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Presentation on the work of the Community Engagement Team to AILG

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Integration and Youth.
20 September 2024



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What we do

The Community Engagement Team (CET) was established in the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth and with the support of Department of An Taoiseach, **to engage directly with elected representatives, relevant Local Authorities, Local Development Companies, and other entities and individuals.**



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Our purpose

The purpose of the team is to **improve the flow of information** regarding arrivals into areas and to help equip local communities with the accurate information required to help them understand the current situation.

- An important role of the CET to **identify local requests** and to bring these to relevant Departments.
- The team **does not have a role** in the procurement of premises or the allocation of new arrivals.



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Objectives

Structures

- Clear structures to engage with key stakeholders, public representatives and community leaders on Ireland's response to increased immigration due to the war in Ukraine and an increase in international protection applicants

Co-ordination

- More effective co-ordination across Government Departments, agencies, local authorities and communities

Information flow

- Improve information flow between Government Departments and local communities

Updates

- Provide a mechanism for updates and queries between local stakeholders and relevant authorities



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Migration – the facts

Thousands of people leave Ireland each year to live in other countries, and thousands more come here to live, work and study. We take a fair approach to immigration, and people and families are welcome to live and work in Ireland if they satisfy our conditions.

- People from the countries in the European Economic Area and UK nationals can live and work in Ireland without a visa or work permit and Irish nationals can do the same in the EU and UK.
- People from outside the European Economic Area apply for permission to work, live or study here. Similarly, Irish people moving to non-European Economic Area countries need to seek permission from those countries.
- Ukrainian people fleeing Russia's invasion have EU Temporary Protection. This means they can live and work in Ireland or throughout the EU.
- People seeking International Protection come here looking for asylum and safety. This is a legal form of immigration and there is a clear process in place for International Protection applications and decisions.



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Population and Nationality

- In April 2024, Ireland's estimated population is 5.38 million people.
- The majority of our non-Irish population come from other EU nations or the UK.
- In the year 2023 we processed 270,000 applications for entry into Ireland or other immigration services, including 13,000 applications for international protection – 4.81%.

Source: [CSO](#).



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International Protection – Legal Framework

Ireland is obliged under international agreements to accept, process and provide access to accommodation to these people – this is a decision taken by all EU Member States and the international community.

Refugee Convention 1951

The 1951 Convention provides the internationally recognized definition of a refugee and outlines the legal protection, rights and assistance a refugee is entitled to receive.

International protection Act 2015

Introduction in Ireland of a single procedure for applications for international protection encompassing an examination and determination of eligibility for international protection (refugee or subsidiary protection) and permission to remain.

EU Recast Directive on Asylum

Creates EU rules on living (or 'reception') conditions for applicants for international protection who are waiting for their application to be examined.

Temporary Protection Directive (2001/55 EC) activated by EU Council Decision EU 2022/382

As of 4 March 2022, immediate protection in EU countries for people displaced by the Russian invasion of Ukraine.



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International Protection - Process

No country can return people while they wait for decisions on their applications. This is a long-established part of Irish and international law.

Categories

- A person fleeing the war in Ukraine who is Beneficiary of Temporary Protection
- A refugee who has been granted international protection in Ireland
- An asylum seeker who is seeking the right to remain in the Irish state – an International Protection Applicant.

Asylum seekers must be provided with basic supports:

- somewhere to stay
- education for children
- the right to work after 6 months.

In Ireland, people are also entitled to an allowance of €38.80 per week for an adult and €29.80 per week for a child.



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Reasons why People Come to Ireland



Perception of Ireland
as a *safe* location



Family / Connections
already in Ireland

English-speaking



International reputation
as welcoming / not hostile





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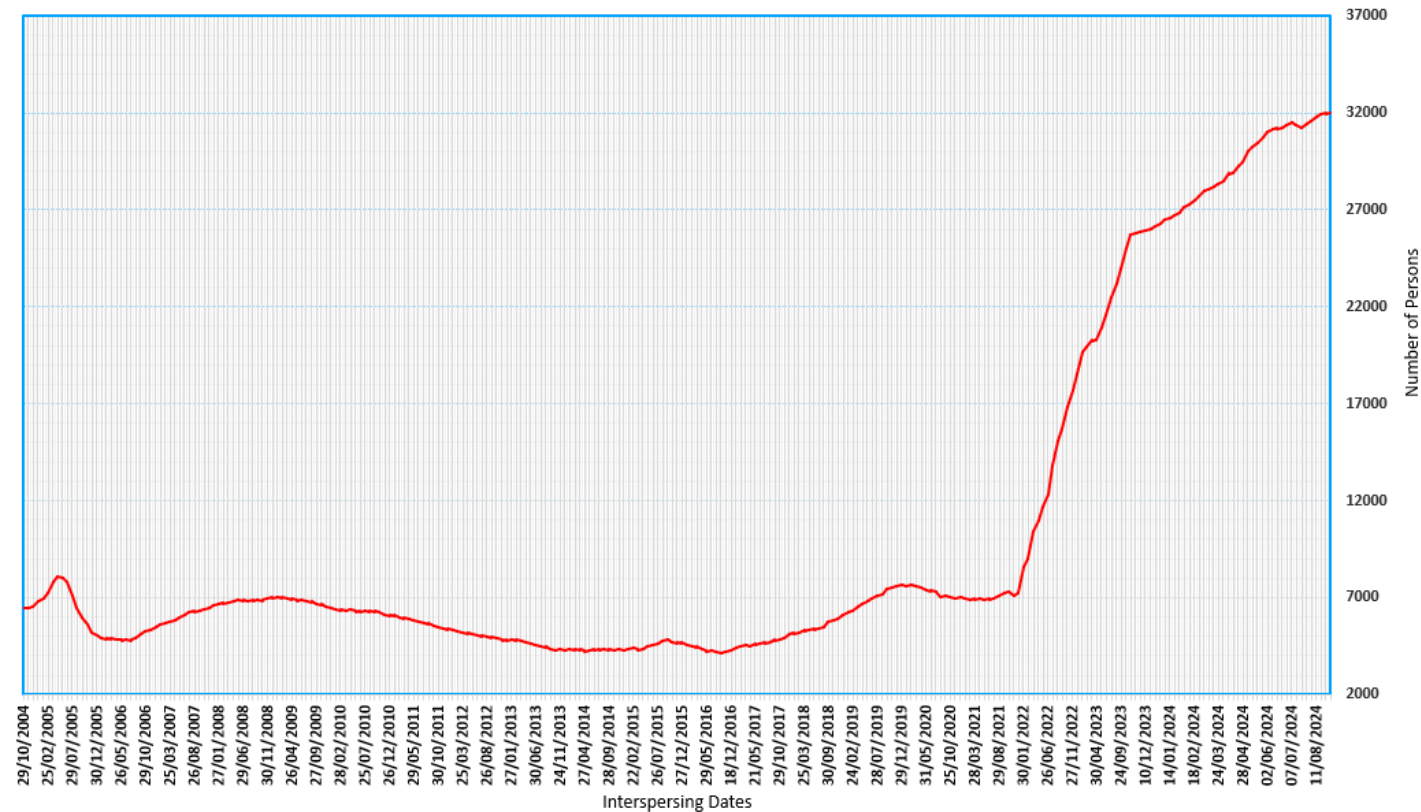
Establishing a person's identity

The Department of Justice fingerprints all people applying for international protection in Ireland, and the data is stored on Eurodac. This is an EU-wide biometric database containing fingerprints of applicants and EU / European Economic Area (EEA) nationals. If the authorities find that people who have been fingerprinted are linked to any serious crimes, they may be refused protection and returned.

Migration Trends & Future Outlook



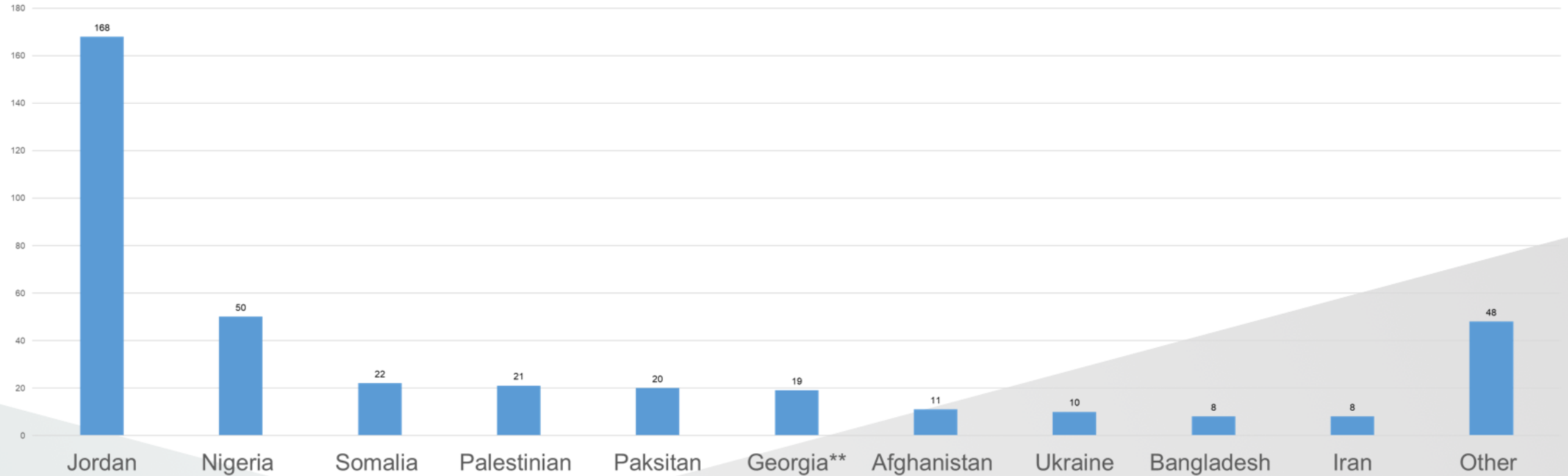
IPAS Accommodation Occupancy 2004 to 01/09/2024



Date	Occupancy
01/09/2024	32,017
31/12/2023	26,279
31/12/2022	19,104
31/12/2021	7,244
31/12/2020	6,997
31/12/2019	7,683
31/12/2018	6,106
31/12/2017	5,096



Weekly arrivals by Nationality



** Safe Countries

Facts & Figures



Current IPAS Accommodation Overview

Total Centres 319 Total IPAS 32,192 Of whom Children 8,550



IPAS Accommodation

- 49 Centres
- 6,545 IPAS
- Of whom 2,019 are children



Emergency Accommodation

- 263 Centres
- 23,954 IPAS
- Of whom 6,421 are children



National Reception Centre

- 1 Centre
- 362 IPAS
- Of whom 110 are children



Citywest Transit Hub

- 1 Centre
- 410 IPAS
- Of whom 0 are children



Tented Accommodation

- 5 Centres
- 921 IPAS
- Of whom 0 are children



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Find out more

Weekly reports on accommodation:

The International Protection Accommodation Service publishes weekly and monthly reports showing numbers of residents, information by county and other details <https://www.gov.ie/en/collection/90641-statistics/#2004>

We cannot provide details of changes in specific site's occupancy levels, to protect residents' security and privacy, and because the provision of accommodation is fluid and emergency in nature.

Payments for IPAS Accommodation

While specific individual contractual arrangements are considered commercially sensitive, the Department publishes reports on all payments over €20,000. These reports are published quarterly and are available <https://www.gov.ie/en/collection/dfdadb-department-of-children-and-youth-affairs-purchase-orders-for-20000-o/#2022>



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Accommodation Process

Long-term plan

The Comprehensive Accommodation Strategy for International Protection aims to address the accommodation shortage and reform the system.

- State-owned sites around the country will be used to provide emergency tented accommodation
- Prefabricated and modular units
- Conversion of commercial buildings
- Purchasing of targeted turnkey properties.
- Design and build of new Reception and Integration Centres
- Upgrading of some existing accommodation centres.



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Accommodation Process – State-owned lands

As part of the Government strategy, publicly-owned sites that would be suitable for development have been identified and considered. In partnership with relevant stakeholders, the Department of Integration can license the chosen site, and work with developers and contractors to put accommodation and resident services in place

The Department complies with all the statutory regulations that apply to the development of the accommodation centres, including Appropriate Assessment Screening and Environmental Impact Assessment Screening. The appointment of a competent Project Supervisor Design Process (PSDP) and Project Supervisor Construction Stage (PSCS) is done through the Health and Safety Authority.



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Accommodation Process – Private Contracts

In April 2024, the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY) sought expressions of interest, through www.etenders.gov.ie for suitable accommodation centres for people seeking international protection.

Expressions of Interest were sought from property owners, private developers and building contractors who are interested in selling or leasing:

- existing properties/buildings in turnkey condition;
- existing properties that require upgrading/refurbishment/renovation.



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International Protection Procurement Services





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Supports and Services for Residents



Education - The Department of Education's policy is to integrate school-aged migrant children and young people into existing mainstream schools as quickly as possible, to provide stability for the children.

When new children arrive into a community, the education teams locally are informed and will support the family, with IPAS teams, to access school places. If the nearest schools to an accommodation centre do not have capacity, then transport will be sought to other schools with available capacity within the locality. A TESS IPEWO will work with centre management and families supporting school enrolment for International Protection applications.



Health - As part of the HSE's support for both Ukrainian people and international protection applicants, each HSE Community Health team has been allocated additional funding to establish a migrant health response including: migrant health team, catch-up immunisations, GP sessional clinics, psychosocial supports and central co-ordination. The migrant health teams are staffed with clerical officers, Public Health Nurses and Nurse management, interpreters, relationship and peer support workers, psychologists and other staff.



Employment - People applying for international protection with permission to access the labour market can avail of Intreo (the Public Employment Service) supports and services. Post Leaving Certificate (PLC) courses are also often focused on directly developing skills for employment. International protection applicants will be granted access to them, as well as employer networks to make applicants aware of available opportunities and to raise employer awareness of applicants' skills and qualifications.



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Communicating with Local Communities



There has been a need to act with speed to deal with the upsurge in arrivals from Ukraine and International Protection Applicants.



Accommodation has had to be secured at short-notice with viable options having to be considered.



At times the State has had to prioritise expediency over engagement with local communities.



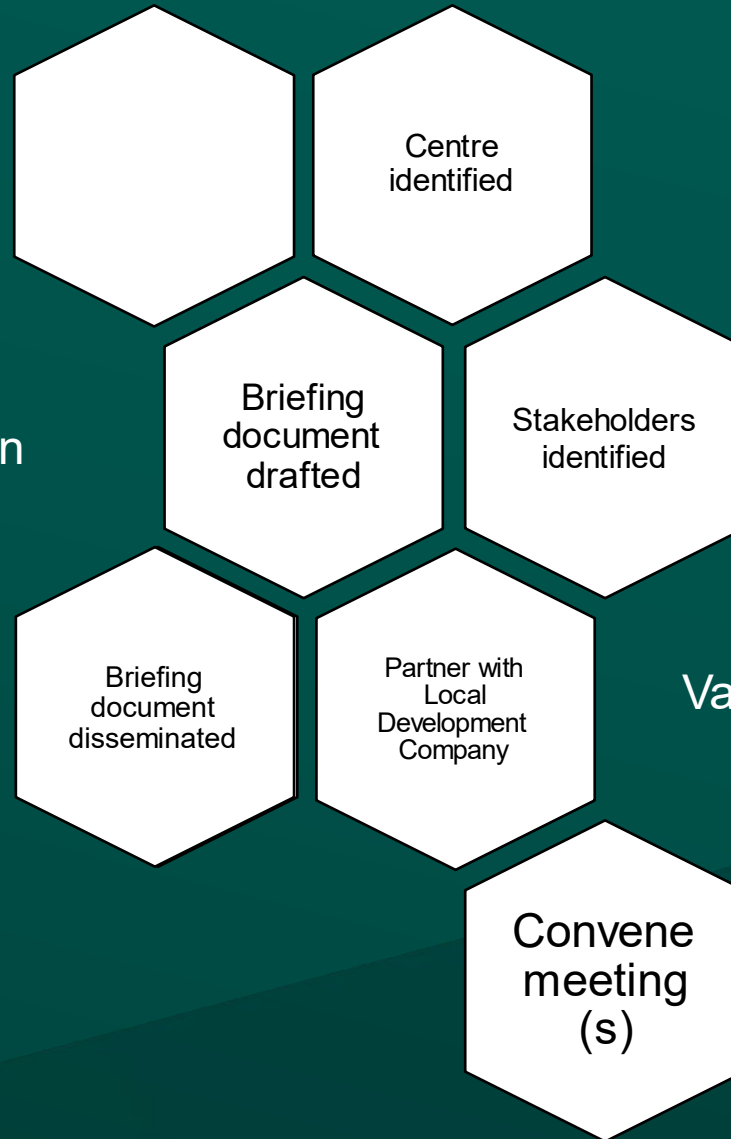
Priority now is to inform local communities to the greatest extent possible of new developments in their areas.



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How we work

Factual information



Value local knowledge



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Community Engagement Meetings

Meets with community representatives in one venue where **all views can be respectfully shared.**

By invitation rather than a public meeting and generally include 10/12 people.

Presents information, listens and brings feedback on any legitimate concerns to the administration team who liaise with various teams with the aim of responding to communities as quickly as possible.

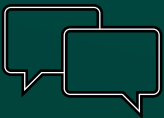


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Community Engagement in Action



103 detailed briefing notes setting out all the details of a property including capacity, resident profile, contract duration and centre management.



54 open or proposed accommodation centres were the focus of the Community Engagement Team between October 23 and 13 September 2024.



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Integration Supports –Migrants and International Protection Applicants

As a country, we want to integrate new arrivals into Ireland in a way that works for them and for the communities who welcome them.

National and local programmes help people who are new to Ireland to access public services, education and training, to find paths to employment, and to connect with their shared communities.





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Integration Supports – Communities

Communities and community groups make huge efforts to welcome new arrivals to Ireland, and Government provides support to help and recognise this important work.

Communities
Integration Fund

Community
Recognition
Fund

International
Protection
Integration Fund

Anti-racism
Programmes

Volunteer
Supports



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Questions?

Contact Community Engagement Team
community@equality.gov.ie