

Community/organization formation in an emerging Philippines-Ireland migration system"

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The economic boom in the decade of the 90's, dubbed as the Celtic Tiger era, triggered an unprecedented wave of in-migration to Ireland transforming Ireland from an emigrant-sending to an immigrant-receiving state. Filipinos were among the immigrant groups that responded to the economic opportunities in Ireland. The mass migration of Filipinos to Ireland, however, is a recent phenomenon. This recentness of migration presented an opportunity to study the evolution of Filipino communities/organizations in Ireland. Using in-depth interviews of key informants – Filipino community/organization leaders in Ireland—I determined three distinct types of Filipino communities and organizations — hometown associations, host-town associations, and religious organizations. Most Filipino communities in Ireland were a product of the coming together of multiple clusters. Each cluster was formed through frequent contacts of the same group of Filipinos in social events such as birthdays, baptisms, and other parties. These clusters are widely dispersed owing principally to the location of the place of employment of its members. It takes a spark in the form of a person or institution with tremendous social capital, or an event in Ireland or in the Philippines to mobilize the various clusters of Filipinos to form a community. Most communities have development or aid projects in the Philippines. Religion and religiosity, the type of beneficiaries, and incentives, are the major factors motivating members to volunteer and/or contribute to their projects. These communities are unwilling to partner with the Philippines government due to perceived corruption, instead, they work exclusively and directly with NGOs and the Church.