

AGIY INFO

The Irish in London - An Update!

On November 1 the results of the first comprehensive analysis of the 1991 Census, in respect of London's Irish population was published by the Action Group for Irish Youth. The Census Briefings cover four areas: demography, employment, housing and Irish women. The 'Briefings' contain borough by borough breakdowns and comparisons with other ethnic groups and with the indigenous population.

Some of the key findings reveal:

***The Irish are the largest ethnic minority group by migration in London when the 2nd generation is included, comprising 9.6% of the total population**

*Unemployment rates for Irish born men is substantially higher than for the rest of the white population. A slightly higher proportion of Irish-born women is unemployed, the difference being most marked in the Inner London boroughs.

***Irish-born young people are less likely to be in full time education than white people as a whole or minority ethnic groups.**

*The proportion of Irish-headed household consisting of a pensioner living alone is well above other ethnic/birthplace particularly in Inner London boroughs.

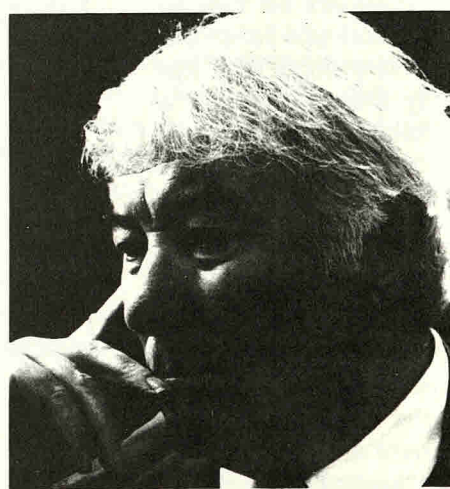
A full summary of the key findings is published on the back of this issue.

AGIY commissioned the briefings in order to fill an important information gap. The most comprehensive data prior the Census Briefings was the data taken from the 1981 Census - which is fourteen years old!

The Census Briefings were produced by Dr. Bronwen Walter of the Anglia Polytechnic University. The four profiles help serve a number of purposes:

Contd on page 2

AGIY's Patron



Séamus Heaney - Nobel Laureate

The Action Group for Irish Youth would like to offer their sincere congratulations to Séamus Heaney on his award of the Nobel Prize for Literature.

Le gach dea-ghuí don Nollaig agus Ath Bhliain

Census Briefings

They allow the Irish community to access their rights - articulated by sound census data.

They provide the public, voluntary and private sectors access to the most comprehensive data available on the Irish in London; in considering how best to respond to Irish need.

They provide a platform for promoting the need for an Irish category in the Census 2001.

The meeting was addressed by Séamus Taylor, Chair, AGIY and four guest speakers: Dr. Bronwen Walter, Anglia Polytechnic University, Chris Myant, Commission for Racial Equality, Oonagh O'Brien, Positively Irish Action on AIDS and Seán Hutton, Federation of Irish Societies.

Séamus Taylor commented: "The Census Briefings are the best available data at present but they are not the full picture and hence they are not good enough. The Irish community most campaign at every possible level for an Irish category in the ethnic group question in the Census of 2001."

Author of the 'Briefings,' Bronwen Walter, gave a general overview of her findings but noted: "These Census Briefings highlight the Irish experience of disadvantage in the areas of housing, employment and health. They underline the most urgent need for more comprehensive ethnic monitoring."

Seán Hutton, Co-ordinator of the Federation of Irish Societies, welcomed the data as easy and accessible information: "As a development worker with the Irish community, I welcome the production of these key statistics on London's Irish community in such an accessible form. They provide valuable support for those

advocating the needs of Irish people."

Chris Myant, from the Commission for Racial Equality emphasised the need for consistent monitoring of the Irish community: "The CRE recommends that both employers and service providers include an Irish category in their ethnic monitoring systems. Use of such a category will help all concerned identify those problems that may confront people of Irish origin in the fields of services and devise ways of overcoming them."

Oonagh O'Brien looked at the Census Briefings from a first tier agency perspective: "Without monitoring our community is invisible and the needs cannot be met."

AGIY would encourage service providers and Irish community organisations to make full use of the data.

Census Briefings available from AGIY cost £5 incl p&p.

Standardised Information System

The purpose of SIS was to develop a centralised database of users within Irish welfare services. The database was placed on a permanent basis after a successful pilot scheme in the autumn of 1993. This is a joint project with the Federation of Irish Societies.

The project aims to:

*enable agencies to produce data for informing statutory and voluntary services policy.

*contribute to service evaluation and enable agencies to respond to management needs.

The collective data provides for the first time, a long-term accurate profile of expressed needs to Irish advice agencies. The reports for the period October 1994 to March 1995 and April 1995 - June 1995 have now been produced.

In the period October 1994 to March 1995 participating agencies assisted over 2,300 enquiries:-

who received over 10,000 advice/support services. The breakdowns were as follows:

60% related to advice/information: *Housing, welfare benefits and health issues*

26% support services *Identification, counselling support access to accommodation*

14% material support. *Food, clothing and financial support*

The age profile and length of residence in GB indicate that service providers are responding to the needs of newly arrived as well as those settled in Britain for many years.

Data also shows:

One third of users were homeless or lived in B&B.

A high percentage described themselves as unemployed or permanently sick. Moreover, the level of requests from unemployed has increased from 50% in the last quarter to 63% in the period April to June 1995.

A high proportion (46%) of all service users reported a health problem or a physical disability.

Other significant figures relate to harassment. There is a marked difference in the level and form of harassment by women (43%) and men (26%); one in five harassed women were experiencing domestic violence. 43% of gay and lesbian users experienced homophobic harassment.

The period April-June 1995 service users received 4,962 support services. The needs expressed, confirm previous data from advice agencies. In this period just over a quarter of the service users had come to Britain in the last year - a fifth of the users were under 25 years of age, of which 28% were requesting housing advice and 11% of advice related to employment.

The project has expanded to include 16 agencies throughout Britain. The SIS is helping to develop a basis for consistent service delivery monitoring for front line agencies.

**For SIS information contact:
AGIY - 0171 700 8137
Seán Hutton - FIS - 0171 916 2733**

London Irish Youth Forum

NEXT MEETING

AGIY Cenus Briefings highlight the Irish experience of housing disadvantage:

*Irish-headed households have low rates of owner-occupation (44%) compared with the rest of the white population (59.2%).

*Proportions in the private rented sector are very high (16.8%), the highest of all identified ethnic groups.

*Census measures of housing show that Irish-headed households fare worse than most other ethnic/birth-place groups(3.6%). The proportions without central heating (22%) is the highest for any group, while the rates of those lacking or sharing a bath/shower and/or inside WC (5.2%) are exceeded only by the Black African group. **AGIY Census Briefings 1995**

This experience of inequality throughout the housing system as recorded in the Census is mirrored by the fact that the Irish are over represented among the homeless.

The largest ethnic minority group using severe homeless weather shelters in London 1993 were Irish (15% of total users).

'Its no laughing matter' 1995 - Irish Housing Forum.

"It's no laughing matter"

The Irish Housing Forum have produced an information and action leaflet/poster. **"The majority of migrants since the 1980s have been young people. Many have been successful but a significant minority has not because of marginalisation, isolation and insecure accommodation"**.

The leaflet urges Irish people to ask for a fair share of resources and proper monitoring of their community. **Contact AGIY for further copies.**

HIV Prevention and Education

Young and Irish AIDS Know the Facts

AGIY in association with Positively Action on AIDS, announce the launch of the updated and revised leaflet: *Young and Irish - AIDS Know the Facts*. The project has been funded by Hackney Council. The leaflets are free to voluntary agencies and £5.00 per hundred to statutory agencies.

AGIY's Staff Team

Brian Mc Carthy was appointed Co-ordinator of AGIY in September. Prior to this Brian worked at Threshold Housing Advice Centre, Wandsworth. **Dónal Mc Kinney** is presently employed as AGIY's locum administrator.

London Irish Youth Forum

Our Future Homes On the streets?

Taran Lamb
(Campaigns Officer)

SHELTER

Thursday, December 14 1995

at

L.V.S.R.C.

356 Holloway Road, N7.

10.30 am

The adoption of "reference rents" in January 1996 and proposals contained in the government White Paper will remove safety nets for many vulnerable people in housing need. Directing resources away from those in greatest need will have a devastating affect on the Irish - a group who already experience disadvantage through out the housing system.

Come to the next meeting and hear what government proposals mean for your organisation and your service users

*New housing benefit rent restrictions from January 1996.

*Local authorities' duties for emergency help for homeless severely weakened.

*Easier evictions for private landlords.

*No permanent home for the homeless.

Contact Brian or Dónal a.s.a.p.

- * The Irish community is the largest ethnic group by migration in London when the second generation is included, comprising 9.6% of the total
- * Boroughs with the highest proportions of Irish people are mainly in inner areas of west and north-west London, although adjacent areas in Outer London have recently expanded
- * Irish women are clustered on the west side of Inner London and adjoining borough. Growth since 1981 was greatest in Outer London boroughs, notably Harrow, Waltham Forest, Enfield and Hounslow
- * Older Irish women are particularly likely to live in certain Inner London boroughs
- * Irish-born people are much older on average than the rest of the population
- * The proportion of Irish-headed households consisting of a pensioner living alone is well above other ethnic/birthplace groups particularly in Inner London Boroughs
- * The percentage of Irish-born people with limiting long-term illness is well above average for all white people
- * Irish-headed households have low rates of owner occupation compared with the rest of the white population, proportions in the private rented sector are very high and renting from local Authorities is well above the average for the white population
- * The percentage of Irish-headed households who lack housing amenities or not owning a car is well above average for all white people
- * Nursing jobs are an important source of employment for women from Ireland
- * Nearly a third of Republic-born men work in the construction industry
- * Irish-born people are more likely to be self-employed than white people as a whole reflecting employment in the construction industry
- * Full time employment of Irish men is lower than for the rest of the white population in all but 2 London boroughs but on average is similar to that of men in two other largest ethnic groups
- * Unemployment rates for Irish-born men is substantially higher than for the rest of the white population. A slightly higher proportion of Irish-born women is unemployed, the difference being most marked in Inner London boroughs
- * A large percentage of Irish-born are highly qualified
- * Irish-born young people are less likely to be in full-time education than white people as whole or minority ethnic groups