

Hurling and Hijabs

How newcomers create a sense of home and belonging in Ireland



Name: Marnix Kelfkens

Student number: 5931169

Supervisor: Luc Lauwers

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¹Abstract

This thesis offers the perspective of three groups of newcomers (people within the Direct Provision Center, Unaccompanied Minors and newcomers within the Northern Inner city Dublin) within the Irish society, on their journey of creating a sense of home and belonging in Ireland by participating in sport initiatives created by social enterprises. In this process of creating a sense of home and belonging in Ireland, and thereby becoming part of the Irish society, newcomers deal, among others, with four kinds of excluding practices, which are *spatial*, *economic*, *social* and *cultural* practices. Social enterprises in Dublin provide newcomers with all kinds of help to deal with these four excluding practices. These organizations do this by providing sport lessons and helping newcomers with the barriers they encounter, like language barrier. Although newcomers still feel the negative consequences of the excluding practices, most newcomers I met were still able to create a create attachment to Ireland due to the help of the social enterprises. From this sense of attachment, a sense of home and belonging arises. During my fieldwork in Dublin, I found that participating in sports initiatives enables newcomers to create a social circle. This social circle, is the start of creating a sense of home and belonging in Ireland.

Keywords: Ireland, sport, newcomers, excluding practices, direct provision center

¹ Cover photo: *Irish independent*, 14-6-2017

Introduction

As I walk towards the All-weather pitch, next to Fairview Park in the Northern-part of Dublin, a child around eight years old runs by me from the dressing rooms towards his team on the other side of the field. Dressed in the light blue which represents Dublin, with a Hurley in one hand, and a helmet in the other. As I look where he is heading, I see his whole team waiting for him to start a match of Hurling. Hurling, a typical Irish sport, is played on a field similar to soccer, with the addition of two rugby poles on top of the goal, a solid ball the size of a baseball and a bat formed like a large spoon (see cover photo). It is a freezing cold Friday evening at the start of my fieldwork in February 2018 in Dublin. I am attending a training called Soccernites, a weekly, free to join soccer training intended for newcomers, to the Irish society, from the age of 14 till 20. I walk past the field where the boys are playing their Hurling match, towards the smaller pitch where Soccernites takes place. I am greeted by Mohammed, the trainer of the group and soon after meet up with the rest of the group, who are curiously taking notice of me. The group consist of 25 guys from Macedonia, Romania, Algeria and Poland, three new guys from Eritrea and South Africa and two Irish guys. All the guys of the group are very keen on telling me where they are from. A large part of the world map could be filled in with all the different countries of origin of those who came together that Friday evening on the All-weather pitch. Most guys arrive at Soccernites in groups and every week there seem to be new people who come to see what the training is about. The guys who attend this training for a longer period of time seem to become good friends. This creates some separate sub-groups, but everyone, also people who are there for the first time, seems to fit in one of these separate groups at first glance.

Soccernites is a way for these guys to create new friendships and therewith a social network in Dublin. This new compiled social network leads to a sense of attachment to Dublin, which can be a start in creating a feeling of home and belonging in Dublin (Hedefort and Hjort 2002). Soccernites, is one of the projects of the social enterprise Sport against racism Ireland (SARI), which helps newcomers to deal with the four exclusion practices they encounter, spatial, economic, social and cultural, whilst trying to create a sense of home and belonging in Dublin. In this thesis I researched whether and how sports can contribute to the newcomers' sense of home and belonging in Dublin. I found that in Dublin sports can be a way for newcomers to create ties with each other as well as with members of the Irish society, which initiate a sense of home and belonging in Dublin, Ireland.

European debate about newcomers

Within contemporary Europe there is a lasting debate about newcomers originating from countries within Europe as well as newcomers originating from countries outside

Europe. This debate is partly due to the ever more connected world where every change in movement of people is noticed (Smith 1993). On one side, there are governments that welcome newcomers, like Germany. Angela Merkel's "Wir schaffen das" (we will make it happen) is a famous phrase in favor of helping refugees from Syria (Zeit 2015)². However, her migration policy has received criticism from within her own country as well as from other European Union (EU) countries. The minister of internal affairs from Merkel's own government, for instance, threatened to abandon his post if the German borders wouldn't be closed to newcomers from outside the EU (Geels 2018)³. Contrary to Germany, there are governments who try to stop the influx of newcomers to their country. On June 11th 2018, Italy denied access to a boat with 629 migrants on board, the boat was eventually accepted by Spain. This denial of access to newcomers is an extraordinary move for Italy, because they are the overseer of the rescue missions on the Mediterranean. However, since the election of the new (right-wing) government, their previous accepting stance for newcomers from Africa is rapidly changing (Guardian 2018)⁴.

Thus, there are countries within the EU, like Germany, that accept newcomers as a logical consequence of an ever more connected world. On the other side there are the populist anti-immigrants parties like 'UK Independence Party' in England, 'Alternative für Deutschland' in Germany, 'Le Front National' in France or the 'Partij voor de Vrijheid' in The Netherlands. These political parties play an important role within their own country and in the European debate, giving counter arguments against the acceptance of newcomers. The underlying position for these counter arguments is their believe in a static national identity and their opinion that newcomers affect this identity in a negative way (Smith 1993). This thesis focuses on how the debate around newcomers is shaped within the Irish context, based on the stories of the people participating in my research, taking place in Dublin, the capital of Ireland. A city of approximately 530.000 inhabitants.

² Merkel, Angela. 2015. Im Auge des Orkans. *Zeit Online* website. Accessed [12-13-2017].

<http://www.zeit.de/2015/38/angela-merkel-fluechtlinge-krisenkanzlerin/seite-4>

³ Geels, Martin. 2018. Crisis binnen regering Merkel om migratie loopt hoger op. NRC, 07-01-2018. [Accessed on 11th of July 2018 from]:

<https://www.nrc.nl/nieuws/2018/07/01/crisis-binnen-regering-merkel-om-migratie-loopt-hoger-op-a1608554>

⁴ <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/jun/11/un-calls-for-migrant-ship-to-be-allowed-to-dock-in-italian-port>

Nederlandse omroep stichting. 2017. "Orbán: Midden-Europa moet 'migrantenvrije zone' verdedigen". *Nederlandse omroep stichting* website. Accessed [12-20-2017]. <https://nos.nl/artikel/2199412-orban-midden-europa-moet-migrantenvrije-zone-verdedigen.html>

National identity

This thesis takes Smith's definition of national identity: *"the matrix of common symbols and practices that characterize a nation"* (Smith 1993) as a starting point. This notion of a national identity creates in- and exclusive practices within each country, defining who is- and who is not a part of the national identity. Smith further discusses the national identity and nationhood by stating that *"Collective cultural identity refers not to a uniformity of elements over generations but to a sense of continuity on the part of successive generations of a given cultural unit of population, to shared memories of earlier events and periods in the history of that unit and to notions entertained by each generation about the collective destiny of that unit and its culture."* (1991, 25). Smith states that national identity and nationhood are based on a shared history and a continuity of successive generations. Within this thesis I will look at how the Irish history still shapes the national identity of the contemporary Irish community. In the chapter memory and forgetting, Anderson (2006) reflects on the coming around of a nation mentioned by Smith, due to the shared history of its people, by saying *'All profound changes in consciousness, by their very nature, bring with them characteristic amnesias'* (Anderson 2006, 204). Meaning that a shared memory is based on a choice of certain parts of the history and a neglecting of other parts due to a selective amnesia. Moreover, the feeling of unity, created by the shared history, can be linked to the imagined communities of Anderson with which he describes a nation as a socially constructed community, imagined by the people who perceive themselves part of the group (Anderson 2006). Rather than an innate connection to a community, the relationship with a community is imagined by the people of the group themselves. Imagined communities cannot be easily perceived, however traditions of a certain community are noticeable. Traditions can both shape an imagined community, as well as being an outflow of an imagined community. Hobsbawn and Ranger (2012, 1) describe tradition as: *a set of practices, normally governed by overtly or tacitly accepted rules and of a ritual or symbolic nature, which seek to inculcate certain values and norms of behavior by repetition, which automatically implies continuity with the past.* According to Hobsbawn and Ranger (2012) traditions can be invented by a community. This way the (invented) traditions can be linked to the imagined communities and national identity by implying a continuity with the past and inculcating a certain set of norms and values. With the constant re-imagination of the community and the (re)invention of traditions, the imagined community is constantly on the move.

Newcomers and a sense of home and belonging

The definition of newcomers I use in this thesis is: people who have migrated to Ireland and are trying to become part of the Irish society. These people can be refugees,

asylum seekers but also people from other European countries, or people who arrive in Ireland on a work visa. This definition is based on the definition of Mökkönen (2013) who defines newcomers as being different from immigrants, whilst she researched newcomers within the Finnish society. This thesis is focused on three groups of newcomers, people within the Direct Provision Center, Unaccompanied Minors and newcomers within the Northern Inner city Dublin

What I found is that these three groups of newcomers try to create a sense of home and belonging in Dublin. It is therefore important to define this sense of home and belonging. Within the anthropology literature, there is an ongoing debate about whether the definition of home is a static one where home is defined as a fixed place, or a more fluid one, where home is seen as a symbolic place. Within the evermore globalizing world, the connection between identity and place needs to be revised, as the static definition of home relies on a sedentarist idea (Rapport and Dawson 1998, 27). In this thesis, when the word home is mentioned I mean home as a symbolic place. So when newcomers create a home in Dublin, they create an attachment to the idea they form of Dublin and the people they know in Dublin. Besides home this thesis will focus on belonging as well, which also requires a definition. Hedefort and Hjort expand on belonging by saying that home is not a place where we belong but rather a place where we feel we belong (Hedefort and Hjort 2002, vii). Belonging, as belonging to a nation, they define as *“a structured set of emotions and attitudes, shaped by an imagined oneness of political and pre-political, contemporary and historical, rational and cosmological orientations”* (2002, xiv-xv). Wood and Waite (2011) refer to belonging as a form of attachment that an individual creates to other people, places or modes. So belonging is someone's personal attachment to a place, its people and the standards and values of both. Wood and Waite (2011) follow Ignatieff's (1994) definition of belonging, and add a sense of security and home to this definition. Spaaij (2014) connects belonging to sport as he sees sport as a way for newcomers to shift the social boundaries. This shift, leads to a new created space for newcomer, from which they can create a sense of belonging to Ireland.

Fieldwork in Ireland, Dublin

During my fieldwork from January until April 2018 in Dublin, I conducted an ethnographic research by doing participant observation and by conducting interviews. For three months I have researched practices of in- and exclusion created by Irish society that newcomers have to deal with when they enter the country. I have seen how despite these exclusion practices (spatial, social, cultural and economic), newcomers still try to create a sense of home and belonging in Ireland. Over these three months I actively participated in three organizations, the first one being Sport against Racism Ireland (SARI). SARI organizes

Soccernites and other sport-initiatives for young newcomers which I attended during the 3 months of my fieldwork. One of the things I did for SARI was organizing the Soccernites sports lessons for newcomers. The second organization I participated in is the Project Fun Direction (PFD), which gives sports lessons in the most deprived areas of Dublin to children, both newcomers and Irish, between 4 till 12 years old. During my stay in Ireland I co-organized these lessons. The last organization I took part in is MASI (Movement of Asylum Seekers Ireland), where I helped organize the Right2Work campaign, by helping with their protests. This campaign is set up to achieve the right to work for newcomers in Ireland.

The three previous mentioned organizations (SARI, PFD and MASI), are all three volunteer driven organizations. This means that the people who run these organizations also have a (full time) job besides their work in these 'social enterprises'. While being active in the voluntary based organization, I have come across both positive and negative consequences of relying on volunteers for these organizations. One of the positive consequences is that it is easier to identify and address a certain problem, without being dependent on government agencies. In this way, productive changes can be implemented faster. One of the negative consequences on the other hand, is that an organization that is mostly led by volunteers can be experienced as unprofessional. For example a date of a meeting of one of the projects I visited was changed because a volunteer had something planned with his family. Moreover, the independence of the government, can also create a splintered atmosphere within the social enterprises branch, relying solely on volunteers. The social enterprises are usually depended on only a few people and have to rely on very small funds and charity in order to keep their projects going. This means that the necessary continuation and regularity, of these projects is at stake. For example one of the people who is very active within the Right2Work campaign had a very busy schedule, which made it impossible to put much work into the campaign, delaying it for a month.

During my three months 'in the field' in Dublin, Ireland, I have become acquainted with a unique sports landscape, with all kinds of different, so far unknown sports to me. Moreover, I have become acquainted with organizations that showed me new ways of how sport can shape the life of newcomers in a nation.

Thesis

In this thesis I will start in chapter one by explaining how the current situation, regarding the way newcomers are treated in Ireland, came about. I will give a short historical overview and explain the present situation regarding the excluding practices for newcomers in Ireland. In chapter two, I will present a recollection of the data I gathered from these newcomers and how they deal with the excluding practices in Ireland. Moreover I will explain how they attempt to create a sense of belonging in their new home country. In the third

chapter I will finish this thesis by giving a detailed description of how newcomers create a sense of belonging by participating in sport initiatives created by social enterprises.

Chapter 1 Current practices of exclusion for newcomers

In this chapter I will dive into the contemporary debate about newcomers and I will examine how the current migration situation in Ireland is shaped from a historical perspective. I will start with a short description of four kinds of excluding practices in Ireland, conceptualized by statements made by my research participants. Moreover, the current Direct Provision System (DPS) will be described and explained from a historical perspective. Finally, I will argue why the DPS has not changed in the previous years, by explaining the, so called conservative nature of the Irish society, mentioned by my research participants.

Four kinds of excluding practices

During my fieldwork I came across four kinds of excluding practices within the Irish society: spatial, social, economic and cultural. In the current and next chapters, examples of the excluding practices will be given, but first a definition of the four practices is needed.

Spatial exclusion means that someone is physically excluded from the Irish society because of the surroundings. The newcomers in the DPS, who are placed in the Direct Provision Centers (DPC), situated in old holiday parks and rural areas of Ireland, experience spatial exclusion. People within these centers are excluded from the Irish society, due to the sealed off centers and their remote locations. Economic exclusion means that someone is excluded from the Irish society because of their financial state. Newcomers within the DPC get a weekly allowance of less than €20,-, and a ban on their right to work. This weekly budget is not enough to buy a return ticket to a nearby town or city. As a result their financial state excludes them from participating in the Irish society. Social exclusion is when someone is excluded from the Irish society, due to the inability to get in contact with members of the society. Therefore creating ties with members of the Irish society becomes difficult. An example is Nazim, a 17 year old Algerian boy. He told me that he was the last one to pick a spot in his soccer team due to the fact that he is not always in the ability to attend the soccer match. Therefore he has trouble with creating ties with his fellow team mates. Cultural exclusion means that someone is excluded from the Irish cultural practices. An example of the cultural and spatial exclusion is Ronnie. He told me that he wanted to learn more about the Irish cultural practices, but didn't have the chance to do so because he didn't have the opportunity to leave the DPC and nobody of the Irish society comes by to explain the Irish cultural practices. Therefore he and others have no opportunity to learn and take part in the Irish cultural practices, even if they want to. What this example shows, and what will become clear in the current and the next chapters is that the four exclusion practices are highly intertwined with each other.

Direct Provision

*"The people in Ireland think that Direct Provision is bad, but they [the Irish population] have no idea how bad it really is"*⁵ Thomas (27) explains to me. *"People have no idea at all, not about the food, that we are packed like animals, bunk beds, no privacy, no money, not the ability to work, nothing"* Ronnie (29) complements Thomas's statement. Both these informants from French Guinea and South Africa are newcomers to the Irish society. They talk to me, in a coffee place in the center of Dublin at the start of my fieldwork, about how they perceive the Irish population is treating them and they refer to the DPS, the system for asylum seekers and refugees implemented in Ireland in 2000.

The DPS was put in place to deal with the ever growing influx of newcomers to Ireland, as the Irish government failed to find a suitable solution to accommodate the newcomers in the years before. The DPS was meant to be a temporal solution but 18 years later the system is still in place, because no better alternative is formulated (Breen 2008). The system is operated by the Reception and Integration Agency (RIA), commissioned by the Irish government. When newcomers are registered they are imputed in DPC, in which families have a room for themselves, and people who arrive alone are placed with 2 or 3 others in a room. In these centers newcomers get the bare necessities, three meals a day, a place to sleep, and a weekly allowance (€19,10 for adults and €9,60 for children). Newcomers are in the DPS for at least 18 months when they arrive in Ireland, with 40% being within the DPS for longer than 2 years⁶. An example of the procedure is Thomas, he got out of the DPS in two and a half year, because he knew what procedure wise aspects were expected from him. This in contrast with some people he was bunked with in the DPC, who were in there for 4 to 5 years, and had no idea about the procedures to get a permit to stay in Ireland. Within these DPC's nothing is organized on the site, like activities or job possibilities. Moreover, newcomers are not included in the social welfare system of Ireland during their first two years and have no right to vote as they don't have an Irish passport. The rules newcomers have to follow and the restrictions of the DPC due to their location, leads to the inability for newcomers to participate in the Irish society. Returning to the four exclusion practices, the location of the centers, outside the Irish society is as mentioned a form of spatial exclusion. Moreover, for the duration of their stay within the DPS newcomers can't work, unless they buy a work visa for half a year (€500,-) or a full year (€1000,-). Paying this amount of money is impossible for most of the newcomers, therefore they experience economic exclusion and are excluded from work and making a salary. The weekly allowance is not enough to actively participate in society, as a bus ticket to leave the DPC is already

⁵ Interview Thomas and Ronnie 5th February

⁶ Thornton, Liam. 2018. *Comment: 'It's time to move away from direct provision'* : Irish independent, 07-01-2018. [accessed on 10th of July 2018].

very expensive. A return ticket will almost consume all of the weekly allowance. Connected to these economic and spatial exclusions practices, newcomers have little or no opportunity to work with or meet people from the Irish society, which leads to social exclusion from the Irish society. They simply don't have the chance to create ties with the Irish population. Moreover, to become familiar with the cultural practices of Ireland, newcomers need to be in contact with people who know the cultural practices, something that due to the location of the DPC's only sporadically happens. Before I will explain more about the DPS, the newcomers and the Irish society, it is important to learn more about the history of Ireland and the emergence of the Irish society.

The History of Ireland

Since the 1840's, when a famine struck Ireland, the Irish people strived to be independent from Great Britain (GB). As Lyons (1971) says, the famine in Ireland was mainly due to the increased demand for potatoes by GB (1971, 34), which resulted in big losses for Ireland. The whole famine has cost about 1 million Irish people their lives, another million emigrated to North-America in this time and in the aftermath of the famine an additional 600.000 people left Ireland in the 1850's. This drive for independence led to Irish independence missions. The first two missions in 1848 and 1867, both failed but gave Ireland its first 'Home Rule', which was a rule implemented by the British government to give Ireland more self-reigning power within GB. To gain more independence a second Home Rule was proposed by Ireland, but this rule was vetoed by the British government in 1893. At this point, the Irish culture was almost abandoned, due to an active anti-Irish culture policy of GB (Edmund 1970). An example of this is the Gaelic language, an official language of Ireland, which had almost ceased to exist at the start of the 20th century. The third Home Rule in 1914, would have allowed Ireland their own government within GB. This rule was never enacted because of the 1916 uprising, when Sin Fein, one of the political parties of Ireland, that is still active today, recruited a large enough crowd for an uprising against GB (Lyons 1971, 363-364). The fourth and last Home Rule meant the separation of the 6 Northern counties, who were more supportive of GB, from the rest of Ireland.

One year after the last Home Rule, a treaty which settled the separation of Ireland was signed in the early hours of the 6th of December 1921 (1971, 438). After the separation a civil war raged through Ireland for more than a year, before a truce was signed between both sides (Edmund 1970, 195). One side being in favor of a treaty with GB and the other side against (Lyons, 446-447). The side in favor of a treaty won as the treaty was passed, in 1923, and Ireland stayed in the commonwealth (Edmund 1970, 195). However in 1949 a separation was finalized within the Ireland act 1949, and resulted in Ireland leaving the Commonwealth (Lyons, 569-570).

History in contemporary Ireland

During my fieldwork I encountered a lot of anti-GB sentiment within the Irish society and I noticed that the fight for separation from GB is still a lived history in the contemporary Irish society. The commemorations of the 1916 uprising are for example still visible in contemporary Ireland in the form of a military parade on Easter Sunday. During this parade, tanks, ground troops and even airplanes are displayed for the president and the crowd which is situated on both sides of the road on large tribunes. The importance of the 1916 uprising can be linked to Anderson's chapter about memory and forgetting (2006, 187). Although, the uprising of 1916 was as unsuccessful as previous ones, this uprising is still commemorated due to the surprisingly hardships to the Irish society of the reprisals of GB. Because of this hard punishment, more and more people felt the urge to become independent from GB, which was the final motivation for the independency of 1921. Although other similar successful uprisings receive selective amnesia, the memory of the uprising of 1916 is kept alive and part of the contemporary national identity of Ireland (Smith 1991, 25, Anderson 2006, 204-205). What this overarching shared connectedness, due to the shared history, creates, is a sense of community between people from the Irish society. This sense of community, due to the shared history makes members of the Irish society perceive to have a relationship based on similarities with everyone in this community. However, this community also creates a distance between the people who are and the people who are not feigned to be part of that community (Anderson 2006). During my fieldwork I experienced to be in this last mentioned group, as I did not share the history with Ireland as the people around me, and therefore was not able to fully participate in the typical festivities.

Ireland in time of migration

As I am interviewing Alex, who is a tour leader and chairman of a cricket club in Dublin, he tells me about the history of Ireland and the first emigration and immigration periods. We are sitting in a small coffee shop within the cultural center of Dublin, close to the parliament. He starts with a description of how Ireland's population came to be as it is today.

"Ireland has always had a history of people moving away. The population hasn't grown since 1850, first there was the famine of 1850, when 1/3 of the population died and another 1/3 of the population moved out. After the Second World War, the Irish economy collapsed which caused another outflow of people. 30 years ago the unemployment rates were pushing, 25% to 30% of the university graduates were leaving the country. But the two five-years plans, first the recovery plan and afterwards the plan for economic progress", changed the whole face of emigration until the late '80's towards immigration from the 90's. This was the first time in history that there was an inflow of people, we didn't have colonies or guest workers

like Germany, France or The Netherlands, so we had no idea how to deal with immigration.

At first they were people of Irish descent coming back, together with newcomers from Australia, New Zealand and America. Then, a large group of Asians came in on student/work visa's, which allowed them to work for 20 hours a week besides their studies, and since 2000 we have people coming in from Eastern Europe and Africa. ⁷"

As mentioned by Alex, there were hardly any newcomers in Ireland before the 1990's. This was due to the fact that Ireland misses a history of having colonies like other European countries and because of the undeveloped economy in Ireland which did not require workers from other countries to come to Ireland, like other European countries did. Although there was almost no immigration to Ireland before the 1990's, there was a growing number of outward migration of Irish citizens in the early-1990's (Kelly 2017). With GB as the most popular destination due to their better work opportunities, followed by Australia and Canada (CSO 2017). However, besides this emigration, people originally descendent from Ireland started coming back, from Australia, the USA and New Zealand in the 1990's. This wave of immigration was followed by a second wave of immigration, made up of the same countries with the addition of people from countries in Asia. The last group started coming in on Student/Work visa, which allowed them to work up to 20 hours a week besides their study. Because they applied for a student/work visa, the Irish government had a clear insight how many people coming from these Asian countries and whether they would be attending a school and have work.

Just before the start of the new century a new and different wave of immigration took place, migrants from Eastern Europe, such as Poland, Albania and Serbia, and from several countries in Africa came to Ireland. The amount of newcomers per year fluctuates from 956 newcomers in 2012, 3726 newcomers in 2015 and 2926 newcomers in 2017 (CSO, 2017). This changing face of immigration, due to the size, their language barriers, and their economic status, forced the government of Ireland to take action: DPS (Breen 2008). This system, introduced in 2000, was meant to be a temporary solution, however 18 years later the same system is still in place. In the early years of the system, someone born in Ireland automatically received an Irish passport. However, a referendum in 2008 among the Irish people changed this possibility for newcomers. A majority of the Irish people voted for a change in the immigration act, whereby people who are born in Ireland, but who don't have an Irish parent, do not have the right to become an Irish citizen (Lely 2008). Mohammed gave me insight in what the immigration act meant for him *"I arrived on the family reunification program in 2007, as my sister was born here. Then my parents, my brother and me were eligible to get an Irish passport. I was almost the last one benefiting from the old*

⁷ Interview Alex 21st of February

system⁸". Why this immigration act was the last change in the DPS, will be discussed in the next paragraph.

"It doesn't win votes"⁹

This quote, 'it doesn't win votes' reflects on the way the DPS is viewed in Ireland. In the first part of this paragraph I will start by naming the current attention for the DPS in the Irish society. In the second part of this paragraph I will explain why the DPS is still in place and why my participants do not expect any change soon.

DPS and the Irish society

During my fieldwork I was involved in the Right2Work campaign, which helped me to gain insight in the current and previous public debate about newcomers since 2000. What I found was that there is no public debate in Ireland around newcomers. I asked Ronit Lentin during one of the meetings of MASI, if she could explain to me why there isn't any political debate about the subject of newcomers. She starts by saying that the DPS is a way of placing people out of society. Where before diversity was celebrated, now *diversity has almost disappeared from public and political culture* (Lentin 2012, 237). In practice this means that before the year 2000 diversity was welcomed. After the DPS was implemented, diversity became an unspoken topic in both society and in the political arena. An example from my own fieldwork, supporting the Lentin's theory is the times that when talking to people unrelated to my research they would, almost without exception, skip the subject of newcomers, and the way they are treated in Ireland, when mentioned. So this means that this group of newcomers within the Irish society receive less attention than previous groups.

DPS still in place

*"It doesn't win votes"*¹⁰ Connor explains to me when I ask him why the DPS is still unchanged. Changing the system would mean that there would be a stir that could initiate a political debate that isn't there right now is his response to my question. Addressing this topic, without a clear reason, would not be beneficial to the political parties in power. Social enterprises want to end the DPS and replace it by a different, more newcomer friendly system. To make any change in the DPS, social enterprises, like MASI and SARI, need to create a buzz around a certain subject, to make political parties focus their attention to this certain subject. The Right2Work campaign, I was involved in, tries to create such a buzz, to open up a political and societal debate about the right to work for migrants. Over the last

⁸ Interview Mohammed Wednesday 28 March 2018

⁹ Connor interview 22th March.

¹⁰ Connor interview 22th March.

years progress has been made, as last year the Supreme Court of Ireland voted unanimously that the laws preventing people within Direct Provision from working in Ireland were unconstitutional (Holland 2018). This vote made the Irish government change the law, which was still pending while I was in Ireland and during the writing of this thesis.

Why is changing the DPS so difficult? Thom, Conner and Alex explain to me that the conservative nature of the Irish society is to blame for the unchanged DPS. Starting with Alex who states that the conservative nature of Irish society is mainly due to the grasp of the Catholic Church.

“And there were the mixed marriages, if a catholic and a protestant got married that state mandated that the kids had to be raised as Catholics. So for you could say 50 years at least, but more for 70 years this country was largely dominated by the Catholic Church, and very, very conservative. (...) Ireland has completely turned around in the last 25/30 years.”¹¹

Connor gave me some insight on how the Catholic Church had a grasp on society until about 1990. The real decline of the Catholic Church only started from 1995, when a constitution was changed, which allowed people to legally divorce (Irish statute book 1995)¹². Constitutional changes are only validated by a country wide referendum. Since the referendum for the right to divorce, more referenda for changing the constitution have been held, in 2015 (right for marriage for same sex-couples) and in 2018 (extension of the right to abortion). Because these referendum subjects (divorce, gay marriage, abortion) were highly sensitive subjects for the church, this constitutional changes show that the grasp of the church is loosening and changing. However, the church still plays a significant role within certain part of the nowadays Irish society, especially in the more rural areas. In a survey conducted in 2017, 3.7 of the 4.7 million people in Ireland still identified themselves as catholic, making up 78,3% of the population, which shows a decline of 5,9% since 2011 and 13,3% since 1990 (CSO 2017).

Thom, leader of one of the organizations who organized sports events for newcomers explains to me that, in his opinion, the ignorance of most of the Irish community is “*incredibly racist*” regarding the DPS.¹³ *This racism isn’t really outspoken, but more of a “racism behind the front door”¹⁴*. This links to what Lentin (2012) calls “*racism without racism*”, which is a silent practiced form of racism, felt by newcomers but unspoken in society. Thom says that “*people are not openly racist, nor outspoken racist, but there is a general anxiety towards change and newcomers*”. According to Alex the racism in Ireland is born out of

¹¹ Interview Alex 21st februari.

¹² Interview Connor 22th March.

¹³ Interview Thom 14th February.

¹⁴ Several interviews during my fieldwork.

xenophobia”¹⁵. He believes that people are not inherently racist in Ireland, but rather afraid that something will change and therefore are resistant to any kind of change.

This fear of change, mentioned by Alex, is given to me, as a third reason for the conservative nature of the Irish society, by my participants. As Conner explains to me:

“People are happy with their life now and don’t need anything to change”¹⁶.

Because of the lack of immigration in Ireland before the 1990’s, newcomers are not, yet, integrated within the national identity of Ireland (Smith 1993). Therefore, the Irish society has no example of a successful integration of a migrant group. The fact that most Irish people are happy with the way they live now and because of that are unwilling to change, leads to xenophobia, according to Thom. For him, this xenophobia, results in the failing DPS:

“The way the system works now does not result in any form of integration. What it does however encourages is intra-gration, the integration of different migrant groups together”¹⁷

During my fieldwork I came across multiple examples of this perceived “intra-gration”, such as the example of Soccernites and the Project Fun Direction I mentioned in the introduction. The people attending the sports training find friendship with each other. In sum, my participants gave me three explanations for the conservative nature of the Irish society: their religion, their racism without racism and their fear of change.

Irish government and voluntarism

In this paragraph my research participants will elucidate their opinion on the work of the Irish government, the role of volunteers in Ireland and how newcomers can become part of the Irish society. About the last subject, becoming part of the Irish society, Alex tells me the following:

“The state is useless. The bureaucracy is slow. When we had bad snow¹⁸, everybody helped out, with shoveling. To me that is what holds Ireland together, the solidarity. When that disappears, and I don’t think it will, Ireland would change completely. The thing is, the way to integrate there: to some extent it is work, to some extent it is sport but really it is volunteerism. If you really want to get accepted in Ireland you need to volunteer, you need to

¹⁵ Interview Alex 21st February.

¹⁶ Informal conversation with Connor during fieldwork

¹⁷ Interview Thom 21st February.

¹⁸ In February 2018 there was a week of heavy snow in Dublin

drive kids to the soccer practice, you cook a meal etc. You throw your hand in, and that's what makes it easier to fit in here¹⁹."

What becomes clear from Alex's story, and stories from other research participants, is that the integration of newcomers heavily relies on the help of volunteers. In Ireland 27% of the people participate in voluntary work (CSO 2015), with that number they are ranked in the top 10 of voluntary participation within Europe, and they outrun countries like the United Kingdom and Germany (Eurostat 2017). Within my fieldwork I found that social enterprises are the basis of how newcomers can become part of the Irish society during their leisure time, besides the conventional ways such as schools. As William during one of the activities of SARI, told me: *"these activities are vital for the integration"*. Although social enterprises are of big importance of the integration of newcomers they are run by volunteers, which can lead to the so-called gaps, explained by Conner:

"The volunteers stepped in and created a country that was very volunteer driven, when there was an economic down set, after the Second World War. When the economic landscape was brighter, it seemed that the government didn't feel the need to change the large voluntary community. The community could look after itself and didn't need the help of the government, and in return the government relied on the community to organize their leisure activities. And, although this seems like an easy way out for the government, it works for most parts of society, as different sports are flourishing, and most things are taking care of. But it does leave gaps where the community does not step in with voluntary work, and the government does not intervene."²⁰

As mentioned by Conner, gaps arise between what society needs and what the government offers. During my fieldwork I came across these gaps within the several organizations I was involved in, and the people I spoke to. Sometimes these gaps were almost visible. An example of a gap was the fact that some organizations I met for an interview needed exactly what came I across in other projects that I participated in. However, as they are not connected and there is no centralized organization, like the government, overseeing all the social enterprises, they do not know how to fill the gaps they encounter. Therefore, multiple organizations with the same goal, creating an inclusive society for newcomers, are splintered, focusing on the same target group but not working together.

The second problem I came across is the fact that the dependence on volunteers threatens the continuation and regularity of these projects to help newcomers create a sense of home in Ireland. Connor comments on this subject: *"If I am not there, the trainings doesn't*

¹⁹ Interview Alex 21st of February

²⁰ Interview Conner 4th of April

take place”, explaining how the organization is highly dependent on him²¹. However, as explained in the introduction, being dependent on volunteers is not only negative. It is a very quick way of dealing with an identified problem without any intervention or bureaucracy of the government. Looking past the positive and negative aspects of voluntarism, what became clear to me, during my in Ireland, is how important voluntarism is for the integration of newcomers.

Ireland and Newcomers

Hence, in this chapter, I have identified four kinds of excluding practices in Ireland; spatial, economic, cultural and social. These excluding practices, the Irish society raises for newcomers, are both on a governmental level as well as on a societal level, and are mainly caused by a conservative attitude towards changing regulations which creates barriers for newcomers to become part of Irish society. As a reaction volunteers, running social enterprises help newcomers deal with these excluding practices by giving them an opportunity to create ties with other newcomers. Moreover they try to accomplish changes in the DPS by ‘working around the government’ instead of working with the government, whereby they fill the ‘gaps’ between what society needs and what the government offers. What becomes clear in this chapter is that social enterprises can be a help towards the inclusion of newcomers. However, changing something on a national level, requires a buzz around a certain subject, and a willingness to change from a significant amount of the Irish society.

²¹ Interview Conner 1th of March

Chapter 2 How newcomers deal with exclusion practices



Right2Work demonstration (Holland 2018)

In the first chapter I elaborated on how Ireland deals with newcomers and named what kind of exclusion practices my research participants deal with: spatial, economic, cultural and social. In this chapter I will explain how newcomers, whilst trying to create a sense of home and belonging in Ireland, experience and deal with the DPS and the four exclusion practices. I will illuminate how creating a sense of attachment to Ireland, its people and conforming to the Irish standards and values can be the start of creating a sense of home of belonging (Hedefort and Hjort 2002, Ignatieff 1994, Wood and Waite 2011). My research participants can be divided into three different groups of newcomers (people within the DPC's, Unaccompanied Minors (UM) and newcomers within the Northern Inner city Dublin), who plan to stay in Ireland, which makes creating a sense of home and belonging important for them.

Dealing with the Direct Provision System

*"People have no idea at all, not about the food, that we are packed like animals, bunk beds, no privacy, no money, not the ability to work, nothing."*²² This is what Ronnie, someone who lives in a Direct Provision Center (DPC), told me during one of the MASI (Movement for Asylum Seekers Ireland) protests. It was the first time that I spoke to someone still living in the DPC, and he told me that I should visit the DPC to see how it is like there myself. During my stay in Ireland I visited two DPC's, Baleskin and Mosney. Baleskin is located in Dublin, close to the Dublin airport, which is approximately a 40 minutes car ride away from the center

²² Interview Ronnie 5th February

of Dublin. Baleskin is an important DPC because it is the first DPC where people arrive in Ireland when they apply for asylum. In Baleskin, which houses people 4 to 5 weeks, immigrants and asylum seekers receive a medical. After this time the newcomers are transferred to a more permanent DPC in Ireland.

When arriving at Baleskin, you enter the DPC via a single gate, which leads to the parking spots. The living areas are made out of wooden houses, each two stories high. Within these houses there are three apartments, which serve either a family or 3 to 4 individuals. Several blocks of these houses make up the outer ring of Baleskin. The inner ring of Baleskin consists of several sea-containers linked to each other, which make up the reception, the dining area, a room with a table tennis table and computers and the activities area. Outside of the activities area a small 'town square' is created, consisting of a football field without field lines and with broken nets, where during the summer one of the summer camps of PFD takes place. The whole site has the feeling of a holiday park, with small houses, perfectly aligned. However being at Baleskin feels artificial. The park looks like a holiday park but knowing that the people who are staying there are not on holiday, and that they don't have the possibility to leave for a long time, leaves you with a pain in your stomach. The gate at the entrance creates a sense of exclusion from the rest of the Irish society. You need to get permission to enter and to exit, which therefore doesn't feel like a public space but more like a private space, closed off from society. I only got access because Connor (founder of PFD) contacted Fiona, who is the activities organizer of the Jesuit Refugee Service in Baleskin. Within Baleskin the people are not literally stuck, as they can leave the center, when asked for permission, if they want to, but their weekly allowance doesn't give them much freedom within the Irish society. The city center of Dublin is 40 minutes away by bus, and the costs of this bus ride, approximately 8 euro retour, is about half the amount of their weekly allowance. This makes that the people inside Baleskin, against their own will, are excluded from the Irish society: spatial exclusion. This spatial exclusion is exemplified by the free weekly trip to the swimming pool nearby my house in Dublin, organized by PFD. This trip was organized with the intention of giving the children swimming lessons and letting them have a little fun. But in the pool there were also people without children who just wanted to get out of Baleskin for a little while. One of the ladies, Elise, explains to me with a heavy accent in the cloudy, hot pool: *I've been here for three weeks now, arrived from Eritrea. This is the first time that me and my son, are out of the center. I have nothing to do and nowhere to go*²³. The swimming pool example shows that PFD tries to fight the spatial exclusion created by the rules of the DPC, for the newcomers staying in Baleskin.

The second center that I visited was Mosney, a permanent DPC, situated 30

²³ Interview Elise 18th of March 2018

kilometers out of Dublin. The center was previously used as a holiday resort, and the far side of Mosney is still connected to the Sea. Walking around Mosney is a surreal experience as the area still very much looks like a holiday resort. Frank (the bus driver of SARI) told me that he used to go here on holiday with his parents 40 years ago. Now, 40 years later, the placement of a large fence, makes this holiday resort fit to be used as a DPC. Although it still looks like the perfect place to spend 1 or 2 weeks on holiday, being stuck in Mosney for longer, without the possibility of going elsewhere and participating in society, is unwarranted. Mosney is practically outside the Irish society, the road towards the center is an exit from the motorway and the closest (small) town takes an hour to reach by foot. However, the road to the town is a motorway which makes it unfit to walk. The weekly allowance is not enough to pay the bus to the nearest town, let alone thinking about going to Dublin by bus, which is further and more expensive. These factors combined create spatial exclusion for the people living in Mosney. In Mosney, newcomers do not receive help from outside with dealing with the excluding practices, compared to the help of PFD in Baleskin. The excluding practices in Mosney are similar to those in Baleskin. People living in both DPC's experience spatial and economical exclusion, which leads to cultural exclusion as well as the newcomers don't have any opportunity to learn about the Irish cultural practices. Moreover, the spatial and economic exclusion, excludes the newcomers on a social level as well, as they have no opportunity to interact with members of the Irish society (Hedefort and Hjort 2002). The difference between Mosney and Baleskin, is that the exclusion in Mosney is more severe due to the lack of help for the newcomers and their own impossibility to deal with the excluding practices of the Irish society themselves.

Thomas²⁴, who lives in Mosney, explains to me what it is like to live in a DPC. He arrived in Ireland, two and a half years ago and was almost leaving the DPS when I met him. *"I'm very happy that I am almost out, now I have the feeling that I can really start a life in Ireland, a feeling I miss while I am living in Mosney"*. Thomas explains to me that living in a DPC is not that bad compared to the hardships he faced when getting to Ireland, but deems the DPS useless. He fled French Guinea and had to leave everything behind. "When I had to choose which country I wanted to go to I choose Ireland. People I met whilst fleeing from French Guinea had told me to go to the Netherlands, but because of the language barrier I choose Ireland, because I speak English. *"I'm happy I chose Ireland, but the system could be so much cheaper, for the Irish society, and better for the immigrants, in my opinion."*²⁵

Visiting the DPC and interviewing the people living there, it became clear to me that there is almost no possibility for newcomers within the DPC to deal with the excluding

²⁴ Interview Thomas, 8th February

²⁵ Interview Thomas, 8th February

practices of the Irish society. The only way for newcomers to change their situation is with the help of Social enterprises.

Social enterprises against the DPS

Just like the PFD in the previous paragraph, the social enterprise MASI, founded in 2014, tries to change the consequences that newcomers deal with regarding the DPS. Right now their main focus is the Right2Work campaign, in which I participated in a number of rallies, during my fieldwork. A possibility for newcomers to work in Ireland can tackle the economic exclusion, as well as give newcomers the possibility to come in contact with people from Ireland and thus deal with the social exclusion. The first rally I participated in was on February the 8th (chapter photo), at the doorstep of the Irish parliament in Dublin, with almost 200 people of MASI present.

As migrants are not able to vote in Ireland, don't have a passport or any official status giving them political power, they are dependent on people and organizations who do have possibilities to change regulation regarding them. *"The only thing we can do is ring bells"*²⁶ is what William told me when we talked about what he and MASI were trying to achieve. Preferably they like to see the DPS change into a new better system for newcomers. A change in the DPS would create better possibilities for newcomers to create a sense of home in Ireland. However, as they are not in a position of power, the only thing they can do is to gain as much attention of the Irish society as possible for the in their eyes failing DPS, so they can only 'ring bells'. The way to ring a bell on the 8th of February was to create a buzz within the national media²⁷. *"We want to agitate the politicians in the Dáil²⁸ by protesting on their doorstep, and hopefully get a lot of media coverage"*²⁹. The demonstration was held at the parliament and one day prior to the announcement of the ruling of the Supreme Court, to create as much media attention as possible.

William and I met on the 6th of February, two days before the protest, at the office of the non-profit organization Comhlamh, which MASI could use for free during the evening time. While we were there William met up with the lawyer of MASI, to fix the last details for the demonstration. As mentioned in the introduction, voluntary based organizations can have both positive as well as negative consequences for the organization. This became clear, participating in the preparations for the rally of February the 8th, as the preparations were not going as smooth as I had expected of such a large social enterprise, organizing a nationwide campaign. Whilst being there with William, I got the responsibility over some important tasks (such as making posters and helping with rallies) that still needed to be done before the 8th.

²⁶ Interview William 6th of February

²⁷ Interview William 6th of February

²⁸ Houses of parliament in Ireland

²⁹ Interview William 6th of February

Moreover, things like a sound-system, contact with the national media, still had to be taken care off. Here the benefit of a voluntary based organization showed as the large network of MASI within Ireland seemed to be sufficient to arrange these important parts within half an hour.

Despite the short term preparation, during the protest everything seemed to be taken care off. All kinds of people were present: migrants, Irish activists from other social enterprises, lawyers and the unions. The national radio was covering it live, the 6 o'clock news opened with the demonstration and the Irish Times (one of the leading Irish newspaper) wrote a large article about the demonstration. So the intention of creating a buzz around the right to work, succeeded, despite the messy preparations. The meetings I attended following this demonstration showed me how activism can work in Ireland. After the protest a group of lawyers took it upon themselves to help out. They proved to the highest court of Ireland that the prohibition on work for migrants was unconstitutional. While finishing this thesis, a final outcome of the modification of this law is still pending.

Creating inclusion within Direct Provision Centers

One of the speakers during this rally of February the 8th Right2Work campaign explained the situation of people inside the DPC's:

*"Therefore they are isolated, therefore they cannot set roots into society, therefore they have no social economic confidence and using that, they have made sure that these people, our friends, have never felt at home in this country, and this is their home.(...) They need to make asylum seekers feel included, they must establish branches"*³⁰

This speech enraptures the idea of home as a symbolic place (Rapport and Dawson 1998). To make somewhere your home you need the possibility to set roots in society. When a newcomer wants to set roots in society, he or she is largely dependent on social enterprises. Therefore contact with people through social enterprises, is the only way for newcomers to create a sense of home and security within Irish society. The fact that the social enterprises help shape the life of newcomers and shape the integration into society Lentin (2012) calls integration 'from below'. She states that the immigration policies of Ireland raise more barriers than they solve, as funding for migrant organizations are cut, and integration is not a politically hot topic any more in Ireland (2012, 226). People from the Irish society help newcomers deal with these barriers by forming social enterprises. Although they deal with the barriers that the governments poses for them, they make integration work in new ways (Lentin 2012, 236-237). This means that the people within Direct Provision have to

³⁰ Speaker Migrant solidarity Ireland, Demonstration Right2Work campaign 8th February

rely on other people and social enterprises, to deal with the spatial exclusion, which takes away their agency to shape their own way of creating a sense of home. They can only participate in the way the social enterprises let them, exemplified by the lessons of the Jesuit Refugee Service's lessons inside Baleskin.

The Jesuit Refugee Service organizes activities within their activities room in Baleskin to deal with these excluding practices. The room has the capacity of 20 to 25 places. Throughout the week several activities take place here, such as an introduction to Irish culture and parenting and English language lessons. In these lessons, newcomers learn what is 'normal' in the Irish society and how Irish families are run, for example that woman work in Ireland. Following these lessons can be seen as a way for the newcomers of getting a sense of the values and standards of the Irish society (Hedefort and Hjort 2012). However, not in all DPC's these lessons are provided and the Irish government is not in control about what newcomers learn. In the particular DPC I visited, the lessons were provided by the Jesuit Refugee Service, who's beliefs passed through in their lessons. Although it is important that classes like these are organized for the newcomer, stated by Connor, in this way newcomers might learn different views on Ireland in different DPC's. Connor explained to me before I went to Baleskin that this is one of the best DPC's within Ireland. *"The people running the place are nicer and thinking with the people living there, rather than only thinking about the costs"*. However, even in one of the better DPC's, people are still reliant on organizations and people from outside the DPS to deal with the excluding practices they encounter. Their agency is limited, but by participating in social enterprises they take some of that agency back.

Other newcomers

Besides the people inside DPC's there are newcomers who don't live in this system, but who also have to deal with excluding practices. During my fieldwork I got in contact with two of these groups: the unaccompanied minors and people living in the Northern Inner City Dublin, one of the most deprived areas in Dublin. The last group has two different types of newcomers: newcomers from other EU-countries who are allowed to move freely within the EU, and people who are out of the DPS and now live in Irish society. In this paragraph I will explain how the unaccompanied minors deal with the excluding practices and how both groups experience an English language barrier.

Unaccompanied Minors

Unaccompanied Minor (UM) is a term which refers to someone: *"not attained the age of 18 years" and not accompanied by an adult*" (Irish Protection Act 2015). They fit in a different category than the newcomers within the DPS and have different rights. When they

arrive in Ireland they are placed within foster homes or foster families. Therefore, they automatically come in contact with people from the Irish society, which is very different compared to the people within the DPS. Moreover, they either have a handler, who takes care of them throughout the week, or are part of a family together with one or two other UM. The unaccompanied minors I interviewed provided me with a different story, than the people within the DPS, about how they experience the process of becoming part of the Irish society. Abel, a boy from Eritrea of 15 years old, who has been in Ireland for 1,5 years explained what the UM system meant to him³¹:

When I arrived in Ireland I had no one. When I was placed with (other UM) at least I had someone to talk to. They placed me with two other Eritrean boys who I did not know before, but we get along fine. They like football as well"

It is difficult to make a generalizing statement for the group UM, as all the stories I gathered are vastly different. One thing all UM I interviewed have in common is that in a way they are very happy to be in Ireland. Opposed to the hardships they faced before, they are safe in Ireland and they are trying to create a social life. One possibility the UM have to create a social life within the Irish society is by participating in extracurricular activities. As the UM live within the Irish society it is easier for them to participate in extracurricular activities, like for example the football training mentioned in the introduction; Soccernites. Mohammed, one of the trainers of Soccernites explained to me that joining Soccernites provided him with a purpose in Ireland. He created friendships and therewith a social circle, something he didn't have before. Although the extracurricular activities within the Irish society for the UM can shape integration in a more productive way, they still depend on social enterprises. During my fieldwork in Ireland I noticed a change in the social enterprises meant for the UM and those within the DPC. The activities organized for the UM by the social enterprises have a more continuous character and are specified for adolescents. This change might have to do with the locations, as organizing an activity is easier within the Irish society, like in Dublin, than in a DPC outside the Irish society.

Thom explained the importance of the continuous character of Soccernites to me: *Organizing trainings on a set time, and in a set place, every week is important, in this way we can give them a steady base in Ireland"*³². The UM have the opportunity to participate in social enterprises every week and therefore have a better opportunity than the people in the DPC to deal with the excluding practices.

³¹ Interview Abel 5th March during Soccernites

³² Interview Thom 12th of April.

Language

Contrary to people in the DPC's the UM learn the English language in school from professionals. Moreover, they participate within the everyday life of the Irish society and speak English in their foster homes or with their foster families. However, becoming a fluent English speaker takes time and most of the boys I met during the Soccernites training had trouble with the English language. Only 2 out of 24 people who regularly attend the trainings are native English speakers as they are Irish and South African. Therefore, James and Mohammed, the Soccernites trainers, forbid the UM attending the training to speak any other language than English. As a basic knowledge of English is in their opinion not only important for creating a home within Ireland, but also in communicating with each other, as they share no other common language. So to make friends, and create a sense of home in Ireland to master the English language is of great importance. This rule of only speaking in English during Soccernites had helped Mohammed creating new friendships outside of his family and had made him more open and confident to express himself in English. Which provided him with new opportunities in Ireland. The rule was implemented to help the UM in learning the English language in such a way that they can build a social network with Irish people. As James said during one of his speeches during Soccernites:

"It is not only important to try here, but also in real life. Nothing is going to hold you back. My English is not the best, but who cares. It is not going to let me down"³³

From their own experiencing and from what they encounter during the Soccernites training, James and Mohammed feel that forcing UM to speak English with each other is the best way to make the UM feel more confident speaking English which helps them creating a their own social network in Ireland.

Newcomers in the Northern Inner City Dublin

The last group of newcomers that I encountered in Ireland were the second generation migrants and people from within the EU. These groups are officially part of Irish society, but still deal with excluding practices. The projects I attended in the Northern Inner City Dublin (NICD), one of the most deprived areas of Dublin, contained a large proportion of these second generation migrants, as well as a large proportion of low educated citizens with an Irish background. Compared to the newcomers in the DPC's, these newcomers are like the UM, living in the Irish society. Contrary to the UM they are not uncertain about their future in Ireland.

The children participating in the Project Fun Direction (PFD) that I coached deal with

³³ James during the Soccernites training the 23th of February

other kinds of barriers than the UM, however language is again the protagonist. For these children their own fluency in English is not the problem, but rather the English language level of their parents. Because of the low English level of their parents, these children have to accompany their parents to meetings as a translator between their parents and the government agencies, and have to translate official letters from the government send to their parents. Moreover, another factor I encounter on multiple occasions in the NICD is the fact that parents of these children do not understand the Irish school system. This makes having a successful school career harder for newcomers, compared to Irish children whose parents are familiar with the school system.

James, introduced in the previous paragraph, reflects on the Irish school system during one of my interviews. His parents are from Angola and had no knowledge of the Irish school system. In Ireland they have leaving exams at the end of secondary school, of which the outcome determines which university you can go to. To achieve a good grade within this leaving certificate there are a lot of things to take care of, like payment for the exam, searching and applying for a college. When your parents aren't raised in Ireland, these things are harder to take care of. James succeeded because one of the organizers of SARI helped him figure out what he wanted to do, apply for a college and finally get into a college. Without this help he thought he would not have made it to a good college.

What I encountered during my fieldwork is that the English language is an important part of the Irish national identity, as it is a necessity for communication (Smith 1993). Language can be a division point of what Burbakers calls being a member of the state or being a member of the nation (1992, 182). With a member of the state he means someone who is officially part of the country, so has a passport, legal documents and can live there without restrictions. With a member of the nation he means someone who is seen as part of the national identity. Language can be an important factor to become part of the nation. As Mohammed explained "*only after I had the confidence to speak English to native-Irish people I felt like I slowly was accepted*³⁴".

Creating a home away from home

Different kind of newcomers encounter different excluding practices from the Irish society, whilst creating a sense of home and belonging in Ireland. Moreover they also deal differently with these excluding practices. People inside DPC's are (almost) totally dependent on social enterprises for contact with the Irish society, as they are practically and (almost) literally outside society. Besides relying on the social enterprises for contact with the Irish society they also rely on the same or different social enterprises for any change in the

³⁴ Interview Mohammed 28th March.

regulations for newcomers on a national level. MASI is one of the social enterprises focusing on the last part, as they try to gain attention from the Irish society by creating a buzz around the right to work for migrants and ultimately around the DPS. Unaccompanied minors have the advantage of being in society, but still face uncertainty and excluding practices. Second generation migrants and people from EU countries living in the Northern Inner City Dublin don't have the uncertainty whether they can stay, but deal with more implicit barriers, such as having to be the translator for their parents and the inability from parents to help them with school. Which makes it harder for them to become a full member of the Irish society. The different kind of newcomers all show that dealing with excluding practices to create a sense of home and belonging can happen in many different forms and ways.

Interlude: Gaelic Games

Standing on Hill 16, I am surrounded by people dressed in the light blue color of Dublin. I am in the standing area of Croke Park, Ireland's largest stadium which has a capacity of 82.300 seats and just like the people around me, I am waiting in suspense on the approaching Gaelic Football match. It is Sunday the 11th of March 2018, the match between the number 1 (Dublin) and the number 2 (Kerry) is about to start. It is the middle of the Allianz league, the spring Gaelic Football league, organized by the GAA (Gaelic athletic association), which ends on Easter Sunday. Hill 16 is named after the 1916 rising, explained in chapter one. It was also here that the English army killed 14 spectators to the Dublin – Tipperary match as a reprisal for the killing of nine British army officers, which both happened on 21st of November 1920. Nowadays Hill 16 is the place where the die-hard supporters of 'The Dubs' (The Dublin GAA-club) stand. Standing on Hill 16, you can feel this shared history among the Irish public.



Everyone around me is Irish, half of the match day program is in Gaelic and the Irish anthem is being played before every match. During the anthem 'the soldiers' song', everyone stands up and sings along, not just the part where I am, but also the people in the seated areas. For a foreigner, not understanding everything that's been sang, the unification

of the public leaves me with goose bumps and makes me feel part of a larger whole.

That the Irish supporters do not expect any foreign visitors to their Gaelic games becomes clear when the man standing left to me assumes I am from Dublin as well, and asks me who is playing left corner back, a term unknown to me then. This middle-aged man, dressed in a light-blue “Dubs” jacket, points to the game setup on his match day program, to clarify what he means as I look uncertain. I explain to him that this is my first Gaelic Football match, and we start talking about Gaelic Football and other sports in Ireland. He explains to me that the county where you are born is the team where you play for, so everyone on the Dublin team is actually from Dublin County. Trades are not possible, which leaves some counties with a good football team and others with a good Hurling team, or both. Moreover, the man explains to me that all the players are amateurs, so they don’t get officially paid for their efforts in the Gaelic Games, although they receive some money via sponsors. This makes the connection between the team and the supporters stronger, because the supporters identify themselves with the players on the field.

The match itself was a new experience for a sports fan like me, as the sport is so vastly different from the sports I know. It was one of the times during my fieldwork that I was really astonished. As a lifelong sports fan it is a wonderful experience to be at a game with 30.000 other people in a stadium and watch a sport that I had only seen on internet and read about on paper. Although it was an easy win for Dublin, it was the perfect atmosphere to see how sport is experienced in Ireland. Visiting this match gives me a new insight to the Irish sports world and how important the GAA is for Ireland.

The GAA sports

The two GAA sports are the in the previous paragraph mentioned Gaelic Football and the sport Hurling. Both sports are played by both sexes, although the man competition is more popular in Ireland. The GAA fields are between 130 and 145 meters by 90, which is big compared to the average soccer field of 90 and 120 meters by 45. In both Gaelic Football and Hurling the duration of the game is 70 minutes, with a break of 15 minutes in the middle. There are 15 players per team, consisting of one goal keeper and 14 in-field players. Both sports use a soccer goal, with the addition of two rugby poles on top of the goal poles (see picture). The two teams on the field try to score as much points as possible during the 70 minutes. In both Hurling and Gaelic football 1 point is awarded if you hit the ball above the upright and between the poles, and three if you hit the ball in the goal. Players of both GAA sports have outfits similar to rugby players, whereby Hurling players wear a helmet because of the possible danger of getting hit by a stick on the head. There is one referee, with two linesman and four goal judges (2 per side), who determine if it are three, one or no points.

The sport Gaelic Football looks like soccer with the addition of being able to pick up the ball with your hand, with which you can dribble similar to basketball. The ball is slightly smaller than a soccer ball. It is a game with few rules, which makes the sport both quicker as well as harder than soccer and basketball. Hurling shares the same hardness as Gaelic Football, but is even a quicker game, because the ball, similar to a baseball, can be hit with a hurley (stick) about 50-60 meters far on the field. In this way, one point can be scored, hitting the ball right between the two poles, from the half way line. The flow of both games is quick, therefore tactics were hard to understand for me at first sight. The running lines are different from any sport I know, attack and defense switch so quickly that within 5 seconds there could be a goal on either sides of the pitch. During my time in Ireland, the Dublin sports fans were very eager to explain the tactics and rules to me of their GAA sports. Therefore, I was able to fully understand both sports and watch them with almost the same enthusiasm as the Irish people do.

Ethnic sports

Both Hurling and Gaelic Football can be seen as what Sogawa (2006, 96) calls ethnic sports: Ethnic sports are sports which are practiced by a fixed group or in a fixed society. These sports relate more or less to the traditional culture of this group or society and therefore contribute to the identity building of the group or society. So ethnic sports are linked to a certain nation-state, and are imbedded in their national identity. A good example of an ethnic sport besides Hurling and Gaelic football is Judo. Judo was typically a Japanese sport, whereby all costumes that were worn were white to represent the spiritual side of the sport. When the sport became more popular among other countries, the two white costumes per game were changed to one white and one blue costume, as it is hard to see the difference between two players when both are wearing white. With this change the all-white tradition of Japan was abandoned. As this tradition was linked to a spiritual side of the sport and Japanese society, Judo changed for the Japanese people from an ethnic sport to an internationalized sport. This example shows that countries and societies can have their own ethnic sports, but also that these ethnic sports can be changed by outside influence. The GAA games have remained relatively unchanged by globalization as they are only played by a very small number of people outside Ireland.

Ethnic sports, but also sports in general can be a 'vehicle' for creating a national identity, which will be explained by an example of the Slovenian Alpine skiing sport. In 1991, Slovenia became independent of Yugoslavia, and felt the urge to create a new national identity, not connected to their former Yugoslavia identity. Alpine skiing, became the vehicle for the forming of the new national identity of Slovenia (1997, 33). The sport went from a

popular past-time towards a traditional Slovenian sport, using national television to frame alpine skiing an important part of the Slovenian identity (1997, 23). This example shows how sports can be used as a way of nation-imagining, and how a sport can be used to create a (new) national identity. The Irish context that I came across is somewhat similar, as the GAA was used to create a separation between the previous identity of the United Kingdom and the new-to-form Irish identity. The GAA sports are an expression of the anti-UK stance mentioned in the first chapter. In this sense sport was used as a way of creating an Irish national identity, as people link their connection to the Irish society with sports.

Sport can therefore also be seen as a tradition, as sports can be seen as an overtly set of rules with a symbolic nature and have a continuity with the past. Like explained in the introduction traditions shape the national identity. National identity can also shape tradition. The two Irish sports, and sports in general, can be seen as an expression of tradition (Hobsbawn and Ranger 2012). Sport as an expression of tradition can be linked to the idea of Macclancy of sport as *'an embodied practice in which meanings are generated and whose representation and interpretation are open to negotiation and contest'* (1996, 4). He defines sport as a practice that gives meaning to those who perform it. So in the Irish context, people give meaning to, for example, playing and watching the GAA sports. People inside Croke Park give meaning to the Gaelic Football match between Dublin and Kerry. In this way the GAA sports are a component of the Irish national identity.

In sum, I found during my three months in Dublin that the (Ethnic) Irish sports are an important expression of the Irish identity, and that the traditions that belong with the sport give meaning to this expression. The GAA sports are of high importance to the Irish society and shape the national Irish identity.

Chapter 3 Creating a home with Sports

In chapter one, I explained the way the Irish society raises barriers and creates excluding practices for newcomers, like spatial, economic, cultural and social exclusion. In chapter two, I explained the way newcomers experience these exclusion practices and how they deal with them, supported by social enterprises, whilst trying to create a sense of belonging and home in Ireland. In this chapter I will illuminate how newcomers deal with these excluding practices by participating in sports. First I will explain more about the GAA sports, nationhood and national identity. Secondly, what I found during my fieldwork in Dublin is that sports can lead to inclusion as well as exclusion. In this chapter I will explain how these in and exclusion practices are shaped by the Irish society. By giving examples I will explain how social enterprises help with the creation of a sense of home and belonging for newcomers in Ireland. Thirdly, I return to the four excluding practices, to see whether and how sport can help newcomers to deal with the excluding practices they encounter.

Sport, nationhood and national identity in Ireland

In the interlude I gave an introduction to the Irish sports world. The two GAA sports are imbedded within the national identity (Smith 1991) of Ireland. Both historically and in nowadays Ireland they represent the Irish identity, especially being Ethnic sports (Sogawa 2006). When the GAA was established in 1884, the English rule prohibited the GAA-sports from being played. The division between Irish and 'English' sports (soccer and rugby) was enlarged when in 1901 "rule 27" of the GAA rulebook prohibited people who played or attended non-Irish sports from ever playing in GAA games (Museum Croke Park 2018). This is an outing of the anti-UK stance that is explained in chapter one which is linked to the Andersons memory and forgetting (2006, 187). During my fieldwork I spoke to people who played soccer when they were young, and although "rule 27" was abandoned in 1971, they still experienced social difficulties by playing English sports: "I used to be beaten up because I played soccer in primary school"³⁵. This example shows that the GAA sports are imbedded within the Irish culture, violating this culture by playing for instance an English sport is violating the Irish national identity.

That the GAA is linked to the Irish national identity, also becomes clear with the 'Rule 42'. A rule in the GAA handbook which prohibits non-GAA sports to be played in GAA-facilities. Bainer and Fulton argue that Croke Park, the largest GAA facility, is a space for conflicted nationalisms (2007), and put this in a broader debate within Irish society. Croke Park can be seen as the physical embodiment of on-going societal process (2007, 71). In one way the alteration of the rule would mean that the tradition surrounding the GAA sports

³⁵ Interview Frank 25th of March, Frank was in primary school during the 1960's

would be abandoned. On the other side people who want to change rule 42 present themselves as expressing their modern and globalized sense of national identity (2007, 70). So either the tradition of the GAA is changed or someone is seen as not modern. During the first chapter similar debates within the Irish society, the referenda and the unwillingness to change the DPS, between the more conservative view of holding on to tradition and the willingness to change.

This debate between the conservative and the progressive nature of the Irish society links to Nationhood (Bain 2001). Nationhood is constructed and reproduced via sports. In Ireland this is very evident as sport is one of the most important leisure activities. During my fieldwork in Ireland the Inner City of Dublin turned green during the five games of the Six-Nations Cup (the annual rugby trophy between the best six European rugby-nations) and light blue during the matches of Gaelic football. During the matches in Croke Park I experienced perfect examples of nationhood being constructed via sports, like I explained in the interlude.

Besides nationhood, Walseth and Fasting (2004) describe that in some European countries sport can be seen as a way of social integration and can be a platform for creating a sense of belonging in a new country. This is in line with Spaaij who argues that sport is a dialect between seeking and granting belonging (2014, 304-305). Sport can also have an important role in creating a sense of belonging for newcomers. As Spaaij argues that there is a dialectic process between seeking from the newcomers and granting from the host society (2014). He researched how Somali youth became part of Australian society by participating in sports. He concludes his research stating the seeking of a sense of belonging is *“multi-layered, dynamic and situational*. In this example, social boundaries shifted, the ‘us’ and ‘them’ with regards to a community, club or region. By participating in sports, the Somali youth became part of the ‘us’ of their club. Antonsich argues that a sense of belonging is often accompanied by a sense of sameness, which excludes everyone who is not part of this sense (Antonsich 2010, 650). Walseth (2006) concludes that via sports different forms and levels of belonging are produced, especially in team sports (2006, 79). She argues that sport can be a place of refuge for newcomers (2006 (2), 462).

Exclusion through sports

What I found during my fieldwork in Dublin is that sports can lead to inclusion as well as exclusion. In this paragraph I will explain how sport can lead to exclusion.

The previous paragraph provides an insight in how GAA is imbedded into Irish society. What I found in Irish society is that newcomers very rarely participate in GAA sports, due to three barriers. The first barrier is about the skills necessary to play the GAA-games, which I will exemplify with an example of one of the trainings of PFD (Project Fun Direction).

During one of the trainings Connor gave a Hurling lesson to girls between 6 and 12. It was in the gym of the O'Connell school, about 50 meters from Croke Park. The gym itself captures the atmosphere of sport and integration in Inner City Dublin, in a decayed setting but with dedication and enthusiasm. It is busy, children having fun together within a gym that is falling apart. The roof is leaking on the far side, tape masked the holes in the wooden floor and one of the basketball nets was hanging in a wrong angle. As I am holding a Hurley, a bat formed like a large spoon, for the first time I explain that in The Netherlands no one of my social circle knows what Hurling is. When I try to hit the ball with a Hurley myself and dribble with it, I fail every time. In the end picking up the ball from the floor with my Hurley is all I achieve that day. The girls who are listening to my story look at me with amazement and one of them picks up the ball with ease. Hurling requires a totally different technique than sports I played in The Netherlands. Hurling is a difficult sport to play. *"When you haven't played Hurling before the age of 12 for a significant amount of time, it is almost impossible to be any good afterwards"* Connor explained to me after the training. Children don't play competitive matches before that age, as they need to learn the technique first. This is the first barrier, when you enter Irish society and want to participate in GAA sports. The technique required to play Hurling and to a lesser degree Gaelic Football is so different from other sports, that it is difficult to participate in the GAA sports when you enter at an older age. This barrier can be seen as cultural exclusion, as it is hard for newcomers to take part in this sport, they can't adapt to this part of the Irish society. The second barrier is the fact that most newcomers, when wanting to participate in sports in Ireland, like to play the same sport as they have played most of their life in their home country. Therefore the barrier of playing GAA sports is much bigger than playing soccer or any other sport they used to play. Like Nazim³⁶ tells me. *"My father used to play it (soccer red.) back in Algeria, I never thought about played Gaelic Football or Hurling, I always wanted to play soccer"*.

The third barrier is the current distance between where the GAA sports are offered and the places where the newcomers live. As there are no special programs in Dublin developed to introduce the GAA sports to the newcomers and newcomers are not actively recruited by GAA clubs, newcomers don't have the opportunity to join and play these sports. During my fieldwork I spoke to multiple newcomers about this missed opportunity, as Connor said: *"the GAA sports don't need immigrants to join them, they are satisfied with their position now, only when their numbers drop will they focus on migrants"*. Another related factor is the relative high costs of participating in GAA sports. *"The costs are higher, contribution, gear, the total costs amount to more than with soccer."* Even if the newcomers would be connected to the GAA sports, the costs would make it harder to participate: economic exclusion.

The barriers mentioned above explain the absence of newcomers within the GAA

³⁶ Informal interview Nazim Soccernites 23th February

sports. This is a missed opportunity to create a sense of attachment within Ireland via sports, and thus also a missed opportunity to create a sense of home and belonging via the GAA sports. With that conclusion in mind the photo on the cover of this thesis and the title give a somewhat flattered image regarding the possibilities of the GAA sports to become part of society.

Inclusion through sport

But what I found in Ireland was not only exclusion, but also inclusion via sports. Sports can both be a facilitator, as it can be a separator regarding the way newcomers feel at home in their new country.

Social enterprises

What I researched during my fieldwork was how newcomers find a home in Dublin far away from their home in the country of origin. What I found is that this was mostly done with social enterprise organization. First I will explain how the current situation in this branch was changed the last decade. Ireland was hit hard by the recession of 2007, this affected the funding for the social enterprises as well. In most parts of the deprived areas in Dublin the budget for social enterprises were totally cut, as Conner and Thom explain to me on two separate occasions. But unlike other parts of Dublin, after the recession they were not able to get the projects back on their feet again. The funding for these parts of town however did not return³⁷. In other parts, parents, or private public partnerships solved the lack of funds, by getting their funds without government help. Connor explains that the soccer club that his daughter and son are part of hold annual fundraisings, which makes up almost all of their budget. “These kind of funds are inaccessible for the community centers and afterschools- in the Northern Inner City Dublin. In this part of town the government money didn’t return, and could not be covered in another way. This is one of the examples of how a gap left by the government could only be filled by volunteer run organizations, but lack of funding made this hard for these organizations.

In the next part I will explain how social enterprises help newcomers shape their way of creating a home within Ireland with the two sports-organizations I participated in SARI and PFD.

³⁷ Interview with Connor 22nd of march

SARI

SARI is a social enterprise which tries *“to use sports as a medium to promote social inclusion, cultural integration, global development and peace building home and abroad.”*³⁸

SARI sees sport as a mediator to deal with racism and excluding practices within Irish society by organizing trainings and annual events. Soccernites is one of these trainings for adolescent boys from 14 years old up until about 20. I attended this every week training for three months, on Friday evenings from 17 o'clock until 19 o'clock, and often extra activities during the week. The countries of origin of the guys joining the training, are as mentioned in the introduction, highly diverse. Of the 25 people who were regulars at Soccernites, about 15 were Unaccompanied Minors (UM). The others, also newcomers, are in Ireland with their family. During the three months, I joined the training every week, I have talked a lot with the guys about their experiences with the Irish society. One thing that stands out is that the majority of this group, said to me that they didn't feel part of the Irish society. Returning to Spaaij (2014, 303) who describes sport can play *“a significant role in a young migrants life, they can express themselves through bodily practices, construct and perform social identities and craft emotional closeness to other people”*. This is what I found to be true with the people attending Soccernites. Although they did not feel part of the Irish society, they create a sense of attachment to each other, whilst being in Ireland. I will illustrate this statement with the following stories of Nazim, Arsen and Daniel.

*Nazim*³⁹

As I am sitting on the sideline of the field watching the final game of the training on the 23th of February, Nazim a 17 year old Algerian man, takes place next to me. He is injured now, but normally he is the best goalkeeper he tells me. He has been going to Soccernites for four years. He started coming to the training after he had heard people at school talking about it. He has been in Ireland the most part of his life, and went to a regular Irish school where he is one of the few non-Irish children. This was the first time that he made friends outside of school. *“It was hard for me to level with anyone at school, but these guys went through the same things, then it is easier”* as he describes what Soccernites means to him. Becoming friends with other newcomers creates a sense of attachment for Nazim. By making these friendships he is creating a sense of attachment to Dublin and the people living there. First he did not really have anyone outside of his family that he felt connected to in Ireland, but after joining Soccernites he made friends outside of his family, which started a creation of a sense of attachment.

³⁸ www.sari.ie/sports-against-racism-ireland/

³⁹ Informal interview Nazim 23th of February 2018

The head office of SARI is situated in a small side-road in the center of Dublin. This office is a place of imagining the way sports can help people find a place within Irish society. The office is decorated with all kinds of posters of activities in the past and still to come. Trophies of sport events as well as prizes from all across the world for the idea of social inclusion and sports are stocked at in the windowsill. Between the two windows there is a couch which is only used as a storage for attributes for training. Stacks of paper almost cover the old computer that stands in the corner of the room. This whole room resides around one big round table with seven chairs around it. This is where the ideas of SARI are created, but also executed. Boys who are part of Soccernites come here to get help with their homework, extracurricular activities or to figure out what their chances are of getting into a certain college. As I planned an interview with Mohammed, one of the trainers of Soccernites, a few of the boys who I am playing with every Friday are coming by. They have practice exams for their leaving certificates, and rely on the help of several members of SARI to help them out with this.

The first to arrive is Arsen, a 17 year old boy from Albania, who arrived alone in Ireland six years ago. He is clearly agitated, because he has struggled to get good enough grades to get into the college he'd like best. He failed a physics exam that Mohammed helped him with and fails to see how he can reach his desired score. Mohammed explains him, again, how the system works, and that just this grade doesn't change the fact that he can still make it into the study of sports instructor. After Arsen has been reassured about his chances of getting into a college Daniel arrives. Daniel is a 18 year old boy from Romania, who arrived alone in Ireland three years ago and who is struggling with the general level of the Irish education system, this struggle is enhanced by his limited knowledge of the English language. 'Every week I help him with something different' Mohammed explained later, "his confidence is growing, but he still has a long way to go to get a good score". For some boys it is just a training, Mohammed explains afterwards, to just have something to do every Friday night and some extra activities. Walseth names sport as a 'free space (2006, 461), where newcomers can act according to their own wishes, escaping from their schoolwork and their parents. Others attendees of Soccernites just like Daniel and Arsen come by every week to get help with their school work. Mohammed wrote an application letter together with Arsen the week before and is helping both with their upcoming trail leaving exams.

The first time when I went to the headquarters of SARI it was to speak to Thom, one of the founders of SARI. He explained the idea behind Soccernites and Divercity, the female counterpart of Soccernites. That first and foremost it is a way to deal with the hardships the

⁴⁰ Meeting with Mohammed, Arsen and Daniel 11th of April 2018

people participating the training faced before coming to Ireland. In the exact words Thom used:

“During these trainings we want to teach the players to deal with the things they will receive within Irish society. They have to deal with racism, segregation and other things than they already had encountered along their way towards Ireland.”⁴¹

Soccernites provides a platform for adolescent newcomers to develop skills which help them in several ways to create friendships and a sense of attachment in Ireland. First and foremost the training is meant to give them a safe place to play their sport and have a weekly activity they can look forward to. Secondly, Thom explained the four main characteristics behind Soccernites that he wants the newcomers: to show resilience and solidarity, to up their self-esteem and confidence in themselves. The confidence and self-esteem are mostly directed towards language, discussed in the previous chapter. Sports is a way to undermine the language barrier, as words do not have to be spoken to understand the game itself. It is forbidden to speak any other language than English during the training. *“This is not because we want them to leave their identity behind, but because when they keep speaking their own languages otherwise they won’t learn the English language”* is what Mohammed⁴² explains. Outside of the training the idea is that the trainers and people who organize the activities will become a kind of mentor. The meeting of Mohammed with Arsen and Daniel is the idea of the trainer as a mentor put in practice. The people who attend the Soccernites trainings can attend by just participating, but it can also be the start of creating a social circle and have help with dealing with bureaucracy of the Irish society. In this way sports can be a facilitator, a start, to make a home in Ireland.

*Glentoran*⁴³

When I was visiting Glentoran F.C. in Belfast, Northern Ireland with a group of 29 Syrian and 1 Iraqi newcomers I saw another example of how SARI can help newcomers, between the age of 14 and 50. It was in a sense, a direct way of dealing with the spatial exclusion of these newcomers, as we picked them up from Mosney, with a sponsored bus. From the moment they stepped in the bus, they were literally part of the Irish society for the time being, and thus dealing with the spatial exclusion. In total there were around 30 people in the bus once we left for Belfast, four of the people who got on the bus could speak English well enough to hold a conversation. This was the second barrier that I noticed, which causes social exclusion. Mo organized the whole day with the help of SARI. He is a 42 year old

⁴¹ Interview Thom Tuesday 10th of April

⁴² Mohammed during soccernites the 16th of March

⁴³ 25th of March 2018

Syrian man from Damascus, who brought his 14 year old son and a friend with him on this day. He translates between Frank (the bus driver), Thom (founder of SARI), Samuel (volunteer Football trainer for SARI, originally from Nigeria but who has been in Ireland for 30 years), me and the rest of the bus. Mo explains: *"I came to Ireland three years ago, via family reunification, as my brother was already living here"*⁴⁴. About 180 people came to Ireland the same way as Mo on the family reunion visa, which was shut down by the Irish government very quickly after Mo arrived in Ireland. Mo worked as an architect in Damascus, also teaching at the university, but has problems with getting his diploma validated in Ireland to be able to work. Therefore he is now hoping and waiting to find a suitable job, within his work field.

Arriving with the bus in Belfast, in the middle of one of the working-class neighborhoods of Belfast, the large decayed soccer stadium looms. The stadium looks as if it hasn't been renovated since the 1980's. We are here because of the social inclusion day of Glentoran F.C., a soccer club in the highest league of Northern Ireland. Besides newcomers, also people with a disability have the opportunity to play a match. The group of newcomers get the chance to play against the under 19 side of Glentoran, after the lunch and a short tour around the stadium. This lunch is provided by the Glentoran F. C. soccer club, taking into account the halal eating Syrians. Before the game starts Samuel says the following to the group:

*"I have been where you have been. I had to go out of my home, run from war and go to Ireland where I have been for the last 20 years. I have been in this country, this country has given me everything, a new life, a chance to build something. But today it doesn't matter, today we are here to play football, today we are here to have fun and forget about all the trouble we left behind, either at home or in the other country. Today we are all the same, and I am proud to be here, to coach you."*⁴⁵

After Samuel's speech, which was translated by Mo, the newcomers were astonished by the amount of attention and understanding of the trainer. One by one they went to him to thank him for making the time to accompany them to Belfast and to be their coach for the day. Moreover, they thanked him for his understanding of their situation and the way he expressed this in his small speech. This personal gratitude messages took up a long time as Mo had to translate everything.

After the speech Samuel gave a short warming up and training. Standing on the field, the conditions of the stadium appeared to be in line with the field itself, holes and bumps made up more of the pitch than actual straight grass. Most of the newcomers seemed to be

⁴⁴ Interview Mo 5th of April 2018.

⁴⁵ Speech Samuel 5th of April 2018

playing football for the first time. The match itself ended in 6-4 for the under 19 of Glentoran, as they seemed to be taking it easy with the newcomers. The Syrians didn't seem to enjoy themselves any less because of that loss. All wearing happily the free Glentoran jersey they received during lunch and evaluating the game they just played. At the end of the day they seemed just happy to be out of the DPC for a day. They invited all of us to Mosney to eat traditional Syrian dishes next Sunday. Samuel was asked to train them again, as they wanted to become better and play more football. According to Mohammed, Nazim and Samuel sport gives them hope of doing something meaningful with their time, and by participating in a soccer match they have the feeling that they are part of society for a day. As Mo translates a remark of one of the guys: *"We looked forward to this day for a long time, it gives us something to do"*.

What I found participating with SARI is that the projects help newcomers deal with several excluding practices, especially social and cultural. With the fieldtrip to Glentoran the newcomers were able to deal with spatial exclusion, as well as offering them just a nice day away from the DPC. With Soccernites the UM can create friendships and therewith start creating a sense of home and belonging in Ireland. With the situation sketch of how Mohammed helped Arsen en Daniel with their schoolwork and their understanding of the Irish school system I illuminated how SARI helps newcomers deal with the cultural exclusion.

Project Fun Direction

The last example that I would like to explain is PFD. The idea behind this social enterprise is to give girls within the most deprived areas of Dublin the opportunity to play sports and develop the skills that sport can improve. These skills include the basic motor skills, communication skills and social skills. The trainings of PFD take place in several venues across Dublin, such as the gym of the O'Connells boy school, mentioned earlier this chapter, but also at community centers and afterschools (where children go to after primary school, to receive help with their homework and play sports). The project focuses on exploring many different sports, such as Basketball, Soccer and Hurling. But also different techniques are practiced such as: just learning how to catch, throw and shoot a ball. PFD was established to give more girls the chance to play sports and to involve girls in an enthusiastic manner by sports. Although most venues were a mix, at least 50% of the children attending every training are girls, showing that the goal to make girls enthusiastic about sports is reached to a large extent. This helps these children deal in a total different way with the social and cultural exclusion. Where without the projects of PFD the chances of the girls playing sports would be much slimmer. By participating on such a young age they develop the necessary motor skills for a continuous sport participation further on in their life.

This disconnection of (young) girls, newcomers and no newcomers, from all kind of

sports is also describes in the research of Walseth (2006) about young woman and sports. Walseth names that the position young woman have within their ethnic identity as not fit for playing sports. Moreover, religion can be an important factor in the willingness and possibility of young woman to play sports (Jay 1997, 90-91). Within the context of this research I noticed the religious aspect the most, as the girls I met almost all didn't participate within a sport context. Divercity was the only initiative that I have encountered in Ireland that included newcomers with a Muslim religion to participate, besides girls with an Irish background. For boys this social identity and religion aspect is less of a barrier within Irish society, as it is 'normal' for them to participate. Within the Muslim society the acceptance of girls playing sports seems to be less than of boys playing what I found in Ireland and what Jay (1997) argues as well. This is what Connor explained to me in an interview: *"For girls it might not be as normal to participate in sports, especially for immigrants, but also for Irish girls. I try to show them that it can be normal for them as well"*⁴⁶ For (Muslim) girls participating in sports can be an extra barrier, which PFD tries to overcome.

Mountjoy Square

On the 5th of April I met Connor near Mountjoy Square, a square in the middle of the Northern Inner City Dublin, where the weekly training sessions of the PFD, in which I participated as a trainer, were held. Mountjoy Square is surrounded by a 'concrete jungle' of large office buildings. In addition a large road divides the square from the rest of the neighborhood. On the square there are grass and trees on one side with benches where a lot of residents spend their time. This creates the feeling of half a park. The other side of the park consists of a concrete soccer field, a concrete basketball court and the building of the afterschool. In this afterschool building provisions are stored and it can house about 20 children and helpers. It is placed on the concrete soccer field where every Tuesday and Wednesday a training is held for the children attending the afterschool. Most of these trainings are attended by 30 to 40 girls and boys, ranging from 4 to 12 years old. The children are from all backgrounds, about 50% are from Irish background. For the rest the composition of the group is similar to Soccernites. There is a large Nigerian community, a lot of children are from Eastern Europe, moreover Polish, Romanian, and Albanian children are present.

The training of today is, contrary to most trainings, inside the building of the afterschool, due to the bad weather. On the outside the afterschool looks like a deserted building, with graffiti and some decayed parts. When you enter the building through one of the emergency exits you see that the afterschool succeeded to create a playful atmosphere

⁴⁶ Interview Connor 1st of March 2018

within this concrete outlook. When Conner and I enter, the tables standing in the room are quickly moved away by the employees of the afterschool. Less children are participating in this training on the 5th of April, than in the weeks before. It is the Easter Holiday in Ireland, the primary and secondary schools have two weeks off during this period. The number of parents present, is also higher than normal. They all sit down at the side of the arena that is created for the games that Connor and I are laying out. The small room reverberates the loud voices of the parents and the high voices of the children. With only 12 children present we do different exercises. I go and sit with the parents after we are done setting up the games and the children started. *"It gives me something to do"* said Denisa, a woman in her 30's who I had seen a few times before at several of the PFD practices, as an explanation why she is attending this training. She explained, in broken English, that she is from the Czech Republic, and arrived here 2 years ago. Emma, her daughter of 8 years old is running around chasing one of the boys. *"Besides the afterschool I bring her to as much as sports trainings as possible"*, Denisa explains, *"she loves it and I think it is a wonderful way of meeting other people than she meets at school"*. *Her English is going to be better than mine in a year"* she responds to how the English of her daughter is, *"she only speaks Czech with me, but sometimes she even starts speaking English to me. With sports it is easier to get in contact with others"*, she explains while looking at Emma who is now trying to defend a castle build of hula-hoops. With this game of 'castle-defense' the children have to communicate with each other, decide who is going to defend and who is going to attack. Like Emma there are many other examples of children from newcomers who find it easy to make friends while playing games/sports as Spaaij (2014) also found in Australia. Sport is the perfect way to deal with the barrier of language, as no vocal communication is needed. Although the parents watching them did not talk to each other that much besides the normal pleasantries, the children don't have any problem mixing during these trainings. When someone doesn't understand a game, the language barriers is bridged by using hands and feet to explain, both with PFD as with Soccernites.

PFD addresses their target group differently on a more diverse way regarding sports and more diverse locations. Their idea is to get the children, girls especially, from less advantage the chance to participate in sports and thus let them develop the social, mental and motor skills that are enhanced by sports. The barrier in these neighborhoods for children to go to sports is higher, because as Connor explains: *"the people in these neighborhoods have less money, are further away from the nearest soccer club and might work weekend or night shifts so they won't be able to bring or get their children from sports practice or games."*⁴⁷ This quote encapsulates how PFD creates social inclusion for children who otherwise would not have the benefits of playing sports. Moreover to social inclusion, PFD

⁴⁷ Interview Connor 27th of March 2018

leads to social contact, as all these children with different backgrounds are in contact with each other. Especially newcomers, as I have noticed during my time in Ireland benefit from this social contact and learn a lot during these trainings. With PFD newcomers have the opportunity to play sports, come in contact with other people (newcomers and Irish) and thereby start creating a sense of home and belonging in Ireland

Sport and the four exclusion practices

I started this thesis with explaining the four exclusion practices (spatial, cultural, social and economic), and I would like to finish with them as well. In chapter one and two I gave examples of how these excluding practices are shaped and how newcomers deal with them. In this chapter I have shown how SARI and PFD help newcomers deal with (some) of these excluding practices. I will shortly describe how the help of the social enterprises, through sport, effects the excluding practices for newcomers. Spatial exclusion is hard to overcome, by practicing sports. The way newcomers become part of society is with social enterprises, and they don't have the means to go to the DPC's often. The trip I took with SARI and newcomers from Mosney to F.C. Glentoran was, however, a good example that it is possible. Social exclusion: Sports does help newcomers to deal with social exclusion. By participating in sport they can create a social circle outside of their family and people from school, is what I found both in SARI and PFD. Cultural exclusion: Sport can help newcomers deal with the cultural exclusion. By participating in sport newcomers become familiar with the Irish cultural practices and can play together with people from the Irish society. Especially in PFD this is the case, as 50% of the children is Irish, which makes it easier to learn the cultural practices. Economic exclusion: Sport does not make it easier for newcomers to deal with economic exclusion. The organizations I participated in don't have a lot of financial means to help newcomers overcome economical differences. Newcomers have to deal with economic exclusion in a different way than sports.

How social enterprises create a sense of belonging

Concluding, in this chapter I first explained the way national identity can shape and is shaped by sports. In Ireland the GAA sports (Hurling and Gaelic Football) are ethnic sports (Sogawa 2006), which shape and are shaped by the Irish national identity. I explained that newcomers can be socially included via sports and can be a way of creating a sense of home and belonging (Walseth and Fasting). I elaborated on how there is a misconnection between the GAA and newcomers because of three barriers; technique, costs and the fact that newcomers play the same sports as they used to before coming to Ireland, creating exclusion for newcomers. But I found inclusion during my fieldwork as well, with both SARI and PFD. I found that these organization help deal with social, cultural, and up until some

extend spatial exclusion. By letting newcomers play sports they are able to create ties with other newcomers as well as Irish citizens. Agreeing with Spaaij (2014) who argued that sport can have an important role in newcomers becoming part of society.

What this chapter shows is that sport can be the start of shaping a home away from home, for newcomers in Ireland. What I have seen during my fieldwork was that by participating in sports newcomers can create friendship and via that create a social life. It can help newcomers deal with the exclusion practices of Irish society. By dealing with these excluding practices, and creating friendships newcomers create an attachment to Dublin, Ireland. By creating this attachment the newcomers start creating a sense of home and belonging.

Conclusion

Research summary

During my three months in Dublin I researched how newcomers create a sense of home and belonging by practicing in sports. I participated in three social enterprises: Sport against Racism Ireland (SARI), Project Fun Direction (PFD) and Movement of Asylum Seekers Ireland (MASI) who try to help newcomers become part of the Irish society. These social enterprises try to fill in gaps between what the newcomers need and what the government provides.

The concept of home in this thesis, is defined using the definition of Rapport and Dawson (1998) who define home as a symbolic place. Connected to the notion of home is the notion of belonging that is defined by the way newcomers create a sense of attachment to a place, people and modes in Ireland. With the creation of a sense of home and belonging newcomers try to create a sense of security and moreover shift the social boundaries. They do this for instance via sports, whereby they create a possibility for themselves to become part of society (Hedefort and Hjort 2002, Wood and Waite 2011, Ignatieff 1994 and Spaaij 2014). Sports can be seen as a tradition, an outflow of the imagined community (Anderson 2006, Hobsbawn and Ranger 2012). When newcomers try to become part of the Irish society they have to conform themselves to a shared history and continuity of generations; the national identity of Ireland (Smith 1991).

In chapter one I examined how the current migration situation in Ireland and the contemporary debate about newcomers is shaped from a historical perspective. The shared history of Ireland, which can be linked to the theory of Anderson (2006) about memory and forgetting, is largely based on centuries long British exploitation, the separation from Great Britain in 1921, and the uprising against Great Britain of 1916 (Lyons 1971, Edmund 1970). Within contemporary Irish society, these events of the past, are still visible, in statues, road signs and commemorations. After the separation of Ireland from Great Britain, it took Ireland until the 1990's to become an economic strong country within Europe. The underdeveloped economy was the cause for an outflow of people from the 1850 until 1995 (Holland 2017, Lyons 1971). However, from the start of the 1990's there was also a steady inflow of people, first from Australia, New Zealand and the USA, afterwards people from several parts of Asia on student/work visa's. Besides, this inflow, newcomers from Eastern Europe and Africa, started coming to Ireland, just before the start of this century. This group did not fit in with the Irish society as easily as the previous groups, which made the Irish government implement the direct provision system (DPS).

In chapter two I let my participants explain their view on the DPS and they experience and deal with the four exclusion practices, that I found during my research (spatial,

economic, cultural and social). What I found is that different group of newcomers (people within the DPC's, Unaccompanied Minors (UM) and newcomers within the Northern Inner city Dublin) experience different excluding practices, and therefore also deal with them differently. Moreover, I found that all newcomers are to a certain extent depended on social enterprises for their creating of a sense of home and belonging in Ireland.

In chapter three I illuminated on how newcomers deal with these four excluding practices by participating in sports. I looked at whether and how the GAA sports, Hurling and Gaelic Football, who can be seen as an ethnic sport of Ireland (Sogawa 2006), could help with the creation of a sense of attachment to Ireland. During my fieldwork I have seen that these GAA sports do not facilitate newcomers with becoming part of Irish society. This is due to multiple reasons; the skills required for playing, the fact that newcomers didn't play these sports in their country of origin and the availability and costs of GAA sports. However, newcomers can still deal with the four excluding practices, and therewith create a sense of attachment to Ireland. How the creation of a sense of attachment can lead to a sense of home and belonging for the three different groups of newcomers will be explained in more detail in the next paragraph.

Dealing with excluding practices by participating in sports

During my time in Dublin, I found four different excluding practices; spatial, social, economic and cultural, that newcomers have to deal with whilst they try to create a sense of home and belonging. Social enterprises help newcomers to deal with these excluding practices and can make a difference in the way newcomers create a sense of attachment, home and belonging to Ireland. The way the three different groups of newcomers deal with the excluding practices, whilst creating a sense of home and belonging in Ireland is different for every group. Newcomers within DPC, the first group of newcomers I identified, deal with spatial exclusion, as the centers are practically outside society. Because the newcomers are outside the society they also deal with social and cultural exclusion as they are not in contact with society. The low weekly allowance excludes them economically as well. The help of social enterprises happens on a sporadic manner for newcomers within the DPC, because the DPC's are difficult to reach as they are placed outside the Irish society. The different exclusions and the sporadic contact with the Irish society makes the home-making process for newcomers within a DPC a prolonged and difficult one. Creating a sense of home and belonging, for the newcomers in the DPC, actually starts when they leave the DPS.

Looking at the Unaccompanied Minors (UM), the second group of newcomers I identified, this research shows that the UM deal with social and cultural exclusion, as they on contrary to the newcomers in the DPC's don't have to deal with spatial exclusion, but also are not part of the Irish society yet. Besides the 'formal' ways such as school, the UM find a

way to create a sense of home and belonging by participating in, for instance, sports programs of the social enterprises. In these programs they make new friends and create their own social network. By making friends they create a sense of attachment with people in Ireland, which can lead to creating a sense of home and belonging in Ireland.

The last group of newcomers (second-generation migrants and newcomers from within the EU) deal with cultural, economic and to a lesser extent social exclusion. On a cultural level they are excluded from the Irish society because they are unfamiliar with the Irish cultural practices. This group is economical excluded because participating in Irish cultural practices, like GAA sports, cost them more money than they have. The social exclusion has to do with their lack of a social network, containing Irish people besides their own family, in Ireland. During my fieldwork I came across a lot of children from this particular group, who participated in the sports-initiatives. Their parents speak little or no English. This means that their parents can't help them with their homework and cannot help them with the complicated Irish school system. On the contrary, children have to help their parents, being a translator. The time and energy spend on this role complicates the creation of a sense of home and belonging for these children in Ireland.

Despite the excluding practices these three types of newcomers try to create a sense of attachment towards the Irish society. Spaaij (2014) researched Somali newcomers in Australian society and how they find a sense of belonging in Australia via sports. His conclusion was that the creation of belonging is "*multi-layered, dynamic and situational*". My research findings in Ireland are in line with this conclusion of Spaaij. Not all newcomers I met during my time in Dublin, succeeded in creating a sense of home and belonging. This can be partly explained by their lack of participating or knowing about, the help of the social enterprises. However most of my research participants accomplished to create a sense of attachment to Ireland, by creating ties with each other and in that way create a sense of home and belonging.

Limitations and future research

The three months in Dublin provided me with a good sense of the Irish (sports) culture and gave me insight on how newcomers try to become part of the Irish society. However my research also comes with certain limitations.

The first limitation concerns the place where my fieldwork took place, Dublin. The way newcomers can make a home in Ireland may depend on the place they live in. Therefore it is possible that the results of this study are only valid for this specific place. The documentary of the BBC "pitching up" (O'brian & Mozani 2017) shows that the GAA games help people within the DPC Ballyhaunis to feel at home in Ireland. A finding different from my conclusion, which implies that a different place can lead to different results. Therefore it is important to

keep in mind that the conclusion of this thesis is only representative for the Dublin.

The limited amount of time available for my research is the second limitation. Three months is a short period to delve into such a complex problem. A longer period of time could have opened more research possibilities, such a broader research aim, the possibility to interview more people or the chance to ask government officials for a reaction. An example of a related research aim would be to study how music, also an Irish cultural practice, creates social inclusion in Ireland, a subject that I came across often but wasn't able to include in this thesis. Moreover, due to the limited amount of time, I could only participate in three social enterprises. A longer period of time would have given me more opportunities to look at more initiatives and have a more in-depth view of newcomers in Ireland. Besides the time-limit, the season I was in Dublin was not optimal for doing research on sports, as most of the activities, of SARI and PFD, happen in the spring and the summer. When my fieldwork ended, in April, the temperatures was just getting pleasant for sporting outside. Doing research during spring or summer would have given more data and thus more perspectives on my research subject.

The last limitation is about my personal research style. Evaluating my time in Ireland, I would say that my research may have focused too much on the sport aspect concerning the newcomers. My participation in social enterprises was, apart from co-organizing a national manifestation, limited to giving training and participating in sports projects. Connecting with the research participants on other topics than sport events could have given me a broader insight in the everyday life of a newcomer in Ireland. Therefore, I would advise future researches to focus on a broader range of aspects of a newcomer's life, to gain a more all-encapsulating inclusive view on how newcomers create a sense of home and belonging in their new country.

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