

Negative Politics, Positive Vision:

Immigration and the 2004 elections

A publication of the Africa Solidarity Centre June 2004

Researched and written by:

Dr. Bryan Fanning, Fidèle Mutwarasibo and Neltah Chadamoyo

Cover designed by Dare Ogun

Printed by Fodhla Print

Table of Contents:

Preface.....3

Recommendations.....4

Introduction.....7

Main Findings.....9

Negative Politics.....13

Positive Vision.....17

Appendix One: Voting in the June Elections.....21

Preface

Negative Politics, Positive Vision: Immigration and the 2004 Elections is a sequel to *Positive Politics: Participation of Immigrants and Ethnic Minorities in the Electoral Process* published in November last year. It reports on responses of the political parties to the questions about the participation of immigrants and ethnic minorities in local and national political processes in Ireland, and indicates where things are at to date. But it does more than that. It places those responses within the broader context of racism in Irish politics. However, it is not enough to focus on the negative. This report emphasises the need for a positive approach and vision. It does so acutely aware of genuine public concerns that the proposals for Constitutional change to Irish citizenship laws, especially their timing, have or might be construed as having a racist intent. The findings and recommendations of this report, if taken seriously and addressed fully and urgently, would address many of these concerns and at the same time create a more positive vision for political inclusion in Ireland.

On behalf of the Africa Solidarity Centre, I recommend this report to all stakeholders in Irish politics and public life. I also thank its researchers and authors Dr. Bryan Fanning, Fidele Mutwarasibo and Neltah Chadamoyo. Sincere thanks also to all political parties interested in and committed to nurturing positive and inclusive politics in this country.

Dr Sahr Yambasu

Chairperson Africa Solidarity Centre

Recommendations

Negative politics, in the area of immigration as in other areas, can only be contested by a positive vision. Perhaps the main problem with the current proposed Constitutional Referendum is that it has no positive element. The rationale for depriving the children of immigrants of their constitutional citizenship rights is predominantly founded on a belief that immigrants constitute a threat to the Irish society. The proposal for a referendum was introduced in a most unfortunate premise. There are legitimate concerns that this has stoked the fires of racism and intolerance.¹ The absence of any positive vision attached to the government's proposal has created a dangerous vacuum in Irish politics. The referendum serves to encourage fears about immigration and intolerance of immigrants without offering a viable way forward for what is now a multicultural Irish society. The following recommendations of the Africa Solidarity Centre stand apart from any decision on when to hold the referendum and irrespective of the decision of the Irish electorate.

Immigrant should not be deprived of their right to vote because of bureaucratic inflexibility. The action by the Minister for Environment, Heritage and Local Government on 22 April 2004 to amend the electoral regulations to enable Temporary Residence Certificate and Garda National Immigration Bureau cards to be used for the purposes of voter identification is commendable. This action needs to be vigorously publicised in the run up to the election by the government and political parties (*See Appendix One*).

Urgent measures are needed to provide leadership against racism and intolerance in the current negative political climate. In future the Irish political parties need to work harder to recruit members of the immigrant and the ethnic minority communities. It is necessary but not sufficient to place advertisements in the media or to issue leaflets in various languages however these initiatives are positive. Parties also need to address institutional barriers to membership. There is a further

¹ The Immigration Control Platform welcomed the governments proposed referendum. See *Irish Times*, 12 March 2004

need for mentoring schemes designed to develop future candidates from the immigrant and the ethnic minority communities. As a short-term measure, the political parties need to work harder to encourage minority communities that it is worthwhile to become members and to support them as well. The existing anti-racism protocol signed by political parties needs to be strengthened.

The mainstream political parties need to clearly distance themselves from anti-immigrant groups such as the Immigration Control Platform (ICP) which contested the last general election on a manifesto of changing citizenship laws, and currently opposes allowing Irish citizen children born to immigrants to remain in the State. The way forward for the Irish mainstream political parties is to distance themselves from ICP and to champion the rights of immigrants and by working to promote integration.

The government should agree not to deport any family member of Irish citizen children before legislation on citizenship is introduced. Such deportations would serve no practical purpose (or political purpose) if the referendum were passed. Just because the Supreme Court decision of February 2002 permits the State to deport third-country nationals family members of Irish children does not mean that this should happen. The Supreme Court made it absolutely clear that all Irish citizen children have equal citizenship status and rights.² A willingness on the part of the government to reassure family members of Irish citizen children currently living in fear of deportation that their rights will be upheld would do much to redress concerns about the mobilisation of immigration issues for political gain. The government should consent to the proposal by the Catholic bishops to give residency rights to the 11,000 or so immigrants who have Irish citizen children in their families.

The State should cherish all children living in Irish society whether or not they are citizens. The right to children's allowances for children of immigrants needs to be reinstated. The reconsideration by the government of plans to reduce the welfare entitlements of widows was broadly welcomed and should be repeated in this case. Children's allowances are primarily a mechanism to ensure that children do not live in

² See the Coalition Against the Deportation of Irish Children <http://www.integratingireland.ie>

poverty. A move by the government to reinstate this right to immigrant children would bring practical and symbolic benefit to the families concerned.

Irrespective of the outcome of the referendum on citizenship the enactment of any specific legislation should be delayed pending a full debate on the integration and naturalisation of immigrants. A positive vision of Irish citizenship is urgently needed in the twenty-first century Ireland. Nothing less than the future of Irish society is at stake. One way or another immigrants will have to be integrated into Irish society. There is a need for a Commission on Integration. This should be an inclusive body with members from the immigrant communities. This commission could be tasked to explore ways of ensuring that immigrants can be successfully integrated even if the birth right to citizenship is lost.

The need to integrate immigrants should be the main focus of any revised citizenship legislation. The exclusion of long-term residents from voting and political representation in the national elections and the European elections violates the principles of representative democracy. It fosters divisions between indigenous people and the immigrants. It encourages the neglect of the immigrants' grievances, thus fostering bitterness and alienation.³

There should be more creative use of policy to promote the integration of immigrants. The government should listen to the advice of Mr Bruce Morrison who as a United States congressman secured work permits for 48,000 undocumented Irish immigrants. He argued that a coherent policy making rather than ad hoc legislative reform was needed in Ireland.⁴ The government should establish an immigration and naturalisation service along American lines. An emphasis on naturalisation is missing from Irish immigration policy. The waiting period to apply for citizenship could be shortened. An American style 'green card' could replace present non-transferable work permits that foster exploitation of immigrant workers.

³ Rayton-Henry Z., 'Citizenship and Migrant Workers in Western Europe' in U. Vogel and M. Moran (eds.) *The Frontiers of Citizenship* (London: Macmillan), p.120

⁴ *Irish Times*, 14 April 2004

A national immigrant and ethnic minority consultative forum should be established. Policies and legislation affecting immigrants will work better if immigrants and ethnic minority communities are included in the debate. Consultation is particularly vital given the fact that the immigrants and the ethnic minorities are so marginalized in the mainstream politics and institutions. A forum to bring together immigrants, ethnic minorities and social partners should be set up.

Introduction

This report is a sequel to *Positive Politics: Participation of Immigrants and Ethnic Minorities in the Electoral Process*, published by the Africa Solidarity Centre in November 2003.⁵ It consists of the findings of a second survey of the responsiveness of the Irish political parties to immigrants and ethnic minority voters in the run up to the 2004 local elections. The first survey, *Positive Politics*, revealed that the main Irish political parties gave little or no thought to the inclusion of immigrants and members of ethnic minority communities living in Ireland as prospective members or potential candidates. It found that the larger political parties were generally indifferent to immigrants and ethnic minority voters and had given little or no thought to seek *their* support in the 2004 local government elections.

Media coverage of the *Positive Politics* report focused predominantly upon the revelation that the **Progressive Democrats** had a clause in their constitution preventing non-nationals from becoming members. The **Progressive Democrats** responded immediately to the report with an announcement that the party's constitution would be amended. This constitutional amendment took place at the party's 2004 annual conference. However, the institutional barriers to participation by the non-nationals in the other major parties were arguably no less profound. For example, **Fianna Fail, Labour, Fine Gael, The Green Party or Sinn Fein** were unable to identify specific policies or good practices that they had adopted to encourage members of immigrant communities and ethnic minorities to become party members.

⁵ The report can be downloaded at www.africacentre.ie

Positive Politics argued that there was an urgent need to encourage the participation of the immigrant and the ethnic minority communities in the Irish politics. Unless the political parties respond to immigrant and ethnic minority communities and encourage the ethnic minorities to become members and candidates in elections, they will be poorly placed to address racism in Irish society. If political parties are unwilling or unable to promote the participation of people from such communities, they will be poorly placed to provide leadership within a fast changing Irish society. Political parties need to reflect the diverse composition of Irish society. The political parties unable or unwilling to work to include people from across the whole multi-ethnic spectrum of Irish society are ill-placed to contest racism and to provide community leadership in an era of rapid demographic change.

That need has increased greatly with the promotion by the government of immigration as the defining issue in the 2004 elections. The present debate in Irish society about removing the automatic constitutional rights to citizenship for children of third country nationals born in Ireland is encouraged by political parties that are themselves poor at including immigrants. The findings of the second survey revealed a number of positive initiatives by the political parties over the last several months. These positive initiatives are commendable but they are insignificant, and have become overshadowed by the current election climate where there are concerns that a few unscrupulous politicians will exploit intolerance and racism. Immigration will become a central factor in the 2004 elections.

The general unwillingness of political parties to make a significant effort to include immigrants and ethnic minorities has set the tone in the political debates about the Constitutional amendment. To put it bluntly, institutional barriers in the Irish political parties to the participation of immigrants and ethnic-minorities cannot be separated from the racism in Irish society that is usually blamed for anti-immigrant populist politics. Racism in Irish politics is a reality. The mono-cultural character of Irish politics is part of the problem of racism in Ireland.

Main Findings

The six main political parties were asked in February 2004 to identify any new policies and practices that they had introduced since the first survey in August 2003. They were informed that the Africa Solidarity Centre aimed to publish an updated report on the responsiveness of Irish political parties to immigrants and ethnic minorities in the run up to the June 2004 elections. Concerns about findings of the first survey were emphasised:

As you will be aware our previous report *Positive Politics: participation of immigrants and ethnic minorities in the 2004 local elections* received considerable media publicity following its launch last December. It stimulated an important debate about a general lack of responsiveness by Irish political parties to immigrant and ethnic minority communities.

The parties were asked the same questions put to them in 2003. They were also asked to provide information about any recent initiatives aimed at improving responsiveness to immigrants and ethnic minorities.

1. *What policies or good practices has the party adopted to encourage members of immigrant communities and ethnic-minority groups to become party members?*
2. *What policies or good practices have been adopted by the party to oppose racism in Irish society?*
3. *Has the party selected candidates from immigrant and ethnic minority communities to stand in the June 2004 local elections?*
4. *What initiatives are proposed by the party to canvas for support amongst immigrant and ethnic minority communities in the June 2004 elections?*

The responses by the political parties to the second survey outlining initiatives undertaken since August 2003 were as follows:

Recent Contributions to Positive Politics

Fianna Fail stated that it aimed to create a society based on the principles of equality and dignity and that it welcomed support from all people regardless of race or religion. The party has recently advertised in *Metro Eireann*, a newspaper apparently widely read by immigrant communities, inviting people to become members. **Fianna Fail** has included an anti-racism section in its local elections manual which is supplied to all candidates.

One party candidate, Councillor David Gaynor, who translated election material into Mandarin received widespread media publicity for his efforts to promote the participation of immigrants in Irish politics. Councillor Gaynor's initiative is welcome, though it is apparently an isolated example of pro-active positive politics. He has emphasised a number of distinct goals aimed at addressing the needs of the Chinese community in the Crumlin-Kimmage Ward. Such proactive efforts seek the votes of immigrant and ethnic minority communities are to be welcomed.

The **Progressive Democrats** promptly decided to remove the prohibition on non-nationals becoming party members following the publication of *Positive Politics*. The rule was changed by the party's National Executive at its meeting on 4 December 2003. The change was officially adopted into a revised party constitution in February 2004. The **Progressive Democrats** now have a number of members who are citizens of non-EU countries. Five such members have joined the Party's constituency organisation in Dublin South-East including two Chinese nationals.

The **Labour Party** stated that it had translated or was translating election literature into various community languages. These include Spanish, Mandarin, Russian, French and Arabic. It emphasised that its public representatives are outspoken about racism in society. It reiterated its commitment to the Anti-Racism Protocol produced by the National Consultative Committee on Racism and Interculturalism (NCCRI). The **Labour Party** is standing one candidate from an ethnic minority community.

Fine Gael stated that it is open to having members of the immigrant community and the ethnic minority communities contest as candidates in the local elections. The party stated that it has advertised in the media aimed at immigrant groups with the aim of encouraging them to become party members and to vote for **Fine Gael**. Some party literature has been translated into community languages. At present the party has not identified any such members and no immigrant or ethnic minority candidates has been nominated to contest in the forthcoming 2004 local government elections. **Fine Gael** stated that it has appointed an equality strategy manager and is currently drafting an equality strategy and action plans for the party.

The **Green Party** stated that they were encouraging members from the ethnic minority communities to become party members in the run up to the local elections. The party invited independent candidates from ethnic minority groups to attend a workshop that covered racism and the elections entitled 'Addressing Racism: For the Candidate on the campaign trail'. This workshop agreed to prepare a fact sheet for candidates about racism so that they could address stereotypes about the ethnic minority groups. The **Green Party** stated that it planned to put together a flyer outlining peoples right to participate in the election in several languages.

Sinn Fein stated that local party organisations have stepped up their voter registration campaigns; all canvassers carry voter registration forms and are familiar with registration requirements. The party has re-endorsed the Anti-Racism Protocol produced by the NCCRI and supported the "Count Me In" initiative. **Sinn Fein** has decided that all of the party's local election candidates should undergo anti-racism training and stated that this work is ongoing. It has sought to introduce an anti-racism charter (developed by the party in Belfast) in some of the local authority areas. **Sinn Fein** stated that Louth County Council has adopted this.

Initiatives since August 2003

<i>New policies and practices identified by parties aimed at improving responsiveness to ethnic minorities</i>	
Fianna Fail	Some party material to be translated into community languages. Advertising in immigrant and ethnic minority media.
Progressive Democrats	Party constitution amended to permit non-EU nationals to join. Five such persons have joined the party.
Labour	Some party materials are to be translated into community languages.
Fine Gael	Some party materials are to be translated into community languages. Advertising in immigrant and ethnic minority media.
Green Party	Anti-racism training for candidates. Some party materials are to be translated into community languages
Sinn Fein	Anti-racism training for all candidates in the local elections. The party is promoting an anti-racism charter for local authorities in some areas.

Levels of participation by the immigrants and the ethnic minorities in the main Irish political parties remain abysmal. Neither of the parties in the government have nominated immigrant or ethnic-minority candidates to contest on their ticket.

Political Participation of Immigrants and Ethnic Minorities

Has (the name of party) selected any candidates from immigrant and ethnic minority communities to stand in the 2004 local elections?	
Fianna Fail	No
Progressive Democrats	No
Labour	Yes
Fine Gael	No
Green Party	Yes
Sinn Fein	No

In total just six independent non-Irish national candidates are contesting in the forthcoming 2004 local elections. The six candidates are:

- Benedicta Attoh – contesting in Dundalk, Co. Louth;
- Tokie Laotan – contesting in Galway;
- Dr Taiwo Matthew – contesting in Ennis, Co. Clare;
- Paul Osikoya – contesting in Galway;
- Rotimi Adebare - contesting in Portlaoise, Co. Laois;
- Candidate Ali Selim - contesting in Dundrum, Dublin.

Negative Politics

Racism in Politics

The *Positive Politics* survey was undertaken to put forward an alternative to the exploitation of racism for political gain in the 2004 local elections. The aim was to encourage the Irish political parties to view immigrants and ethnic minority communities as assets and potential supporters; to ask them for their vote and to listen to their concerns. This way the political parties would move away from the present one-sided conversation about immigration, diversity and social change that presently

characterises the mainstream Irish politics. However racism is already a reality in the local government elections.⁶

During the 2002 election most Irish politicians adhered to the NCCRI Anti-Racism Protocol for Political Parties. However, some politicians did not and some successfully exploited racism for their political gain. A recent Seanad debate on the referendum on citizenship described the exploitation of racism in Cork North Central during the 2002 general election as ‘a chilling reminder of what happens when individuals turn a sensitive issue of race and citizenship into a political football’.⁷ In this debate Senator Minihan, of the Progressive Democrats, recalled his experience of contesting Cork North Central. He stated that Deputy Noel O’Flynn topped the poll after he engaged in a high profile campaign against asylum seekers and that this resulted in ‘a heightening of racial tensions in the city.’ Senator Minihan described the human cost of such politics:

A university student visited me in a distressed state. Her father was from Hong Kong, her mother was born and educated in Cork, and resided there. She was as much a Corkonian as I am. However, because of her different ethnic looks, she was a victim of racial taunts. A mother of two foreign adopted children contacted me. Her children had settled into school and had been in Ireland since they were a few months old. They were now being taunted in the school yard. Cork people who had married non-nationals who had become integrated into the community, and who had worked and lived in Cork for a number of years, contributing to our society, were now being racially abused. Elderly ladies living alone were in fear of being assaulted or raped by non-nationals who according to myth were rampant on the streets of Cork. This was a result of playing with people’s emotions; the myths and tensions grew fuelled by some local journalists.

⁶ For example, Ms Tokie Laotan, who is standing as an independent candidate in Galway, has been targeted by racist hate mail.

⁷ Debate on Senator John Minihan’s Private Members’ motion on the Referendum on Citizenship in the Seanad, 8 April 2004.

The proposal to hold a referendum on the removal of the rights of children born in Ireland to immigrants to Irish citizenship was initially justified by the use of myth. It is clear that the deliberate unsubstantiated stereotyping of the immigrant mothers as exploiting the health services was stage-managed to elicit political justification for the referendum.⁸ Such stereotyping is as unprincipled, racist and dangerous as the exploitation of the asylum issue in Cork North Central.

A joint letter from the Masters of the Rotunda, National Maternity Hospital and the Coombe stated that many of the women presenting late were actually dispersed asylum seekers coming up from rural areas rather than so called 'citizen tourists'. This was confirmed by civil servants in an August 2003 memorandum.⁹ The deliberate attempt to present the issue as a health crisis is an act of profound disrespect to people working in the health services. Health is perhaps the most politically sensitive issue with the Irish electorate. Efforts to shift the blame onto the immigrants are unprincipled and cynical.

There are real issues that need to be addressed concerning the birth of immigrant children in Ireland. Most of these are clinical and resource problems encountered by Irish health staff (who include immigrant gynaecologists, paediatricians and nurses) in their efforts to ensure the safety of vulnerable mothers and their babies. A very different picture from that painted in dominant stereotypes has emerged from academic research. For example, the North Area Health Board has published detailed research on the experiences of immigrant mothers, the various problems they encounter (including racism and material deprivation) and the positive work being done by health professionals to come to terms with a changing client group. This rounded human account of the 'problem' contrasts with what often seems to be an inhuman political debate. In the words of one mother, who had previously lost two of her babies; *'I was afraid. I was so afraid. My mother was not here. No one was here. I was afraid this child would die. I was so happy when I came out of the hospital with my baby. I was crying all the time from happiness.'*¹⁰

⁸ Alan Ruddock, *Sunday Independent*, 11 April 2004, Editorial, *Irish Times*, 18 April.

⁹ Mark Brennock *Irish Times*, 22 April 2004.

The constitutional amendment can legitimately be perceived as **racist in effect**. As one Fianna Fail councillor who opposes the referendum put it: ‘the proposed referendum is designed to remove what has always been a fundamental right in this State, namely a person’s right to citizenship by virtue of birth. The corollary of the proposed change is the underlining and increased supremacy of citizenship by virtue of blood.’¹¹ The ideological message being put to African people living in Ireland, including those with Irish children, is that they must remain outside the nation because they do not have ‘Irish’ blood and are not part of the Irish ‘race’.

Institutional Racism in Irish Politics

The **Fianna Fail** handbook for candidates in the local elections sets out a clear and helpful definition of institutional racism; ‘*Process that consciously or unconsciously result in the systematic exclusion of ethnic minorities form institutional racism. It is most visible in the inequitable outcomes for minority ethnic groups from the policies and practices of organisations and institutions throughout society.*’¹²

The inability of political parties to adequately encourage membership of the immigrant and the ethnic minority voters needs to be understood in terms of institutional barriers. As Irish political parties campaign for the June 2004 elections, none has any formal barriers to members from immigrant or ethnic minority communities. Most have taken small steps in the right direction. However, the general inability of parties to attract such members and candidates to their fold suggests that institutional racism may be a future problem.

A clear example of institutional racism can be seen in the refusal until as recently as 22 April to allow many immigrants legally entitled to vote to join the register of electors. This happened because of the incompatibility between procedures operated by the Department of Justice Equality and Law Reform and the requirements of the

¹⁰ P. Kennedy and J. Murphy-Lawless (2002) *The Maternity Care Needs of Refugee and Asylum Seeking Women* (Dublin: Northern Area Health Board).p.78

¹¹ Councillor Pat F. O’Connor, letter to editor, *Irish Times*, 10 April 2004

¹² *Fianna Fail handbook for local election candidates*, (2004).

Department of Environment and Local Government.¹³ The ID cards issued by the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform to asylum seekers state that these are not to be accepted for the purposes of legal identification. The result has been that many people entitled to vote were prevented from including their names on the register of electors.

It took several requests to the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform and the Department of Environment and Local Government before clarification regarding how such people could register was forthcoming. A statement by the Irish Refugee Council, issued prior to the amendment, summed up the problem in the following terms; *“The strength of any democracy is in the extent to which all who are entitled to vote are encouraged and enabled to do so. In this regard the Irish Government has, to date, singularly failed Ireland’s immigrant communities. A failure to rectify this situation will be a missed opportunity for significantly enhancing the integration of Ireland’s new communities into Irish society”*.¹⁴ The necessary procedural amendment was not introduced until 22 April (*see Appendix One*). This is very late in the day. In addition to potentially disenfranchising some people the delay may have put non-Irish national electoral candidates at an electoral disadvantage. The issue can be seen as an example of how institutional barriers can foster institutional discrimination.

The Need for a Positive Vision

Urgent action needs to be taken to shift the tone of Irish politics in the run up to the local elections. Government ministers might consider claims that they have promoted a negative politics of fear and anxiety into the forthcoming elections as unfair. One analysis might be that the referendum itself is aimed at reassuring that portion of the Irish electorate which is worried about the consequences of immigration. There is a legitimate debate to be had about such social change. Another analysis is that the current referendum fosters racism and intolerance because no positive vision is being put forward. It is crucial that debates about the Constitution and the future of citizenship in the multi-cultural Ireland of the twenty first century take place. These

¹³ See *Irish Independent* 14, April 2004

should not be limited to one narrow set of proposals aimed at reducing citizenship rights in what seems to be a panic measure.

Current concerns about racist intent in the proposals for Constitutional change need to be addressed in the immediate short term. If the government had simultaneously outlined measures aimed at building confidence amongst immigrant and ethnic minority communities alongside proposals for a referendum then there would not have been concerns about racist populist politics. For example, at present a significant number of immigrant family members of Irish citizen children are worried about deportation. Indeed some deportations have already taken place. The assurances given by the government following the Supreme Court decision on *Lobe v. Minister of Justice, Equality and Law Reform* in February 2002 that the cases of individual families would each be considered on their merits need to be reiterated in the strongest possible terms. A decision by the government not to deport any family member of Irish citizen children would do much to allay the fears of immigrants about a willingness to play the race card in Irish politics. There is no need to deport family members of Irish citizen when it is also proposed to amend the citizenship law.

Irrespective of the result of the Referendum the Government should give a commitment not to introduce specific legislation on citizenship in advance of a full debate on how immigrants should be integrated into Irish society. The fortress mentality of merely increasing barriers to immigrants becoming citizens poorly serves the needs of present day Irish society. Citizenship and naturalisation policies need to be developed within a positive vision of how immigrants are to be integrated into Irish society. For example, the waiting period in applications for citizenship could be reduced so as to foster the integration of immigrants. There should be clear goals of promoting the naturalisation of immigrants as distinct from seeking to marginalize them.

Citizenship has been described as the ‘most potent measure of integration’.¹⁵ It potentially allows immigrants to participate in society to the same extent as

¹⁴ Joint statement by *Integrating Ireland* and the *Irish Refugee Council*, 13 April 2004

¹⁵ ECRE cited in Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform (2000) *Integration: a Two Way Process* (Dublin: Official Publications), p32.

indigenous persons. The possibilities for securing the social inclusion of migrants and non-citizen ethnic minorities will be curtailed where there are no opportunities for naturalisation. It is important to emphasise that many migrants will not wish to become citizens. Some countries require their citizens to relinquish citizenship should they acquire citizenship elsewhere. Immigrants are often unwilling to give up rights in their countries of origin (e.g.; the right to return, own property or vote) and it is also the case that symbolic issues of identity and loyalty to their countries of origin may be barriers to naturalisation.¹⁶ There is a clear need for naturalisation policies to take into account the aspirations of immigrants. It is also crucial that the rights needed to foster integration should be not restricted to citizens.

A number of political parties have opposed holding a Constitutional Referendum at the same time as the 2004 elections. For example, the Green Party have argued that the government should publish a green paper on citizenship before considering any change to the Constitution.¹⁷ Other political parties have endorsed this proposal. However, it is not enough. There is a need for a full debate on what it means to be a member of Irish society in the twenty first century. Such debates have been fostered in other countries. For example, the United Kingdom established a *Commission on the Future of Multi-Ethnic Britain*.¹⁸ A similar Commission is needed to creatively consider ways of integrating immigrants into Irish society.

In an era where there is a willingness to deny the birth right of citizenship there is a need to be creative in promoting integration by other means. One suggestion endorsed by the European Commission in the follow up to the *Tempere Summit* is the notion of ‘civic citizenship’. The Commission defined civic citizenship in terms of guaranteeing that immigrants will have access to certain core rights within a defined time period.¹⁹

¹⁶ For example, a survey in Germany in 1984 found that 54.7 percent of immigrants respondents had no interest in obtaining German citizenship. See Hammer T (1985) *European Immigration Policy: A Comparative Study* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press)

¹⁷ *Irish Times*, 15 April 2004

¹⁸ Parek P., *Report of the Commission on the Future of Multi-Ethnic Britain* (London: Runnymede Trust)

¹⁹ Migration Group - Issue Paper - Lisbon Seminar on “Civic Participation of Immigrants”, 5 April 2004

The Irish political parties and government do not reflect the diversity of the Irish society. This problem is one of ‘descriptive representation’; the degree to which public representatives look like the people they represent.²⁰ It is crucial then that a number of mechanisms be devised to foster the participation of immigrants in debates about the future of Irish society. One suggestion would be establish a national integration council with members from the immigrant and the ethnic minority communities and the social partners. Immigrant organisations are poorly funded. Capacity building programmes for immigrant representative organisations and voluntary services are needed. Much could be learned from the experiences of services developed for the Irish emigrants living in Britain and the United States.

²⁰ Lilliard E., Richardson J.R. and Cooper C., *Descriptive Representation in Multi-Member District Legislatures, 1975-2002* – Paper presented for the Midwest Political Science Association. Chicago, IL. April 2003

Appendix One: Voting in the Local Elections in 2004

On 22 April 2004 the Minister for Environment, Heritage and Local Government amended the Electoral Regulations. The new regulations amend the specified documents which a voter may be required to produce at a polling station to include temporary Residence Certificate cards, a Garda National Immigration Bureau cards and Travel Documents containing name and photograph.

The relevant statutory instrument is published as 175 of 2004 by the Stationary Office.

Further information

- Carlow County Council,
County Offices, Athy Road, Carlow 0503 70300
- Cavan County Council,
Courthouse, Cavan 049 4331799
- Clare County Council,
New Road, Ennis, Co. Clare 065 6821616
- Cork County Council,
County Hall, Carrigrohane Road, Cork 021 276891
- Donegal County Council,
County House, Lifford, Co. Donegal 074 72222
- Dun Laoghaire/Rathdown County Council,
Town Hall, Marine Road, Dun Laoghaire, Co. Dublin 01 2054700
- Fingal County Council,
County Hall, Main Street, Swords, Fingal, Co. Dublin. 01 8905000
- Galway County Council,
County Buildings, Prospect Hill, Galway 091 509000
- Kerry County Council,
Aras an Chontae, Rathass, Tralee 066 7121111
- Kildare County Council,
St. Mary's, Naas, Co. Kildare 045 873800
- Kilkenny County Council,
John's Green, Kilkenny 056 52699
- Laois County Council,
County Hall, Portlaoise, Co. Laois 0502 22044
- Leitrim County Council,
Courthouse, Carrick-on-Shannon, Co. Leitrim 078 20005

- Limerick County Council,
County Buildings, O'Connell Street, Limerick 061 318477
- Longford County Council,
County Secretary's Office, Dublin Road, Longford 043 46231
- Louth County Council,
Courthouse, Dundalk, Co. Louth 042 9335457
- Mayo County Council,
Aras an Chontae, Castlebar, Co. Mayo 094 24444
- Meath County Council,
County Hall, Navan, Co. Meath 046 21581
- Monaghan County Council,
County Offices, The Glen, Monaghan 047 30500
- Offaly County Council,
Courthouse, Tullamore, Co. Offaly 0506 46800
- Roscommon County Council,
Courthouse, Roscommon 0903 37100
- Sligo County Council,
Riverside, Sligo 071 43221
- South Dublin County Council,
Town Centre, Tallaght, Dublin 24 01 149000
- North Tipperary County Council,
Courthouse, Nenagh, Co. Tipperary 067 31771
- South Tipperary County Council,
County Hall, Emmet Street, Clonmel, Co. Tipperary 052 25399
- Waterford County Council,
County Offices, Dungarvan, Co. Waterford 058 22000
- Westmeath County Council,
County Buildings, Mullingar, Co. Westmeath 044 40861
- Wexford County Council,
County Hall, Wexford 053 42211
- Wicklow County Council,
County Offices, Wicklow 0404 20100

City Councils

- Cork City Council, City Hall, Cork 021 966222

- Dublin City Council, City Hall, Dublin 2 01 6722222
- Galway City Council, City Hall, College Road, Galway 091 536400
- Limerick City Council, City Hall, Limerick 061 415799
- Waterford City Council, City Hall, Waterford 051 309900

Town Councils

- Arklow Town Council,
Town Hall, Arklow 0402 32819
- Athlone Town Council
Town Hall, Athlone 0902 72107
- Athy Town Council,
Rathstewart, Athy, Co. Kildare 0507 31444
- Ballina Town Council,
Market Square, Ballina, Co. Mayo 096 21399
- Ballinasloe Town Council,
Town Clerk's Office, Bridge St, Ballinasloe, Co. Galway 0905 42263
- Birr Town Council,
Town Clerk's Office, Birr, Co. Offaly 0509 20187
- Bray Town Council,
Town Hall, Bray, Co. Wicklow 01 2868285
- Buncrana Town Council,
Civic Offices, St. Oran's Road, Buncrana, Co. Donegal 077 61198
- Bundoran Town Council,
Town Clerk's Office, Bundoran, Co. Donegal 072 41230
- Carlow Town Council,
Town Hall, Carlow 0503 31759
- Carrickmacross Town Council,
Courthouse, Carrickmacross, Co. Monaghan 042 9663662
- Carrick-on-Suir Town Council,
Town Hall, Carrick-on-Suir, Co. Tipperary 051 640032
- Cashel Town Council,
Town Hall, Cashel, Co. Tipperary 062 61166
- Castlebar Town Council,
Marsh House, Newtown, Castlebar, Co. Mayo 094 23350

- Castleblayney Town Council,
Town Clerk's Office, Castleblayney, Co. Monaghan 042 9740058
- Cavan Town Council,
Town Hall, Cavan 049 4331397
- Ceannanas Mor Town Council,
Headfort Place, Ceannanas Mor 046 40064
- Clonakilty Town Council,
Town Hall, Clonakilty, Co. Cork 023 33380
- Clones Town Council,
Courthouse, Clones 047 51018
- Cobh Town Council,
Town Clerks Office, Cobh, Co. Cork 021 811307
- Dundalk Town Council,
Town Clerk's Office, Town Hall, Dundalk, Co. Louth 042 9332276
- Dungarvan Town Council,
Town Hall, Dungarvan, Co. Waterford 058 41111
- Ennis Town Council,
Waterpark House, Drumbiggie, Ennis 065 6828040
- Enniscorthy Town Council,
UDC Offices, Market Square, Enniscorthy, Co. Wexford 054 33540
- Fermoy Town Council,
Courthouse, Fermoy, Co. Cork 025 31155
- Killarney Town Council,
Town Hall, Killarney, Co. Kerry 064 31023
- Kilrush Town Council,
Town Clerk's Office, Kilrush, Co. Clare 065 9051047
- Kinsale Town Council,
Municipal Hall, Kinsale, Co. Cork 021 772154
- Letterkenny Town Council,
Council Offices, Cavehill, Letterkenny 074 25399
- Listowel Town Council,
Town Hall, Charles Street, Listowel 068 21004
- Longford Town Council,
Dublin Road, Longford 043 46474
- Macroom Town Council,
Town Hall, Macroom 026 41545

- Mallow Town Council,
County Council Offices, Annabella, Mallow 022 21542
- Middleton Town Council,
Loughal Road, Middleton 021 631580
- Monaghan Town Council,
1 Dublin Street, Monaghan 047 82600
- Naas Town Council,
Town Hall, Naas 045 897232
- Navan Town Council,
Town Hall, Watergate Street, Navan 046 29078
- Nenagh Town Council,
c/o Courthouse, Nenagh 067 31241
- New Ross Town Council,
Council Offices, The Tholsel, New Ross 051 421284
- Skibbereen Town Council,
Town Clerk's Office, Skibbereen 028 21222
- Templemore Town Council,
Town Hall, Templemore 0504 31496
- Thurles Town Council,
Slievenamon Road, Thurles 0504 21433
- Tipperary Town Council,
Dan Breen House, Tipperary 062 51179
- Tralee Town Council,
Town Hall, Princes Quay, Tralee 066 7121633
- Trim Town Council,
Town Hall, Trim 046 31238
- Tullamore Town Council,
UDC Offices, O'Connor Square, Tullamore 0506 52470
- Westport Town Council,
Castlebar Street, Westport 098 25888
- Wicklow Town Council,
Town Hall, Wicklow 0404 67327

