



Knowledge Exchange Seminar Series (KESS)

...is a forum that encourages debate on a wide range of research findings, with the overall aim of promoting evidence-based policy and law-making within Northern Ireland



'Lost generations'? Taking the longer view on Northern Ireland migration

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Outline

1. Recent migration trends
2. Taking the longer view: Looking at the numbers over time
3. Why migrate? Some causes of migration
4. Where have people emigrated?
5. Who are the migrants?
6. Discourse of migration since 1921: Are there lessons for us now?



Emigrants leaving Derry on the tender to board the ship *Cameronia*, bound for New York, Sept. 1938

Source of photograph: Bigger
McDonald Collection, courtesy of
Libraries NI

Trew, Johanne Devlin (2013) *Leaving the North:
Migration and Memory, Northern Ireland, 1921-
2011*. Liverpool University Press, ISBN 978-1-
84631-940-2.



Leaving the North

Migration and Memory, Northern Ireland 1921–2011

JOHANNE DEVLIN TREW

Liverpool University Press





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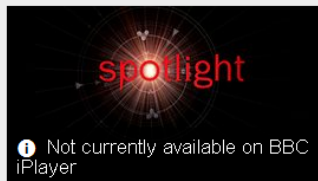
one Spotlight

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Lost Generation

DURATION: 30 MINUTES

First in a new series. Mark Carruthers uncovers the challenges facing recent graduates, students and young job seekers struggling to break into the world of work - and asks what impact the toughest economic situation in a generation will have on their futures. < [SHOW LESS](#)



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Spotlight Poll



Spotlight's opinion poll on attitudes to NI flag controversy & a Border Poll. PDF 897Kb

Belfast Telegraph, Feb. 20, 2012

front page



Exodus of our middle-class

Fears grow as hordes of talented young professionals quit Ulster to find work

HIGHLY-skilled and educated middle class young people are being forced to leave Northern Ireland against their will at an almost unprecedented rate, according to experts.

There are fears the drain of skilled and talented people could have effects that last into future

EXCLUSIVE
BY ADRIAN RUTHERFORD

generations with unpredictable consequences for society.

The flood of young people is being pushed across the globe by economic gloom, a collapsed job

market and an uncertain future. University of Ulster emigration expert Dr Johanne Devlin Trew said: "Nobody knows just how big this issue is going to be."

Today the Belfast Telegraph begins a special series focusing on how emigration has already impacted on 21st century life.

Graduate Steve Pointon (27), quit Belfast for the United States in September 2007. "I left because of a lack of opportunities," he says.

The exodus has led to calls for swift political action to try to hang on to our best and brightest. SDLP MLA Patsy McGlone said: "We are in danger of losing a generation."

WHY WE LEFT NORTHERN IRELAND: ECONOMIC EMIGRANTS TELL THEIR STORIES, PAGES 4&5



Our brightest young talent

In the first of a three-part series, **Adrian Rutherford** looks at the reasons why hundreds of our young people have decided to leave Northern Ireland's shores



SWIFT political action is needed to halt the loss of a generation of young people who are leaving Northern Ireland, experts have warned.

Skilled and talented young people are leaving in their droves, pushed across the globe by economic gloom, a collapsed jobs market and an uncertain future.

The exodus could have effects that will last for years, if not decades, with unpredictable consequences.

As the country battles against one of the most brutal downturns for men, and women, are being forced to leave home for a better life abroad — with the best and brightest leading the charge.

The drain of people from North-

to the labour market.

Another is Steve Pointon (27), who left Belfast for the United States in September 2007.

"I left Northern Ireland because of a lack of opportunities," he says. "After graduating in 2005, I had 21 different job interviews before eventually finding work."

One of the areas worst hit is Mid-Ulster, where a decline in the construction industry has forced many young people to head abroad.

Patsy McGlone (below), a SDLP MLA for the area, said more must be done to address the issue.

He said: "We are in danger of losing a generation and it is time for the Executive to wake up to the fact that unemployment is driving hundreds of young people away

AROUND THE GLOBE THE ULSTER WORKERS DISCOVERING A

Steve Pointon (27)
Originally from south Belfast
Currently living in Mississippi, United States

In September 2007 I moved to the US and spent three years in Detroit, Michigan, before moving to Batesville, Mississippi. I left Northern Ireland because of a lack

me to say I felt safer walking around the suburbs of Detroit than Belfast. I moved to take a job as an interim youth pastor at a church in Detroit and after 18 months was asked to stay on. Now I serve a church in Batesville where

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forced to find work abroad

WORLD OF OPPORTUNITY ON FOREIGN SHORES

Caroline Greene (35)
Originally from Downpatrick, living in Norway since August 2008

We moved to Stavanger, Norway in August 2008 because my husband Robin was offered a transfer with his company, Schlumberger. There wasn't much demand for a simulation and modelling engineer in Belfast.

We decided to move without me having seen Stavanger, or even Norway. The higher wages were an incentive to move here, although the cost of living is high. We miss our family but do travel back a few times a year. We are happy to stay and embrace the Norwegian culture.

Karen Beggs (30)
Originally from Moira, living in Dubai since December 2008

I was offered a job in Dubai and tax free was appealing. There are pros and cons to both locations. My salary is tax free, though the living expenses are higher. Expats make up 85% of the community here, but I only see my family twice a year.

Kirsty Rainey (22)
Originally from south Belfast, living in Vancouver, Canada, since November 2010

I am a qualified occupational therapist and graduated from Coventry University in June 2010. Leaving Northern Ireland was based on the job market in the UK and I had always wanted to move to another country. I've a one-year working holiday visa and am applying for a second year with the hope of an occupational therapy job after an exam I have to sit. Looking ahead, I do see myself coming back home after a couple of years, but it is all job dependant.



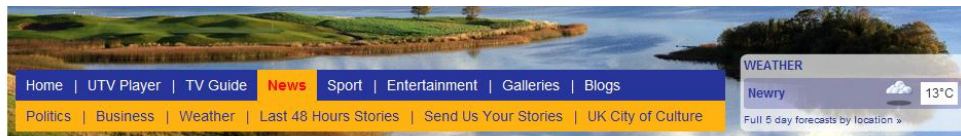
The Open University

Paul Rogers (29)
Originally from Cookstown, living in Sydney, Australia, since December 2011

I left Northern Ireland to study civil, structural and environmental engineering at Trinity College, Dublin. I graduated in June 2005, and joined the Railway Procurement Agency in Dublin the

turn, the funding for a lot of the transport projects was reduced or cancelled. I took voluntary severance last September. I would like to return to Ireland but realistically it would be 10-plus years. There is work in Australia but most-

Feb. 2013



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Emigration 'draining' NI communities

Published Thursday, 21 February 2013

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The high numbers of people emigrating from Northern Ireland has had a devastating impact on communities across the region.

Find out more

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Concerns over NI emigration Students speak out Analysis

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They set up home abroad in search of jobs and a better quality of life, with almost 25,000 leaving the region between 2010 and 2011.

Most of those emigrating are aged between 16 and 39, and it means the average age of NI's rural villages is rising.





Feb. 2013

Departure Diaries

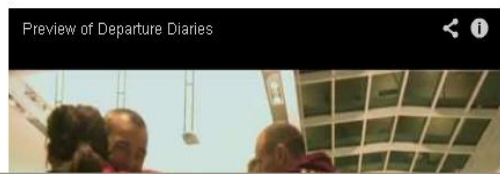
Video: BBC series to explore emigration from Northern Ireland

Almost 25,000 people emigrated from Northern Ireland last year. A new series will explore the stories behind the statistics, "following those who are planning to leave, and those that are left behind, the preparation and packing, the hopes and fears and the tearful farewells".



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Almost 25,000 people emigrated from Northern Ireland last year. A [new BBC One Northern Ireland series](#) will explore the stories behind the statistics, "following those who are planning to leave, and those that are left behind, the preparation and packing, the hopes and fears and the tearful farewells".



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A. No. Using traditional mail, email, fax and telephone communication methods we can buy your home even if you are living abroad.

Q. How do I find out more?

A. Call us now on 0844 846 8880 or contact us through our enquiry form.



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Empty shoes paint stark picture of emigration

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Eirena McGrade, left, who collected

LET'S WORK TOGETHER
Tyrone Jobs & Careers Fair
FRIDAY 27th SEPTEMBER
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West Tyrone MLA **Barry McElduff** with Mark Patterson on *Sunday Sequence*, BBC Radio Ulster, 15 Sept. 2013

Is emigration 'Our dirty wee secret'?



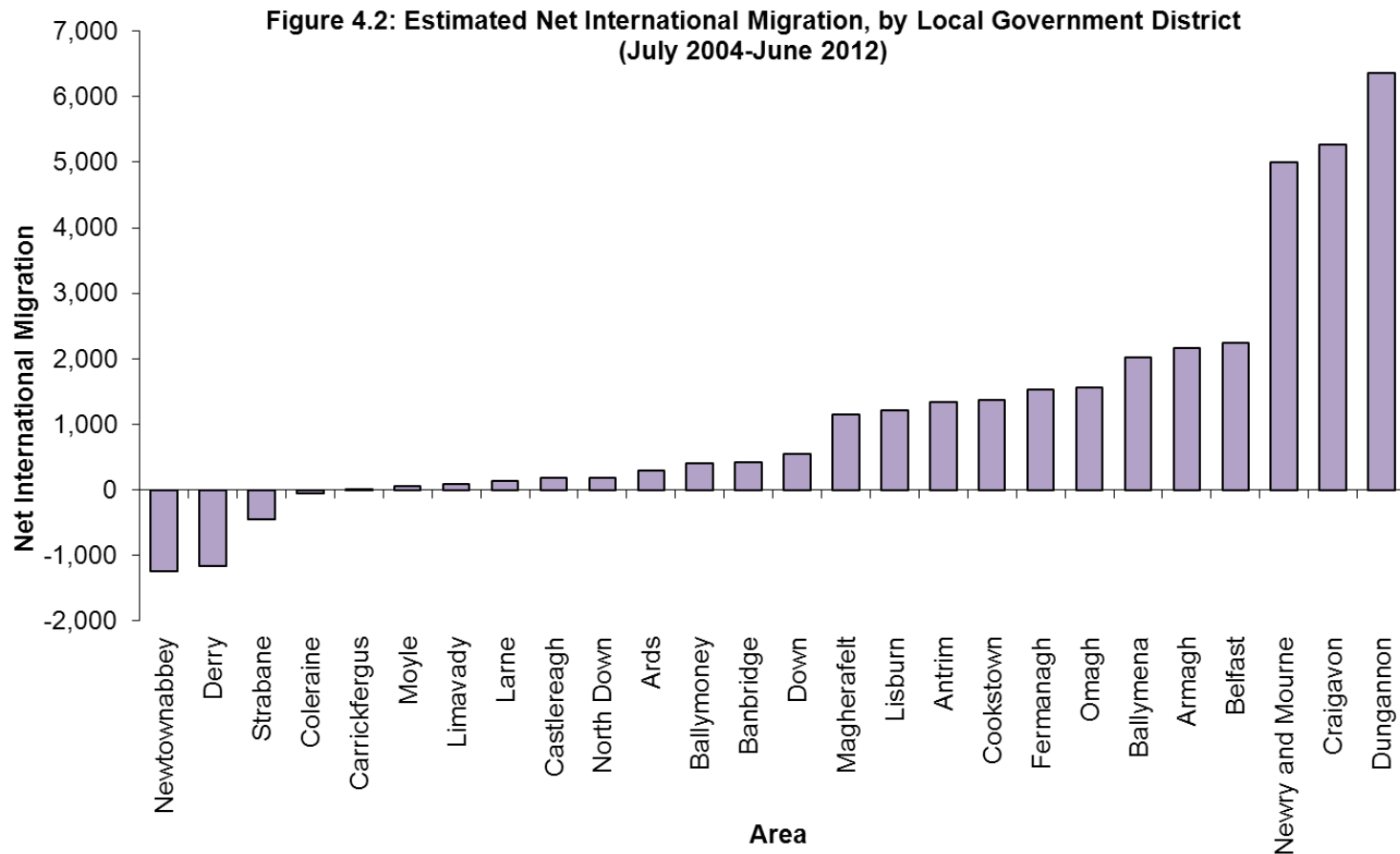
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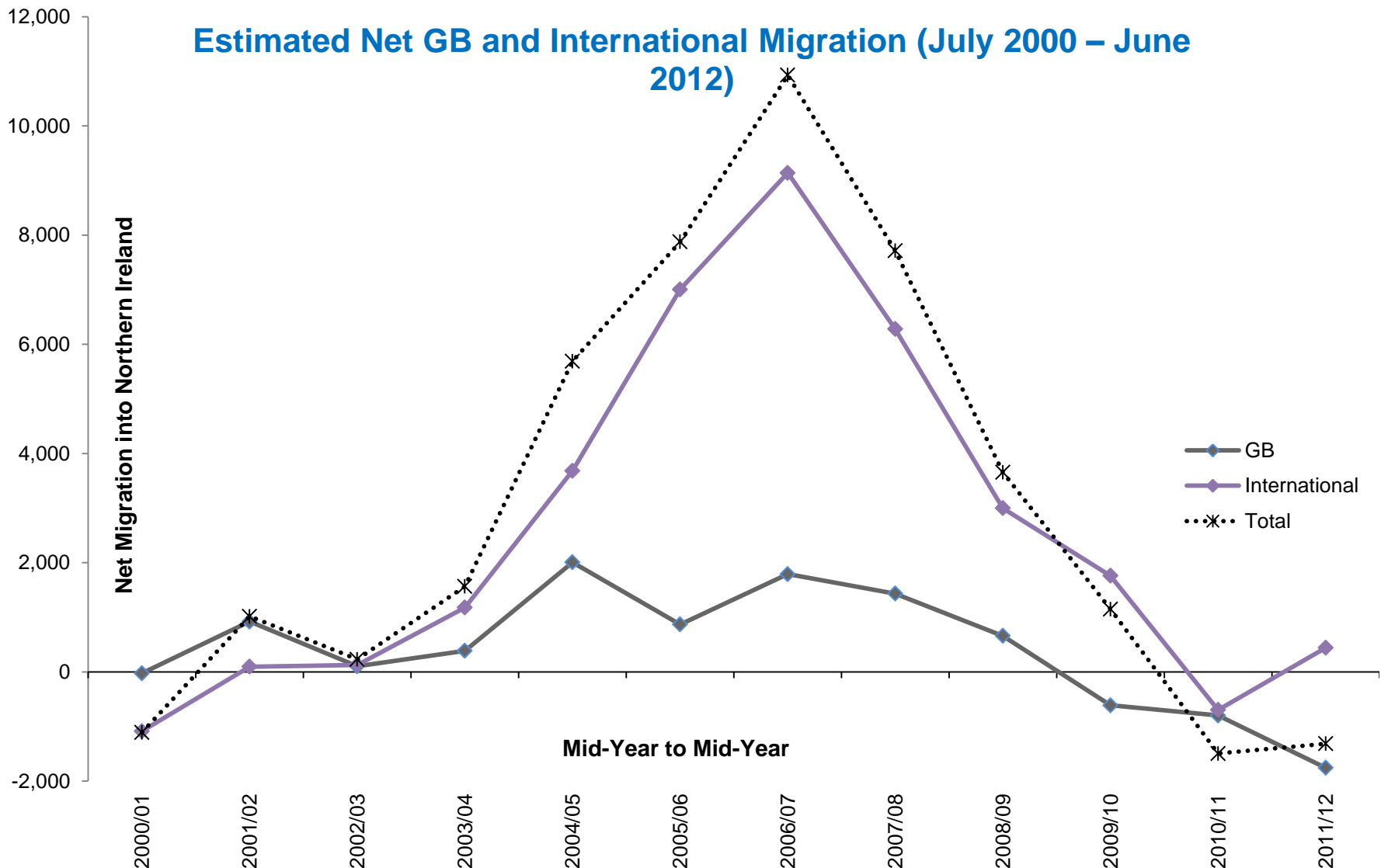
So why the silence at Stormont???



Are Stormont politicians only interested in immigration?



Estimated Net GB and International Migration (July 2000 – June 2012)



Source: NISRA, **LONG-TERM INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION ESTIMATES FOR NORTHERN IRELAND (29 August 2013)**

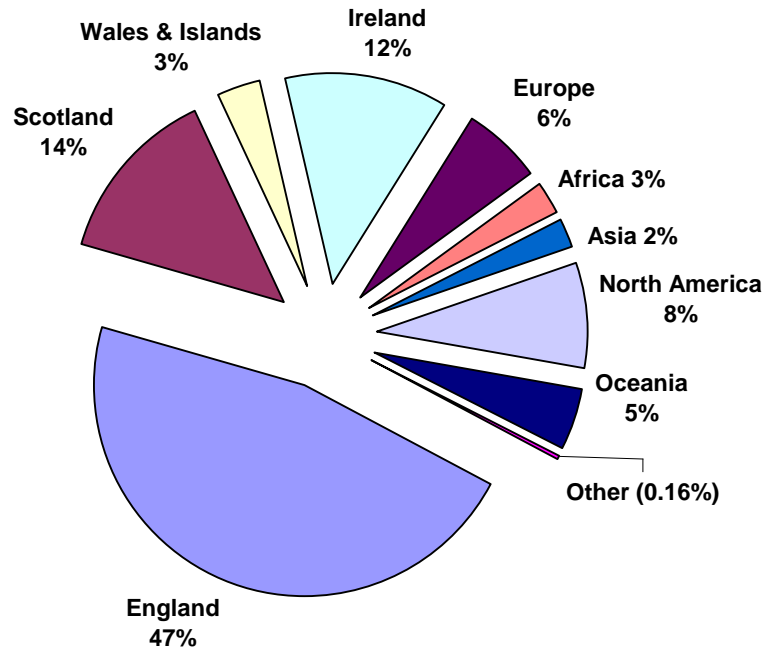
Top source countries for recently arrived immigrants to Northern Ireland as indicated by health, employment and education data, 2004-2011

Non-UK born resident NI pop 2011 (est.)	NHS reg Jan 05–Dec 11	NINo Apr 04–Mar 11	WRS May 04–Mar 11 (EU 8)	WP (2004–2009) (non-EU)	School Census 2005–11 Principal additional languages
Total	101,948	88,310	42,525	12,405	–
ROI 25,000	Poland 26,943	Poland 31,162	Poland 23,465	India 2,855	Polish
Poland 15,000	ROI 11,383	Lithuania 10,474	Lithuania 7,990	Philippines 1,910	Lithuanian
Lithuania 13,000	Lithuania 10,184	Slovakia 6,923	Slovakia 5,660	Ukraine 1,155	Portuguese
India 9,000	Slovakia 4,965	ROI 6,758	Latvia 2,480	–	Chinese (Cantonese & Mandarin)
Zimbabwe 4,000	India 4,527	India 3,540	Czech Republic 1,630	–	Tagalog / Filipino

Net mig for 2001-2011 = +38,400

Let's not forget the returning emigrants

NI-born returnees in the year prior to the 2001 census,
by place of last residence



93.4% of NI-born
resident in NI in
2011 had never
lived outside of NI
(2011 census)

Taking the longer view....

Our brightest young talent?

Is emigration our 'dirty wee secret'?

LOST GENERATIONS?



Ulster emigration, 1607-1960



Source data: Patrick Fitzgerald (2006) 'Mapping the Ulster Diaspora, 1607-1960', *Familia* 22: 1-17;
Source of chart: Trew, *Leaving the North*, p.11



Ireland, net migration by decade, 1921-2011

Decade	Ireland	Northern Ireland
1921-31	-10.9	-8.0
1931-41	-3.1	-1.9
1941-51	-9.3	-3.6
1951-61	-14.1	-6.5
1961-71	-4.5	-4.5
1971-81	+3.2	-7.3
1981-91	-5.6	-4.4
1991-01	+3.3	-0.2
2001-11	+8.1	+2.2

Northern Ireland, net migration by census period

Census period	NI Pop. (end of period)	NI Net migration
1926–37*	1279745	–57651
1937–51	1370921	–67267
1951–61	1425042	–92228
1961–71	1536015	–69222
1971–81	**1532600	–111423
1981–91	1588794	–69420
1991–01	1685274	–3914
2001–11	1810863	‡38400

Source: NI
Census, 1926-
2011



*1922-38 = -94,000 (calculated from B of Trade data)

** revised census total

‡ preliminary figure

NI migration 1996-2012*

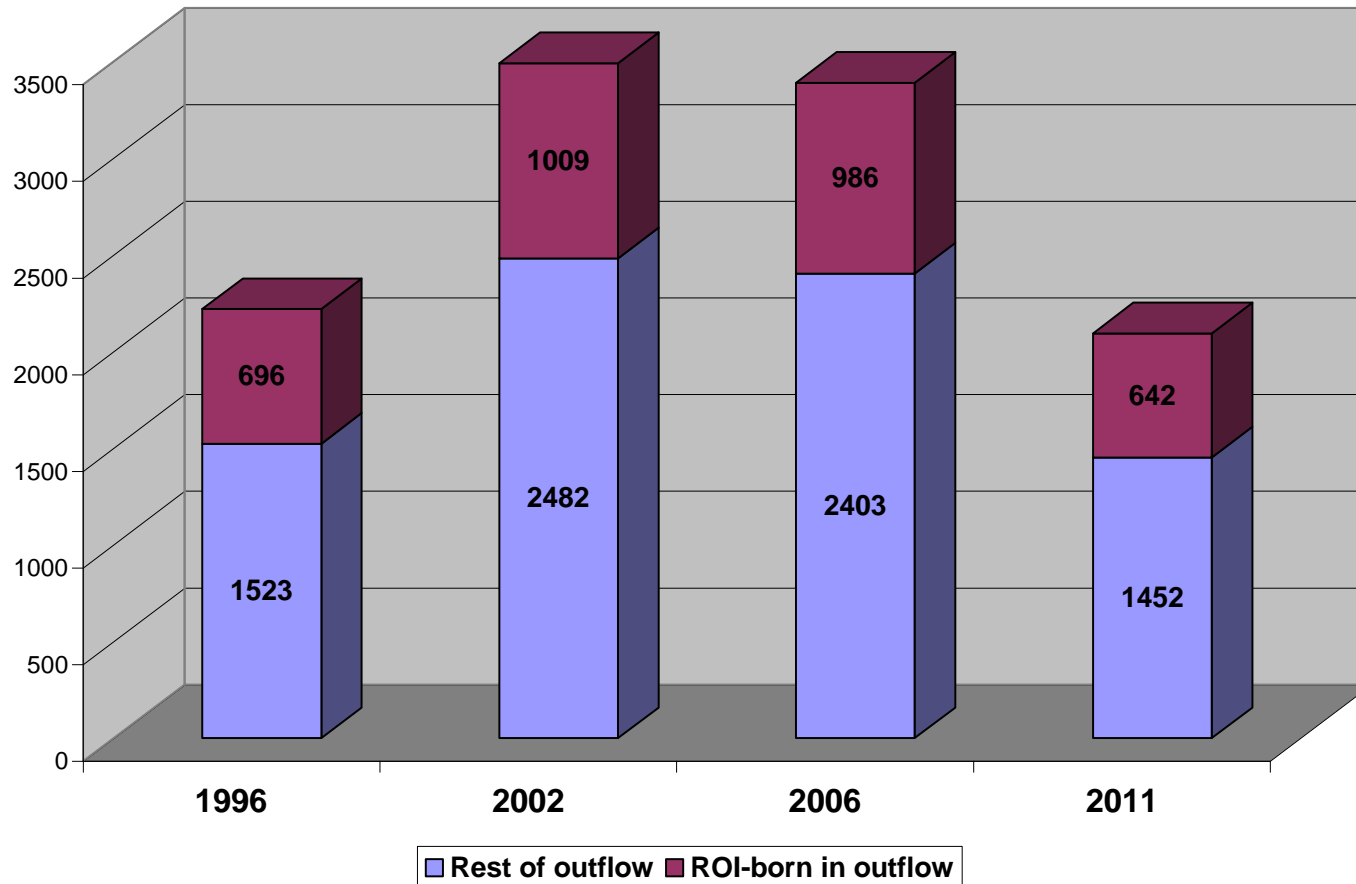
Year	gross inflow	gross outflow	net mig
1996/97	16,922	17,954	-1,032
1997/98	16,911	18,696	-1,785
1998/99	17,433	22,248	-4,815
1999/00	17,748	19,975	-2,227
2000/01	18,169	19,278	-1,109
2001/02	18,998	17,982	1,016
2002/03	17,917	17,688	229
2003/04	20,419	18,854	1,565
2004/05	25,842	20,152	5,690
2005/06	28,183	20,307	7,876
2006/07	32,705	21,775	10,930
2007/08	30,402	22,688	7,714
2008/09	25,261	21,604	3,657
2009/10	24,544	23,394	1,150
2010/11	23,724	25,218	-1,494
2011/12	23,255	24,570	-1,315



(*year calculated July to June)

Source: NI mid-year population estimates

Migration outflow from Northern Ireland to the ROI in the year prior to the ROI census, 1996–2011



NI migration 1970-1990

Year	gross inflow	gross outflow	net mig	Year	gross inflow	gross outflow	net mig
1970/71			-9,700				
1971/72			-20,400	1980/81			-6,100
1972/73			-23,900	1981/82	9,960	18,740	-8,780
1973/74			-13,700	1982/83	14,360	18,940	-4,580
1974/75			-9,900	1983/84	15,594	19,007	-3,413
1975/76			-9,700	1984/85	15,098	19,002	-3,904
1976/77			-7,700	1985/86	15,889	19,112	-3,223
1977/78			-8,700	1986/87	13,478	19,122	-5,644
1978/79			-5,600	1987/88	13,832	21,514	-7,682
1979/80			-5,300	1988/89	14,373	20,779	-6,406
				1989/90	15,040	19,833	-4,793



Why migrate?



Interwar migration: Economic legacy of WW1

Between **1876-1913** volume of international trade grew at the same rate of world production (approx. 3% per annum)

WW1 : production diverted into re-armament, patterns of int'l trade disrupted due to hostilities

1920s: production restored but gap with int'l trade ever increasing, by late 1920s production was at 50% increase on 1913, while trade increased only 25%. Depression continued to increase gap between production and trade – British exports fell 30% from 1929-1931.

Decline or slow growth in the 1920s of local industries such as shipbuilding, textiles and coal mining – these were of considerable importance in particular regions (NI, Wales, North of England, Scotland)

Unemployment rates in NI, GB & UK 1922-30

(%)	1922	1923	1924	1925	1926	1927	1928	1929	1930	Ave.
NI	22.9	17.9	16.6	24.2	23.3	13.1	17.2	15.1	24.3	19.4
GB	-	11.2	9.9	10.7	11.9	9.7	10.8	10.6	16.3	11.4
UK	14.3	11.7	10.3	11.3	12.5	9.7	10.8	10.4	16.1	11.9

Sources: Ulster Year Book, 1922-30; Mitchell (1988, 124)

Unemployment rates in NI, GB & UK 1950-59

%	1950	1951	1952	1953	1954	1955	1956	1957	1958	1959	Ave.
NI	5.8	6.1	10.4	8.1	7.0	6.8	6.4	7.3	9.3	7.8	7.5
GB	1.5	1.2	2.0	1.6	1.3	1.1	1.2	1.4	2.1	2.2	1.56
UK	1.6	1.3	2.2	1.8	1.5	1.2	1.3	1.6	2.2	2.3	1.7

Sources: *Ulster Year Book* for NI; Mitchell (1988) for GB & UK

Unemployment rates in NI, GB & UK 1970-79

%	1970	1971	1972	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979	Ave.
NI	7	7.9	8.8	6.1	5.7	7.9	10	11	11.5	11.3	8.64
GB	2.6	3.4	3.7	2.6	2.6	4.1	5.6	6	6	5.6	4.22
UK	2.6	3.4	3.8	2.7	2.6	4	5.5	5.8	5.7	5.3	4.14

Emigration NI: 1950s – 1970s

In Northern Ireland it is estimated that between 1951-61 the annual emigration rate was 15.4 per thousand population.

The rate of emigration was 10.8 per thousand for Catholics and 4.6 per thousand for Non-Catholics (Simpson 1983: 102).

'Until the 1960s...the North had a net emigration rate around half that of the Republic, although in the 1960s the rates became very similar...Though the North escaped the massive outflow of the 1950s, it would seem that there has since been a catching up, with Catholics leading the deprivation stakes' (Munck 1993: 85).

1970s saw the highest level of out migration since the years immediately following partition in the early 1920s, net population loss during the decade of -111,423

Migration NI: 1980s – 1990s

Approx **10-15,000** depart per annum

Reversal of previous Protestant / Catholic emigration balance with Protestants becoming majority, esp. university students who choose not to return

1990s – almost as many immigrants as emigrants masks real emigration figure

Immigration NI: 1990s-2011

By 1997, minority ethnic groups made up 1.5% of NI population; **by 2011 = 1.8%**

Increasing concerns about racism, attacks, migrant workers

UK foreign-born population **2011 = 13%** (half of whom arrived since 2001)

NI foreign-born population **2011 = 4.5%** (over half of whom are European 2.51%; 1.97% from post-2004 EU accession countries): issue of 'under-employment' for skilled workers



Where did our 'brightest young talent' go?: 1920s emigrants



Irish-born resident in Britain, 1921-2011

Year	Eng & Wales			Scotland			Britain	
	Irish-born	NI-born	% NI-born	Irish-born	NI-born	% NI-born	Total Irish-born	% NI-born
1921	364747	-	-	70623	88397	55.6	523767	-
1931	311033	70056	18.4	56391	67905	54.6	505385	27.3
1951	492056	134965	21.5	45653	43354	48.7	716028	24.9
1961	667088	187549	21.9	41904	37308	47.1	933849	24.1
1971	675870	215805	24.2	33365	32790	49.6	957830	26
1981	579807	209042	26.5	27044	33927	55.6	849820	28.6
1991	569750	218521	27.7	22800	26393	53.7	837464	29.2
2001	473027	222975	32	21809	33528	60.6	751339	34.1
2011	407357	214988	34.5	na	na	na	na	na

Source data: Census: Engl & Wales, 1921-2011; Northern Ireland, 1921-2001; Scotland, 1921-2001; table from Trew, Leaving the North, p132

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Mr. E. O'KELLY, 13, QUEEN SQUARE, BELFAST.

Advertisement in
*The Tyrone
Courier,*
January 21, 1904

Empire Migration Act, 1922

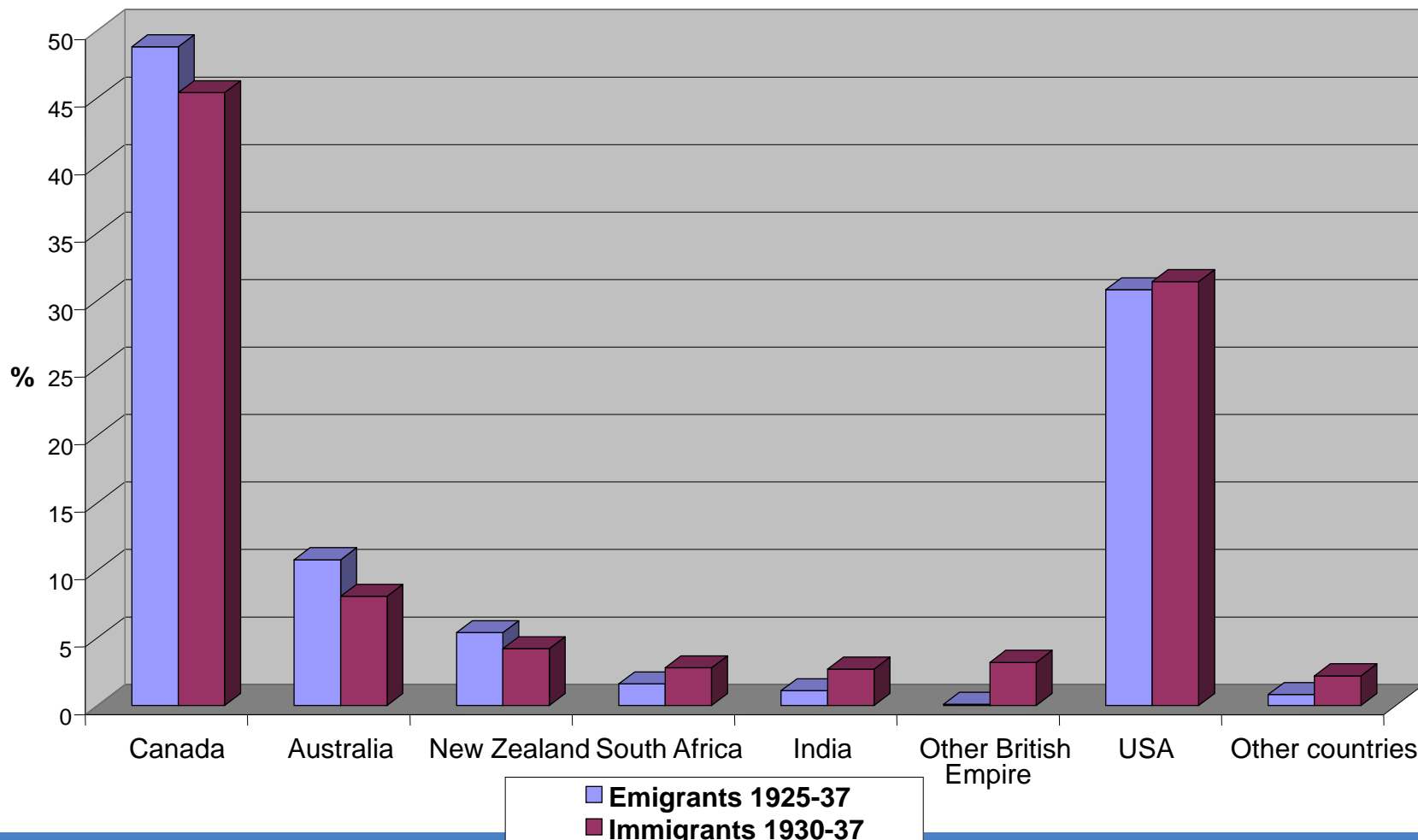


Imperial penny
post inaugural
stamp, Dec.
1898

reduced postage
to the Empire
from 5 down to
2 cents

Destination and Source Countries for Northern Ireland Overseas Migrants, 1920s-30s

Emigration = 94,000



Richhill Castle, Legacorry Estate, Co. Armagh (aka Richmond Centre for Overseas Settlement, 1926-30)



Cooperative scheme of NI and Canadian governments

Who are NI migrants?

our 'brightest young talent'

Post-war emigrants and returnees

Immigrants & ethnic minorities

1970s & 1980s emigrants



Who are the NI migrants?

Interwar period = **labourers and domestics** (but data is unreliable!), also **family migration** as **children** comprised 24% of emigrants and 22% of immigrants

Post-war = **skilled trades**, but increasingly **families** as **children** under 15 comprised almost 30% of emigrants and 27% of immigrants

1970s - 1990s = two streams:

1. students, young graduates ('brain drain')
2. the low skilled

2000s – increasingly **families** added to streams of students and low-skilled (for immig and emig)



Northern Ireland overseas migrants by occupation, 1920s-1960s

Males	% Emigrants		% Immigrants	
	1925–37	1961–63	1930–37	1961–63
Agriculture	39	5	16	3
Labourers	20	9	27	8
Trades	16	31	24	22
Clerical/sales	12	11	14	12
Professional	2	17	4	18
Transport	3	4	3	4
Other	7	17	12	22
Students/retired	–	6	–	11
Females	% Emigrants		% Immigrants	
	1925–37	1961–63	1930–37	1961–63
Domestic	45	6	23	4
Housewife	32	45	54	47
Clerical/sales	7	19	6	15
Clothing trades	3	6	2	2
Professional	3	14	6	17
Other	10	8	9	10
Students/retired	–	2	–	5

Source table:
Trew, Leaving
the North, p. 50

Some estimates of NI net emig by denomination, 1926-81

	1937–51 Barritt & Carter	1951–61 Barritt & Carter	1951–61 Compton (1976)	1961–71 Compton (1985)	1961–71 Compton (1989)	1971–81 Compton (1989)	1926–81 Rowthorn & Wayne (1988)
Total net mig	67,000	92,000	92,000	69,000	61,000*	110,000*	441,000
Catholic	39,000	51,000	55,200	41,500	33,000	55,000	263,000
% Catholic	58%	55%	60%	60%	54%	50%	60%
Protestant	28,000	41,000	36,800	27,500	28,000	55,000	178,000
% Protestant	42%	45%	40%	40%	46%	50%	40%



*Compton's figures are lower than those published by the Registrar General

Source table: Trew, Leaving the North, p. 95

Is there a discourse of NI migration?



Interwar migration



John Martin Mark

Unionist MP, Londonderry

'Of a certain religious persuasion over 2,000 had emigrated during the last three months...a very large proportion of these were young men of the farming industry – farmers' sons who are the very backbone of our country.'

-Parliamentary debates, NI, 13 March 1924



Sir Robert J. Johnstone

Unionist MP for Queen's University

'It is altogether to our advantage that we should have a large population, an **outpost population**, in Canada and the other great dependencies of the Empire'.

Parliamentary debates, NI, 26 October 1926



Sir James Craig

Prime Minister of NI

‘Now it is intensely important to Great Britain and to **Ulster** also that there should be a close connection with, and a steady influx of **good British blood** and capital into, the Dominions, because if the **country at home** does not pay attention...there is always the chance that by **foreign blood** and in **Canada by American blood** they may be getting the whole country into mortgage to the American people’.

Parliamentary debates, NI, 27 October 1926



Thomas Henderson

Independent Unionist MP, Belfast, North

‘Thousands of young men who went out from Ulster...are now derelicts in the industrial cities of Canada and they cannot even get home. In the parks of Canada there are large numbers of young men lying at nights in utter starvation’.

Parliamentary debates, NI, 27 October 1926



Joseph Devlin

Nationalist MP for Belfast, West

In response to the Richhill emigrant training scheme:

‘I will not vote for a single penny to be given for the purpose of training emigrants. I would like from the first to protest against this Vote being put under the heading “Unemployment”... It ought to be under a special vote – “Our foreign policy in regard to the emigration of the youth from Northern Ireland into another country”... I have never heard of so monstrous a transaction in my life than to give this valuable asset to a great rich country like Canada’.



Parliamentary debates, NI, 4 May 1927

Dehra Chichester

MP for Londonderry

‘We ought to be proud that a certain proportion of the emigrants from these shores go out... the benefit which we may confer on a portion of **the Empire of which we are a part** ... we ought always to remember first of all that there will be amongst the young men of the **nation** always a spirit of adventure... **this call of the blood**’.

Parliamentary debates, NI, 5 May 1927



Post-war migration



Cahir Healy

MP for South Fermanagh

Debate on release of 1961 census results:

‘**Quiet and drastic discrimination** is going on in regard to one class of people of the Six Counties...Catholic young men are being pushed out of the Six Counties for lack of work, houses or any chance of employment on public boards...The plain truth is that Catholics are obliged to quit having neither work nor home’.



Parliamentary debates, NI, 27 February
1962

Terence O'Neill

Minister of Finance

Debate on release of 1961 census results & crisis
of rural depopulation:

'I believe one of the reasons people are leaving the country and going to the towns is **because of the influence of television**. People living in remote areas see on their television sets the kind of life which those in urban areas have... I fully agree that it is **unfortunate** that so many of our **best people** have to leave this shore.



Parliamentary debates, NI, 27 February
1962

Recent 'new' migration (since 2004)

- Discourse of immigrant 'others'
- Fear and intolerance of migrants (as in wider UK context, generated in part by the media)
- Relative silence on emigration

Summary: Has there been a 'discourse' of NI migration?

1. Relative **silence** on migration, especially emigration
2. Avoidance of '**failed state**' narrative?
3. Is there a **Northern Ireland diaspora**? Lack of diaspora discourse esp. since the 1970s
 - non-cooperation on cross-border diaspora initiatives (e.g. The Gathering (est. spend = €13, revenue = €170m, attracted 250-275,000 visitors))
 - could NI emigrants (the 'reluctant diaspora') be relied upon to support the state?
4. Immigrant 'others' often viewed as a '**problem**'; like emigrants, they are not valued for the potential they might offer in connecting NI to other places and ideas.

Thank you for your
attention!

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Leaving the North

Migration and Memory, Northern Ireland 1921–2011

JOHANNE DEVLIN TREW

Liverpool University Press

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