

Contemporary migrations and the challenges of identity – The preservation of cultural and national identity among Croats in the Republic of Ireland

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.11567/met.2025.10>

UDK: 314.15-026.49(417=163.42)

Prethodno priopćenje

Zaprimljeno: 19.7.2025.

Prihvaćeno: 25.8.2025.

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ABSTRACT

This paper addresses the phenomenon of contemporary migration of Croats to the Republic of Ireland, with particular emphasis on the preservation of cultural and national identity within the broader context of the Croatian diaspora. The principal aim of this study is to present the perceptions of Croatian emigrants regarding their own identity, as well as to identify the challenges they face and the strategies they employ in order to maintain it. The analysis is based on the results of a quantitative survey conducted in May and June 2025, among Croatian migrants residing in Ireland. These findings provide valuable insights into their migration experiences, levels of satisfaction with personal and professional circumstances, and the degree of integration into Irish society. Special attention is devoted to their attitudes toward the perception and preservation of the Croatian language, customs, religion, as well as cultural and national identity within the migratory context. Integration into Irish society is most frequently pragmatic in nature and predominantly motivated by economic considerations, while emotional and identity-based ties to the homeland remain strong and clearly articulated. This study contributes to a deeper understanding of contemporary migration processes and may serve as a foundation for the development of targeted policies and strategies that support both the preservation of identity among Croatian emigrants in Ireland and across the world, and their successful integration into the host society.

KEYWORDS: contemporary migration, Croatian diaspora, Ireland, national and cultural identity, Croatian language preservation, social integration, social networks

INTRODUCTION

Migration has historically shaped societies, identities, and relations between states, and in the contemporary era, it has acquired new dimensions under the influence of globalization, the freedom of movement within the European Union, and the accelerated transformations of the labor market. Croatia, as a country with a long tradition of emigration,¹ entered a new phase of migratory processes following its accession to the European Union in 2013, when labor mobility became significantly easier and legally unrestricted. One of the most prominent destinations of this new wave of Croatian emigration has been Ireland, a state which, owing to its economic growth and strong demand for labor, has attracted thousands of Croatian citizens, particularly young people. The present study is directed toward examining contemporary Croatian migration to Ireland, with a particular focus on questions of identity, cultural belonging, and the ways in which migrants construct and preserve their sense of national consciousness within a new social environment.

National identity in the diaspora cannot be regarded as a static or predetermined category. On the contrary, it is a dynamic and multilayered process in which cultural and emotional ties with the homeland are constantly re-examined, adapted, and reaffirmed. This process is especially delicate within the context of societies such as Ireland, which are characterized by a high degree of multiculturalism and openness, yet also by pronounced secularization and liberal social norms, which in certain respects differ markedly from traditional Croatian values. It is precisely in the interplay between adaptation and preservation, between integration and the maintenance of identity, that Croatian migrants in Ireland construct distinctive patterns of national belonging. This paper seeks to provide insights into such patterns, drawing on the results of a quantitative survey conducted in May and June 2025 among Croatian migrants residing in Ireland. This study aimed to investigate how these migrants perceive their cultural and national identities, which dimensions they consider essential for maintaining national belonging (such as language, customs, and religion), and to what extent they are prepared to transmit that identity to future generations. The study is situated within a broader conceptual framework of trans-

¹ The first wave of Croatian emigration lasted until 1914 and consisted primarily of economic migrants, with approximately half a million Croats leaving during this period (Vulić, 2021, 11).

national identities and contemporary migration theories, which underscore the fact that identity in the migratory context is no longer a one-directional process of assimilation into the host society, but rather a dynamic negotiation between multiple cultural and social frameworks.

Croats in Ireland, though geographically distant from their homeland, often maintain strong emotional and symbolic connections with Croatia, whether through language, customs, family and religious values, or through social networks, and virtual communities. A particular focus of this research is placed on the role played by various mechanisms of social organization and communal gathering in the preservation of national identity. Illustrative examples such as the Croatian Catholic mission in Dublin and the amateur football club FC Croatia Fermoy demonstrate how institutions of religion and sport extend far beyond their primary functions, becoming central carriers of identity continuity as well as platforms for integration and mutual support among migrants. Simultaneously, in the context of contemporary forms of communication, virtual spaces such as Facebook groups increasingly replace traditional structures of organization, creating new arenas of community in which national identity is shared, shaped, and transmitted through everyday interaction.

The fundamental research questions posed in this study are the ways that Croatian migrants in Ireland experience and express their sense of national belonging, which factors are most significant in preserving their cultural identity, and how do they perceive their relationship toward the homeland. Additionally, the research seeks to identify patterns of critical distance toward specific aspects of Croatian social and political life. Methodologically, the study is grounded in the analysis of quantitative data collected through a structured questionnaire survey, with the interpretation of the results placed within a broader social, cultural, and theoretical framework. Although the results do not claim full representativeness, they nonetheless provide meaningful insights into the dominant trends and attitudes of a segment of the Croatian migrant community in Ireland, particularly with respect to emotional ties to the homeland, linguistic practices, religious orientation, and symbolic articulation of national identity. Ultimately, this study contributes to a deeper understanding of the ways in which national identity is shaped within a transnational and multicultural society, emphasizing the importance of supporting and recognizing migrant communities as active participants in the preservation of cultural heritage and identity diversity. Through the lens of the migratory experience, it becomes possible

to observe more broadly the societal processes related to migration, national identity, and belonging in the 21st century.

THE QUESTION OF NATIONAL IDENTITY IN THE CONTEXT OF THE CROATIAN DIASPORA IN IRELAND

Within the framework of contemporary migration and global mobility, national belonging is increasingly understood as a process shaped by the interaction between an individual and his or her social environment. Rather than being perceived as a fixed category, identity is now more often regarded as fluid, multidimensional, and subject to contextual influences. For members of diasporic communities, such as the Croatian community in Ireland, national belonging simultaneously implies a sense of connectedness with the homeland on the one hand, and adaptation to a new cultural space on the other. Multicultural societies enable individuals to cultivate their own culture while also participating in a wider social community, a dynamic that often results in the formation of so-called multiple identities. In such settings, national identity does not disappear, instead, it undergoes transformation through language, customs, family structures, religious affiliation, and everyday communication within the community. The diaspora thus becomes a space in which national belonging is not assumed, but rather reaffirmed and transmitted on a daily basis. The preservation of cultural and national identity in this context depends on a range of factors, from family values, society, and education, to the presence of organizations and digital forms of community. The roles of the individual, migrant community, and host society collectively shape the manner in which national belonging is constructed within the contemporary migratory environment.

Within this process, it is particularly important to consider how migrants themselves perceive their identity, the extent to which they seek to preserve it, and the ways in which they intend to transmit it to their children. The sense of belonging is often cultivated through everyday practices such as the use of the Croatian language within the family, the preparation of traditional dishes, the celebration of national holidays, and participation in local communities, including those created virtually through social media. Although physically distant from their homeland, many Croatian migrants in Ireland remain emotionally and culturally connected to Croatia. These ties are often reinforced during moments of national sports or cultural

events, when collective identification is especially pronounced. Such examples confirm that national belonging in the migratory context is not exclusively a matter of legal status or territorial proximity, but also a profound sense of cultural and national connectedness that transcends physical borders.

According to estimates by the Embassy of the Republic of Croatia in Ireland, between 16,000 and 17,000 Croats currently reside in Ireland,² a figure corroborated by data available on the official website of the Central state office for Croats abroad (SDUHIRH, Croatian diaspora in Ireland, <https://hrvatiizvanrh.gov.hr/hrvati-izvan-rh/hrvatsko-iseljenistvo/hrvatsko-iseljenistvo-u-irskoj/4697>, accessed July 1, 2025). Emigration to Ireland represents a relatively recent migratory trend, distinguishable from traditional Croatian emigrant destinations both by the intensity of migration in a relatively short period following Croatia's accession to the European Union in 2013, and by the visible decline in migration after 2020 (Komušanac, Bogović, Bušljeta Kardum, 2025, 11; Balija, 2020, 22; Adamović, Potočnik, 2022, 404).

The process of identity construction within the migratory context depends to a large extent on the degree of sociocultural integration (Bertoša, 1999, 128). Similar observations can be found in the work of Georgievski and Žoglev, who distinguish between personal, social, and national identity (2014, 517). In his study of Croats in Hungary,³ Grbić emphasizes that through migration and encounters with a new environment, cultural content changes and identities are reshaped into multiple forms (1994, 124–125), an experience comparable to the more recent Croatian diaspora in Ireland. Such further refines this perspective by introducing four levels of integration, regional, national, European, and global, highlighting that it is precisely at the national and European levels that identity undergoes the greatest transformation under the influence of globalization and integration processes (2000, 83). In this sense, the research of Sekulić and Šporer further problematizes

² The data were obtained from the Embassy of the Republic of Croatia in the Republic of Ireland, following a request submitted in May 2025 for the purposes of research conducted within the project *Contemporary migrations, identity and return: A study of the perception of national identity and return from the perspective of recent Croatian emigrants in the Republic of Ireland*, carried out at the Faculty of Croatian studies, University of Zagreb, with financial support from the Ministry of demography and immigration of the Republic of Croatia. The author of this paper was a member of the project team.

³ Although Croats in Hungary constitute an autochthonous minority community in that country, the conclusions may also be applied to the Croatian emigrant community in Ireland.

identity as a multilayered structure, in which ties to the national space are expressed through ideological variables (such as nationality and religiosity), while identification with Europe is mediated through social factors (such as social status and professional success). The authors conclude that European identity does not exclude but rather complements national identity (Sekulić, Šporer, 2008, 21).

One of the key factors in preserving national identity among younger generations of migrants is Croatian language education abroad, an initiative organized by the Ministry of science, education and youth of the Republic of Croatia. This educational program not only contributes to the preservation of language but also fosters the transmission of cultural values and a sense of belonging (Bušljeta Kardum, Župančić, Plaza Leutar, 2021, 75).

In the survey conducted for this study, the final question⁴ posed to respondents was „In light of your experience of living and working in Ireland, would you make the decision to move to Ireland again?“ The majority of respondents (86.5%) stated that they would probably make the same decision, while 10.8% indicated that they would probably not, and only 2.7% were uncertain. These results point to a high level of satisfaction with life and work in Ireland within the surveyed sample. Most Croatian migrants evaluated their migratory experiences positively, despite the challenges that living abroad inevitably entails. The high percentage of those who would make the same decision again can be linked to favorable economic conditions, quality of life, and professional development opportunities in Ireland. Simultaneously, the existence of a smaller share of respondents expressing doubts or dissatisfaction indicates individual differences in perception and attitude.

It may therefore be concluded that economic and professional factors play a crucial role in shaping migration decisions, while also influencing perceptions of national identity and belonging. Satisfaction with life in Ireland should not be seen as a threat to the sense of connectedness with Croatia, rather, it suggests the possibility of the coexistence of multiple layers of identity. Croatian migrants in Ireland are thus compelled to construct their identity in the interspace between two cultures, demonstrating that national belonging in the contemporary diasporic context is not static, but actively shaped through everyday practices, individual decisions, and the broader social context of the host society. This dynamic of identity repre-

⁴ The question was included in the final section of the survey questionnaire *Migrations and return*, which has not been analyzed in its entirety in this paper.

sents one of the central features of contemporary migration and constitutes a significant indicator of changing understandings of national belonging within the globalized society of the twenty-first century.

INFORMAL ORGANIZATIONS AS BEARERS OF COLLECTIVE CONSCIOUSNESS AND NATIONAL BELONGING IN THE DIASPORA

Catholic missions within the Croatian diaspora have traditionally extended far beyond solely religious roles. For example, in Germany, a country with a large Croatian migrant population, out of approximately 400 Catholic communities that conduct services in their native languages, and as many as one-quarter of them are Croatian Catholic communities (Ančić, 2017, 58). Their function encompasses the preservation of national, linguistic, and cultural identity among migrants, thereby contributing not only to the religious life of the community but also to its functional integration into the host society. Within this context, the Croatian catholic mission Dublin (HKM Dublin) represents one of the central spiritual and identity-based strongholds of Croatian migrants in Ireland (Komušanac, Bogović, Bušljeta Kardum, 2025, 71–72). Established in 2016, the Mission emerged in response to the rapid increase in the number of Croatian citizens residing in Ireland, particularly after Croatia's accession to the European Union in 2013. By providing religious services in the Croatian language and enabling sacramental life, the Mission simultaneously serves as a space of gathering, identification, and the preservation and transmission of national and cultural values. It operates within the Archdiocese of Dublin, with the support of the Croatian foreign pastoral service. Since its founding, the Mission has been led by friar Josip Levaković of the Franciscan province of St. Cyril and Methodius. In 2023, leadership of the Croatian catholic mission Dublin was assumed by friar Miron Sikirić, a member of the Franciscan province of Bosna Srebrena (Croatian catholic mission Dublin, <https://hkmdublin.wordpress.com/>, accessed July 1, 2025).

The Mission's primary tasks include the regular celebration of holy mass in the Croatian language, as well as preparation for and administration of the sacraments. Liturgical celebrations are most often held at St. Mary's Church in central Dublin, although, depending on the needs of Croatian parishioners, services are also organized in other parts of Ireland. Beyond the pastoral dimension, the Mission plays an important social and cultural role. Simi-

lar to other countries with larger Croatian migrant communities, it serves as a place of mutual connection, the preservation of collective identity, and the integrative transmission of language, customs, and religious practice. Special emphasis is placed on involving children and young people in order to ensure that identity elements are established and preserved among future generations. The Mission also encourages active participation in the wider Irish society, thereby achieving a balance between preserving the national identity and successful integration into a multicultural environment. For many members of the Croatian migrant community, particularly those who emigrated as individuals, without families, the Croatian catholic mission Dublin represents a symbol of belonging, support, and orientation in a new life context.

The Croatian Catholic Mission in Dublin demonstrates how religious institutions in the diaspora can fulfill a multifaceted social role that extends beyond the religious framework. In the context of contemporary migration, where individuals are often exposed to the pressures of assimilation and the risk of losing cultural ties with their homeland, such organizations represent a stable anchor of identity and belonging. Their activities create a sense of community, continuity, and connectedness with one's culture, which is especially important for preserving language, customs, and values in multicultural environments. Simultaneously, they facilitate constructive integration into the host society without requiring the abandonment of national belonging to the country of origin. This balance between assimilation and the preservation of national identity constitutes one of the key features of satisfaction and successful life in the diaspora. A particular strength of such organizations lies in their ability to transmit cultural and identity elements to younger generations growing up outside their homeland. In this way, they act not merely as guardians of the past but also as active builders of the identity future of the Croatian community abroad. Given the still sizeable Croatian migrant population in Ireland, systematic support for and strengthening of such forms of organization could, in the long term, have a positive effect on the reinforcement of national consciousness and the preservation of Croatian identity under conditions of global mobility.

One of the more prominent examples of social gatherings among Croatian migrants in Ireland is the amateur football club FC Croatia Fermoy, which brings together members of the Croatian community from various regions of the homeland, such as Zagreb, Split, Đakovo, Varaždin, Križevci, Mala

Kopanica, and others, who have emigrated to Ireland. The club was founded in 2021 and operates in the areas of Fermoy and Cork, located in the south of Ireland. In a short period of time, the club achieved notable success, most prominently winning the regional Leisure league in 2023. In addition, the club received the „Večernjakova domovnica“ award for the most popular Croatian organization in the diaspora, presented to them in 2022 in the German town of Bad Homburg. Beyond its sporting achievements, FC Croatia Fermoy actively participates in shaping the social life of migrants by organizing events for children and communal viewings of matches of the Croatian national football team (Socca, *Croatia team conquers Ireland*, <https://soccafederation.com/croatia-team-conquers-ireland/>, accessed July 1, 2025).

Football associations within the diaspora often fulfill functions that extend beyond the sporting dimension. They act as important pillars of identity-based gatherings, providing a space for the expression and preservation of national identity, particularly in the context of life outside the homeland. Football, as a globally recognized social phenomenon, frequently assumes symbolic value within Croatian migrant communities, functioning as a mechanism of connection with national culture, language, and tradition. Experiences from different countries, such as Canada, Australia, the United States, and, indeed, Ireland, show that the establishment of clubs with a Croatian designation and the organization of sporting, cultural, and social events are often motivated by the need for belonging. Such associations operate as informal cultural centers, transmitting identity values to all generations, particularly the younger ones, and strengthening mutual bonds among community members. They also contribute to the maintenance of collective memory and national pride, especially during moments when sport becomes a focal point of the community, such as the international appearances of Croatian national teams. In this sense, clubs like FC Croatia Fermoy represent not only creative collectives but also a form of social care for national and cultural identity within the migratory context. Their social function is crucial for fostering a sense of community and for maintaining Croatian identity within the multicultural and globalized environment of contemporary migration. The example of FC Croatia Fermoy further illustrates how sports can assume a deeply rooted social and symbolic role within migrant communities. Football clubs of this kind create spaces of identification, pride, and cultural exchange, which are especially valuable in environments that do not share the same national context. Through regular gatherings, team spirit, and connection with their

homeland, community members actively participate in keeping the Croatian cultural and national identity alive. Such initiatives not only improve the quality of life for members of the migrant community abroad but also strengthen transnational ties with Croatia. Football associations may therefore be considered a relevant factor in strategies aimed at preserving national and cultural heritage in the migratory context.

Within the contemporary migratory context of Croats in Ireland, one further specificity is evident. Although numerically significant, the Croatian community in Ireland, apart from the aforementioned Croatian catholic mission Dublin and the amateur football club FC Croatia Fermoy, lacks the developed classical forms of social institutions characteristic of other migrant communities in the diaspora (including Croatian ones, for instance, in Germany or Australia). Instead of physical gatherings and formal associations, Croats in Ireland primarily connect virtually through social media, which serves as the principal means of communication and cohesion within the migrant community. Social networks, particularly the Facebook platform, play a particularly significant role in shaping collective identity and facilitating the exchange of experiences and useful information. Interest-based groups centered around the experience of life in Ireland, for example, „Hrvati u Irskoj“⁵, „Hrvati u Dublinu HR IE“⁶, „Žene u Dublinu :)“⁷, „Hrvati na radu u Irskoj“⁸, „Hrvati u Corku“⁹ and others, have several thousand members. The main advantage of such platforms and this form of communication lies in the rapid exchange of information and the ease of establishing mutual connections (Rajković, Horvatin, 2017, 268–269).

In the absence of classical organizational structures and physical spaces for gathering, social media have become the key instrument of connection among Croatian migrants in Ireland. Virtual spaces, such as Facebook groups, enable quick and accessible exchanges of information, experiences, advice, and news, thereby actively shaping the sense of community and

⁵ The Facebook group „Hrvati u Irskoj“ has 63000 followers (Website: <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100082836892779&sk=followers>, accessed July 12, 2025).

⁶ The Facebook group „Hrvati u Dublinu HR IE“ has 9700 followers (Website: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/519626055078190>, accessed July 12, 2025).

⁷ The Facebook group „Žene u Dublinu :)“ has 5800 followers (Website: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/839753696055319>, accessed July 12, 2025).

⁸ The Facebook group „Hrvati na radu u Irskoj“ has 1500 followers (Website: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/3185592214987768>, accessed July 12, 2025).

⁹ The Facebook group „Hrvati u Corku“ has 7400 followers (Website: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/349331375250482>, accessed July 12, 2025).

belonging. Although unstructured and informal in character, these online communities fulfill many of the functions once held by associations, cultural clubs, or regional societies in traditional migratory contexts. Beyond offering functional support within a new social and institutional environment, social networks provide a symbolic space for expressing identity, remembering the homeland, and preserving language. Through such actions, national identity and cultural values are transmitted through daily communication and interaction. Through posts, comments, and mutual support, community members construct a sense of solidarity and continuity, regardless of geographical distance. These forms of connection are particularly important for younger members of the diaspora, who are generally more digitally literate and inclined toward virtual communication. In this sense, social networks have the potential to function not only as informational but also as cultural and identity resources for the Croatian community in Ireland. They illustrate how contemporary technologies can substitute for classical organizational structures within migrant communities while also serving as platforms for new forms of transnational belonging.

In conclusion, it may be stated that the Croatian migrant community in Ireland develops specific forms of organization and identity preservation adapted to contemporary migratory and communicational conditions. Although numerically significant, the Croatian community in Ireland still lacks the institutional support available to Croatian migrant communities in countries with longer migratory traditions. Under these circumstances, the strength of alternative forms of organization and activity becomes evident, ranging from religious and sporting associations to digital platforms. The Croatian catholic mission Dublin, FC Croatia Fermoy, and virtual communities on social networks serve as crucial mechanisms for preserving cultural, linguistic, emotional, and ultimately national connectedness with the homeland. Through their activities, contemporary patterns of national belonging are formed, constantly negotiated between integration and the preservation of the national identity. In this context, national identity does not disappear but rather transforms and adapts to new social frameworks, simultaneously affirming its resilience and adaptability. The preservation of national identity in the diaspora thus becomes a process encompassing both formal institutions and everyday, spontaneously created forms of communities. In the long term, it is precisely this combination of traditional and contemporary approaches that represents the key to safeguarding Croatian cultural and national identity in the migratory context of the twenty-first century.

METHODOLOGY AND PRESENTATION OF RESEARCH RESULTS

Quantitative survey research was conducted between May 17 and June 4, 2025.¹⁰ This study had two objectives. On the one hand, it sought to explore migration experiences and satisfaction with life in Ireland, while on the other, it aimed to provide a deeper understanding of how Croatian migrants currently residing in Ireland perceive their national identity and how they view the possibility of returning to Croatia. Participation in the survey was entirely voluntary and anonymous, and no personal information (such as name, residential address, or contact details) that could reveal the identity of the respondents was collected. The data obtained were used exclusively for scientific and research purposes and were analyzed on an aggregate basis. The questionnaire was divided into four sections and contained a total of 58 questions. The areas covered included: general information, quality of life and living standards, perception of national identity, and, finally, issues related to migration and potential return to Croatia. For the purposes of this paper, only data concerning the perception and preservation of cultural and national identity among Croatian migrants in Ireland were processed and analyzed.

The questionnaire was distributed via the aforementioned virtual groups of Croats in Ireland on the Facebook platform. This distribution method was chosen with the aim of reaching a broader spectrum of potential respondents. A total of 72 participants completed the survey. Although this represents a relatively small sample, the collected data provide valuable insights into the perceptions and experiences of a segment of the Croatian diaspora residing in Ireland. It must be emphasized, however, that the results cannot be generalized to the entire population of Croatian migrants in that country, but rather serve as indicative patterns pointing to potential trends. The collected data also allowed for the identification of modes of thinking within a particular portion of the migrant community. While the conclusions cannot be extended to the entirety of the diaspora, they nevertheless open the way for a more nuanced understanding of identity-related

¹⁰ The research was conducted in May and June 2025 within the framework of the project *Contemporary migrations, identity and return: a study of the perception of national identity and return from the perspective of recent croatian emigrants in the Republic of Ireland*. The project was carried out by the Faculty of Croatian studies, University of Zagreb, with financial support from the Ministry of demography and immigration of the Republic of Croatia. The author of this paper directly participated in the research as a member of the project team.

processes in the migratory context. Moreover, they provide a valuable foundation for future research, which, based on larger samples and possibly different methodological approaches, could expand upon the results and insights obtained. These findings may also prove useful in shaping strategies for supporting Croatian migrant communities within contemporary European societies.

The limited number of participants may be, at least partly, connected to feelings of dissatisfaction, resignation, or emotional distance from their homeland, which could be a consequence of the migration process itself or the reasons for emigration. There is also the possibility that some migrants avoided participation due to mistrust, fatigue with the topic, or simply a lack of interest. Nevertheless, the survey results and respondents' answers provide meaningful insights into the perception of national identity in the migratory context. In this sense, the data are not presented as representative of all Croatian migrants in Ireland, but rather as an illustrative depiction of one part of the population. Even such a sample, however, may indicate specific patterns of thought and belonging which merit analytical attention. These results served as the basis for interpreting the perceptions and practices of preserving cultural and national identity in the diaspora.

Before analyzing attitudes concerning the perception and preservation of cultural and national identity, it is necessary to present the basic demographic and social characteristics of the respondents. This segment of the research functions as a contextual framework that allows for a more precise interpretation of the answers and thought patterns within the surveyed group. The presentation of respondents' age, gender, family, and migration structure offers insights into the profile of the Croatian migrant community in Ireland.

The distribution of the questionnaire via social networks certainly influenced the age structure of the respondents. The most represented group was participants aged between 26 and 35 years (37.5%), which is in line with expectations, given that younger groups are more active users of digital platforms. An equal proportion (37.5%) was recorded among respondents aged 36 to 45, pointing to high participation among the working-age population. Respondents between the ages of 46 and 50 accounted for 13.9% of the sample, while those over 50 made up 6.9%. The least represented were respondents aged 20 to 25, at only 2.8%. Regarding gender structure, women represented a clear majority, constituting 75% of the respondents, while men accounted for 25%. The questionnaire also collected data on marital status

and parenthood. More than half of the respondents (54.2%) reported being married, while 24.4% were in cohabiting partnerships. Singles comprised 16.7%, and divorced individuals only 2.8%. Nearly half of the respondents (48.6%) reported having no children, 25% had one child, 20.8% had two children, and only 5.6% reported having three or more.

In terms of duration of residence in Ireland, the majority of participants (80.6%) had lived there for more than five years, indicating a more stable migratory settlement. Among those residing in Ireland for three to five years were 11.1% of respondents, while 5.6% had lived there between one and three years. Only 2.8% had been in the country for less than one year. The study also included data on housing status. The majority (55.6%) lived in rented accommodation, while 31.9% owned their own property. Shared housing (renting a room with other individuals) was reported by 11.1%, and only 1.4% lived in employer-provided accommodation.

Regarding the mode of migration, 40.3% of respondents stated that they had migrated alone. Another 33.3% moved with a partner, 23.6% with their entire family, and the smallest share (2.8%) with friends. Among those who had initially migrated alone, 50% indicated that their partner and/or children had subsequently joined them, while 30.6% still lived alone. The share of respondents without a partner was 16.7%, and only 2.8% reported being in a relationship with a person of Irish nationality. Finally, data were collected on children born in Ireland. The majority of respondents (77.8%) had no children born in the host country, while 22.2% had at least one. These general data provide the demographic and social context necessary for a deeper analysis of attitudes, experiences, and identity patterns among the Croatian diaspora in Ireland.

Following the presentation of demographic characteristics, the analysis turns to questions aimed at understanding the perceptions and expressions of national identity in the migratory context. This group of questions was developed within the conceptual framework of the European social survey (ESS),¹¹ an academically grounded international research project carried out in numerous European countries since 2001. The ESS has already been recognized as a crucial component of the European research landscape in the social sciences. Its methodological consistency and continual refinement of research tools have ensured a high level of quality in research infrastructure and positioned Europe as a leading actor in the global field of compar-

¹¹ ESS (Website: <https://www.europeansocialsurvey.org/>, accessed May 1, 2025.).

ative social science (The European social survey European research infrastructure consortium /ESS ERIC/, website: <https://www.europeansocial-survey.org/about-ess/>, accessed July 2, 2025). The survey is considered one of the most relevant research undertakings in the field of social sciences, and its methodological approach allows for a comparative analysis of citizens' attitudes on a wide spectrum of social phenomena, including identity, national belonging, and social values. For this study, selected questions were adapted to the specific thematic focus of the Croatian diaspora in Ireland, in order to investigate more precisely patterns of self-perception, cultural orientation, and emotional connectedness with the homeland.

A quantitative approach was applied, focusing on examining Croatian migrants' subjective perceptions of various aspects of the importance and preservation of cultural and national identity in the migratory context. The questionnaire was structured around a series of statements and questions thematically related to national belonging, emotional connectedness with the homeland, language, customs, religious practice, and the degree of integration into the host society. To measure respondents' attitudes, a five-point Likert scale was used at certain questions. Respondents assigned numerical values from 1 to 5, where the ratings had the following meanings: 1 – „completely dissatisfied“, 2 – „mostly dissatisfied“, 3 – „neither satisfied nor dissatisfied“, 4 – „mostly satisfied“ and 5 – „completely satisfied“. This approach enabled the quantification of personal attitudes and their interpretation in light of identity dynamics. Combined with demographic data, the results provide an overview of migrants' personal attitudes and experiences in relation to key dimensions of identity, with special emphasis on emotional and cultural connectedness to Croatia. Based on these methods, the following section presents the concrete results of the survey.

One of the central questions in the study concerned the perceived importance of elements contributing to the preservation of national identity in the diaspora, with a focus on the everyday use of the Croatian language and religious affiliation. The results indicate that language is recognized as a particularly important symbol of identity: 43.1% of respondents assigned the highest rating to the importance of using Croatian daily, while an additional 20.8% rated it with a 4. Moderate importance (3) was assigned by 15.3%, whereas a smaller number expressed a more distanced view: 8.3% rated it with a 2, and 12.5% believed that Croatian has no significant role (rating 1) in preserving identity in the diaspora. In contrast, religious affiliation and Catholic tradition were perceived as much weaker anchors of iden-

tity. Half of the respondents (50%) rated the importance of Catholic faith and belonging to the Church with the lowest score (1), indicating a weakening of religious identity in the diaspora, at least within the surveyed group. The highest rating (5) was given by 19.4%, while 8.3% assigned a 4, 13.9% a 3, and the remaining 8.3% a 2. These findings point to a differentiated perception of identity elements within the migrant community. While language and everyday communication in the mother tongue remain a strong symbol of cultural belonging, the religious dimension shows significantly weaker association with national identity. It may be concluded that among younger generations in the diaspora, identity is increasingly constructed through language, customs, and culture, while traditional forms of religious belonging are losing their significance.

Further questions addressed the emotional and symbolic aspects of identity, such as pride in the Croatian heritage, attitudes toward traditions, symbols, and ties to the homeland. Regarding pride in their Croatian origin, the results again reveal a division of attitudes. The highest rating (5), expressing strong identification and importance of this dimension, was chosen by 34.7% of respondents, while 22.2% rated it with a 1, suggesting low importance within their identity framework. An additional 13.9% rated this aspect with a 4, 16.7% with a 3, and 12.5% with a 2, confirming the existence of differing interpretations of national pride in the diaspora. The preservation of Croatian customs and traditions, such as Christmas and Easter practices, was considered important for maintaining identity. As many as 40.3% selected a 5, while 15.3% rated it with a 4. Moderate importance (3) was assigned by 19.4%, and 8.3% assigned a 2. However, 16.7% completely denied the importance of traditional practices in shaping identity, highlighting individual differences in attachment to the cultural patterns of the homeland. Interestingly, the display of national symbols, such as Croatian jerseys, flags, or the so-called „red-and-white checkers“, was largely perceived as less important. A significant 40.3% rated this element with a 1, and 12.5% with a 2. Only 25% valued the symbolic representation of national belonging with a 5, and an additional 6.9% gave it a 4. These results suggest that external symbols, although recognizable, are not decisive in the everyday construction of identity, often being replaced by deeper cultural and linguistic ties. Responses regarding the maintenance of connections with the homeland through following sports events, news, and similar activities were also heterogeneous. 31.9% rated this aspect with a 5, 20.8% with a 4, and an equal 20.8% with a 3. Lower identification (2) was

reported by 8.3% of the respondents, and 18.1% considered it entirely unimportant (1). Overall, the data indicate that the identity of Croatian migrants in Ireland is not primarily built upon the display of national symbols, but rather upon cultural practices, emotional attachment, and the active preservation of language and customs. These differences may be linked to generational variations, degrees of integration, and individual migration experiences.

The survey also examined attitudes regarding the key factors for maintaining ties with the homeland, as well as concrete practices contributing to identity preservation in the diaspora. When asked which elements were crucial for sustaining connectedness with Croatia, the largest proportion of respondents (48.6%) emphasized the importance of frequent visits to family and friends in the homeland, especially during holidays and vacations. This suggests that emotional and family ties remain central to maintaining identity. The next most frequent response (19.4%) referred to everyday use of Croatian within the family, particularly among adults, as well as organized language learning for children through formal or informal Croatian classes abroad.¹² Only 13.9% recognized the preservation of customs, culture, and traditional practices as an important factor, while 9.7% mentioned following current events in Croatia through the media, online portals, and social networks. Notably, institutional aspects, such as the support of diplomatic consular offices, were rated as almost negligible, with only 2.8% of respondents considering them important. A small proportion (1.4%) offered personal answers confirming the diversity of views, ranging from the emphasis on individual motivation („the person's own desire to remain connected with national identity“) to complete rejection of any proposed factor („irrelevant“, „unimportant“, „none of the above“). Consistent with these findings, respondents were asked about their frequency of visits to Croatia. More than half (52.8%) stated they visited two to three times per year, especially during holidays and summer vacations. Over three visits annually were reported by 18.1%, while 29.2% visited only occasionally, once every few years. These results confirm that personal contact, physical presence, and emotional connectedness remain important factors in preserving

¹² In Ireland, there are teaching locations where schoolchildren have the opportunity to learn the Croatian language. Croatian language instruction abroad is organized by the Ministry of science, education and youth of the Republic of Croatia, and teachers from Croatia are assigned to posts abroad for fixed terms (Ministry of science, education and youth, *Croatian language instruction abroad*, website: <https://mzom.gov.hr/istaknute-teme/medjunarodna-suradnja-i-eu/hrvatska-nastava-u-inozemstvu/683>, accessed June 16, 2025).

national belonging. Finally, linguistic practices in the family environment were explored, focusing on communication with the children. Almost half (48.6%) had no children, while among those who did, 47.2% reported making efforts to speak Croatian with them daily. A smaller share (2.8%) used Croatian mainly when communicating with relatives via phone or video calls, and 1.4% used it exclusively when meeting other Croats in Ireland. While the figures suggest a strong intention to preserve the language within families, such practices clearly depend on living circumstances and the degree of integration into Irish society.

The role of religious institutions, especially Croatian catholic missions, has traditionally been significant in gathering and connecting diaspora communities worldwide. However, the results of this study reveal a certain distance from organized religious life among Croats in Ireland. When asked about participation in masses organized by the Croatian Catholic mission in Dublin, 44.4% reported not attending because they did not consider themselves religious. An additional 31.9% cited the unavailability of services in Croatian near their place of residence, pointing to the geographic limitations of the mission's activities. Occasional participation, usually during major religious holidays, was indicated by 11.1%, while only 4.2% reported attending mass several times per month. Some respondents (1.4%) provided personal answers that further illustrated different stances toward religion: „I am religious, but I do not attend mass“; „I am religious, but I do not need the Church“; „I am not religious“; „I always work on Sundays“ and so forth. These results confirm the growing trend of individualized religious practice in the diaspora, where formal belonging does not necessarily imply active participation in religious community life.

The study also examined respondents' citizenship status as a legal-political component of integration. The results show that 45.8% neither have nor intend to apply for Irish citizenship, while 33.3% were in the process of obtaining it (having applied but not yet receiving status). A further 18.1% stated that they had not yet met the formal requirements to apply. Only 2.8% reported holding Irish citizenship, suggesting a relatively low degree of formal integration despite long-term residence. Additional insights were provided by responses concerning the following of sports events featuring Croatian athletes, which often act as a strong link with the homeland. The largest share (41.7%) actively followed Croatian national teams at major international competitions, while 33.3% did so selectively („some tournaments yes, others no“). Conversely, 20.8% did not follow Croatian sports at

all, and 4.2% reported primarily following the domestic clubs Dinamo or Hajduk. Sport, therefore, appears as an important but not universal form of symbolic identification with the homeland. When asked what they were most proud of in relation to Croatia, respondents gave especially high recognition to natural beauty, with 59.7% naming natural attractions as their primary source of pride. History and cultural heritage were ranked second, mentioned by 12.5%. Sports achievements were highlighted by 6.9%, and gastronomy by 5.6%. A smaller share (4.3%) pointed to scientific, artistic, or cultural accomplishments, while 2.8% reported not being proud of anything related to Croatia. A further 1.4% provided personal responses, such as: „the Croatian mentality“; „I am not proud of anything I did not personally achieve“; „none of the above“ and similar. The subsequent question focused on negative perceptions of Croatian national identity. When asked what they were least proud of regarding Croatia, the responses showed a critical stance toward the political and institutional environment of the homeland. Half of the respondents (50%) pointed to the level of corruption as their greatest source of shame, underscoring migrants' sensitivity to moral and governance-related shortcoming. Social disorder (lack of order, justice, and transparency in daily life) was cited by 20.8%, while 19.4% expressed no pride in state governance. A smaller proportion pointed negatively to political heritage (8.6%) and Croatian history (1.4%), suggesting that criticism largely concerns the contemporary context rather than cultural-historical legacy.

A subsequent series of questions sought to conceptualize national identity through the evaluation of the question „*What makes a true Croat?*“ Answers were measured using a five-point scale (1 – least important to 5 – extremely important). The statement that birth in Croatia determines who is a „true Croat“ received little support: 34.7% rated it with a 1 and 18.1% with a 2. Moderate importance (3) was assigned by 18.1%, while higher scores were less common: 16.7% rated it a 4, and 12.5% a 5. Citizenship as a marker of belonging also produced divided responses. The largest proportion (31.9%) rated it a 3, indicating that citizenship is seen as technical but not decisive. The lowest score (1) was given by 26.4%, while 18.1% rated it with a 2. Higher levels of agreement were rare, 8.3% assigned a 4, and 15.3% a 5. In contrast, the statement that knowledge of the Croatian language makes one a „true Croat“ was perceived more positively. The highest score (5) was given by 30.6%, while an additional 22.2% selected a 4. A moderate stance (3) was held by 22.2%, while 9.7% rated it as a 2, and 15.3% considered language

irrelevant to identity (1). These results confirm that language is perceived as one of the most stable markers of identity, especially in the migratory context. The statement that maintaining customs and traditions makes one an authentic member of the Croatian nation was even more strongly affirmed. As many as 34.7% rated this statement with a 5, and 16.6% with a 4. Moderate importance (3) was given by 16.6%, while 13.9% rated it as 2, and 18.1% rejected it altogether (1). These results indicate that cultural practice, rather than legal or territorial belonging alone, shapes authenticity of identity among migrants.

The exploration of identity perceptions also includes views on religious affiliation and civic orientation. The statement that belonging to the Catholic Church is a determinant of Croatian identity received predominantly negative responses. A full 55.6% rated this with the lowest score (1), clearly indicating that religious affiliation is not perceived as central to identity. Only 15.3% gave it the highest rating (5), and 11.1% a 4. An equal 11.1% selected a neutral rating (3), while 6.9% gave a 2. These findings confirm the earlier observed trend regarding organized religion, suggesting that for many migrants, religion is more a private matter than an element of national identification. Conversely, the statement that adherence to Croatian laws and regulations defines who is a „true Croat“ provoked the greatest divergence of opinion. A relatively high 27.8% rated it with a 5, and 18.1% with a 4. Meanwhile, 23.6% selected a neutral score (3), while lower values were reported by 12.5% (2) and 18.1% (1). Such a distribution suggests differing interpretations of the relationship to the institutional framework of the homeland. For some, the legal order carries symbolic significance, for others, it represents a direct marker of identity.

The final question in the group concerning national identity addressed comparisons between respondents' personal lifestyles in Ireland and those they had led in Croatia, allowing multiple answers. The largest proportion (26.4%) reported living in a completely different way than in the homeland. Slightly fewer (25%) indicated that they lived similarly to before but felt less anxious about the future, which may reflect a sense of security and stability in the new environment. Two groups, each comprising 18.1%, expressed related but distinct views. One emphasized that life is similar to that in Croatia but that they miss family and friends, while the other reported that although their lifestyle is similar, they feel greater happiness and satisfaction. A smaller share (12.4%) reported living similarly but with reduced

social activity, which may result from fewer social contacts, language barriers, or cultural differences.

Overall, the findings indicate that national belonging among migrants is primarily manifested through cultural, linguistic, and emotional dimensions, while institutional, religious, and political connectedness with the homeland depends on personal values, living conditions, and the level of integration into the host society. Taken together, these results demonstrate that the identity profile of Croatian migrants in Ireland is multilayered and subject to individual interpretation. Religious and legal elements of identity are perceived in diverse ways, while everyday life in the diaspora reflects a combination of adaptation, nostalgia, and redefined life perspectives.

DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS OF THE RESULTS OF THE SURVEY RESEARCH

The contemporary migratory wave of Croats to Ireland, particularly after Croatia's accession to the European Union in 2013, reveals the multilayered and dynamic nature of diasporic identities. The identity of Croatian migrants in Ireland is not static, rather, it is continuously shaped and re-examined through various dimensions, ranging from language and religious practices to cultural customs, everyday behavioral patterns, and collective values. In the migratory context, identity cannot be taken for granted, it is actively transmitted, often under conditions where institutional support typical of traditional diasporic communities is absent. The results of the quantitative survey conducted among Croatian migrants in Ireland provide concrete insights into the ways in which the respondents experience, interpret, and express their national belonging. When combined with practical examples, such as the activities of the Croatian catholic mission Dublin and the amateur football club FC Croatia Fermoy, it is possible to identify key mechanisms involved in the preservation of cultural and national identity. These examples confirm that collective gatherings, religious and sporting activities, as well as digital communication, play an important roles in maintaining a sense of belonging. In this process, national identity is not lost. It is adapted, expanded, and reinterpreted within the framework of the challenges and circumstances of life abroad. In this way, the Croatian migrant community in Ireland affirms itself as an active subject in the transnational space, capable of preserving its own cultural heritage while simultaneously integrating into the wider social environment. Such a combination of the

„own“ and the „foreign“ the familiar and the unfamiliar, the traditional and the contemporary, constitutes the foundation for understanding identity processes in the modern migratory context, particularly in a multicultural society such as Ireland.

The results of the conducted survey provide an insight into complex patterns of the formation and preservation of national identity among Croatian migrants in Ireland. Although the study was based on a non-selective sample with limited representativeness, certain trends emerged that point to the characteristics of identity dynamics within the migrant community. One of the most striking findings concerns the high symbolic value of language in the process of preserving Croatian cultural and national identity. The Croatian language is perceived as a strong and emotionally charged marker of belonging. A majority of respondents recognize the everyday use of Croatian as an important aspect of cultural connectedness with the homeland. This is particularly evident in the family context, where many parents make deliberate efforts to communicate with their children in the mother tongue on a daily basis, despite the challenges of a bilingual environment. In contrast to language, religious affiliation, and the institutional religious framework, though traditionally significant in many Croatian diasporas, demonstrate a relatively weak identity function in this sample. More than half of the respondents do not regard belonging to the Catholic Church as a relevant component of Croatian identity. This finding can be interpreted through the prism of generational changes, secularization trends, and the fact that religious services in the mother tongue are not equally available across all parts of the Croatian migrant community in Ireland.

Further analysis shows that the emotional and cultural elements of national identity, such as customs, traditions, and symbolic practices expressed through visits to the homeland, are ranked among the most important by the majority of respondents. Travels to Croatia are not perceived solely as tourism, but as a restorative and identity-affirming experiences, especially in the context of family ties and cultural belonging. In contrast, the display of national symbols (the Croatian flag, the „red-and-white checkers“ and similar) carries less identity significance, pointing to a more pragmatic and personal approach to national belonging in the diaspora. A particularly interesting dimension emerges in responses concerning the determinants of the „true Croat“. Respondents generally do not consider place of birth or formal citizenship to be key factors, thereby confirming that identity is not

derived solely from bureaucratic or geographical status. Instead, cultural practices (language, customs) and individual emotional connectedness to the homeland are perceived as central elements of national belonging.

When it comes to critical reflection on Croatia, the research results reveal a high level of awareness regarding the negative aspects of the political and social systems. The greatest number of respondents cited corruption, social disorder, and ineffective state governance as sources of „shame“ and distancing. Thus, national identity is not idealized, rather, it is shaped through selective identification. Positive aspects, such as language and cultural and natural heritage, are highlighted, while negative socio-political realities are simultaneously critically rejected.

Ultimately, the results confirm that the national identity of Croatian migrants in Ireland is neither static nor unambiguous. It is shaped through a combination of emotional belonging, cultural practices, and personal interpretation, while simultaneously adapting to a new social environment. Migrants construct their personal identities between their homeland and host country, whereby neither complete assimilation nor strict preservation of national insularity occurs. In this sense, what emerges is a multicultural transnational identity, adaptable, multilayered, and rooted in everyday practices and relationships.

CONCLUSION

Like most Croatian migrants worldwide, Croatian citizens whose life circumstances and personal choices have led them to Ireland constantly navigate between belonging and adaptation, that is, between the need to preserve their cultural and national identity and the necessity of adjusting to a new social and cultural environment. A sense of belonging to the Croatian nation is most often expressed through the cultivation of language, customs, folklore, religious affiliation, and participation in the migrant communities. Simultaneously, integration into Irish society requires the acceptance of new norms and adaptation of lifestyle and professional standards. This process often generates personal dilemmas and fears, raising the question of how to integrate without losing one's cultural and national distinctiveness. While many Croatian migrants report a high degree of adaptation to the Irish way of life, they simultaneously emphasize the importance of preserving Croatian cultural and national identity,

particularly in the upbringing of children and in everyday communication in the Croatian language. Belonging and adaptation are not mutually exclusive processes, they must coexist in balance, supported by the community, the homeland, and the host country through access to information, content, and opportunities that allow the nurturing of both identities. Dual belonging can, on the one hand, be understood as a resource and enrichment, but on the other hand, it can also generate challenges, inner tensions, or feelings of non-belonging. In maintaining this balance, the roles of family, digital media, and organized migrant initiatives are crucial. Croatian migrants thus live daily between two worlds, the one from which they originate and the one in which they currently reside.

The national identity of Croatian migrants in Ireland is shaped by complex relations between personal self-perception, family patterns, collective practices, and the structure of the host society. The empirical results of this study indicate that language remains the most important symbol of cultural and national belonging, with its daily use, particularly in the family environment, recognized as a key factor in preserving Croatian identity within this migrant community. Simultaneously, a notable distance from institutionalized forms of religious belonging points to changing patterns of national identification. Religion, especially among younger generations, is losing its role as a primary identity marker. Analysis of the various dimensions of national identity, ranging from symbolic elements such as tradition and national symbols to everyday practices and linguistic use, confirms that identity among Croats in Ireland is neither homogeneous nor unchanging. Rather, it is a dynamic process, continually shaped in relation to the homeland, the host society, and individual self-perception. Within this process, non-formal institutions such as the Croatian catholic mission Dublin, educational initiatives such as Croatian language instruction abroad, and virtual communities on social networks play an important role in maintaining a sense of belonging beyond formal frameworks. Participation in sports and cultural activities further demonstrates how national identity can be expressed and safeguarded through alternative forms of social engagement. These examples underline the importance of social mechanisms that, on the one hand, facilitate integration into the new environment while, on the other hand, strengthening national identity and fostering solidarity.

In the context of contemporary migration, transnational practices increasingly constitute everyday life, migrants remain simultaneously connected to their homeland and their host country, thereby building multiple iden-

tities that are not limited by the borders of a single state or social framework. In this process, attachment to the homeland does not weaken, rather, it transforms in accordance with new life circumstances. The surveyed Croatian migrants in Ireland collectively demonstrate a strong attachment to Croatia through language, tradition, cultural practices, and symbolic connectedness, while simultaneously seeking to integrate into Irish society by embracing new professional, cultural, and social norms. Although based on a limited sample, the findings of this study highlight the need for stronger institutional support within this migrant community. In particular, the development of educational, cultural, and communication platforms will be essential to ensure the preservation of Croatian identity in the future. In this regard, the role of the Republic of Croatia, through the Central state office for Croats abroad, diplomatic and consular missions, and relevant educational and cultural institutions, should focus on long-term strategies aimed at sustaining Croatian cultural and national identity within the migrant community in Ireland.

In conclusion, the identity dynamics of Croatian migrants in Ireland cannot be reduced to a simple dichotomy of „preservation“ versus „adaptation“. Rather, it is a complex process in which national identity is continuously constructed, questioned, reconstructed, and transmitted, depending on life experiences, personal values, and the interplay of homeland and host-country influences. The preservation of national identity during migration is not merely the responsibility of individuals, it is also a societal and political challenge. Croatian migrants in Ireland show that it is possible to be simultaneously integrated into a new environment while maintaining a strong connection to one's cultural heritage. Through such experiences, contemporary migration should be viewed as an active participant in both the preservation of cultural and national identities and the shaping of new forms of belonging.

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Suvremene migracije i izazovi identiteta – očuvanje kulturnoga i nacionalnoga identiteta Hrvata u Republici Irskoj

Lidija Bogović

SAŽETAK

Rad se bavi temom suvremenih migracija Hrvata u Republiku Irsku s naglaskom na očuvanju kulturnoga i nacionalnoga identiteta u kontekstu hrvatskoga iseljeničtva. Cilj rada je prikazati percepciju hrvatskih iseljenika o vlastitom identitetu te identificirati izazove i strategije kojima se služe u njegovu očuvanju. U radu se analiziraju rezultati kvantitativnoga anketnoga istraživanja provedenoga u svibnju i lipnju 2025. godine među hrvatskim iseljenicima koji žive u Irskoj. Rezultati pružaju uvid u njihova migracijska iskustva, zadovoljstva životnim i profesionalnim okolnostima, stupnju integracije u irsko društvo, a poseban je naglasak stavljen na stavove prema percepciji, ali i očuvanju hrvatskoga jezika, običaja, vjere te kulturnoga i nacionalnoga identiteta unutar iseljeničkoga konteksta. Integracija u irsko društvo najčešće je pragmatična i vođena ekonomskim motivima, a emocionalne i identitetske veze s matičnom domovinom i dalje su izražene. Rad doprinosi boljem razumijevanju suvremenih migracija i može poslužiti kao temelj za izradu ciljanih politika i strategija koje podupiru očuvanje identiteta hrvatskih iseljenika u Irskoj i općenito u svijetu, ali i njihovu integraciju u zemlji primateljici.

KLJUČNE RIJEČI: suvremene migracije, hrvatsko iseljeničtvo, Irska, nacionalni i kulturni identitet, očuvanje hrvatskoga jezika, integracija, društvene mreže