



IMPACT REPORT 2025



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FOREWORD

This Impact Report reflects a year of extraordinary commitment, impact and leadership at a time when the need for our work remains as urgent as ever. Across Ireland, thousands of refugees and people seeking international protection turned to the Irish Refugee Council for information, legal assistance, advocacy, housing support, education guidance, employment advice and community connection. Behind every statistic in this report is a person seeking safety, stability and the opportunity to rebuild their life.

During the year, the organisation provided intensive one-to-one support to more than 3,400 people and engaged over 20,000 people through its services, outreach, webinars and

information channels. These achievements are a testament to the dedication and professionalism of our staff, volunteers and supporters.

One of the year's most significant milestones was the landmark judgment secured by our Independent Law Centre before the Court of Justice of the European Union. This case reinforced important protections for people seeking international protection and demonstrated the critical role that strategic litigation can play in advancing human rights.

As we look ahead, we remain committed to an Ireland where every person seeking safety is treated with dignity, protected by their rights, and supported to build a future in their new community. The challenges ahead are significant, but so too is our determination to meet them.



Nick Henderson

Chief Executive Officer

HIGHLIGHTS 2025

3,404 people received intensive one-to-one supports



20,152 people supported through calls, emails and webinars

1,623 people reached through outreach



Coordinated civil society advocacy on the EU Pact on Migration and Asylum influencing the transposition of the Pact into Irish law

134 appearances and mentions in community, national, and international media



Launched a new, more user-friendly website

Awarded the Partnership Charity and Volunteering / Pro Bono awards by the Chambers Ireland Awards for the impact of KIND partnership, and 13 years of partnership with A & L Goodbody Solicitors



Secured a landmark Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU) ruling affirming the rights of homeless international protection applicants



*Clockwise from top-left: Our Head of Integration Services and young leader at the launch of our current Strategic Plan.
A former staff member speaking at our seminar on the Future of legal counselling under the EU Pact.
Speakers and panellists posing for a photo at the seminar on the Future of legal counselling under the EU Pact.*



IMPACT REPORT 2025

INFORMATION AND ADVOCACY SERVICE

Our Information and Advocacy Service, delivered by five staff members, provides free, expert, and confidential support to refugees and people seeking protection and their families across Ireland.

Assisted **1,180 people** through one-to-one casework, 311 of those were international protection applicants experiencing homelessness.

320 were refugees supported to apply for family reunification, beginning the first step to mothers, fathers and children being reunited.

1,428 incoming calls to our helpline answered, giving immediate answers to crucial questions.

1,157 people reached through outreach in 12 different locations and online, meeting people where they live and supporting them with accurate information.



Our Information and Advocacy Service team providing information during outreach sessions.

Ahmed's Story

The Irish Refugee Council first met *Ahmed in June 2025 after fleeing conflict to seek international protection in Ireland. Quiet and measured, he spoke with a clear sense of purpose: every step he took was driven by the hope of reuniting with his wife and daughter.

While awaiting a decision on his application, devastating news reached him. His wife had been killed, and his daughter was now alone. The loss was profound, yet it strengthened his resolve. Once granted status, he applied for family reunification independently and, against all expectations, received approval in under three months-something almost unheard of in cases that often take years.

He approached the Irish Refugee Council for support with his daughter's visa and a safe way for her to travel to Ireland. She had no caregiver available to accompany her, and he was unable to return. The Irish Refugee Council began coordinating with multiple organisations and agencies to identify viable options. Just as progress seemed steady, another difficulty emerged: there was no funding available to support safe travel, and none expected for months.

Despite each setback, the father stayed focused. If someone trustworthy could be arranged to accompany his daughter, he said he would work to save the necessary funds himself. His determination sparked collective effort. Through sustained advocacy and coordination, full funding was eventually secured. With countless calls, documents, and meetings completed, a travel date was issued for November.

As hope grew, another difficulty surfaced. Her state of mental health and trauma required specialised care during the journey. Travel had to be postponed until appropriate safeguards were in place. The news was disappointing, and for a moment the process felt uncertain. After renewed conversations and careful planning, necessary support was arranged. Two weeks later, she safely arrived in Ireland.



Today, father and daughter are rebuilding life together. They are settling into routines, strengthening communication, adjusting to school, and learning how to be family again as they begin to imagine a safer future.

**To protect privacy, name has been changed and the persons pictured are not connected to this story.*

UKRAINE RESPONSE

Our Ukraine Response work, delivered by one staff member, links people fleeing the war in Ukraine with information about their rights and entitlements.

1,741 calls

to our Ukraine Language Helpline answered, providing accurate and up to date information in Ukrainian and Russian.

1,312 email queries

responded to, providing guidance on rights, services, and supports available to Beneficiaries of Temporary Protection.

366 individuals

reached through 16 targeted outreach sessions in high demand and hard to reach centres including those accommodating children and elderly people.

4,242 people

reached with information through 11 webinars including on international protection.

Active member

of the core group of the Ukraine Civil Society Forum, which meets weekly, and the full Forum, which meets monthly.



Dear Oksana

I would like to sincerely thank you for all the help, support, and guidance you provided to me regarding the application for Temporary Protection in Ireland. Your advice and support were extremely important to me.

I am very happy to share that I have been granted Temporary Protection in Ireland. I am currently looking for a job and feel much more confident and at ease. I am also very pleased that there is an opportunity here to use and develop my English language skills - this brings me great joy and motivation.

Thank you sincerely for your work, your humanity, patience, and kindness. Your work truly has great value and helps people at very important moments in their lives. I wish you good health, peace, warmth, grateful people around you, and many bright days ahead. May all the good you do return to you many times over.



Our Ukraine Response staff member providing information during an outreach session.

IRISH REFUGEE COUNCIL INDEPENDENT LAW CENTRE

Our Independent Law Centre, comprising two Solicitors, one Trainee Solicitor and one Legal Officer, provides expert legal advice, representation, and strategic litigation to people fleeing war and persecution. Over the past year, we have worked to uphold rights, secure protection, and advance systemic change for those seeking safety in Ireland.

Representation before the Court of Justice of the European Union in respect of a client who experienced homelessness, resulting in leading judgment on States' obligations.

358 people supported with legal representation in their protection applications.

176 new files opened, and ongoing casework on many pre-existing matters including representation before the Court of Justice of the European Union in respect of a client who experienced homelessness.

Supported 74 age-disputed minors through representation in both age assessment and international protection. Some decisions have required challenge by way of judicial review.

41 family reunification cases supported, many of which are incurring significant delays.

Supported 118 international protection applications, many in respect of age-disputed minors, or children who have been taken into care following our intervention.

5 reception conditions cases supported, including first ever International Protection Appeals Tribunal appeal of withdrawal of reception conditions, resulting in International Protection Accommodation Service (IPAS) decision being overturned, and introduction of procedures around withdrawal.

Recognition at Chambers Ireland Awards of strength and impact of KIND partnership, and 13 years of partnership with A & L Goodbody Solicitors.

Delivered a seminar on the Future of Legal Counselling under the EU Pact on Migration and Asylum.

Protecting Children Through Legal Advocacy: Ali's Story

After arriving in Ireland, Ali was incorrectly assessed as an adult, placed in adult accommodation, which was inappropriate to his needs, and could not access education or any payments. Our Independent Law Centre supported him in appealing the decision about his age.

It was overturned, meaning that he was taken into the care of Tusla, accommodated appropriately with other teenagers, who he could play football and attend school with. The Independent Law Centre also represented him in his international protection application, attending the interview and writing legal submissions. Ali was recognised as a refugee. The team is now helping him to bring his mum and younger brothers to Ireland.



**To protect privacy, the person pictured is not connected to this story.*

YOUTH WORK

Our Youth Work programme, delivered by one staff member, empowers young people in the international protection process to build resilience, develop skills, and integrate into Irish society. Through group activities, one-to-one support, and leadership opportunities, we help young people thrive.

80 youth events delivered with 132 different young people attending at least one event.

25 different organisations or facilitators delivered at least one workshop bringing diversity of perspectives and techniques to the work.

194 young people supported through one-to-one casework helping them navigate a range of challenges they face after arriving in Ireland.

Broadened the **Young Leaders' Network** and delivered the first annual leadership retreat which gave young people, time, space and support to develop their skills and reflect on their values.

Launched the 'International Refugee Councils United for Youth' project with refugee councils from Finland, Estonia, and Denmark delivering cross border exchange in the pursuit of best practice.





Our Youth Worker engaging in a conversation with young people in our youth group.

Dear Jaime

That was an amazing trip! I really enjoyed it and hope you all did too. We had so much fun — music, dancing, laughter — everything was just perfect. I'm truly thankful to everyone, all the group members, for making it so special.

Hope we'll meet again soon!



EDUCATION PROGRAMME

Our Education Programme, delivered by one full-time and one part-time staff member, works to widen access to higher and further education for people in the protection process by removing barriers through financial support, tailored information, and advocacy. The work has helped hundreds of students access learning opportunities and navigate complex education systems.



71 people were granted funding through our Education Fund, (out of 809 applications), covering fees, travel, and other expenses, and highlighting demand that far exceeds available resources.

779 queries responded to, empowering people with accurate and expert information.

Presented about the work to the **South East Technological University Sanctuary Scholarship** committee.

Delivered **outreach and information sessions** across education, youth and accommodation settings, including in Donegal, Drogheda and provided support to National Youth Council Ireland's youth information project.



Dear Aoife & Marwa

I hope you both are doing great, and I hope you both find this mail in good health. I am writing this email to let you know that I have Successfully cleared the exam from Royal College of Surgeons of Ireland and being one of the only 2 candidates who cleared it, from specialists from all across the world.

I want to thank you guys and IRC for trusting me and supporting me at times when I needed the most, I can't wait to get the opportunities to be able to serve our Irish community and support IRC for their projects.

Thank you for EVERYTHING!



Our Education Officer chats with an attendee at our Education Fund celebration event.

HOUSING CASEWORK AND POLICY

Our Housing Casework and Policy work, delivered by one staff member, supports refugees and people seeking protection as they transition from IPAS accommodation and begin their new lives in communities across Ireland. We provide information, practical assistance, and policy advocacy to help people secure safe long term housing.

41 people received tailored support in searching for accommodation from eight volunteers trained in refugee housing rights through our Befriending Programme, combining practical assistance with fostering connection and wellbeing.

196 people supported with filling and submitting housing applications.

110 Somali women with refugee status supported through our Hands Together Somali capacity building workshop to promote independence and integration.

151 people reached with information on navigating the housing market through online workshops.

196 people received housing support through workshops and casework to facilitate reunification with close family members.

5 local authorities' staff trained on housing rights and entitlements of refugees.

Collaborated with medical social work teams in the Mater Misericordiae University Hospital and the Rotunda Hospital to improve access to medical care and housing supports on mutual cases.

Kose's Story

Kose is very determined and speaks English well, but his limited reading capacity and digital literacy affected his access to state documents and support.

He first submitted a housing application in 2023, but as of December 2024, he still had not successfully been added to a local authority housing list as he struggled with follow-up correspondence from his local authority.



After being recognised as a refugee, Kose took up employment in Dublin working in construction. When he received a transfer letter from IPAS, he moved in with a friend to avoid losing his job in Dublin.

When Kose's Irish Residence Permit (IRP) expired in September 2024, he lost his job and became homeless. Due to limited digital literacy, Kose struggled to engage with the Immigration Service Delivery portal and with his local authority to check the status of his housing application.

His confidence levels dropped significantly, and he found it difficult to communicate with different services. When he presented to Intreo (public

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employment service) for support, he was incorrectly advised that he was not eligible for social welfare supports due to his IRP being out of date. His financial situation became precarious as he lived off his dwindling savings, and he found himself on the brink of rough sleeping.

In October 2025, Kose attended an Information and Advocacy Service appointment where he was then referred to our Befriending Programme under the Housing programme. At the Befriending sessions, one of the volunteers initially engaged with him in French. This helped Kose build up his confidence, and over several sessions, he established trust in the organisation and engaged with us further for support.

Collaboration between our Information and Advocacy Service and Housing work helped him to renew his IRP and engage with his legal entitlements to social welfare and housing supports. Our Housing Officer attended his homeless assessment with him, where he was able to advocate for himself. Dublin Region Homeless Executive provided him access to emergency accommodation and helped him get his housing application with Dublin City Council approved. Kose now has a stable base to re-access work and has been referred to our Employment team to help him with getting back into employment.

Our Information and Advocacy Service staff member at a Housing protest.



HOUSING PROJECT – A PLACE TO CALL HOME

Our Housing Project provides safe, secure homes for refugees as they build their new lives in Ireland. By offering stable accommodation, we help people move forward with dignity and hope.

15 properties managed,
providing homes for 92 tenants across Ireland.

EMPLOYMENT

Our Employment Programme, delivered by two staff members, supports refugees and people seeking protection to better understand their employment rights, build skills, and access sustainable employment in Ireland. Through training, partnerships, and outreach, we support people to thrive and fulfil their potential.

416 people reached through training and workshops.

225 people were supported to improve their employment outcomes through personalised one-to-one casework.

180 provided with support to apply for permission to work while in the international protection process.

100 people reached through in person outreach.

Piloted a **4-week Employment Skills Programme** focused on wellbeing, workplace readiness, corporate culture integration, and employment.

Delivered **employment preparation workshop** to the Young Mothers Network.





Dear Amaka

I'm delighted to share that I've recently secured a Senior Business Analyst role! I want to extend my heartfelt thanks to you for your unwavering support, beginning with the Integration to Ireland training.

That program and your openness throughout helped me believe that I could pursue any role I'm qualified for, regardless of my asylum (now refugee) background. Your vulnerability and encouragement made a lasting impact, and I don't take any part of that experience or meeting you for granted.

I'm also thrilled to let you know that my husband has now joined us. Thank you again for your support during that journey, and please extend my gratitude to your colleague, Virginija, as well.

May God bless you and everyone at the Irish Refugee Council.



RESETTLEMENT

Our Resettlement programme, delivered by one staff member, supports Syrian and Afghan refugees as they rebuild their lives in Ireland, providing vital information, protection, and cultural orientation to help them settle and integrate.

4,200 queries received.

12 outreach sessions were delivered.

9 cultural orientation sessions were delivered to support new families with settling in Ireland.

26 online information sessions were delivered, mainly on family reunification, citizenship, visas, and the new changes under the 2026 Bill.

7 in-person training sessions were delivered for staff and volunteers working with refugees.

5 in-person training sessions were delivered on how to work with interpreters effectively when supporting people.

20 hours of online interpreter training and 3 in-person training days delivered for **35 interpreters.**



A participant at our Cooking With Refugees programme delivered by our Resettlement Officer.

COMMUNITY SPONSORSHIP



Our Community Sponsorship programme, delivered by two staff members, supports local groups across Ireland to welcome and integrate refugees into their communities. We provide training, guidance, and ongoing support to ensure a warm and successful welcome.

2 new Community Sponsorship groups supported and trained to welcome resettled refugees directly into their communities.

10 training and information sessions delivered to communities across Ireland to build capacity and awareness.

58 people supported to access to income supports and Housing Assistance Payments.

POLICY AND ADVOCACY

Our Policy and Advocacy work, delivered by one staff member, advocates for fair procedures, best practices, and the rights of people seeking international protection in Ireland. We work to influence legislation, raise awareness, and empower activists to create lasting change.

Chaired **10 meetings** of the Civil Society Coalition on the EU Migration and Asylum Pact, bringing together civil society to speak with one voice.

5 meetings and 4 trainings delivered for members of the Asylum Support Network, supporting the range of organisations across Ireland helping people.

Presented at the **Oireachtas Justice Committee** on the International Protection Act 2026.

Briefed TDs and Senators at **2 Oireachtas briefings** on international protection applicant homelessness and the International Protection Act 2026.

Press conference with civil society organisations on the International Protection Act 2026.

Submitted a detailed **analysis** of the General Scheme of the International Protection Act 2026.

2 'Activists and Advocates' workshops - for migrants and grassroots activists- on Understanding and Influencing the Irish Government.



Dear Alan

Just want to say thank you to Alan and the wider IRC staff for facilitating the regular meetings and providing such well researched information. It is an amazing support network to be a part of and it is very reassuring to see so many invested members coming together monthly to discuss and share news. Looking forward to more meetings in 2026.

Thanks for the great work of the IRC and the support network - its very informative.

I would like to say how grateful I am for the ASN meetings as it provides valuable information, networking and highlights new issues as they emerge. It is also a platform for a level of solidarity and advocacy that would be hard to replicate elsewhere.

Thank you.



Members of the Coalition on the EU Migration Pact pose at a photocall at Leinster House.

COMMUNICATIONS

Our Communications work, delivered by one staff member, delivers strategic messaging to promote the dignity, rights, and stories of people in the international protection process. Through media engagement, campaigns, and our social media platforms, we raise awareness, mobilise for different actions and influence public attitudes.

Launched our new website giving it a new feel and more user-friendly interface.

134 appearances and mentions in local, national, and international media.

9 press statements highlighting key issues and positive developments in international protection.

Represented the organisation on the **Coalition on the EU Migration Pact Communications** subgroup producing social media campaigns, press releases and supporting media engagement.

Supported the delivery of a **press conference** by the Coalition on the EU Migration Pact to influence the transposition of the EU Pact.

Launched, **'A new life can be overwhelming', national campaign**

to raise awareness on challenges faced by refugees in Ireland.

Supported the promotion and visibility of the **Refugee Week Ireland** initiative which fosters connection and solidarity.

Gained **2,680** new followers across our social media platforms, expanding our digital reach and engagement.



Journalist Sally Hayden speaking at a seminar we co-hosted on the experiences of people fleeing to seek protection including in Ireland.

THANK YOU

Thank you to the individuals, foundations, trusts, companies, and organisations who donated to support the work of the Irish Refugee Council in 2025. Without you, we would not be able to provide support to refugees and people seeking international protection. We hope that, as you read over the pages of this report, you see the lasting impact that your support has had on the lives of so many people.

We are a small independent charity that relies on donations and funders, and as the demand for our services continues to grow, in an increasingly hostile environment, we need that support more than ever. Thank you for the support, we could not do the work we do without you.



SUPPORTERS AND FUNDERS 2025

- Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund
- A&L Goodbody
- Apple
- The Association of Leaders of Missionaries and Religious of Ireland
- Children's Rights Alliance
- Community Foundation Ireland
- Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration & Youth
- Department of Justice
- Department of Tourism – Creative Ireland
- Dropbox
- Dunamase Development Futures
- European Council on Refugees and Exiles
- Finnish Refugee Council
- Hawthorn Tree Consulting
- Indeed Ireland
- International Catholic Migration Commission
- Ireland Funds
- Irish Red Cross
- Irish Youth Foundation
- Kind, Kids in Need of Defence
- LinkedIn
- Matheson
- Mason Hayes & Curran
- Mount Street Club Trust
- Musgrave Charitable Trust
- National Youth Council
- New Horizon
- Pencroft Unlimited
- Pobal
- St Stephens Green Trust
- TK Maxx Homestead Fund
- The Glorney Charitable Foundation
- The One Foundation
- Third Age
- University College Cork



Clockwise from top left: Participants working on an exercise during a Communication skills workshop. Our Employment Programme and Fundraising staff members at a Job Fair sharing information about our work. Our Communications Officer delivering a Communication skills workshop to activists and advocates. Our Independent Law Centre staff members with colleagues from other organisations at an Arthux Cox Pro-Bono Week event. Our Employment staff members pose for a photo with A & L Goodbody staff members after delivering an employment session jointly.

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Irish Refugee Council



Our staff and trustees pose for a photo following our AGM and the launch of our Strategic Plan last year.