by gender



#### 4. Conclusion

This first analysis of findings of the 'Polonia in Dublin' study shows that there are more women than men in the sample. Generally, Polish immigrants are relatively young, and this is even more true for female respondents. Poles tend to live in some neighbourhoods in Dublin that have a high availability of rented accommodation, which is in line with the finding that the vast majority rents rather than owns their own home. Many respondents share a house, and frequently also a room.

Polish migrants are also very well educated, with very few having completed primary education only. The gender difference is quite remarkable for educational achievement, with the majority of men having second level education, and the majority of women having some form of third level qualifications. Remarkably, more women than men were working at the time of the survey, and substantially more men than women reported being unemployed.

Most Poles arrived after Poland joined the EU in 2004, with a peak in 2006, reflecting the findings from other sources. Interestingly, more men reported arriving in the earlier years, with females tending to arrive more often in later years.

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