



# 2021 Impact Report

[irishrefugeecouncil.ie](https://irishrefugeecouncil.ie)

# Impact 2021



## Introduction:

2021 has been another very busy year for the Irish Refugee Council. We have supported more than 3,000 people across all our services and achieved real change for refugees and people seeking protection in Ireland. We are very grateful to all who support our work. Personally, I want to thank our staff and volunteers who are the driving force behind our impact. Most of all, we thank the people we have the privilege of working with. We are in awe of their fortitude, particularly during a global pandemic. 2022 presents new challenges and opportunities, we will continue to grow and adapt, challenge and question. Nick Henderson, CEO

## Drop in Centre: information to support navigation through the protection process

- 340 new people receiving assistance, support and advice from our Drop in Centre
- 15,167 incoming telephone calls, a 22% increase from 2020
- More than 600 email queries responded to
- 173 Asylum Support Network members and 14 trainings delivered to the Network
- 12 'Know Your Rights' trainings delivered in partnership with DLA Piper
- 7 online information sessions with more than 710 people registering to attend

## Law Centre: providing expert legal advice to secure protection from persecution

- Ongoing representation to 180 clients in international protection process and to 45 clients in family reunification
- 23 clients recognised as refugees; 10 positive permission to remain decisions, 25 positive family reunification decisions
- 2 new High Court Judicial Review cases
- Referral of 6 international protection applications to A&L Goodbody
- Attended 29 International Protection Office interviews between May - December
- 46 young people supported in family reunification through KIND project with support from pro bono partner firms, 8 positive decisions received
- Representation provided to clients in relation to Reception Conditions, Age Assessment, Dublin III, inadmissibility and more





### Afghanistan response: supporting and assisting Afghan people post the Taliban takeover

- Visa applications on behalf of 60 sponsors in Ireland submitted with a further 105 being worked through
- 30 applications submitted by pro bono partners A&L Goodbody
- Preparing to assist more than 150 sponsors in applying for the new Afghan Admission Programme with support from new pro bono partners, Matheson and Philip Lee solicitors in addition to A&L Goodbody
- Supported 19 Afghan people to move into independent accommodation
- Three presentations and engagements with people living in EROCs

### Education: advocacy and support to broaden access to higher and further education

- 56 people, from 19 countries between the ages of 24 and 43, given financial support through our Education Fund to access further and higher education, average grant amount: €950
- Advocacy on behalf of: 36 people to achieve a Sanctuary scholarship, 5 people to receive Student Support Scheme, 7 people receiving SUSI support
- 300 people supported through advice and information by phone and email
- 40 people referred to education guidance
- In partnership with College Connect published: A Community Needs Analysis with Refugees & People Seeking Asylum - Exploring Access & Barriers to Higher Education
- Distributed more than 72 laptops

### Employment: support and guidance to help people fulfill their potential and access work

- 121 women intensively supported through casework and advocacy
- Four 'Integration from Day One' programmes delivered with 53 women completing the Integration from Day One programme
- 11 people in work placement, 15 women progressing to sustainable employment from programmes
- 14 collaborations with employers
- Deloitte : 4 people in 6-month internships with Deloitte
- EY: 8 people in summer internships, 6 offered follow-on contracts
- IKEA: 3 people in 2-month internship, all offered permanent contracts
- 39 women partaking in mentorships

## Housing: helping people transition from Direct Provision and access secure housing

- 57 people accommodated through our 'Place to Call Home' housing project and five households supported to move on from the project in to long term accommodation
- More than 600 people given information and advice on housing
- 95 people at risk of homelessness supported, 60 people supported to move in to a HAP tenancy from Direct Provision or homelessness
- 130 people received training on leaving Direct Provision and Housing Rights
- 160 housing applications submitted

## Youth Work: empowering young people to build new lives in Ireland

- 46 young people, from 12 countries, engaged with through group projects and one to one support
- 27 young people receiving one to one support
- Presentations and outreach to 12 schools across Ireland
- Six youth Groups and Youth Projects: 'Just Us', 'Just World', 'Move Your Mood', Summer Workshops, Gaisce, 'Connections'
- Published Mind Yourself, A Mental Health Resource for Young People

## Resettlement: helping new Syrian and Afghan refugees build lives in Ireland

- More than 1,300 people supported and advised over phone, email and whats app
- More than 970 resettled or relocated Syrian refugees assisted and supported
- Types of support: Family Reunification, IHAP, Follow up on visas and travel, Citizenship applications, joint spouse visa applications, assistance with information and CV, Business start up and placements
- Syrian Women's Group in collaboration with One Million Stars commencing in May 2021
- Nine Irish Resettlement Community of Practice meetings, commencing in March 2021
- 5 groups (11 sessions for each) on cultural orientation
- International Community of Practice once a month
- Five trainings delivered to other resettlement workers in Ireland
- 2 Interpreter Training Programmes for interpreters and four for staff



### Community Sponsorship: supporting communities to welcome refugees:

- 17 community sponsorship groups engaged and supported
- 26 resettled people supported nine local community sponsorship groups
- 15 trainings to community sponsorship groups and two public webinars

### Advocacy for policy change:

- 14 press releases
- More than 50 media appearances across radio, TV and print
- Successfully advocated for people subject to the inadmissibility process to receive reception conditions
- Appointed a member of the Programme Board to oversee the end of Direct Provision
- Active member of the European Council on Refugees and Exiles
- Highlighted hotel quarantine of protection applicants beyond 14 days
- Seminar on the effects of Brexit on Irish and UK protection policy
- Health professionals report research (to be published in 2022)
- 'Our Voice, Our Rights' research project funded by IHREC in partnership with Spirasi (to be published in 2022)
- Highlighted ongoing delays in the international protection process through 'Hanging on a Thread' report
- Four joint letters and submissions on Afghanistan
- Ongoing advocacy for broadening access to higher and further education
- Ongoing advocacy for improved interpreter services and regulation in Ireland
- Presentation to the Joint Committee on Public Petitions
- Advocacy for the Land Development Agency's mandate to include accommodation for people seeking protection





## Reports, events and seminars:

