

Protection & reception

The length of time

Question to GE16 candidates: Do you think that people in the asylum process should have an option to move to independent living situations if the government cannot process their application in a timely manner?

Question to GE16 candidates: Would you support a cap on the length of time people spend in initial reception centres and the right to work if the government are unable to process their applications in a timely manner?



There is a new single procedure in the recent International Protection Act which is being lauded by politicians as a cure all and an excuse for the continuation of Direct Provision. The new procedure is intended to speed up the application process meaning shorter stays in reception centres. Even with the best of intent, administrative delays happen. There is already a delay of six months from making an asylum application to the main interview and then further delays of about 12 months at the Tribunal stage. It also won't be of any real benefit to people caught up in the old asylum application system. With any reception system, people should have the option to move to completely independent living within six months, the time the politicians have told us is what it will take from application to decision.

Commitment needed from GE16 candidates: Place a cap on the length of time in reception centres and grant the right to work to safeguard against history repeating itself.

An alternative to Direct Provision

[Alternative reception systems](#) to Direct Provision have been put forward but have been continuously disregarded by Ministers, politicians and officials. Ireland needs to ensure that the institutionalisation of men, women and children is a thing of the past.

The human cost

- Over 1,225 [RIA September 2015] children are accommodated in Direct Provision alongside adults to whom they have no connection and who have no responsibility towards them
- There are no child safety checks carried out on adults living in Direct Provision
- [Nearly ten times more children living in this system were referred to the Child and Family Agency \(2014/2015\) than children living in the community](#)
- Separated children (those without parents or carers in the state) are moved out of foster care and into Direct Provision upon their 18th birthday as they are deemed an adult
- Depression and mental health issues among people in the Direct Provision system are up to five times higher than in the wider community
- The average length of stay in the system is 4 years
- The new Emergency Reception and Orientation Centres established under the Irish Refugee Protection Programme have all the same features as Direct Provision centres.

A profit making industry

- In all, there are 17 firms which receive about €50 million a year to run 35 Direct Provision centres across the State, providing for just over 4,500 asylum seekers.
- Ireland has paid over €850 million to private contractors for accommodating asylum seekers, some of whom own more than one centre.
- People in this system are denied the right to contribute to the economy regardless of how long it takes to process their application.
- The 'Value for Money' report published by the Reception and Integration Agency in 2010 was a narrow evaluation based on financial costs only. It looks at the short term operational costs but not at a not-for-profit model or the long-term cost legacy arising from this discredited system.

For a family of 4 for a year:

- Govt spend €48,000 on DP

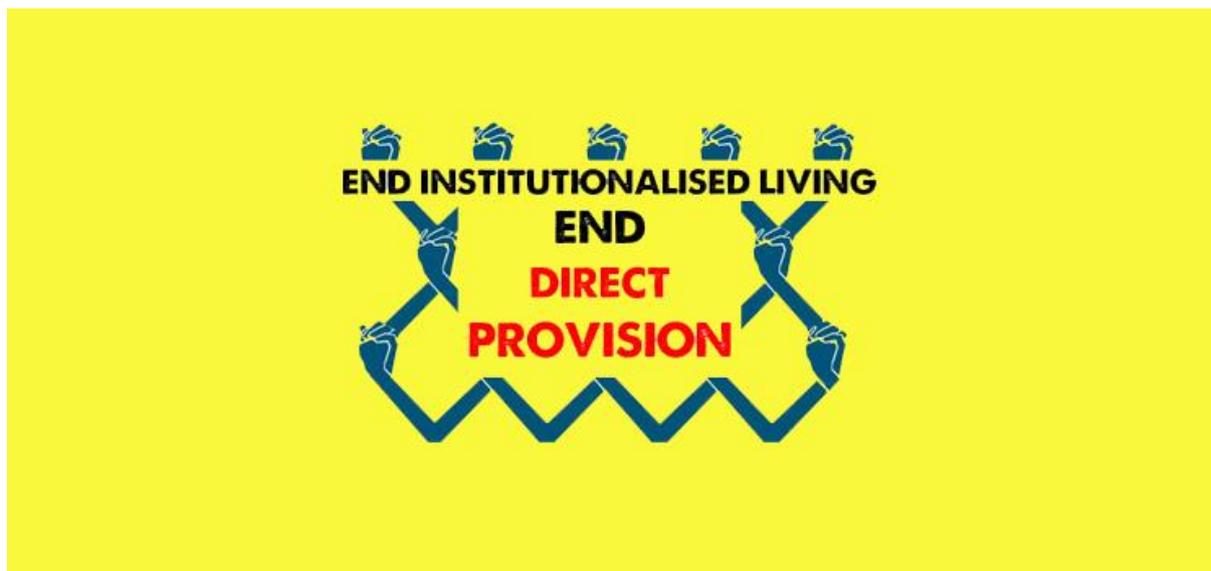
- Payment to family < €3,000



Question to GE16 candidates: Do you support an end to the current system of Direct Provision in Ireland and would you work for an alternative initial reception system which does not operate on a 'for profit' basis and allows for self-determination?

Commitment needed from GE16 candidates: Support to establish an appropriate reception system that:

- ~ embodies the best interests of the child
 - ~ allows for self-determination
 - ~ is based on care and not profit
- ~ identifies and supports individuals with special needs and vulnerabilities at an early stage
 - ~ makes early legal advice available
- ~ includes independent complaints (to the Ombudsman and Children's Ombudsman)
 - ~ includes inspection mechanisms
 - ~ provides the right to work



If you are unsure or want to know more about the system of Direct Provision you can explore the many issues further [here](#).