



## **Different but equal... exploring cultural diversity within Deloitte**

A participatory-photography project conducted by  
Dr. Maria Quinlan, University College Dublin

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# Foreword



At Deloitte, we aspire to offer the most inclusive workplace in Ireland for our people. We know from the research that having real diversity, people with different backgrounds, perspectives, beliefs and ways of thinking and working together, leads to better decisions and solutions. In order to make an impact that matters for our clients and our people we need to enable this diversity of thought. The only way we can do this is if our people feel they can be themselves at work and share their thoughts and perspectives. Respect and inclusion ensures we continue to attract and retain the great people who provide innovative solutions to our clients every day.

But what is inclusion? It can be difficult to get under the skin of what would really make a difference to people, in terms of feeling a sense of belonging and inclusion. The aim of this project therefore was to try an innovative approach and to see what we could learn and do differently in our business.

We began this project unsure what we might find out. Do people from outside Ireland feel included? If they don't, what will it take to resolve that? What does an inclusive workplace mean? The participants have been so open and shared their deepest personal experiences. What really stood out for me personally were the stories people shared about themselves. It is so easy to group and categorise people, but through their photos we see the individual shine through: their personal experiences, their hopes, their struggles and their desire to be part of Deloitte and its future. I was also delighted to see how much positivity shone through in terms of the opportunities people feel they have both in Ireland and at Deloitte.

I wish to thank each of them for their participation and for contributing to our learning and progression. Thank you also to Dr. Maria Quinlan for steering us so expertly through this project. To everyone at Deloitte, I encourage you to read these stories from our colleagues, put yourself in their shoes, and reach out to get to know each other, regardless of how similar or different you perceive them to be. Finally, in the words of Melody, one of the participants: "like audit and the Irish weather, don't make assumptions."

**Brendan Jennings**  
CEO, Deloitte Ireland



# Project design and methodology

Creating space for people to share their stories, fears, concerns, and hopes is key to achieving inclusive workplaces.

The aim of this project was to explore the thoughts, feelings and experiences of diversity, respect and inclusion of Deloitte's foreign nationals, using a method of participatory photography known as photovoice. Photovoice is a research methodology and an advocacy tool which uses photographs, coupled with facilitated group dialogue and photo-captioning, to give voice to people's lived experience of a particular issue.<sup>1</sup>

Eleven Deloitte Ireland people from nine different countries participated in this project. They selected over forty photographs to share within this catalogue.

Throughout this catalogue of photographs, we have added our own words sparingly to guide the reader and to gather the photographs into loose overall themes. In the main however, we have attempted to leave the talking to the people who took the photographs and shared their stories with us.

## Methodology

This photovoice project was conducted with a group of eleven Deloitte Ireland employees; eight women and three men. Participants were recruited via the Deloitte Ireland Respect and Inclusion Council's callout for volunteers, and came

from countries as diverse as Brazil, India, Malaysia, Moldova, the Netherlands, the Philippines, Poland and Zimbabwe.

The project was conducted over three weekly two-hour workshops – Chart 1 outlines the high-level steps involved in this photovoice project.

In the first week the group was introduced to the aims and objectives of the overall project and to the photovoice methodology. Each member of the group was given a digital camera and instruction on how to use it – no prior photographic experience was required for participation. Based on the overall aims and objectives of the project, the group discussed and brainstormed the themes that they felt they would like to explore via photographs over the three-week project timeframe. The group decided on the following list of broad themes to loosely guide their photo-taking over the period of the project:

- How does it feel to be here? ('here' can be Deloitte or Ireland generally)
- What you think the positive impact of diversity is on Ireland/Deloitte
- Instances where you felt included or not included in Ireland/Deloitte
- How you feel about working in Deloitte/Ireland

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1. Wang, C., Burris, M. (1997) Photovoice: Concept, Methodology, and Use for Participatory Needs Assessment. Health Education Behaviour 24: 369; <https://photovoice.org/vision-and-mission/>

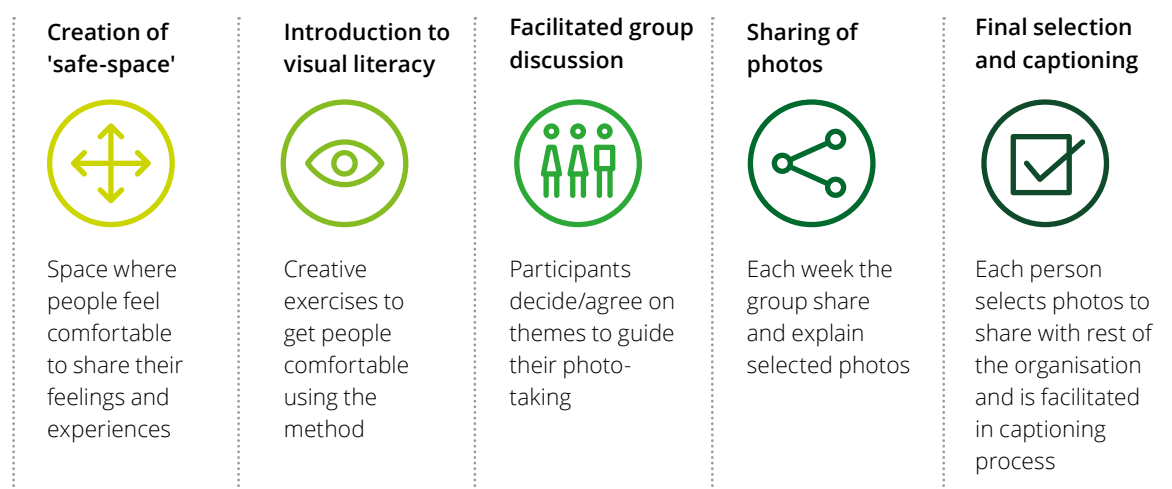
- Home
- Where you belong
- What 'respect' in the workplace means to you
- What 'inclusion' in the workplace means to you
- Your experience of Ireland
- Your experience of Deloitte
- What would make you feel more included/respected?

In the second week's workshop, the participants chose a selection of the photographs from those that they had taken during the previous week to share and discuss with the group. The selected images were projected onto a large screen and each participant described their photographs and the meaning behind them to the group. A group dialogue of the emerging metaphors and themes was facilitated.

For the final week's workshop, participants again shared a selection of their photographs with the group. They also selected the photographs that they wished to include in the final project catalogue and exhibition.

All three workshops were audio-recorded and following the final workshop each participant was sent a transcript of their narrative description of each of their photos. Each participant reviewed and edited their final selection of photographs and the accompanying narrative that they wished to include with them.

Chart 1: Steps in the photovoice research method



## Findings

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### 1. Inclusion, belonging and home



Findings





## 1. Inclusion, belonging and home

*"We all share the goal to be included, to know that we are seen, that we are heard and most importantly that we matter."  
[Lesley-Anne]*

Within their photographs, participants explored the concepts of difference, diversity and what it looks and feels like to be included within an organisation, and indeed within the wider Irish society. Within the following selection of fifteen photographs, participants explore ideas of shared space, of different people all working together with a shared sense of purpose, united by the organisation's values and goals.

*"..in Deloitte, we are all from different countries and different races, and no matter what our differences are because of race, creed, colour, religion, whatever, we are all part of one organisation, we are all working towards one common goal."  
[Mona]*

That there is room for difference within Deloitte, that differences are accommodated, is a theme raised by several participants. Diversity is expressed through metaphors of rainbows; of busy streets which accommodate all modes of transportation; and bunches of flowers

which when all tied together create bouquets which are more beautiful by the variety within them.

*"Just like different colours of the rainbow, we all belong to different countries, different communities, but still group together." [Ritu]*

The important role which Deloitte plays in making people feel at home in Ireland, and able to be themselves is a theme which emerges from the participants' photographs and associated captions. As Pauline puts it *"...that you're allowed to be who you are. I do feel that at Deloitte, I've been thinking about this a lot all week, and discussing it with my colleagues, and I feel that I'm very lucky."*

Work is an important part of how participants believe they integrate into a society, and the simple act of commuting to work surrounded by fellow-travellers is used to describe what it feels like to 'belong' in a country.

*"I was driving to work, and I was thinking, everyone is driving and I'm one of them. I'm here, I have my place, I have my work and I'm one of them, driving to work." [Ewa]*

Figure 1.



© Mona |2018 | Deloitte

There are two types of trees in this picture – the right side are the more leafy and more flowery kind of trees and the left side are the leaf-less or bare kind of trees. What I noticed was they are all a part of that area, and they are all respected the way they are in the park. They weren't plucked out or thrown away if they didn't have any leaves. So, in Deloitte, we are all from different countries and different races, and no matter what our differences are because of race, creed, colour, religion, whatever, we are all part of one organisation, we are

all working towards one common goal. That's what I thought about the concept of 'respect'. No matter who we are, with all our differences, we should be respected. There will be cultural differences, because we are all from different places, we have our own thinking, we have our own way of life, it's not that we can all be totally the same as each-other, but we can try to be amicable. You should respect the person opposite you, no matter where he or she is from. Forget the differences, and be who you truly are – that's what really matters.

Figure 2.



© Lesley-Anne | 2018 | Deloitte

This picture represents what I think "Respect, Diversity & Inclusion" looks like. This is a picture of Nelson Mandela's jail cell. I fulfilled a lifelong dream of mine when I got to visit Robben Island in South Africa. The sobering journey to the island by boat does not begin to prepare you for the multitude of emotions you experience on the Island.

While doing the tour and hearing the stories I finally stood outside Nelson Mandela's jail cell and a wave of emotions came over me. But the question that most stood out in my mind was how could someone have endured some of the most unimaginable experiences for over 27 years, and come out and show such compassion and forgiveness.

When he was released had he told the people of South Africa to fight there would have been a lot of bloodshed, as the South African people were ready to fight, they wanted to fight. However, "Madiba" knew that there was a bigger picture to his struggle.

He respected that he had the power to bring about change, change for the good of all his people. He understood better than most that segregation only

generates hatred, that even though people may come from different backgrounds, i.e. culture / religious beliefs / ethnic / gender that a common goal to live in harmony and peace was achievable. Diversity is something that should be celebrated. We are all unique, our individuality and differences make us who we are, and it should be welcomed even when you may not be able to understand.

We all share the goal to be included, to know that we are seen, that we are heard and most importantly that we matter. This "one man" made an impact in my life, "Madiba" showed me that respect is showing compassion and kindness in the face of hardship. To embrace and acknowledge diversity is to realise that this does not mean segregation or discrimination, but to reach out and include those who are not from the same background as myself to educate them and hopefully manage to make them realise how to overcome their insecurities.

May Deloitte continue to strive to achieve and educate its staff on this importance. We all bleed the same red blood...

Figure 3.



© Mona |2018 | Deloitte

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This is a picture of a busy street on a Monday evening. There's a Luas, there are cars and there is a bus captured all in one image. Whether it's a Luas, a car, or a bus – they are all headed in one direction, and they are all inclusive in the street, no matter what their destination is, or who is inside them. They (the Luas and bus), no matter who is inside them, they are providing their service for the common people. Similarly,

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in Deloitte we all work as one, we should be united in strength. There will be cultural differences, but I think we can come up with more events or campaigns or training on inclusion – because I'm not sure that people are aware of the Respect and Inclusion programme we have in Deloitte, and that we are striving towards a more united, stronger community.

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Figure 4.



© Mona | 2018 | Deloitte

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This picture is taken at one of the florist stalls on O'Connell street, near the Spire. A bunch of flowers all tied in a bouquet, and we have lilies and roses and orchids, and once they are all held together they

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look beautiful. So, I feel that we are like those flowers, of different varieties in Deloitte and once we all strive towards a common purpose and share the common objectives we'll be as pretty as it looks.

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Figure 5.



© Ewa | 2018 | Deloitte

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That was actually on the night that we had our first meeting here – they put the fruit in the Deloitte building next door. It felt so welcoming – like there's fruit there for everyone, even me. I'm not Irish, but I can take the fruit, and that's so

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great. It represents the welcoming atmosphere in Ireland that actually made me stay. I came to Ireland just for my summer holidays, and that was thirteen years ago. I think Irish people are very nice people, that's why I stayed.

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Figure 6.



.....  
I was driving to work, and  
I was thinking, everyone  
is driving and I'm one of  
them. I'm here, I have my  
place, I have my work and  
I'm one of them, driving  
to work.  
.....

© Ewa | 2018 | Deloitte

Figure 7.



.....  
This is a very tiny  
street, but there are so  
many buses, cars and  
a tram – and everyone  
can fit.  
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© Ewa | 2018 | Deloitte

Figure 8.



© Pauline | 2018 | Deloitte

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The Blockchain team have a whole wall with statements and sayings and this is one of them – 'Don't Ever Play Yourself'. Apparently it's from some DJ, and I guess he was referring to playing his own music maybe, I don't know – but for me it links into what other people have said – 'be yourself', and to be allowed to be yourself, and that you shouldn't put on something else because you have to hide or feel that you have to hide. That you're allowed to be who you are. I do feel that at Deloitte. I've been thinking about

this a lot all week, and discussing it with my colleagues, and I feel that I'm very lucky. I'm from Holland, I'm not that far away. I'm only an hour away, and while there are definitely cultural differences they're not as big maybe as with a few of the other countries represented here – I look the same, there's less assumptions made about me when I walk into a room. It's only when I start talking that the accent might come through or anything like that. So, my experiences are relatively positive.

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Figure 9.



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This is a billboard I came across. 'Give me a heart for simple things, friends and family, justice and love, food and wine, and make me thankful' - I guess this is just really what makes me feel included somewhere else, so here in Ireland if I just have my friends, my new-made family here, some love and some wine I feel happy, I feel included. It just highlights the key values that people might have, and that if you're able to find something similar here that makes you feel at home, that you belong here as well, that you can belong here as well.

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© Pauline | 2018 | Deloitte



Figure 10.



© Pauline |2018 | Deloitte

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I walk past this every day on the way to work, it's at the Natural History Museum. When I saw it first it made me laugh, and it still does. It made me happy, it's funny, it's quirky and it's quite strange – it fits well there and it's always there as well. I've been here five years and they've been there the whole time. When I think about what makes me feel included here, what makes me feel at home and what makes me want to stay – it's little things like this. Something consistent that's there for me – Deloitte is the

one consistent thing here for me and I think most of us here would have moved for this job, or 'a' job. You need something like that, consistent in your life to be able to go abroad because you do need an income and that kind of practical stuff. It's also so quirky and funny and kind of random in the garden of a national museum – it makes me appreciate Ireland in general that that's possible here and that that's allowed, that it fits in somehow. So even if you're a little bit quirky or a little bit different, you can still fit in really nicely.

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Figure 11.



© Ritu | 2018 | Deloitte

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Driving on the way to Wicklow, we luckily got this rainbow. Just like different colours of the rainbow, we all belong to different countries, different

communities, but still group together. Everyone is on the same path, we might be in different directions, but everybody is travelling the same path.

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*"I don't know where home is."* [Zain]

In exploring the idea of 'home', the dislocating nature of the immigrant experience emerges from participants' photographs. Most have left their families to come to Ireland and miss them and many other aspects of their home country. As Lesley-Anne puts it, *"..to me family is where your heart is, and therefore Zimbabwe will always be home to me."*

This dislocation, and the associated struggle for identity will be explored in more detail later in this catalogue.

Figure 12.



© Lesley-Anne |2018 | Deloitte

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This picture represents my journey which began eighteen years ago when I left my home in Zimbabwe. I arrived in Ireland at a young age filled with apprehension, hope and sadness, having left my family and friends and everything familiar to me. I made a promise to myself that it would not be in vain but that it would enable me to achieve my ambitions of bettering my life and that of my family. Many Zimbabweans feel displaced and are spread all over the world due to the mismanagement and greed of a president who was corrupt. General wellbeing became a struggle and many families were torn apart in order to survive. Ireland afforded me the opportunity to better my life and also to provide financially for my siblings who I still support and who still live in Zimbabwe. To me family is where your heart is, and therefore Zimbabwe will always be home to me. I have immersed myself in the Culture of Ireland, learning about the traditions and participating in social events whereby I can learn more about the country I decided to make my new home. I have been fortunate to have met a great number of Irish people and am proud to call them my friends.

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Figure 13.



It's something that makes me feel at home here, but also makes me miss home.

© Pauline | 2018 | Deloitte

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This is around the corner from where I live in Howth – there are two rabbits. Every morning when I walk down to the DART I walk by here. I used to have a rabbit myself when I was back in Holland, it just reminds me of home. So, every morning

when I walk by and the rabbits are out I know it's going to be a good day, I don't know why. For me it's a good start of the day. It's something that makes me feel at home here, but also makes me miss home.

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Figure 14.



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This is the papal cross in the Phoenix Park. The cross represents my faith and belief that all things are possible as long as one truly believes. My faith has kept me going these past few years.

It's a conversation I have a lot with my Irish friends, because in Africa faith is one of the important things, to be religious. I'm Catholic and growing up (in Zimbabwe) all the priests and nuns were from Ireland, so you had that influence – and the representation I had of Ireland and the importance of religion was totally different from the reality of when I came to Ireland. A big contrast for me is coming here and going to mass and it's mostly older people – and I understand that there were a lot of issues, things that happened in Ireland which is probably why people don't go to mass, but it was interesting to see the difference.

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© Lesley-Anne | 2018 | Deloitte

Figure 15.



© Zain |2018 | Deloitte

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I decided to take this picture of the moon because it does definitely remind me of home. Actually, I don't know if it specifically reminds me of home – I've lived in about fifteen different countries already, so I don't

know where home is, but I spent most of my time in the Middle East. In the Islamic faith the moon is an important symbol, so this reminded me of home a lot.

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## Findings

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-  2. Challenges –  
dislocation and  
otherness and  
assumptions



Findings





## 2. Challenges – dislocation and otherness and assumptions

*“When you are here you do a lot of questioning. You question yourself all the time. What am I doing here? What's the purpose of this? Where are you going? Am I going to regret staying?” [Vanessa]*

Through their photographs, and the group discussion which the sharing of those photographs sparked, a consistent set of themes emerged in terms of how participants have experienced the feeling of dislocation and the challenge of trying to 'fit-in' to a new environment as someone who is from a different country. Throughout the participants' stories, a sense emerges that there is a strong need for resilience in the face of the challenges, which moving to a new country brings. As Vanessa puts it;

*“...[if] you decide to come here, it's a challenge – you're out of your comfort zone and you just stay firm and you take whatever.”*

Several participants describe a feeling of having to work harder than Irish-born people in order to be accepted, or to justify their place in the organisation. For example, as Adelin puts it;

*“..it is not only hard in the beginning until you figure things out and find everything needed. It is a long struggle, a race where you have to prove yourself, you have to show that you can do better than the locals if you want that job.”*

There is also a sense that working in any way part-time is not necessarily something that participants believe is open to people who are not Irish;

*“...as a foreign person you need to stand out, you need to prove that you are part of the team. In order to get a promotion, you need to be the best, and work hard. Maybe that's what it would feel like for me to be included, to know as a foreign person if you may also work part-time and not have to prove always that you are a working machine.” [Alex]*

Another key theme which emerges within participants' photographs is the idea of assumptions. Whether it is assuming where a person is from; that English is not their first language; that their grammar will always need to be watched; or assuming other things about their cultural background and characteristics. Across the board, participants have experienced colleagues assume

things about them which are not necessarily true. As Melody puts it;

*“...just like the audit and Irish weather, don't make assumptions!”*

Participants express a desire to be asked about their experiences, cultural background, preferences and so forth rather than for people to make assumptions about them. Due to the range of nationalities working within Deloitte, participants feel that Deloitte provides a great opportunity for this kind of cross-cultural learning to take place, and indeed to be facilitated by the company through Respect and Inclusion initiatives.

Figure 16.



© Adelin |2018 | Deloitte

"Run For Your Lives", says this wall in my gym, and it made me think about life when moving abroad. It is not only hard in the beginning until you figure things out and find everything needed. It is a long struggle, a race where you have to prove yourself, you have to show that you can do better than the locals if you want that job. You have to dedicate

everything and work twice as hard if you want to be like everyone else. Many see moving abroad as a luxury, but in my own experience, moving was a necessity that required sacrifice, patience and night shifts in order to get where I am today. In most cases, it really is a race in which you run like your life depends on it.

Figure 17.



© Vanessa|2018 | Deloitte

This picture is just like a very confused road – I don't even know where you can turn there. Sometimes I feel like, what am I doing here [in Ireland], where am I going, should I follow that sign there and go straight or maybe if I turn here I might get somewhere quicker? Then the lights, they are green as well. So, it's a bit how everybody feels, when you are here you do a lot of questioning. You question yourself all the time: what am I doing here? What's the purpose of this? Where are you going? Am I going to regret staying? As you stay, this becomes more and more home and it's so funny when you go back 'home' [to

Brazil], you feel like you miss home, you miss Ireland. So, it's kind of weird. I think 'home' is where you are, and the places where you've lived or have been born are just places. If you make the move to change, to try something new, to discover something better – then when you go back [home] you are not the same person.... you're an outsider. You can't live 20 years here [in Ireland], build up a life, a family, colleagues and then say no but my 'home' is there [in Brazil]. That's why it's so important to feel included, to feel accepted because you make this your home, you really do.

Figure 18.



© Vanessa|2018 | Deloitte

I wanted to picture that sky, because that's the sky that we actually see [in Ireland]. Most of the days, this is what we see. You see the sea – it shows the kind of wildness of Ireland, and it's tough – like the weather is not great, but still... you live, and you live well, and you're happy here. The road also shows that you are going somewhere and you're here [in Ireland] to get somewhere, so it's part of the journey of life, being here at the moment, I don't know the future.

Figure 19.



© Vanessa|2018 | Deloitte

You look into this street and you see that monument there [the Spire] and it's actually something that was put there. I don't know if it was made by an Irish designer or if it came from here, I don't know the story of this monument, but it's just something that stands out and it's kind of different from the buildings around and it's something different, but it's there and you get used to it with time and then it becomes part of things.

It wasn't there before, someone put it there and everyone was looking saying what is this? It's so different, but then it stays there and then with time it just becomes part of the scenery and you get used to it because you see it every day. So, I think it's the same with Ireland, with Dublin at the moment because of the economy and the jobs, so a lot of foreign people are coming here

and getting jobs, working and trying to be a part of this. Also, you see that this monument is very solid, it's very firm, it doesn't move even if the wind is very strong in Ireland, it stays there – because you have to. You know, you decide to come here, it's a challenge – you're out of your comfort zone and you just stay firm and you take whatever. So, it's kind of like, how I feel like being here. I actually think the Spire is very beautiful – the world changes, like there is a wave of immigration at the moment, we don't know in a few years' time it could be the other way around like it was in the past. A wave of people leaving Ireland – now it's a wave of people coming. We adapt, everybody adapts to each other, naturally. We struggle, yes, because you're not in your comfort zone but you have to be firm.

Figure 20.



© Lesley-Anne |2018 | Deloitte

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Recently my mother and I decided to find out if it would be possible to bring my brother and sister to Ireland to live with us to make our family complete. It is with sadness and disbelief that we were told that it is not possible because we were not born Irish. I no longer am regarded as a Zimbabwean citizen and have no rights,

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yet as a citizen of Ireland, which I am, and have made Ireland my home – I am also told that I have no rights. I conclude my story by saying that I will not give up my fight for family reunification and I will prove that my choice to make Ireland my home was the right one.

Figure 21.



© Melody |2018 | Deloitte

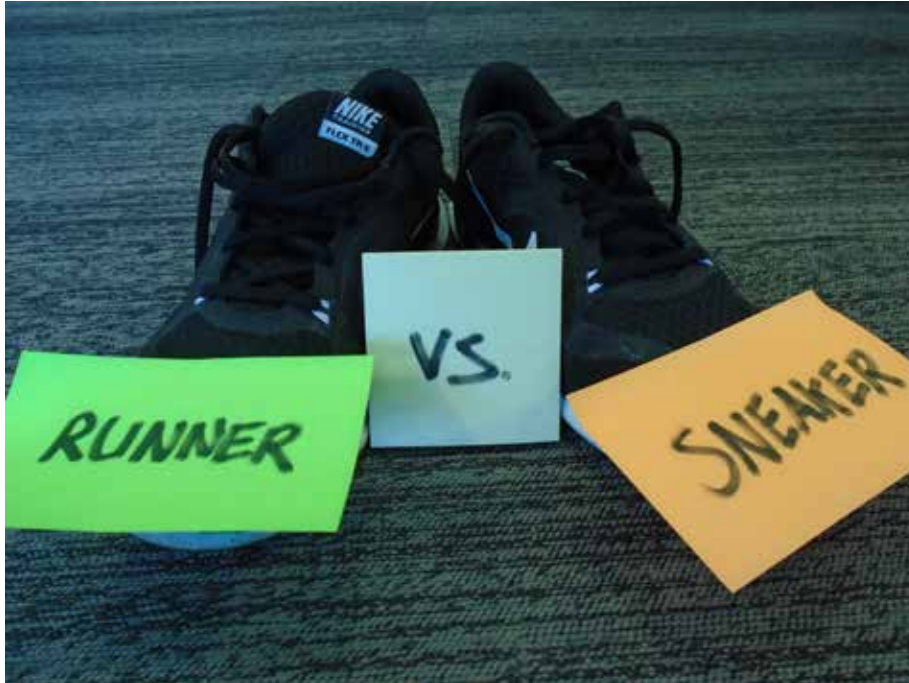
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It's a blue sky, that's not a view we have very often in Ireland, unfortunately! This is my view from the office and whenever I look out the window I'm reminded of the blue sky which I have at home, but back then (at home) I didn't appreciate it because you see it every day, so you don't notice that it's there until you come here, you start noticing things that you had before, or you didn't have and now you have it. So, it's kind of like, working in Ireland, being in Deloitte, it reminds me that I have these perks and this gratefulness to work here. It's also a reminder to myself that I should appreciate my identity that I have back home, because there were several instances where people just assume you're from China which I didn't like. Sometimes I have conversations with managers or partners and they say, "when are

you heading back to China?", but I can't exactly say to them, would it be better for you to ask me where I'm from rather than just assuming I'm from China? It's the same with people on the streets, they will just say hello in Chinese, and while I do speak Mandarin, I'm not from China! I appreciate that I work here, but sometimes I do question my choice – does my identity have to be questioned every single day? Sometimes it feels kind of awkward, so I do tell them, no I'm not from China, I'm from Malaysia, and then they'll feel awkward and I'll feel bad because I made them feel awkward. So, I think it would be better to just ask rather than assuming where that person is from. It's things like that that make me feel uneasy, uncomfortable. Just like the audit and Irish weather, don't make assumptions.

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Figure 22.



© Pauline |2018 | Deloitte

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These are my shoes. One of the things that I realised when I came over to Ireland was that I use a lot of American English words, because you'd be watching movies and listening to music from America, and you pick up the American words not realising that they are American words and not English or Irish. One of the main ones was that I wear sneakers – or I think I wear sneakers! I was told really quickly that I wasn't wearing sneakers, that I was wearing runners and I was like, "but I don't run!" There's a lot of other words too, I have an Irish boyfriend, so every time I would say something that he would think is American he would tell me, in a joking way – but the runners and sneakers is the one that five years later I still do wrong, I still say sneaker. I think I've adapted to all the other ones. Again, it's not necessarily something negative but it's something that struck me in that yeah I have changed certain words that I use to make sure that I say it right, or 'right' according to this country. I don't necessarily perceive it as something negative, most of them are quite funny, but yeah you do flex into whatever language is spoken around you I guess.

We are working in our second language, and we're all doing it and it's fine, but a couple of weeks ago one of my more senior colleagues was reviewing my PowerPoint slides and had a few comments on them, which was absolutely fine - a bit of feedback on what I had to change, but one of the comments was on the grammar used in a sentence. The colleague said, it's probably because you're Dutch and it's probably a different translation, but this sentence needs to be changed, so just be mindful that, because you're not from here, you will always need to mind your grammar much more than anybody else. I was fine that day, I was like yeah that's fine, I'll change my wording, but then sometimes it takes a while before you realise what just happened. And now when I think back about it, they should not have said that. Not a problem at all giving me feedback and asking me to change a sentence around because they think it flows better, or that other words get the message across stronger, but there's no need to say that because you're not from here you probably will always have to be extra careful about what you write.

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Figure 23.



© Pauline |2018 | Deloitte

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'Hoi' is the Dutch version of 'Hi'. Even though there's only one letter difference, the languages are worlds apart, Dutch doesn't look anything like English. Your language will always be judged, it's always 'a thing'. Even though you are fluent, and you know everything, it will always be a thing,

or someone else makes it a thing by using it in your feedback – so that's the main thing I tried to get across in this picture. Even though there's only a teeny tiny difference, they could not be further apart when it comes to certain things.

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Figure 24.



© Alex | 2018 | Deloitte

In this pot the flowers are all different, we see the hyacinths, daffodils and other flowers, maybe four or five types and all growing together. For me, this is about diversity... we are very different and even different colours in bloom show this on the picture. We are in the same place, but we are all different and that's diversity, and that's the beauty of it. There are many of us, which represents diversity, and this also represents inclusion - that we are all together, and everyone flourishes.

The other interpretation is that there are many of us, we are all different and some people might be

growing better, or blooming better, and some are not that good. For various reasons, some might grow better in the same pot, but some might grow less, and it may be because of what's around them, that it's not a helpful environment to grow. The soil might be the same, but some might flourish better – for example the locals because of their backgrounds. As you progress in Deloitte, you're told you need to develop client relationships, but I'm not a local, I didn't study with the CEO of this or that company so my connections in Ireland or in Dublin wouldn't be the greatest.



Figure 25.



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This is a picture I took when it snowed in Dublin. It represents how life was disrupted suddenly – and that resembles how it was when I came to Ireland, how my life was disrupted. Whether it was the culture shock, change of country,

change of language. When it snowed in Dublin, I think after about two weeks everything was back to normal, so when you adapt to a new place, everything becomes normal. Eventually, things start feeling normal.

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Figure 26.



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I'm sure every person working in Deloitte knows what 5.15 means. Personally, I feel like 5.15 is not just the green light to go home, but rather it's time when I stop working for my employer and start working on my personal growth and development. This is the time when I put everything down and go and try to work on my own life, be that study, sports, goals

or hobbies, simply do as much as I can to become a better version of myself every day. Obviously when I am in work it's hard to think 'oh I need this in my life, or I need that', I'm focused on work, but when I get to 5.15 I put work aside and try to focus on myself as well. I believe that's vital in any kind of work environment, not just Deloitte.

Figure 27.



© Lesley-Anne & Vanessa |2018 | Deloitte

At Deloitte we're coming together to bring respect and inclusion into our workplace. We are colleagues in the same department, we do the same work – with other colleagues from different nationalities as well. We work for Deloitte, and we represent Deloitte the same way as everybody else. We have the brand in our hands – Deloitte is an international name, so whoever is here working for Deloitte is representing it.

I thank Deloitte for the opportunities that they give to everybody and I really hope that we

really represent them the way that they want. I think Deloitte are doing a good job for inclusion and diversity. They are giving opportunities to everyone, I think Deloitte are really open to giving opportunities to people from outside of Ireland. If you look around you will see so many nationalities, so many different faces. Whether the people who are working here really accept it and are open to it? That's maybe another story, but it will come with time – I'm positive it will come with time. It's not always easy as a foreigner because you have to adapt, but the local people have to adapt as well.

Figure 28.



© Alex | 2018 | Deloitte

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I wanted to take a photo that represents the five working days of the week – luckily I did not have to create a setting. When I think about what would make me feel included in Deloitte, it could be an opportunity to know if you could be treated the same way as locals. For example, we know that there are people who work part time, but I'm not sure I know any foreign people that work part time. I know Irish people who work part time, and you know obviously more in support roles than in client-facing roles. In my department there is a working mum who works

part time and in other departments there are mums with kids who work part-time, and they are Irish.

I have no clue if there is such an opportunity for me – because as a foreign person you need to stand out, you need to prove that you are part of the team. In order to get a promotion, you need to be the best, and work hard. Maybe that's what it would feel like for me to be included, to know as a foreign person if you may also work part time and not have to prove always that you are a working machine.

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Figure 29.



© Henyr |2018 | Deloitte

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This is my friend, working with me in the same department, with her daughter. We come from the same country, she's been here two years now. Her optimistic view of things creates a positive environment in our work place.

Where we're from (the Philippines) it's very common for us to be close with

our extended family, so our mothers, grandparents, take care of the babies when the mother or father is gone to work. This is the support system that currently we don't have here, thus it's necessary for her to adjust and adapt. Deloitte gives her the opportunity in terms of flexibility to sometimes work from home when needed.

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Figure 30.



© Melody | 2018 | Deloitte

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Deloitte is like a platform for people from different cultures to meet up because ever since I've worked in Deloitte I've met so many people from so many different nationalities. It's really interesting because if it wasn't for Deloitte I wouldn't have known so

many different cultures, met so many people. I believe it's kind of like a bridge between people, different kinds of people, and we should take advantage of that.

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Figure 31.



© Alex |2018 | Deloitte

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This shows a communal garden, and it's well looked after. The grass is cut, and all the bushes are round, they have no sharp edges. When I was thinking about what respect and inclusion might look like or what it feels like... basically that people understand that we are a big company, there are many different cultures here in Deloitte and so it's good to understand how

to behave, not to say things that might make another person embarrassed or feel uncomfortable. I don't know if it's a case of having a set of ethics or rules, so that it's in order, it's well looked after, taken care of – people think about what they are saying and doing. It's up to all of us, we should take care of our communal garden so to speak.

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Figure 32.



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This is a picture of Temple Bar, a very famous tourist spot. For me when I see this picture, I'm always reminded of the times when I go to the bars and then you meet so many different kinds of people, and that place is where you actually start talking to people that you don't know. You can ask them about their stories and you listen to their stories and that I think is a very good way to learn about people's cultural background. So, I think Deloitte is similar in a kind of way, because we have so many different kinds of people – I think we should all take this opportunity to learn about everyone, because, when you learn about people, team work actually works better - because there's so many differences between everyone.

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Figure 33.



© Pauline | 2018 | Deloitte

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We discussed what it is you'd like to say to others, what's the message you'd like to get across to Irish people working for Deloitte. What I would like to say to other people is just join us, ask us the questions – start talking, get to know each other, get experience. We talked about how people make assumptions a lot about where you're from, or assuming that you behave a certain way because you're from a certain

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country. What I tried to say here is just ask – join us on this journey, join us, join me personally on the journey I'm going through here – just ask me how I feel, and how I feel it's going, rather than making assumptions, let's do it together. On top of that Deloitte has been one massive journey for me – a rollercoaster of emotions.



## Findings

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### 3. Opportunities – Deloitte and Ireland



Findings



### 3. Opportunities – Deloitte and Ireland

*"I feel that Ireland gave me the opportunity to construct my career and build a future for myself. To me, Deloitte is an opportunity to develop the person I am, to advance into something better every day." [Adelin]*

Ireland generally, and Deloitte specifically, are perceived by participants as places where people can develop, grow and blossom. Participants are consistent in their description of Deloitte as a place where they are encouraged and given the tools to grow and develop. For example, Pauline says;

*"...at Deloitte I've felt that the door is always open for me, and that I can always walk straight through and do what I'm here to do and what I want to do."*

Ireland is experienced by participants as a place of opportunity, with an economy which

is once again booming, and which provides opportunities for them to develop their careers.

Participants also highlight that Ireland's social and economic growth is dependent on migrant workers, and that people from other countries working here in Ireland can add real value economically and socially.

*"Building sites are all you see around Dublin... we're all hands together to build this new Ireland. ...now we have the boom back again... we're part of it, even if Irish society is not happy with this, they need our expertise, they need foreign people to come and work for Ireland." [Vanessa]*

Another important aspect of the opportunity that Ireland provides relates to gender equality. Some female participants share how Ireland has provided them with opportunities which would not

necessarily be as readily available to women in their home countries. For example, as Mona puts it;

*"I feel that being in Ireland is working out for me, yes there's a lot of time when I miss my family, but at the end of the day I don't regret being here. Because I feel in some ways I'm better off here – I have my own independence, I'm free, I can earn, I can be the way that I am." [Mona]*

This does not mean that participants have not experienced negative aspects of Irish culture, with several sharing instances of racial stereotyping and racist abuse that they have faced in Ireland.

Figure 34.



© Adelin|2018 | Deloitte

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This picture represents Deloitte and Ireland in my personal view. Just like the cranes are constantly working on building something, I feel that Ireland gave me the opportunity to construct my career and build a future for myself. To me, Deloitte is an

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opportunity to develop the person I am, to advance into something better every day. It is a place where I constantly improve, because there's always something new to learn here. In some way, Deloitte is the crane that helps me to reach new heights.

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Figure 35.



© Adelin|2018 | Deloitte

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Every flower has only leaves at first, but in time it blooms and becomes that beautiful thing that puts a smile on people's faces. People are just like flowers, if you give them the chance to show what they can do, their time to bloom will come, and they won't disappoint. I was barely 19 when I started working in Deloitte, and for a while, I thought that I have no chance in this fast-paced environment. But my employer, my superiors and colleagues believed in me and my abilities to work as hard as the others, and after 8 months in the company I am just like everyone else and I thank Deloitte for it. Give people trust and time, and great things will bloom from that.

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Figure 36.



© Mona |2018 | Deloitte

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This is taken at one of the stalls down on Henry Street. The Irish flag is very similar to the Indian flag, where I am from. It's the same colours but just horizontal rather than vertical. However even though the flags are similar, the countries are very different. I come from a place which is very much in contrast with the culture or with the values that the people here (in Ireland) share. I feel the Irish culture is more open and they have more parity in terms of gender, there's less imbalance between gender or income groups. Where I am from a lot of differences exist, whether in gender or the rich and the poor. I feel that being in Ireland is working out for me, yes there's a lot of time when I miss my family, but at the end of the day I don't regret being here. Because I feel in some ways I'm better off here – I have my own independence, I'm free, I can earn, I can be the way that I am. Unlike in India where there are social expectations - you are expected to be getting married by 25 and if you're not, it's not a great thing. And it doesn't matter if you're getting married to the person you love, it's not your preference frankly – if you're 25 or older you have to get married.

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Figure 37.



© Ritu | 2018 | Deloitte

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This is a picture of someone paragliding in Wicklow. I belong to a very orthodox family in India, and I have a disability since birth, I have polio. So, when I was five or ten years old, everybody in my family said – she won't be able to run, she won't be able to do anything on her own, she'll have to be on crutches – all sort of criticism. Then when I was fifteen, they started to talk about marriages – how is she going to be able to get married, and all those kinds of criticisms from the family members, but not from my parents. It's

generally the custom in India to go for an arranged marriage and my parents started looking for a groom for me who also had a disability so that was the mindset in our culture. But my mum, she always motivated me to study and to stand on my own feet, so I think because of my mum I am here. This picture represents that I am flying in the sky – limitless, and now everybody in my family is very proud, never thought that I would come abroad, never thought that I would be here.

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Figure 38.



The endless sky reminds me of the endless opportunities we have in Deloitte.

© Melody |2018 | Deloitte

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The endless sky reminds me of the endless opportunities we have in Deloitte. Ever since I came to Deloitte, and ever since I came to Ireland, I've been given a lot of opportunities to travel around Europe, which I don't have back home because it's so far away and so expensive to fly to Europe. Not only that, I was exposed to different types of clients and learning ways to deal with different clients. It a very interesting experience – I really enjoy working here in Deloitte, in Ireland. It's a really beautiful picture, and I really enjoy my time here in Deloitte.

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Figure 39.



© Vanessa|2018 | Deloitte

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The first picture here you see a very old shop and then a DNG Sale Agreed sign. The second picture was taken on the Top Deck at Hatch Street in Dublin. Building sites are all you see around Dublin – and where we work in our department we work with a lot of property development. So, we're all hands together to build this new Ireland. We work in receiverships and liquidations and so we did a lot of work after the crisis, and now we have the boom back again. We are now working with the

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investments and the property market – so we are all hands together to build this new Ireland and we are grateful for this opportunity to be here and to be part of it in a way. We're part of it, even if Irish society is not happy with this, they need our expertise, they need foreign people to come and work for Ireland. There's so many opportunities now, and if you don't have the workforce, you have to go and get them from somewhere, otherwise you won't be able to develop.

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Figure 40.



© Ewa | 2018 | Deloitte

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There's so many buildings out there – it represents for me the idea that there are so many opportunities in Deloitte. Also, the blue sky shows that Deloitte is helping us so much, but there is also clouds that shows

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that there are problems as well... with people, with work, with the fact that English is not my first language. But so many buildings, so many opportunities.

Figure 41.



© Pauline |2018 | Deloitte

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This is one of the walls in the office in Whitaker Court – it's the back wall, loads of doors. I guess what I've tried to say with this picture is that – I was nervous coming to Ireland, not sure what to expect and what kind of walls I might come across trying to get a job or [if I

could] be myself and not encounter any of that... and it's actually quite a positive message in that at Deloitte I've felt that the door is always open for me, and that I can always walk straight through and do what I'm here to do and what I want to do.

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Figure 42.



© Pauline |2018 | Deloitte

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This is the gym around the corner, it says 'Don't Wish For It, Work For It' – when I came to Ireland, sitting at home after college and travelling, I was like 'what's next?' – you know it's like, oh God real life needs to start! You have a lot of dreams, a lot of things that you would like to do. One of the things, when I went travelling first, but then it hit me again afterwards, it's

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what's next? It's always 'what's next'? What am I going to do after, and at the time I wished that I could work abroad, and that I could build a career abroad, and that I would actually be able to do that – and I just realised that I had to stop wishing for it and actually had to just do it, and move abroad and try it out, and go from there.



Figure 43.



© Vanessa |2018 | Deloitte

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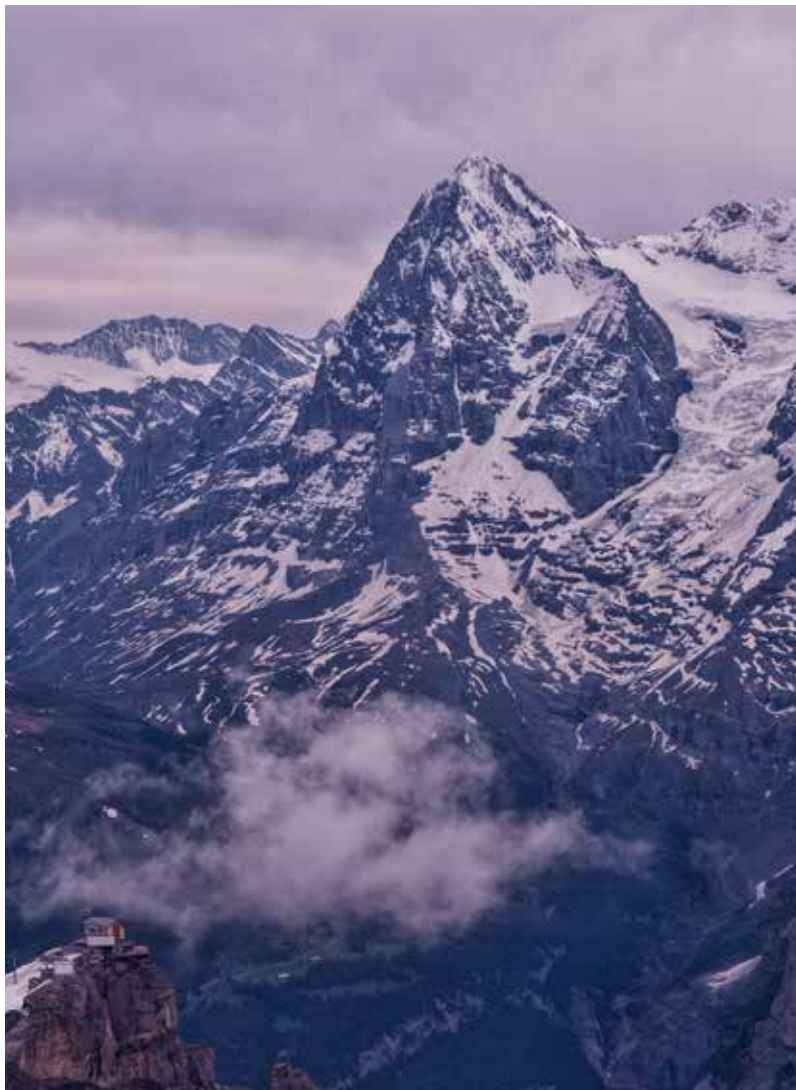
Dublin is changing, and something that I've noticed is the cycling, everywhere you look there are cyclists. It's something that you wouldn't have seen in Ireland ten years ago. It's another way for people to go to work, to get around, the city is changing. We are also facing the accommodation crisis, it's so difficult to find accommodation – especially if you're a foreign person and come to work here. You think it's a great opportunity – you find a job, but then you can't find somewhere to live, so people are struggling with this as well. You can see all around Dublin – auctioneer signs of Sale Agreed, Sold, To Let, Let Agreed, the bicycles everywhere, the cranes are everywhere on the landscape. You can see the old and new beside each other.

Everywhere you look things are changing – there are so many opportunities, Dublin is becoming a multi-cultural city, there are so many people coming to work. The companies are becoming so international and it's nice, it's so nice. I think it's going to be very enriching for the Irish society, and it's all positive, positive changes. It's good times.

You see there is an old building, a church and then a massive new building and a crane on top of it as well – Dublin is a city in transformation. New people, new ideas, new ways of working. Deloitte has such a big role in all of this, in many of the big projects Deloitte is involved – the brand, the name, Deloitte is everywhere. It's a great place for opportunities.

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Figure 44.



© Henyr |2018 | Deloitte

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There are two main elements to this photo, the mountain represents Deloitte and the small cabin which accentuates the overall composition of this photograph, represents each individual in Deloitte. Being part of a large organisation, one's talent and contribution might easily be taken for granted or unnoticed. However, Deloitte's different programmes

(e.g. IMPACT Day) and values (e.g. leadership at all levels) allows the individuals to challenge themselves, participate, develop their skills and have an innovative mind-set which contributes to the overall growth of the firm and one's personality, career, sense of purpose and well-being. We might be a small piece but we'll always be a part of the bigger picture.

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# Appendices

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Ethics and safety



Acknowledgements



Participants



# Appendices



## Ethics and safety

Participants' safety and emotional wellbeing was the number one consideration of this project. Throughout each stage of the project participants were given the option of sharing their photographs, thoughts, experiences or of choosing not to. The primary aim of this project was to create a safe space where participants could express themselves via photography to the degree that they wished to do so, without any requirement to share that with the other members of the group, the project facilitators or ultimately with the wider public via this catalogue and the associated exhibitions.

Participants' safety and emotional wellbeing is the number one consideration of this project.

Dr. Maria Quinlan has received specialist training in the photovoice methodology from the PhotoVoice Organisation and adhered to the organisation's statement of ethical practice.<sup>2</sup> Informed written consent was achieved over a phased basis to ensure that participants had clarity regarding what they were being asked to consent to, how their information would be used and what participating in this exhibition and catalogue would involve.

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2. <https://photovoice.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/Ethical-Statement.pdf>



## Acknowledgements

I would like to firstly thank the eleven men and women who participated in this project for sharing their experiences with such openness, honesty and vulnerability. This project is fundamentally their work and would not have been possible without their generosity of time and spirit. It was a pleasure to work alongside them on this project.

I would secondly like to thank Deloitte Ireland, and particularly Torunn Dahl, Eimear McCarthy and Brendan Jennings, for their vision in understanding how the photovoice methodology could be used to both help give voice to the experience of colleagues who have joined Deloitte Ireland from other countries, and to raise awareness regarding the complexity and nuances of what it takes to be a truly respectful and inclusive organisation.

Photovoice is a method that demands transparency and openness from participants with the aim of revealing truths. It takes an organisation that really wants to understand a topic to trust their employees with such a method. Deloitte is a great example of such a company, unafraid of hearing what its people have to say.

**Dr. Maria Quinlan**  
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### About the researcher

Dr. Maria Quinlan is a lecturer and research fellow at University College Dublin (UCD). Maria is a sociologist who specialises in the use of creative, person-centred research methods which aim to facilitate people in sharing their lived experience. She has over 15 years' experience as a researcher, and for the past five years acted as Research Lead at the Applied Research for Connected Health centre at UCD. Maria is also Head of Research at the Institute of Integrative Counselling and Psychotherapy (IICP), where she lectures in Equality and Inclusion; the Sociology of Mental Health; and Research Methods. She has carried out a variety of projects within the area of organisational behaviour, diversity and inclusion, including an in-depth study of gender and career progression within the financial and professional services in Ireland. Maria is a former Human Capital consultant at Deloitte Ireland.





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**Alex**  
Deloitte  
Europe



**Ewa**  
Audit  
Poland



**Henryr**  
Risk Advisory  
Philippines



**Lesley-Anne**  
Corporate Finance  
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**Melody**  
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## **Different but equal... exploring cultural diversity within Deloitte**

A participatory-photography project conducted by Dr. Maria Quinlan, University College Dublin



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