Growing up undocumented in Ireland
Agenda for input

1. Situating the context of undocumented children and young people in Ireland
2. No clear framework or pathway
3. Current situation re access to citizenship
4. UNCRC recommendations to Ireland 2016
   “clear and accessible formal procedures for conferring immigration status on children and their families who are in irregular migration situations.”
We surveyed 108 undocumented parents raising their children in Ireland. Here’s what we found out.

68% Born in Ireland

58% of those born in Ireland are over 5 years old. 20% are over 10 years old.

78% of those born outside of Ireland have been living here for over 5 years. Some have been here for more than 16 years.

32% Born outside Ireland

“My home is here in Ireland. I came when I was 7 years old, and now I’m 10. My dream is to attend college, get a degree and find a job. I don’t know what to do as I’ve spent my whole life studying and look forward to attending college, only to find out that I can’t.”

Maria, 10 yrs old

“I feel trapped and like there is no way out for me. The future is very worrying for me and it’s very hard to be hopeful as I don’t know if I will be able to have a future here.”

John, 19 yrs old
Years in Irish education

- The average length of time in school is 5 years
- 8% have spent over 10 years in school

Age of undocumented children and young people

- 31% are under the age of 9
- 42% are between 10-17 years old
- 27% are over 18 years old

For these children and young people, Ireland is home - the home they know and love.

Just like everyone else, they have hopes, dreams and ambitions. They’ve grown up here, they live here, and they belong here.

This is an enormous waste of talent and a loss of great potential. These children and young people are valuable and have a valuable contribution to make, but uncertainty and fear will stop them from thriving and being the best they can be.

But right now there is no pathway to residency for undocumented children and young people, whether they were born here or came here with their parents.

The government has the power to bring about a solution and provide a pathway to residency. All they need to do is introduce a straightforward and sensible mechanism that ensures no child or young person grows up undocumented in Ireland. These children and young people are our future, and their future is here.
Mental Health

Fear and Stigma
Education
Transition into adulthood
Access to University/college
Labour Market Access

MRCI Migrant Rights Centre Ireland
Films by Young, Paperless & Powerful

2015, Young, Paperless & Powerful
https://vimeo.com/132984011

2018, This is My Life
https://vimeo.com/301863642
Youth Exchange with PICUM, 2019
Undocumented in Ireland: ‘I feel as Irish as they come’

Rashmi (24) is campaigning for a pathway to residency for young undocumented people.
Justice for the Undocumented campaign for a pathway to papers for undocumented people in Ireland.

My name is Niloy, I am working as a chef. I have been living in Ireland for years. I am an undocumented person just like the undocumented Irish in the US and Australia. Ireland is my home and Ireland needs me.

Happy St. Patrick's Day!
History in the making

Image is hyperlinked to video
Commitment in the programme for government 2020

Create new pathways for long-term undocumented people and their dependents, meeting specified criteria to regularise their status within 18 months of the formation of the Government, bearing in mind EU and Common Travel Area commitments.

See the full pdf linked in the text for full programme for government
Important Update for People who are Undocumented in Ireland
The sky is not the limit.

Young, paperless, and powerful.
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