

Proiectos Romano:

A study of Roma
communities
in Balbriggan



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CAIRDE

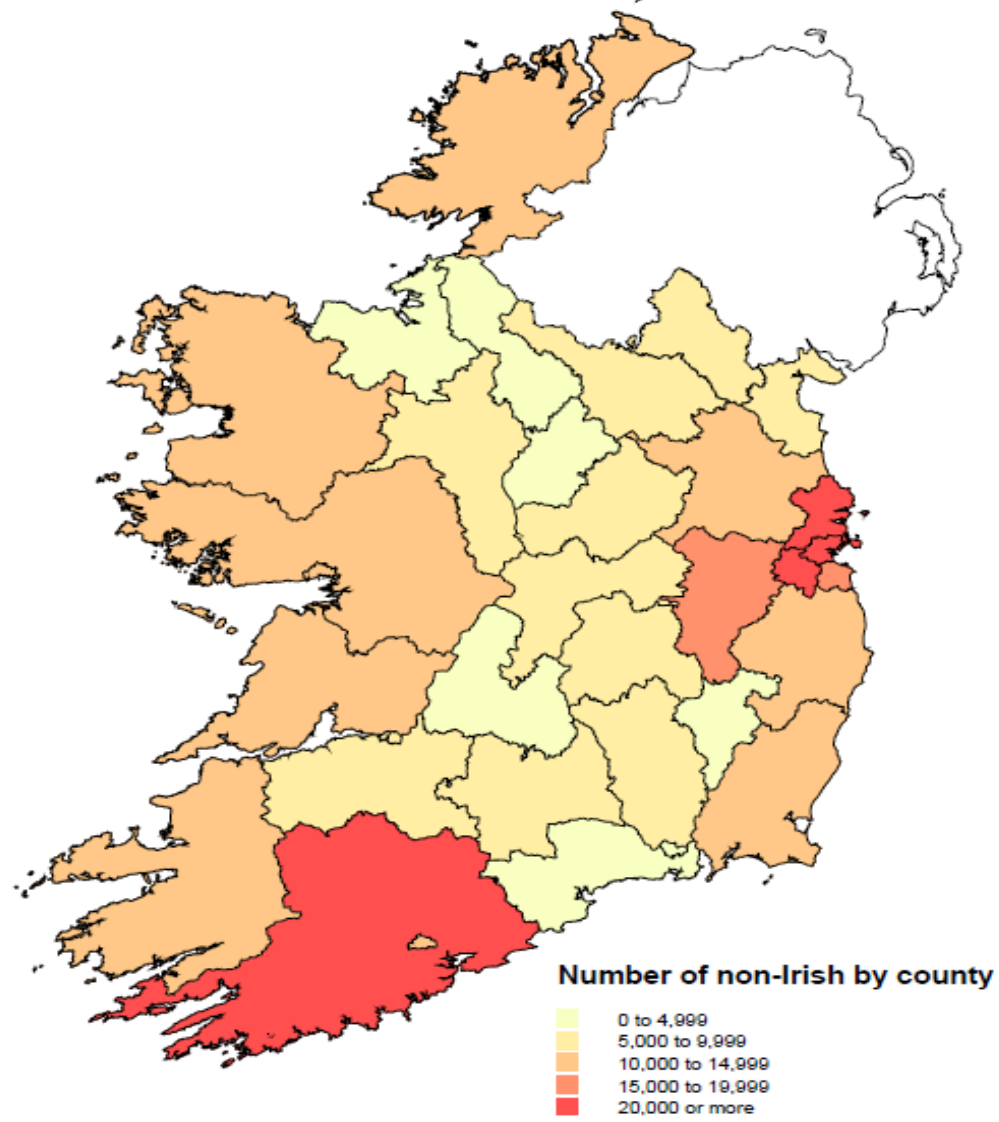
- Community Development Organisation working to reduce health inequalities among ethnic minorities
- Holistic approach/ Social Determinants Health Model
- Set up in 1985 HIV/Gay man in Dublin inner city
- Working with ethnic minorities since 2000
- Set up an office in Balbriggan in 2010



Demographic Information

Fingal saw the largest increase of its non-Irish residents since the previous census (Census 2011)

Figure 3 Distribution of non-Irish persons by county



Balbriggan Demographic information

Population Size

- The population of Balbriggan went from 8,473 in 1996 to 19,963 in 2011 an increase of 135.5%

Balbriggan

- Balbriggan is one of the fastest growing areas within Fingal

Proiectos Romano: A study of Roma communities in Balbriggan

This report is a snapshot of the socio-economic situation of Roma people in Balbriggan

It was a collaborative initiative between Cairde and Musicantia

Methodology

The study was carried out over a period of approx. one year. Three main phases:

1. Short training on research methods was delivered to 5 Roma participants
2. Data collection carried out by the Roma researchers
3. Data entry, data analysis and compilation of the Report

The questionnaire included open-ended questions and it was divided into 7 sections:

- Participants' Personal Profile
- Housing and Accommodation
- Health
- Training and Education
- Employment
- Racism and Discrimination
- Respondents' views on what needs to be changed

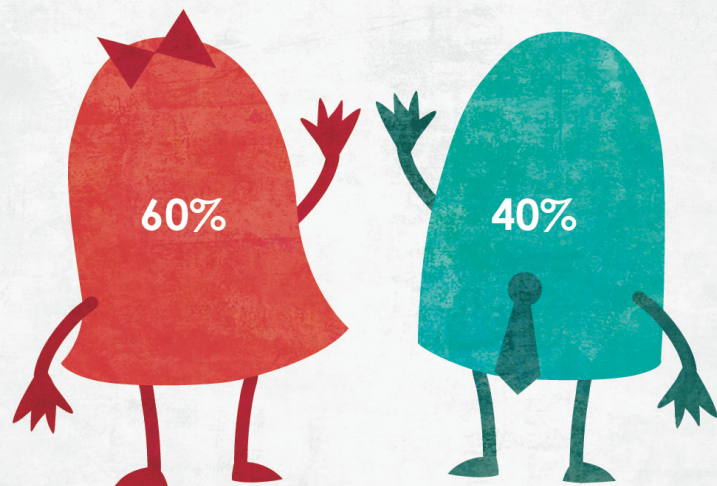
The report reflects the topics in the questionnaire and adds recommendations



Participants' Personal Profile

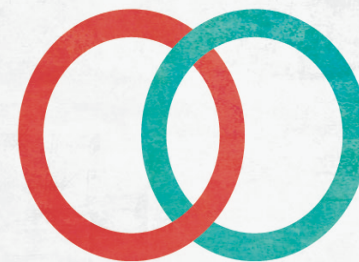
PARTICIPANTS

Thirty Roma people participated in the study



MARITAL STATUS

50% co-habiting, **33% single** (never married or widowed), **17% married**



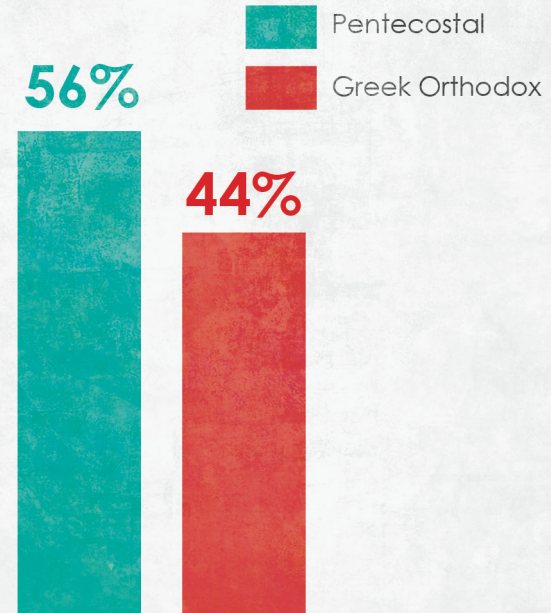
CHILDREN

All the women in the study have children



The average number of children per family, among women respondents, is **5**

RELIGION

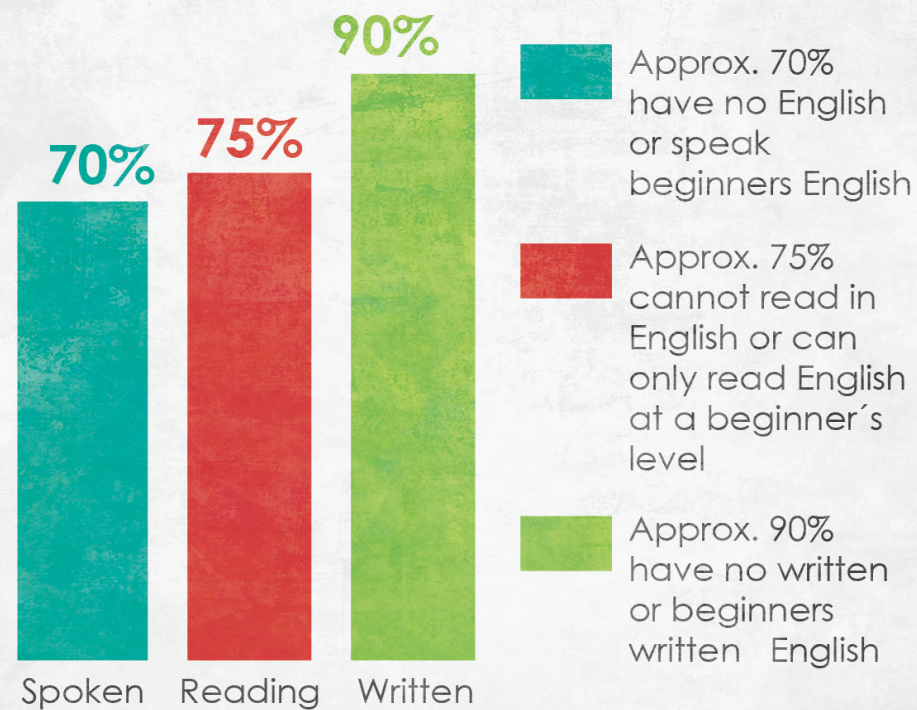


Many respondents came to Ireland to seek asylum before Romania joined the European Union in 2007

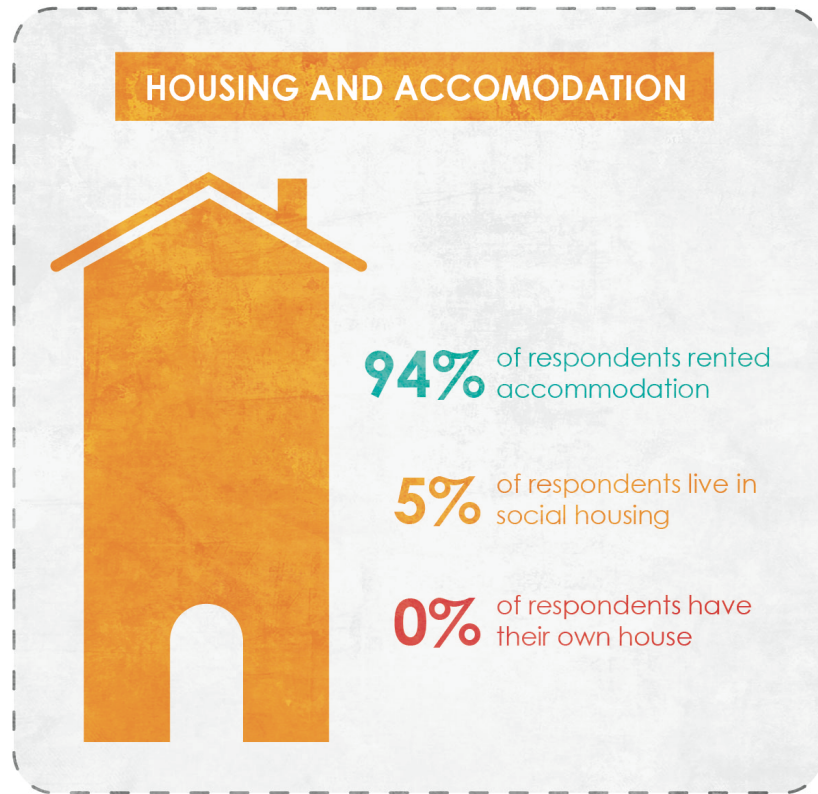
TIME SPENT IN IRELAND



ENGLISH LANGUAGE



Housing and Accommodation



Many respondents have been registered with the local authorities for about a decade

The majority of respondents state that it was very difficult to find accommodation

Issues in finding accommodation: housing crisis, racism/ social welfare/ lack of large housing units

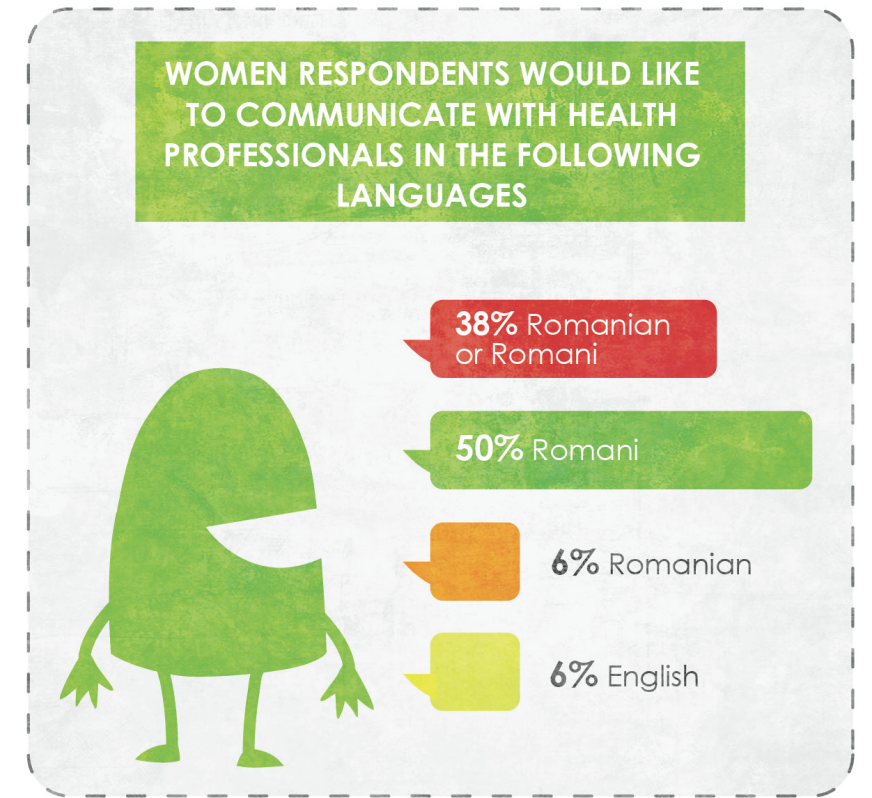
Health

All respondents have a medical card

Most common health issues identified:

diabetes and heart related issues

90% state that language represents a barrier when it comes to accessing health services

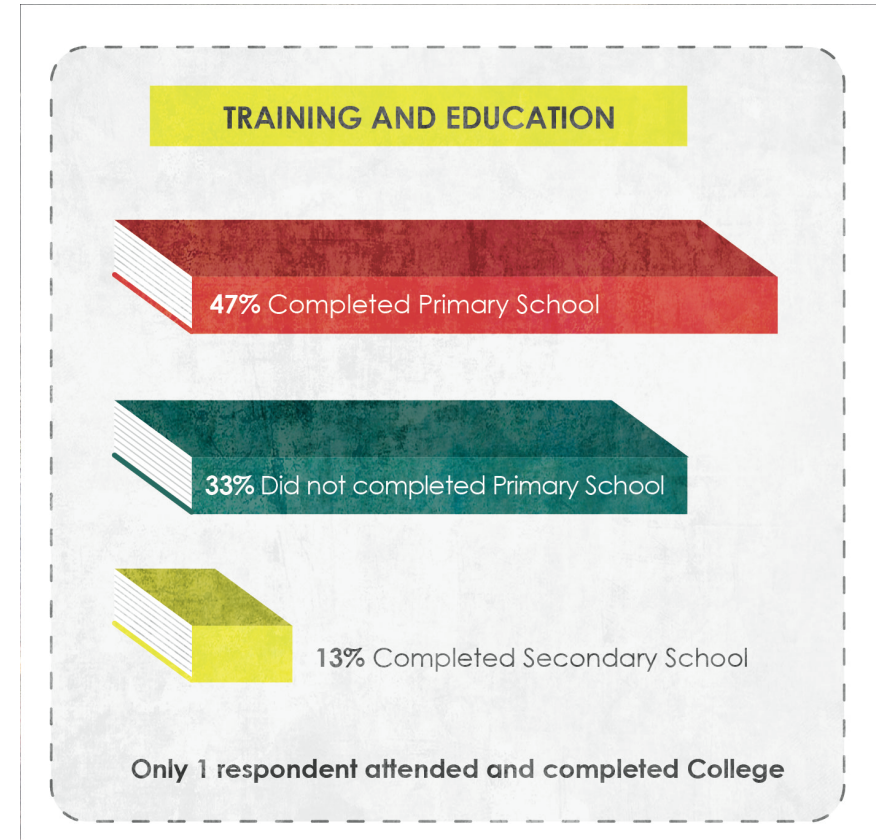


Training and Education

Approx. 95% of respondents state that they attended school

12 years old is the most frequent age of school leaving

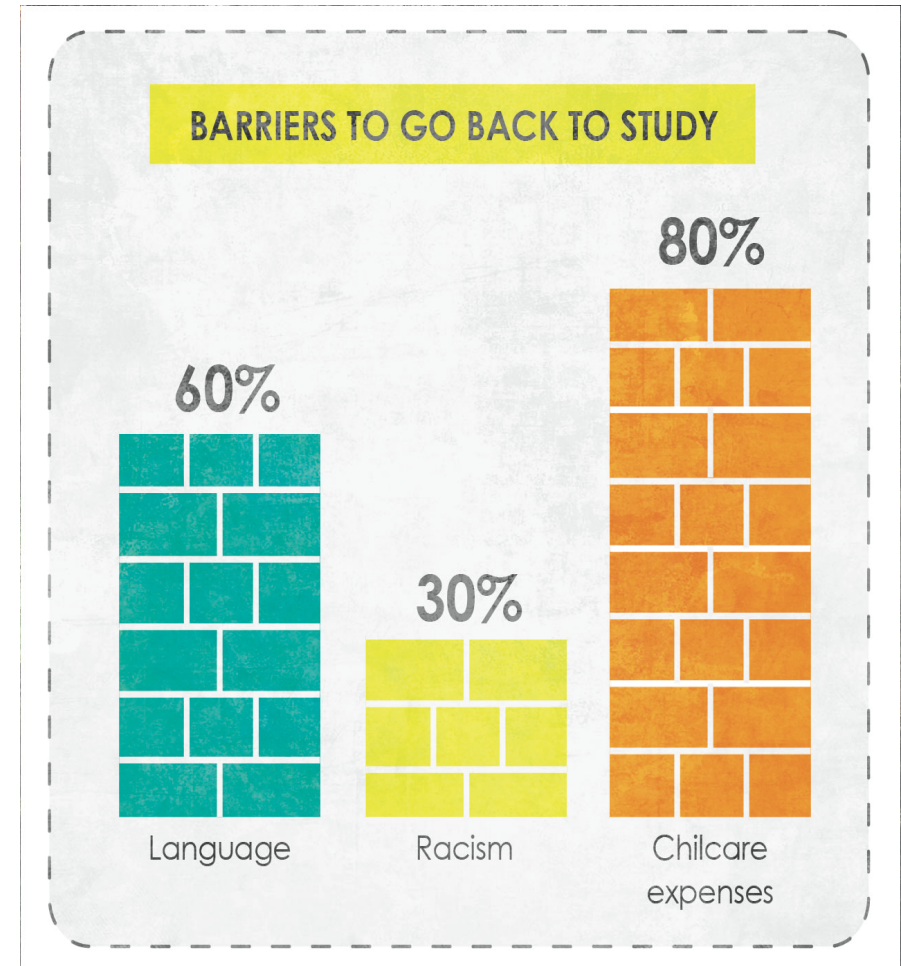
4 years is the average amount of time in school



Approx. 75% of respondents would like to go back to study

Subjects that they would like to study:

English language (most popular), literacy, psychology, tourism, teaching, design etc.

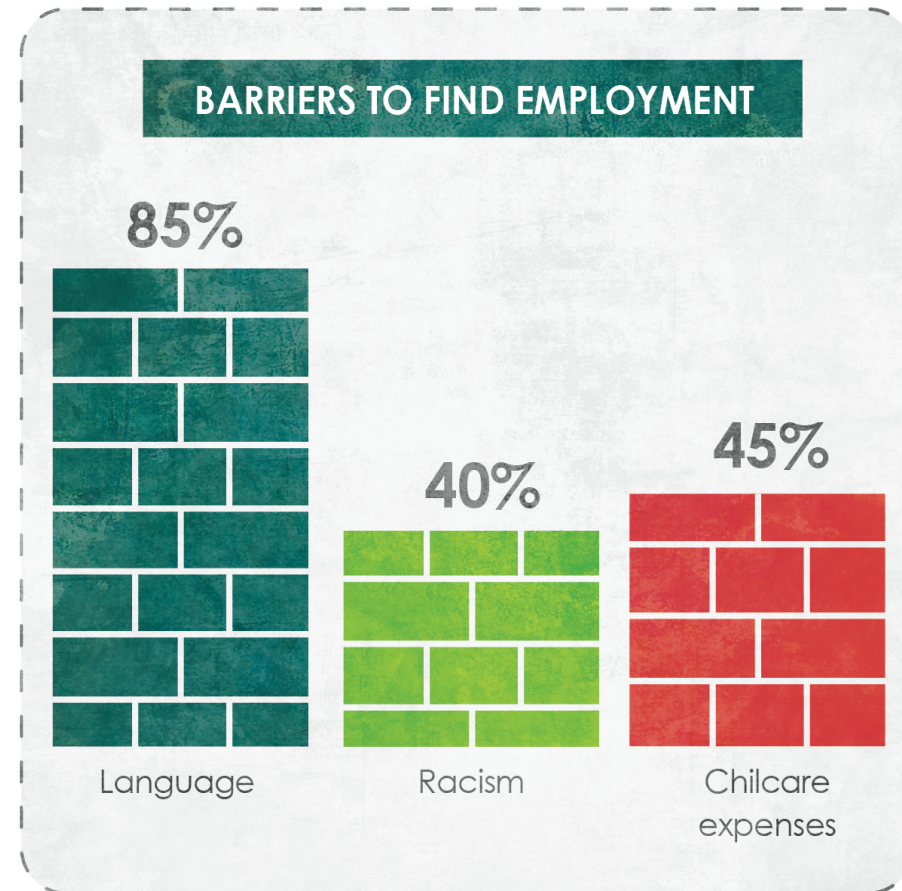


Employment

Approx. 95% of respondents are unemployed

Current national unemployment rate 7.8% (CSO 2016)

Unemployment rate in Balbriggan 13.1% (Census 2011)

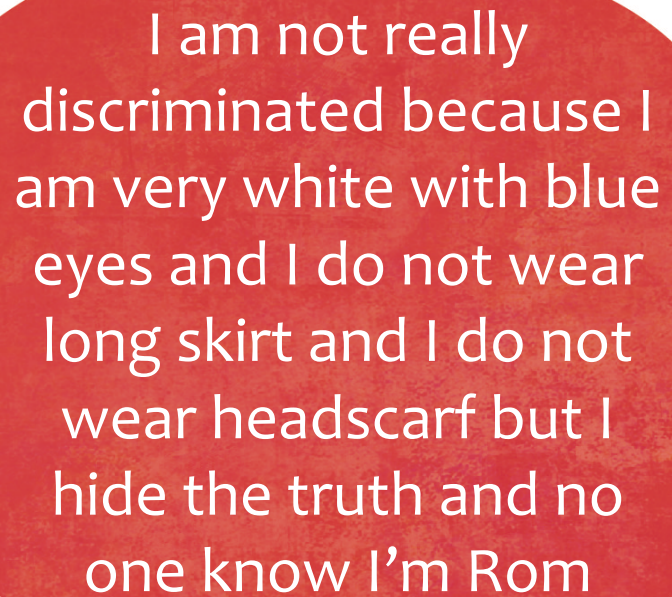


Racism and Discrimination


Approx. 85% of the respondents state that they have been victims of racists attacks since they moved to Ireland

Approx. 85% state that they did not report any racist episodes to the Gardai.





I am not really
discriminated because I
am very white with blue
eyes and I do not wear
long skirt and I do not
wear headscarf but I
hide the truth and no
one know I'm Rom



When I was
on maternity
they treated
me like dirt
and the nurse
ignored me

Recommendations:

Two main recommendations emerge from the study:

1. Tackle Racism and Discrimination

- Statutory and non-statutory bodies should implement anti-racism/intercultural awareness training for all staff
- Employ Roma interpreters and mediators/ Employ Roma people
- Develop Roma Primary Health Care Projects
- Housing - Local Authorities and the HSE should allocate specific funding to make sure that Roma housing needs are addressed

2. Education

- Need for more English classes and for a clear English language progression route to follow
- Literacy classes

Classes should be not simply be provided but delivered in a way that can meet participants' needs i.e. childcare.

Finally, there is a wide range of expertises among respondents. This expertise should be recognised by nuanced schemes that would promote and encourage their use which will be beneficial for society as whole

Ethnic Minorities and Mental Health in Ireland:



Barriers and Recommendations



8 ethnic minority groups were selected on the basis of ethnicity, religion, gender, and language

The groups that took part were: Polish, African, Chinese, Lithuanian, Muslim, Romanian, **Roma**, Russian speakers

175 Questionnaires – the questionnaire was designed to identify if Cairde's service users or their close families had experienced mental health difficulties: what stressors were affecting them; where and if they sought professional or other type of help to deal with their issues

25 Consultation meetings (focus groups and interviews, involving over 100 people – Roma (1 focus group with women and 1 focus group with men; both groups were of mixed backgrounds and involved both professionals and activists as well as individual communities members)

The study was published in 2015



What can lead to mental health issues?

- Discrimination and Racism
- Isolation and loneliness
- Financial Difficulties

What are the barriers to access mental health services?

- Cultural and language barriers
- Stigma and shame attached to mental health
- Lack of trust in institution

Mental Health is directly linked to social and economic factors

All the Roma respondents stated that they do not look for any professional help

Their suggestions:

1. They would access local professional services if there were Roma interpreters available at all times
2. Develop Roma women peer support groups



Thank you