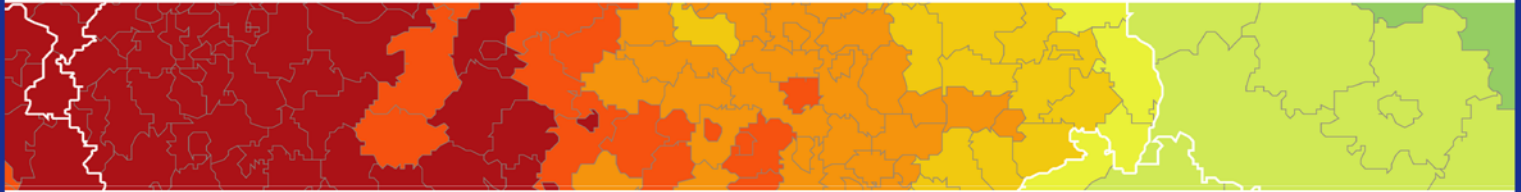


Inspire policy making by territorial evidence



Impacts of refugee flows to territorial development in Europe

Applied Research

Case study – Limerick
Overcoming the challenges of distribution: the integration of refugees and asylum seekers in Limerick, Ireland

Version 18/07/2019

This applied research activity is conducted within the framework of the ESPON 2020 Cooperation Programme, partly financed by the European Regional Development Fund.

The ESPON EGTC is the Single Beneficiary of the ESPON 2020 Cooperation Programme. The Single Operation within the programme is implemented by the ESPON EGTC and co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund, the EU Member States and the Partner States, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland.

This delivery does not necessarily reflect the opinion of the members of the ESPON 2020 Monitoring Committee.

Authors

Lison Rabuel, VVA (Italy)

Advisory Group

Project Support team: Radu Necsuliu (Romania), Lodovico Gherardi (Italy) and Andor Urmos European Commission

ESPON EGTC

Martin Gauk (Policy Expert), Laurent Frideres (HoU E&O), Ilona Raugze (Director), Johannes Kiersch (Financial Expert)

Information on ESPON and its projects can be found on www.espon.eu.

The web site provides the possibility to download and examine the most recent documents produced by finalised and ongoing ESPON projects.

This delivery exists only in an electronic version.

© ESPON, 2019

Printing, reproduction or quotation is authorised provided the source is acknowledged and a copy is forwarded to the ESPON EGTC in Luxembourg.

Contact: info@espon.eu

ISBN: 978-2-919795-16-1

Table of contents

List of Figures	iv
List of Tables	iv
List of Boxes	iv
Abbreviations	v
Executive summary	I
1 Profile of the area	1
1.1 Socio economic context	1
1.2 Current stock and flows of asylum seekers, refugees, and migrants in the area of analysis	3
1.3 Challenges, opportunities and impacts	7
1.4 Institutional and policy framework dealing with asylum seekers and refugees	10
2 Analysis of selected policies/challenges	14
2.1 Topic and motivation	14
2.2 Objectives and logic of intervention	14
2.3 The actors	16
2.4 Implementation	20
2.5 Outcomes, impacts, and results of the specific policy	21
3 Conclusions and lessons learnt	24
References	25
List of Annexes	27
Annex I Impacts	27
Annex II Policy and actors classification	30
Annex III Network analysis	33

List of Figures

Figure 1: Limerick Metropolitan District	1
Figure 2: Distribution of the non-Irish population in Limerick City and County, 2016	2
Figure 3: Average monthly rents for all property types and all bedrooms, 2008-2017, EUR....	3
Figure 4: Asylum applicants from outside EU-28 in Ireland, 2009-2018	4
Figure 5: Number of people accommodated in direct provision centres, October 2018	5
Figure 6: Radar chart of policies in place	13
Figure 7: Different actors and their roles	16
Figure 8: The actors and their relations in the programming and implementation phases	19

List of Tables

Table 1: Involvement of actors in the different policies in place	18
Table 2: Legend	20
Table 3: Financial impacts and their indicators – regional/local level	27
Table 4: Economic impacts and their indicators	28
Table 5: Social and political impacts and their indicators	29
Table 6: Policy classification: different types of policies for different targets at Country and local level	30
Table 7: Actors classification: A picture of the actors involved in the asylum seekers and refugees' system at Country level	32
Table 8: Actors classification: The actors involved in the specific intervention under analysis	33
Table 9: Mapping the actors and the roles	34
Table 10: Relationship matrix - PROGRAMMING PHASE	36
Table 11: Relationship matrix - IMPLEMENTATION PHASE	37

List of Boxes

Box 1: Every Child is Your Child	23
--	----

Abbreviations

ASR Network	Asylum Seeker and Refugee Network
EC	European Commission
ECIYC	Every Child is Your Child
ESPON	European Territorial Observatory Network
EU	European Union
GDP	Gross domestic product
INIS	Irish Naturalisation and Immigration Service
IRPP	Institute for Research on Public Policy
IWG	Limerick Integration Working Group
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NUTS	Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics
RIA	The Reception and Integration Agency
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

Executive summary

This case study looks into the integration of refugees and asylum seekers in Limerick – the fourth biggest city of Ireland, located in the southwest of the country. Limerick has a significant migrant population, with 9.6% being non-Irish, and is a recipient of asylum seekers under the national distribution policy – so called direct provision (7.6% of the direct provision population of the country).

Over the past few years, the city and county of Limerick has taken numerous actions in order to facilitate the integration of immigrants, refugees and asylum seekers. The Limerick Integration Plan 2017-2020 (2018) is the third multiannual plan promoting the integration of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers. The Limerick Integration Working Group, comprising different actors (policymakers, NGOs, community members), is responsible for coordinating the implementation of the plan and streamlining the topic of integration to all policy areas.

The actors are working together to overcome some of the challenges generated by the direct provision system. The government is providing housing and income support, but asylum seekers at the different accommodation centres suffer from a lack of privacy, overcrowdedness, isolation, poverty, lack of education, and a lack of information on processes and job opportunities, which considerably hinders short- and long-term integration. Once they obtain their status, refugees also face a range of challenges, such as the difficulty of finding decent housing and stable employment (regardless of whether they come from the asylum system or as part of the UNHCR Resettlement Programme).

The set of policies analysed in the case study aim to counteract the detrimental effects of the direct provision system and to encourage the integration of asylum seekers and refugees. These include the provision of information and support from the NGO Doras Luimni, language courses, scholarships from the University of Limerick and fundraising events by the initiative, Every Child is Your Child. The combination of these initiatives is deemed to have very positive impacts as they tackle different barriers to integration for migrants, refugees and asylum seekers, in particular language barriers, lack of information on education and training opportunities, poverty and to some extent psychological issues.

Taken together, they allow the refugee population in Limerick to integrate better than if they solely relied on basic housing and income support offered under the direct provision system. A number of refugees and asylum seekers have been able to attend free education and training, access to employment, or benefit from additional financial support to pay for their children's school supplies. For the community as a whole, the combination of these initiatives has a positive impact in terms of openness, increased tolerance, etc.

The success of these policies can be attributed to two main factors. First, the strong interconnection between the different actors involved in the initiatives: the Limerick Integration Working Group, the Limerick City and County Council, the different NGOs (Doras Luimni, the Jesuit Refugee Service), the University of Limerick and the local community. Second, the

reliance on a couple of committed actors who are dedicated to advancing the work on integration despite an acknowledged lack of human resources and funding. The case study shows that these linkages can be a strength, but also can endanger the sustainability of the initiatives as they rely on a limited number of committed actors, and on little financial resources. Furthermore, it should be noted that significant challenges remain as the system of direct provision creates difficulties for the smooth running of the initiatives (difficulties to travel from one place to another outside the centre, to eat outside, to open a bank account, etc.).

Taking these aspects into account, it is possible to outline the following important policy aspects to consider. First, absorption capacities of the different territories are not enough to guarantee the successful distribution of asylum seekers across a country if there are no common standards regarding living conditions. Second, it is important that initiatives are financed over time, and benefit from sufficient human resources. Finally, the presence of a network of committed actors and institutions is a real advantage, as highlighted by the Limerick ecosystem.

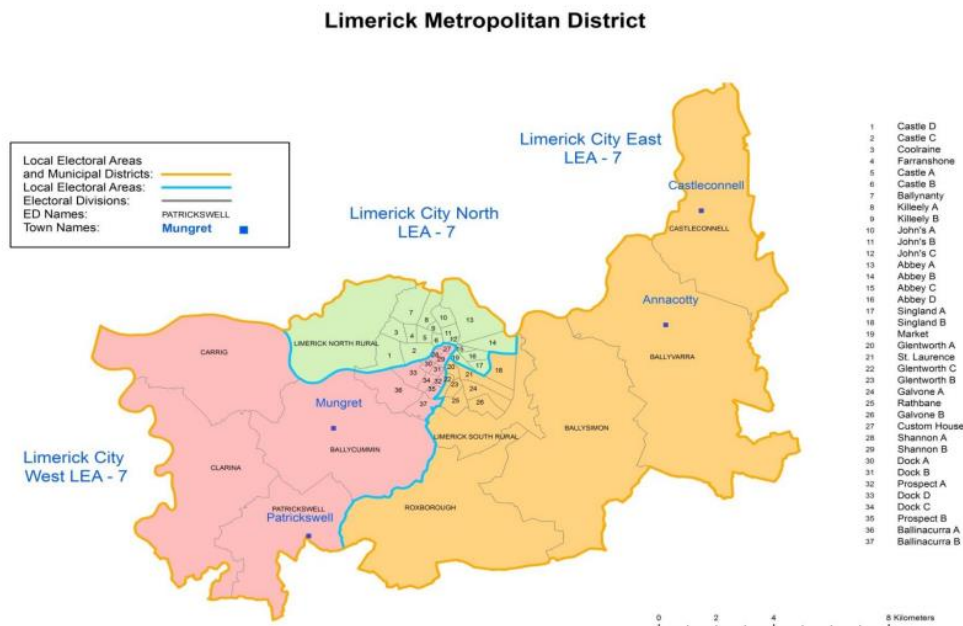
1 Profile of the area

Limerick is located in the southwest of Ireland, 200km away from Dublin. The city and county of Limerick belongs to the NUTS 3 area of the Mid-West (IE051), along with the county of Clare and Tipperary, and is part of the NUTS 2 area of Southern Ireland. This Chapter provides an overview of the socio-economic context, the inflows and distribution of asylum seekers and refugees in the Limerick area.

1.1 Socio economic context

Limerick is the third largest city of the country with a population of 194,899 in Limerick City and the County, according to the 2016 Census of Population.¹ Around 100,000 people (104,952) live in the metropolitan area, a figure that has increased by 3% since 2011. In particular, the city centre has experienced a significant change in population over the past five to ten years, with population increases of between 24% and 41% in some electoral divisions (Shannon A, Shannon B, Dock A, Custom House and John's C).² The figure below shows the division of Limerick into different districts.

Figure 1: Limerick Metropolitan District



¹See the results of the 2016 Census for Limerick City and County: [http://census.cso.ie/sapmap2016/Results.aspx?Geog_Type=CTY31&Geog_Code=2AE19629148F13A3E055000000000001#SAPMAP_T10_1001](http://census.cso.ie/sapmap2016/Results.aspx?Geog_Type=CTY31&Geog_Code=2AE19629148F13A3E05500000000001#SAPMAP_T10_1001); and for Limerick municipal district: http://census.cso.ie/sapmap2016/Results.aspx?Geog_Type=MD2014&Geog_Code=C87338E0-A7B9-4305-B7F2-FC23410FEFE2#SAPMAP_T2_200.

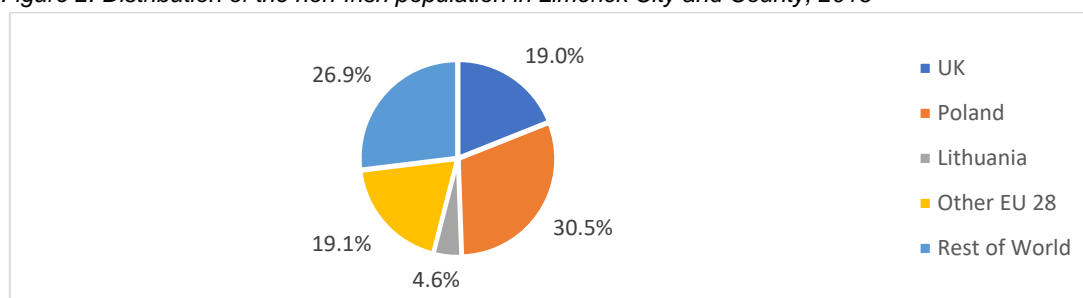
² Paul Partnership Limerick (2016). Limerick Metropolitan Area – Socio-Economic and Demographic Profile. Available at: <https://www.paulpartnership.ie/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/Limerick-Metropolitan-Area-Profile-Census-2016.pdf>.

Limerick is a rather young city, with 50% of the population under the age of 35 in the metropolitan area. Total fertility rate in the area was 1.8% on average between 2014 and 2017, which is slightly below the national average of 1.9% but above the EU average of 1.6%, according to Eurostat. Furthermore, Limerick had an 'old dependency' ratio of 19.3 for the period 2014-2017, which means that 100 persons of working age must provide for 19.3 retired individuals. Although this figure is much below the EU average of 28.5, it has increased compared with the periods 2008-2013 (16.4) and 2005-2007 (15.3). This trend is expected to continue as the number of people aged above 65 is continuously increasing: it rose by 18% between 2011 and 2016 in Limerick City and County, compared with an overall population increase of 1.6%.

According to the 2016 Census of population, non-Irish nationals represented 9.6% of the local population in Limerick City and County, which is slightly less than the national average of 11.4% but still higher than the EU average of 7.5% in the same year (as per Eurostat data).³ This figure has remained stable since 2011, when it was 9.8%. In the city of Limerick (metropolitan area), this percentage is higher (13.6%), but it should be noted that it compares with significantly higher percentages in other Irish cities (18.6% in Galway City, 17.1% in Dublin City).

Around 30% of the non-Irish residents of Limerick are Polish, 19% are from the UK, 25% from the rest of the EU (with a significant Lithuanian and Latvian community), 15% from Asia, 4% from Africa, 8% from the rest of the world (including Australia, Russia and the USA), as the figure below shows.

Figure 2: Distribution of the non-Irish population in Limerick City and County, 2016



Source: Irish Central Statistics Office, 2016 Census data.

The Limerick area is a major contributor to national economic growth. The GDP per inhabitant over the period 2013-2017 was EUR 56,833, which is higher than the national average (EUR 47,867) and the EU average (EUR 28,600), according to Eurostat. Similar to the rest of Ireland, the city of Limerick has experienced significant economic growth after the economic crisis. The average GDP growth was of 17.1% between 2014 and 2017, which is even higher than in the

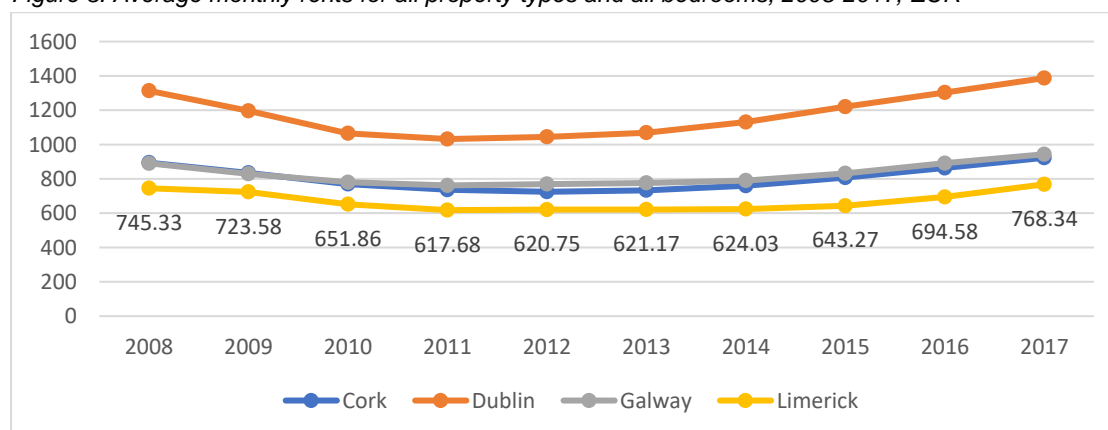
³ Number of people residing in an EU Member State with citizenship of a non-member country (21.6 million) and number of people residing in an EU Member State with citizenship of another EU Member State on 1 January 2017 (16.9 million) out of the total EU population (512 million). Sources: Eurostat (migr_pop3ctb) and (demo_gind).

rest of the country, the national average during this time being 15.6%. The unemployment rate has also much reduced since the financial crisis (from 12.8% in 2008-2013 to 8.9% in 2014-2013) and is slightly lower than the national average of 9.3%. Because of this trend, Limerick has attracted a lot of workers over the past few years.

The population of Limerick has a satisfactory level of education, with 54.1% of the people aged 30-34 with tertiary education, which is slightly higher than the national average of 52.5% and much higher than the EU average of 38.9%, according to Eurostat.

A major concern in Limerick relates to access to affordable housing. Latest figures published by the Irish Residential Tenancy Board (RTB) show that monthly rents in Limerick city increased by more than 12% in 2018 to reach EUR 880 at the end of June. This issue is common to the rest of Ireland, and somewhat less significant in Limerick than in other Irish cities, such as Dublin (see the figure below), where monthly rents in 2017 were 1.8 times higher than in Limerick.

Figure 3: Average monthly rents for all property types and all bedrooms, 2008-2017, EUR



Source: Irish Residential Tenancy Board.

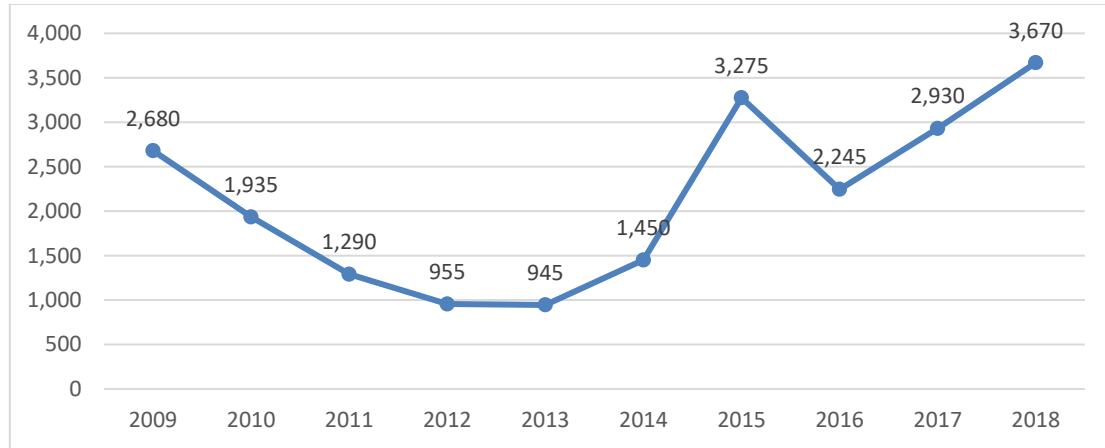
The rise in rental prices creates some challenges regarding access to decent housing, to which refugees (especially those who just obtained their status) are particularly vulnerable.⁴ This aspect will be developed in Section 1.3.

1.2 Current stock and flows of asylum seekers, refugees, and migrants in the area of analysis

Although traditionally an emigration country, in the past few decades Ireland has become more and more a country of immigration, especially after the EU enlargement of 2004. In 2018, there were 3,673 asylum applications lodged in Ireland, which represented an increase of 25.5% on 2017, and an even more significant increase compared with 2016, according to Eurostat (see the graph below).

⁴ Interview with Doras Luimni, 21/02/2019; Interview with a Limerick Integration Working Group representative, 12/03/2019.

Figure 4: Asylum applicants from outside EU-28 in Ireland, 2009-2018



Source: Eurostat (*migr_asyappctza*).

According to the Irish authorities, there is no clear explanation for the increasing number of people seeking asylum in Ireland in 2018, and that it is too early to say whether rising asylum claims will continue at the same rate.⁵

Once an application has been lodged, asylum applicants are dispersed across 37 accommodations centres in the country until a decision on their status is taken. This distribution policy is known as **direct provision**. Seven of the centres are state-owned but the majority of the centres are managed on a commercial basis by private contractors. The Reception and Integration Agency (RIA), a functional unit of the Irish Naturalisation and Immigration Service (INIS) under the Department of Justice and Equality, is charged with providing accommodation and ancillary services to asylum seekers under the direct provision system.

In October 2018, a total of 5,848 asylum seekers or refugees were living in 37 direct provision centres across Ireland, including over 1,500 children.⁶ **In the Limerick region, around 450 people were living in three direct provision centres, including around 50 children.** Latest figures show that, as of October 2018:

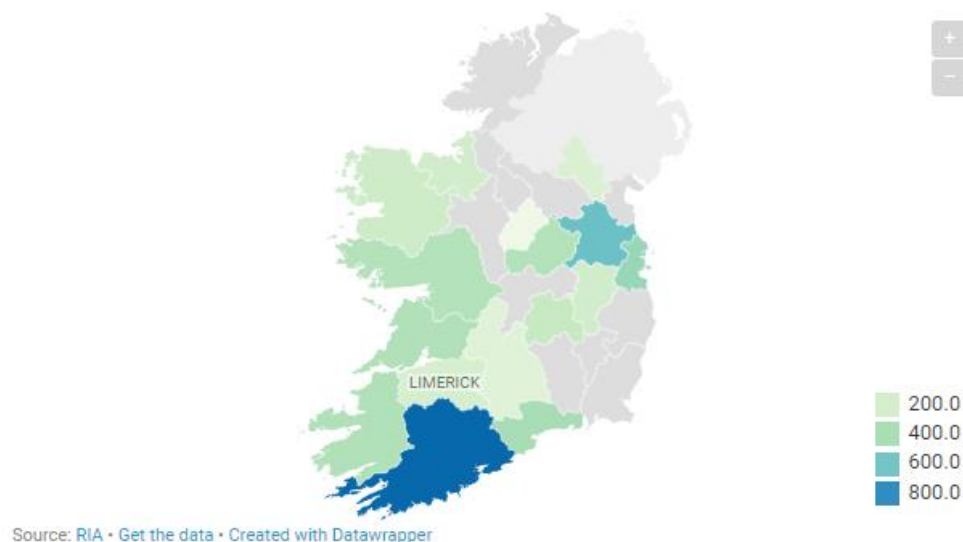
- **Mount Trenchard** is currently at maximum occupancy of 85 people, accommodating single males.
- **Hanratty's** has a capacity of 118 of which 114 places are occupied. It accommodates single males and females.
- **Knockalisheen** is located in the county of Clare, though 10 minutes from Limerick City Centre. The centre can accommodate 250 people and currently hosts 247. It welcomes single males and females, as well as families.

⁵ Conor Lally, (2 January 2019). "Number of asylum claims reaches 10-year high". The Irish Times. Available at: <https://www.irishtimes.com/news/social-affairs/number-of-asylum-claims-reaches-10-year-high-1.3745511>.

⁶ RIA (2018). Monthly Report October 2018. Available at: <http://www.ria.gov.ie/en/RIA/October%202018%20monthly%20report%20updated%20.pdf/Files/October%202018%20monthly%20report%20updated%20.pdf>.

This makes Limerick a major recipient of asylum seekers under the direct provision system, accounting for **7.6% of the total direct provision population in the country**. However, Limerick is far from being the Irish county with the highest share of people living under direct provision: the highest number of residents are located in the county of Cork (912 comprising 17% of the direct provision population), Meath (622 or 12%) and Dublin (470 or 9%), as the map below shows.

Figure 5: Number of people accommodated in direct provision centres, October 2018



Residents of direct provision centres account for around 0.1% of the total population in the county of Limerick (0.2% when taking into account the residents of the Knockalisheen centre, located in the county of Clare). This is less than in other counties in Ireland, such as Westmeath and Monaghan, where such centres account for 0.4% of the total population and a very small percentage of the overall total migrant population (which represents 9.6% of the total population in Limerick County, as mentioned in Section 1.2).

The number of direct provision residents in the Limerick area has remained stable over the past few years. Around 700 residents were present 2008, when an additional accommodation centre was in operation, but this has since closed. Furthermore, the Westbourne Holiday Hostel centre (with a capacity of 90 people) closed in January 2017, which has slightly decreased the number of direct provision residents in Limerick County.⁷

⁷ Interview with Doras Luimni, 21/02/2019.

Anecdotal evidence shows that the majority of refugees tend to settle in the location where they were in direct provision. Owing to this trend, Limerick has become the home of many refugees and persons with permission to stay.⁸

In addition to direct provision centre residents, **Limerick is also one of the locations of the resettlement programme and has welcomed 83 people in this framework in 2017.** Ireland has set a resettlement quota for refugees of 200 persons per year since 2005, which was filled until the financial crisis. Thereafter, uncertain economic conditions have hampered the filling of the quota.⁹ Cases are selected on the basis of a paper application or following face-to-face interviews in the country of the refugee by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). Dossiers are submitted to the Department of Foreign Affairs and are examined by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Justice Equality and Law Reform.¹⁰ There is limited data on the profile of the Limerick's cohort, but at national level there were a total of 792 arrivals in 2017, of which the majority (429) were minors.¹¹ Finally, Limerick does not host asylum seekers under the EU relocation strand.

There is no data on the provenance of the refugee and asylum seeker population in Limerick, but interviews confirmed that the main nationalities represented at the national level were also represented in Limerick.¹² **In 2018, about a quarter of people seeking asylum in Ireland were from Albania (12.5%) and Georgia (12.3%), followed by Syria (9.1%), Zimbabwe (7.7%) and Nigeria (6.8%).** The same nationalities were also represented in 2017, with a higher percentage of Syrians (18.6%) as well as 6.8% of Pakistanis. In 2018 around 63.2% of asylum applicants were male, 37.4% were women and 28.8% children.¹³

Interviews have confirmed that a particular profile cannot be established regarding education, skills and employment situation of the refugee and asylum population in Limerick. On this

⁸ Helen O' Grady (Doras Luimni) (2008). Barriers to the Labour Market for Refugees and Persons with leave to remain in Limerick. Available at: <http://dorasluimni.org/wp-content/uploads/pdf/publications/barrierstolabour.pdf>. A person with leave to remain is a person who has been refused a refugee or subsidiary protection status or has withdrawn from the asylum process (because they married or entered a civil partnership with an Irish citizen or an EU citizen). Source: http://www.citizensinformation.ie/en/moving_country/asylum_seekers_and_refugees/refugee_status_and_leave_to_remain/leave_to_remain.html.

⁹ Know Reset (2013). Country Profile – Ireland. Available at: http://www.know-reset.eu/files/texts/00164_20130705130333_knowresetcountryprofileireland.pdf.

¹⁰ Refugee Legal Aid Information – Resettlement in Ireland. Available at: <http://www.refugeelegalaidinformation.org/resettlement-ireland>.

¹¹ IRPP Statistics – 26 February 2018.

¹² Interview with Doras Luimni, 21/02/2019.

¹³ International Protection Office, Monthly Statistical Report, December 2018. Available at: <http://ipo.gov.ie/en/IPO/IPO%20Statistics%20December%202019-FINAL.pdf/Files/IPO%20Statistics%20December%202019-FINAL.pdf>.

aspect again the population is very diverse, and the challenges faced at local level remain the same as at national level.¹⁴

1.3 Challenges, opportunities and impacts

Most challenges related to the arrival and integration of the refugee and asylum population in Ireland are linked to the national distribution system of direct provision. As highlighted by the NGO Doras Luimni in several reports, housing and income support under the direct provision system was designed as a short-term measure for asylum seekers waiting for a decision on their application, but in fact many applicants experience lengthy stays (on average three years, which can go up to six to seven years). This creates a range of physical and mental health issues, declining skills and barriers for short- and long-term integration.

The NGO highlights the following key issues in the centres¹⁵:

- **Privacy & overcrowded living conditions:** residents live in shared accommodation, with single adults sharing rooms with up to eight people;
- **Isolated locations:** some centres are located in rural areas, with limited transport connections and support services. This is the case of the Mount Trechard centre in Limerick;
- **Length of time:** the average length of stay in direct provision is 24 months, with some residents having spent up to 10 to 12 years living in these conditions;
- **Food:** three meals are provided at set times each day; limited cooking facilities available in a small number of centres;
- **Poverty:** an allowance of EUR 21.60 per adult and per child is provided on a weekly basis;
- **Education:** limited access to further and higher education, and limited information on potential opportunities;
- **Employment:** until February 2018, asylum seekers had no right to work in Ireland and therefore direct provision residents could find a job. The new law improves the situation but some barriers remain, as developed below;
- **Standards & monitoring:** living conditions vary widely from centre to centre. There is little trust in the RIA complaints procedure and limited publicly accessible information on complaints or transfer decisions. The existing inspection system focusses on health and safety issues and does not consider the social or emotional needs of residents;
- **Profit:** the majority of direct provision centres are managed by private contractors on a for-profit basis, on behalf of the State. In the Limerick area, the two Limerick centres are privately owned. The Knockalisheen centre, in the county of Clare, is state owned;
- **Health:** physical and mental health issues among residents are very common. Asylum seekers are five times more likely to experience mental health issues and psychiatric conditions;
- **Children & family life:** 30% of direct provision residents are children (about 11% in Limerick). Children have been born and raised living in these conditions, and the long-term developmental effects are still unknown.

¹⁴ Interview with Doras Luimni, 21/02/2019.

¹⁵ Doras Luimni website, "Direct Provision". Available at: <http://dorasluimni.org/direct-provision/>.

Some issues are particularly relevant in the Limerick context and have been highlighted in an interview with Doras Luimni.¹⁶ One common concern at the direct provision centres of the Limerick area is the **lack of minimum standards for comfort, health and safety**. The lack of private space – or, in the case of the Knockalisheen centre open to families, space for children to play or for doing their homework – was also emphasised. One issue particular to the Mount Trechard centre is its isolated location (five kilometres away from the nearest village), which creates additional barriers to integration, employment and general access to services for its residents. The interviewee has noted that the Irish government is working towards streamlining conditions of the different centres as a result from the transposition of the European Directive on Reception Conditions in July 2018.

An additional challenge highlighted by Doras Luimni as well as other organisations¹⁷ was the **difficult transition of residents from the centres to local communities** after a positive decision on their status has been taken. First, high rental prices in the Limerick area make it challenging to find housing, and some residents have to remain in the centres long after they have been granted refugee status. Second, because most residents have lived in the centres for a long time in the particular conditions described above, it is difficult for them to find a job, access proper education and training, and undertake the different procedures to receive subsidies.

Before the transposition of the Reception Conditions Directive in July 2018, asylum seekers were not allowed to work in Ireland. Since then, asylum applicants can request labour market access permission if they have not received a first instance decision on their claim after nine months (see Section 1.4 below). According to the NGO Doras Luimni, this condition prevents a part of the asylum population (the one that has already received a decision and is undergoing an appeal procedure) from requesting a permission, which is still not ideal. However, some positive effects have already been noted, such as an increase in the number of asylum seekers looking for job or training opportunities or preparing CVs ahead of receiving a decision on their application.¹⁸

A study conducted in 2008 by the NGO¹⁹ collected some information on the profile of the refugee population: education, employment and potential issues that could hinder access to the labour market. Although the study is 10 years old, some of the challenges highlighted seem to still exist.

¹⁶ Interview with Doras Luimni, 21/02/2019; JRS.

¹⁷ Irish Research Council, Irish Refugee Council (2016). Transition from Direct Provision to life in the community; Jesuit Refugee Service Ireland (2015). Right to Work – Evaluating the Case for Extending the Right to Persons Seeking Protection in Ireland.

¹⁸ Interview with Doras Luimni, 21/02/2019.

¹⁹ Helen O' Grady (Doras Luimni) (2008). Barriers to the Labour Market for Refugees and Persons with leave to remain in Limerick. Available at: <http://dorasluimni.org/wp-content/uploads/pdf/publications/barrierstolabour.pdf>.

Notably, the study found a **high engagement in education and higher education by refugees in Limerick, as well as a good knowledge of English**. Recent results from the 2016 census, although covering the total migrant population and not only refugees and asylum seekers, tend to confirm this trend: the majority of those who speak foreign languages have a good grasp of English: 77.4% in the city centre and 81.6% in the city and environs.²⁰ It should also be noted that out of the 400 adult refugees living in the direct provision centres of Limerick, about 40 of them have received a scholarship to study at the University of Limerick under the University of Sanctuary programme (see Chapter 2).²¹

The 2008 impact study found **major obstacles for refugees/persons with leave to remain when they attempt to exercise their right to education and work in Ireland**. One deterrent for education is the three-year residency rule requiring refugees to pay international student fees until they have been resident in this country for three years. Other difficulties highlighted are restrictions based on status – e.g. refugee/leave to remain, high fees, access to information and lack of English.

While many of participants of that study were currently, or had previously completed further education in Limerick, a number had also been engaged in the labour market. At the time of the research, 20 people (33%) said they were actively engaged in the labour market with eight people (13%) in full-time employment – six in manufacturing industries and two employed in a customer service call centre. The remainder were either working in the care sector or behind the scenes in retail outlets on a part-time basis. The 2008 study found those who were in employment were generally working at a level that did not fulfil their initial set of skills. The same was true for education level; it was generally felt that language posed the greatest difficulty when attempting to secure employment.

It should be noted that some of the challenges highlighted above are also relevant to refugees coming to Ireland under the UNHCR resettlement programme. Even though those refugees benefit from one year of support services, with dedicated staff actively taking care of their integration (in Limerick, this has been outsourced by the city and county to the NGO Doras Luimni), after that year the support stops. In the case of the Limerick cohort that arrived in 2017, financial support from the city and county council (receiving funds from the government) stopped in June 2018. After that, refugees are faced with the same challenges as the rest of the refugee population, namely that most of them are still in an unstable financial and social situation. Notably, only a limited number of refugees from the 2017 cohort have found a stable job, according to figures from the NGO Doras Luimni (six individuals out of 20 families).²²

²⁰ See the Limerick Integration Plan 2017-2021.

²¹ University of Limerick (2018) New four-year scholarships for asylum seekers and refugees. Available at: <https://www.ul.ie/news-centre/news/new-four-year-scholarships-asylum-seekers-and-refugees>.

²² Email received from Doras Luimni on 20/03/2019.

There is little information available on financial, economic and social/political impacts. At national level, the direct provision system provides asylum seekers with EUR 21.60 per person per week. At local level, the City and County Council of Limerick has a budget of EUR 10,000 dedicated to migrant integration under the Intercultural Cities programme, a Council of Europe initiative co-funded by the government. This allows different streams of the Limerick Integration Plan 2017-2020 to be implemented, which sets out the city and county's key objectives for integration of the migrant community, including refugees and asylum seekers (see Section 1.4 below). The Limerick City and County Council also grants some funds for migrant integration under the city's other policy areas, such as education and health. This allows several initiatives helping the integration of asylum seekers and refugees to be financed – e.g. education and training programmes, language courses and community events. This is completed by the involvement of other actors such as the University of Limerick, the NGO Doras Luimni and the members of the different migrant communities (Polish, Filipino, African countries, etc.). The combination of these initiatives to complement basic housing and income support offered under the direct provision system is deemed to have had very positive impacts in the area, as Chapter 2 will develop.

1.4 Institutional and policy framework dealing with asylum seekers and refugees

Ireland's legal framework for asylum procedures, reception conditions, detention and content of protection is made up of a series of international and European regulations: the International Protection Act 2015, the Immigration Acts 1999, 2003 and 2004, the Illegal Immigrants Act 2000, the European Convention on Human Rights 2003, the EU Subsidiary Protection and Reception Conditions Regulations, and the Dublin system, among others.²³

As mentioned above, Ireland transposed the **EU Reception Conditions Directive** in July 2018. In line with the directive, Ireland now grants access to the labour market and vocational training to people who have not received a first instance recommendation within nine months. In August 2018, the Department of Justice and Equality published the Draft National Standards for Direct Provision Centres for public consultation. It is hoped that agreed national standards will be finalised in 2019 as part of the government's efforts to comply with the EU (recast) Reception Conditions Directive.

The **Irish Refugee Protection Programme** was established by government decision in September 2015 as a direct response to the refugee crisis, and has pledged to allow access of 4,000 persons to the country using the EU relocation mechanism (2,622 asylum seekers to be relocated from Greece and Italy), UNHCR resettlement strands (1,040 refugees mainly from

²³ Asylum Information Database – Overview of the legal framework, Republic of Ireland. Available at: <https://www.asylumineurope.org/reports/country/republic-ireland/overview-legal-framework>.

Lebanon) and other mechanisms (notably unaccompanied minors previously resident in the Calais camp).²⁴

Over the past few years, Ireland has been very active in promoting migrant and refugee integration through different policy measures, e.g. the National Action Plan Against Racism (2005-2008), Migration Nation (2008), Migrant Integration Strategy and sector specific integration strategies (Intercultural Health Strategy 2007-2012, Integrated Workplaces 2008, An Garda Síochána's Diversity Strategy and Implementation Plan 2009-2012), Intercultural Education Strategy (2010-2015), Culture 2025 – Eire Ildanach: A Framework Policy to 2025. In particular, the **Migrant Integration Strategy** (2017) provides the framework for government action on migrant integration from 2017–2020. The goal is to create an integrated society in which migrants are facilitated to play a full part in Irish society.

In the area of Limerick, the **Limerick Corporate Plan 2015-2019** outlines the city and the county's commitment to actively promote diversity, equality and partnership and ensure due regard for human rights. The **Local Economic and Community Plan 2016-2021** reiterates this commitment, as well as the **Limerick Heritage Plan 2017-2030**. The **Limerick Integration Plan 2017-2020** (2018)²⁵ is the city's third multiannual plan for the years 2017 – 2021. It focuses on integration of asylum seekers, refugees as well as EU and non-EU workers in the Limerick City and County. The plan identifies five priority integration themes: language, education and employment; information and communication; access to public services; cultural awareness and anti-racism; and active community participation.

The **Limerick Integration Working Group (IWG)** is responsible for coordinating the implementation of this Integration Plan. It is composed of representatives of the city and county, NGOs (Jesuit Refugee Service, Doras Luimni), and the University of Limerick, among others. There are 19 statutory, community and voluntary and migrant representative groups in the IWG, committed to progressing integration measures, promoting diversity and enhancing social cohesion in the region. The IWG focuses on migrant integration, especially asylum seekers and refugees (including persons with leave to remain).

Actors of the Limerick Integration Working Group are working together in order to overcome some of the challenges of the direct provision system, as will be further detailed below. The NGO Doras Luimni provides information and assistance to direct provision residents, organises language classes, as well as runs information and awareness-raising campaigns for the better integration of the refugee community in the Limerick area. The NGO is currently in the process

²⁴ Department of Justice and Equality – Irish Refugee Protection Programme. Available at: [http://www.justice.ie/en/JELR/Pages/Irish_Refugee_Protection_Programme_\(IRPP\)](http://www.justice.ie/en/JELR/Pages/Irish_Refugee_Protection_Programme_(IRPP)).

²⁵ City of Limerick (2017). *Belonging to Limerick: Connecting People and Communities*. Available at: <https://www.limerick.ie/sites/default/files/media/documents/2018-04/Item%203%20Draft%20Integration%20Plan%202017-21.pdf>.

of establishing the **ASR Network**,²⁶ a forum where direct provision centres residents (as well as the broader asylum and refugee community) can meet on a regular basis to discuss common issues and concerns.

Another example of an initiative promoting refugee integration in Limerick is called '**Every Child is Your Child**' (ECIYC)²⁷. It is seeking to establish an ongoing fund to assist asylum seeker parents and children living in direct provision. The initiative notably raises funds through charity dinners in order to complement the weekly allowance of EUR 21.60 per person, which is deemed insufficient to cover basic needs.

Finally, the **University of Limerick** is particularly active in promoting refugee integration through education: on top of language courses, the University offers grants for refugees through the Sanctuary Programme, which is seen as having very positive economic and social impacts. According to Doras Luimni, the provision of scholarships for refugees has been one of the most positive initiatives for access to education and employment undertaken in the country, with positive effects on people's skills, but also confidence and motivation. Furthermore, it also has an impact on the wider student community, with an increase of awareness of refugees' issues, initiatives for a better tolerance and integration.²⁸

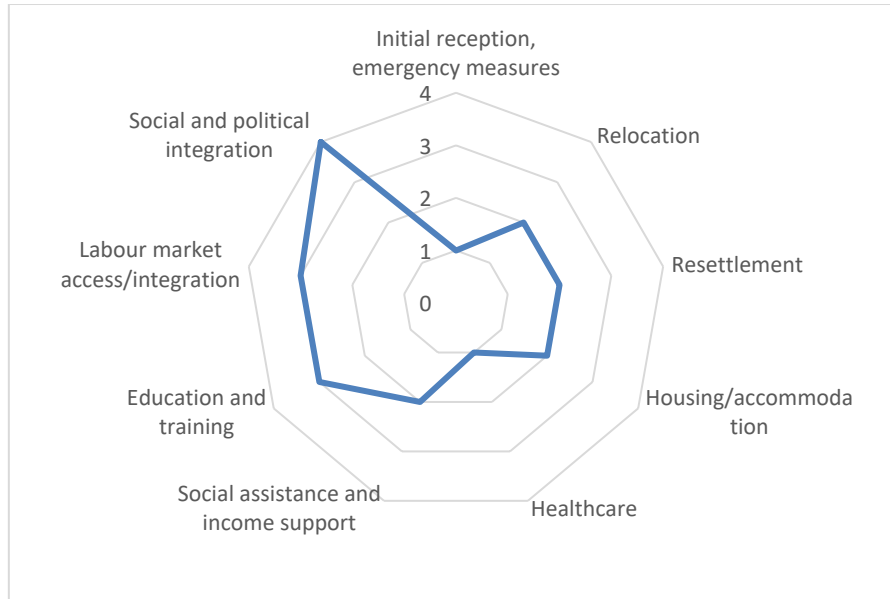
The figure below presents an initial assessment of the policies in place in the Limerick area: social and political integration measures are present and show positive results, as well as labour market integration and education and training measures. Relocation, housing and income support policies are found to be more problematic (see the challenges of the direct provision system referred above). Initial reception measures as well as healthcare support exist but there is no information on whether they are effective.

²⁶ Available at: <https://www.limerick.ie/node/2486>.

²⁷ Limerick Post (1 May 2018). "Upcoming extravaganza to raise funds for parent awaiting approval of refugees status." Available at: https://www.limerickpost.ie/2018/05/01/upcoming-extravaganza-to-raise-funds-for-parent-awaiting-approval-of-refugee-status/?fbclid=IwAR04XMtbO68p-YzCufpe01PrJ6sMEZSv_fxidUxBhOrrY-vfm8rMx5BKIPw.

²⁸ Interview with Doras Luimni, 21/02/2019.

Figure 6: Radar chart of policies in place



Legend:

- 0 no policy in this domain
- 1 there is a policy, but information on the policy results achieved are not available
- 2 information on the policy results is available and it highlights relevant problems in terms of effectiveness and/or efficiency
- 3 information on the policy results is available and shows positive trends; the policy is perceived as able to address the problem in an effective or efficient way
- 4 the policy in this domain is a good practice/a benchmark.

The active partnership between these actors to overcome the challenges of direct provision and promote the successful integration of asylum seekers and refugees has been selected as the policy focus of this case study, as developed in Chapter 2.

2 Analysis of selected policies/challenges

This chapter presents the set of measures selected to be the focus of this case study, the main steps of its implementation and challenges encountered, as well as its impacts on the integration of refugees and asylum seekers in the Limerick area. The set of measures selected targets social and political integration, particularly through education and training, and labour market access, and aims to overcome the challenges raised under the national dispersal policy scheme of direct provision.

2.1 Topic and motivation

One characteristic of the Limerick area is the strong connections among different actors, policymakers, NGOs, the University of Limerick, different community members and volunteers. This takes place notably through the Limerick Integration Working Group, which is responsible for drawing up and implementing the Limerick Integration Plan 2017-2021. Several policy documents have highlighted the role of this interactive way of working together, such as the Local Economic and Community Plan 2016-2021, which commits to the “implementation of actions to support equality, diversity and social integration, **the latter involving different sections of communities in dialogue and working together on issues of common concern**”.

The integration of refugees and asylum seekers in the Limerick area is carried out through a set of initiatives attempting to complement and fill in the gaps of the direct provision system: provision of information and support from the NGO Doras Luimni, language courses, scholarships from the University of Limerick, and fundraising events by the initiative, Every Child is Your Child. The combination of these initiatives has positive impacts as they tackle different barriers to integration for migrants, especially refugees and asylum seekers, such as language barriers, lack of information on education and training opportunities, poverty and to some extent psychological issues. Combined they can lead to a more successful integration of the refugee population in Limerick than would have occurred by relying solely on basic housing and income support offered under the direct provision system. This ultimately benefits the asylum seeker and refugee population as a whole (including refugees who have arrived under the UNHCR resettlement scheme).

2.2 Objectives and logic of intervention

The dispersal of asylum seekers in the framework of the direct provision system gives rise to a number of challenges, as highlighted in Section 1.3, and is deemed to have a detrimental effect on the integration of asylum seekers and refugees. Similarly, refugees coming under the Resettlement Programme benefit from one year of support but face similar challenges to the rest of the refugee population with regards to finding employment and decent housing, etc., when the active support ceases.

The objective of the intervention presented is to overcome these challenges, which ultimately contributes to the objectives of integration of migrant communities in Limerick as set out in the Limerick Integration Plan.

The integration of refugees and asylum seekers is carried out through a set of different initiatives attempting to complement and fill in the gaps of the direct provision system:

- **Information provision and integration support:** the NGO Doras Luimni runs an advice and information centre that provides support for asylum seekers and refugees in their application process, education, employment, housing, etc.;
- **Language courses:** different organisations offer free language courses to refugees – the NGO Doras Luimni, the University of Limerick, the Adult Education College, the Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board, as well as different primary schools through community education programmes;
- **Access to higher education:** the University of Limerick offers has offered a number of scholarships worth EUR 1.8 million to refugees and asylum seekers²⁹ in the framework of the University of Sanctuary programme, an initiative that promotes good practices of universities welcoming asylum seekers and refugees into their community.³⁰ Asylum seekers and refugees also have access to the Mature Student Access Certificate (MSAC), a one-year, full-time, pre-degree course designed for mature students³¹;
- **Income support:** the initiative Every Child is Your Child (ECIYC) raises funds through charity dinners in order to complement the weekly allowance given to asylum seekers as part as the direct provision system; and
- **Social integration, awareness raising:** different initiatives such as the anti-rumours campaign carried out between 2014 and 2016 in order to dispel misconceptions around the topic of migration (including refugees)³², the Irish Music Academy through the programme Singing and Sustainable Social Integration³³, and community events such as the Africa Days, soccer competition, etc.

This is expected to contribute to fulfilling the objectives of the Limerick Integration Plan through the five priority themes:

- Language, Education and Employment
- Information and Communication
- Access to Public Services
- Cultural Awareness and Anti-Racism
- Active Community Participation

²⁹ Limerick Leader (20 June 2018). "UL to offer scholarships worth EUR 1.8 million to refugees ad asylum seekers". Available at: <https://www.limerickleader.ie/news/home/319370/ul-to-offer-scholarships-worth-1-8-million-to-refugees-and-asylum-seekers.html?fbclid=IwAR2IxI75Iz-Fm0OmywoE7sEYCZWFucxabc6p3BCKk8aaBuuiUP85wKsU1kmg>.

³⁰ See the City of Sanctuary initiative: <https://www.ul.ie/news-centre/news/new-four-year-scholarships-asylum-seekers-and-refugees>.

³¹ See the MASC: <https://ulsites.ul.ie/mso/mature-student-access-certificate>.

³² See the anti-rumours campaign: <http://dorasluimni.org/anti-rumours-campaign/>.

³³ See the Irish Music Academy's website: <https://www.ul.ie/engage/node/1791>.

Each priority theme is co-chaired by an organisation of the Limerick Integration Working Group, which is responsible for implementing and monitoring the Integration Plan. The Limerick Integration Plan is seen as the main tool for mainstreaming integration-related services into the city and county's local policies, although the successful support of asylum seekers and refugees also takes place outside this framework (e.g. through private initiatives such as ECIYC).

2.3 The actors

One of the particularities of the Limerick policy system in place for integrating refugees is the strong interconnection between the different actors involved in the different initiatives described above. Another characteristic is the reliance on a couple of committed actors who are dedicated to advance the work on integration despite the lack of human resources and funding.

The main actors active at local level:

- Limerick City and County Council
- University of Limerick (especially the University of Sanctuary Committee)
- IWG Chair
- IWG community members (African Community, Filipino Community, etc.)
- NGOs: Jesuit Refugee Service, Doras Luimni
- Other initiatives: ECIYC
- Funders: Redemption Church, St Vincent de Paul, Bank of Ireland (Enablement Fund), University of Limerick's Student Union

The Mayor of Limerick has taken political responsibility for the Limerick Integration Plan by approving it officially and being present at its launch, along with the President of Ireland.









Other actors relevant at international and national level are the ones framing the different international national dispersal policy schemes – i.e. the UNHCR (resettlement), the Department of Justice and Equality (Irish Refugee Protection Programme) and the RIA (Direct Provision).

Finally, it should be noted that the Council of Europe initiates and co-funds the Intercultural Cities Programme, which financially backs most of the integration-related initiatives in Limerick.

The following infographic summarises the actors and their roles in the policies described. The largest characters represent central actors while the smallest ones have a secondary role in that role/function.

Figure 7: Different actors and their roles

Roles	Actors
Setting Legal Framework 	Council of Europe (Intercultural Cities Programme), UNHCR, IRPP, Limerick Integration Working Group (chair and members), Limerick City and County Council

Political Responsible		IRPP, Limerick City and County Council, Mayor (James Collins)
Technical Responsible		Jesuit Refugee Service, Doras Luimni, University of Limerick, ECIYC
Financing		Council of Europe (Intercultural Cities Programme), IRPP, Limerick City and County Council, Jesuit Refugee Service, Doras Luimni, University of Limerick, Redemption Church, St Vincent de Paul, Bank of Ireland
Programming the Intervention		UNHCR, IRPP, Limerick City and County Council, Limerick Integration Working Group (chair), University of Limerick, ECIYC
Coordinator in the implement.		RIA, Limerick Integration Working Group (chair and members), Doras Luimni, University of Limerick
Policy implementer		RIA, Limerick City and County Council, Limerick Integration Working Group (chair), Jesuit Refugee Service, Doras Luimni, University of Limerick, ECIYC
Monitoring and data		RIA, Doras Luimni, University of Limerick, ECIYC
Resources mobilisation		Limerick City and County Council, Limerick Integration Working Group (chair), Jesuit Refugee Service, Doras Luimni, University of Limerick, ECIYC

The aforementioned actors are often active in each other's initiatives and as such frequently interact. The table below illustrates the links between the different initiators actively involved in the implementation of the policies described above.

Table 1: Involvement of actors in the different policies in place

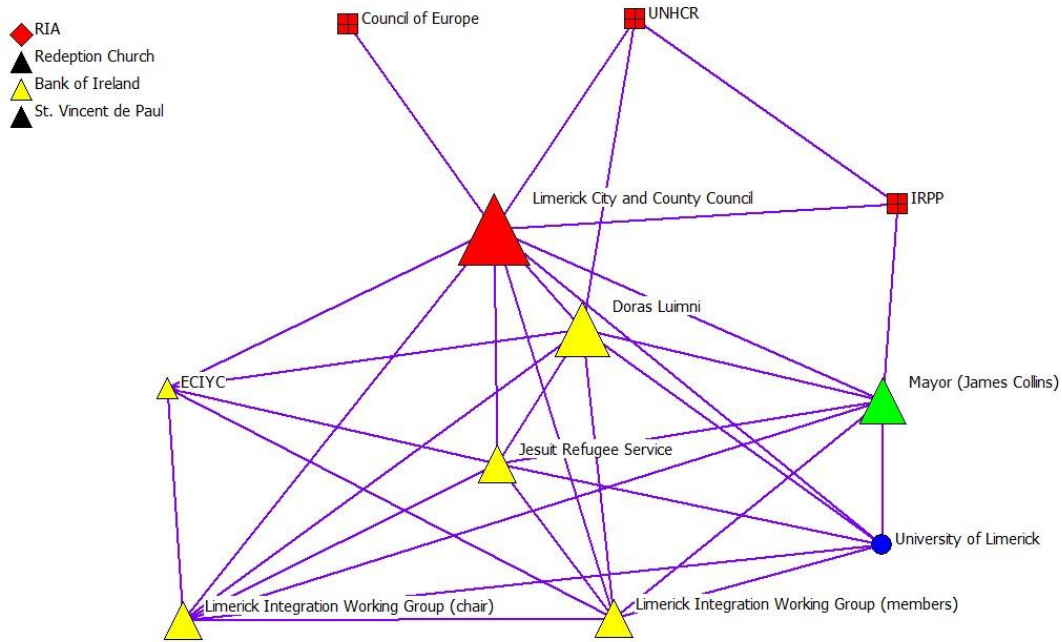
Actor/Policies	Information provision and integration support	Language courses	Higher education	Income support (ECIYC)	Social integration
Limerick City and County Council		✓		✓	✓
University of Limerick		✓	✓		✓
IWG chair		✓	✓		✓
IWG community members	✓				✓
Jesuit Refugee Service	✓				✓
Doras Luimni	✓	✓		✓	✓
ECIYC				✓	✓

The following graphs represent the relationships among actors in the programming and the implementation phases. As shown below, the policy network comprises 15 actors – 11 involved in the programming phase and 14 in the implementation phase.

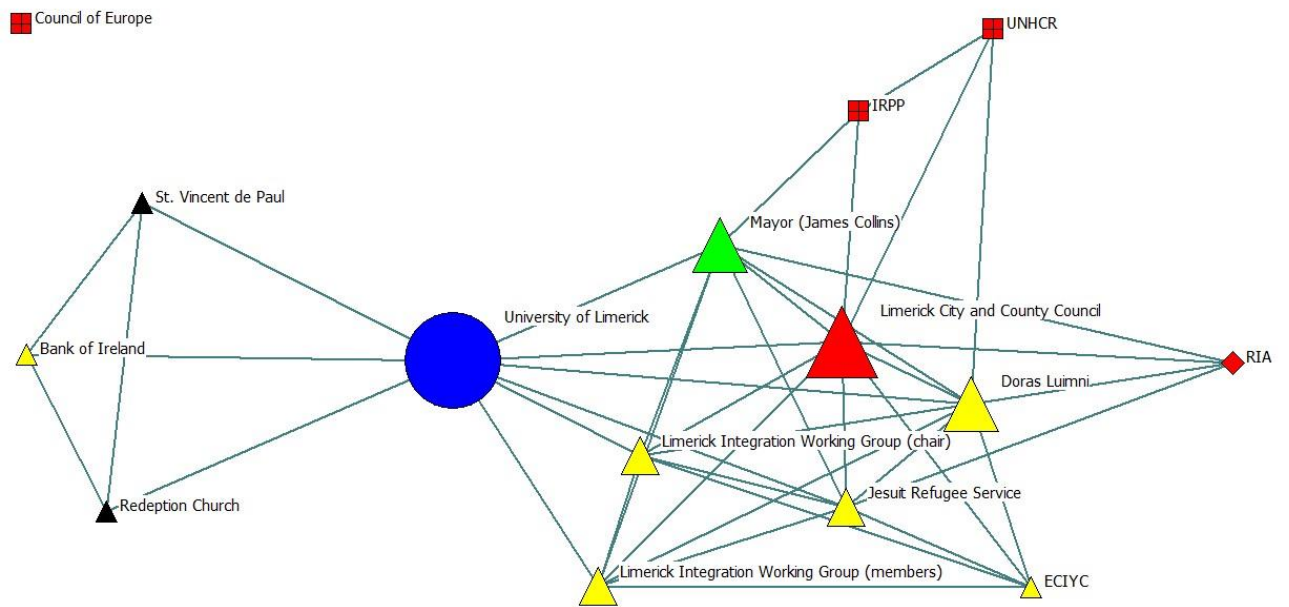
In the case of Limerick, both programming phase and implementation phase are quite complex and involve different types of actors at different territorial levels (local and regional) for the different policies. The programming phase involves international, regional and local actors, even if the core network is mainly represented by administrative and special interest actors at local level (Limerick City and County Council, Doras Luimni, the Jesuit Refugee Service and the Limerick IWG). In the implementation phase of the University of Sanctuary Programme, the University of Limerick plays a very important role, being the connector between the programming sub-network and the one composed by NGOs and the Bank of Ireland, which are isolated in the programming phase.

Figure 8: The actors and their relations in the programming and implementation phases

Programming phase














Implementation phase



As shown above, the colour represents the type of actor, the dimension whether they are central or secondary, and the shape represents the territorial level.

Table 2: Legend

Type of actor (Colour)	Central or secondary actor based on betweenness (Dimension)	Territorial (Shape)
 Bureaucrats  Politicians  Experts  Special Interest  Diffused interest	 Central actor  Secondary actor In each graph all the actors involved in the programming or implementation phase of the project/policy are represented, even if isolated (usually top left) in one of the phases	 International  National  Regional  Local

These linkages between different actors, and in particular the establishment of personal relationships between them, can be seen as a strength: it is easy for them to communicate with each other, solve problems, and help each other in achieving common policy objectives (in this case, successful integration of the migrant/asylum seeker/refugee population). But this is small scale and proximity between the actors can also bring certain challenges, including:

- Reliance on a few key actors: the IWG, Doras Luimni and the University of Limerick, are represented by a limited number of committed actors who dedicate time and energy, including in their personal life, to foster the integration of refugees and asylum seekers;
- Lack of institutionalised human and financial resources, and the absence of a set budget for integration except from the Intercultural Cities budget.

This endangers the sustainability of the different initiatives, which rely on the commitment of a couple of key actors. It is hoped that the Limerick City and County takes a more active role in the IWG, for instance as a co-chair, in order to further institutionalise its commitment and maybe justify a budget increase for integration-related activities.³⁴

2.4 Implementation

The initiatives presented above have been implemented at different points of time, but there has been an accumulation of new initiatives over the past two years (possibly as a result of the 2017-2021 Limerick Integration Plan). The advice and information centre from Doras Luimni has been running for some years, as well as the language courses for refugees and asylum seekers offered by the various organisations (mentioned in the 2008 impact study described in Section 1.3³⁵). By contrast, the University of Sanctuary scholarship was made available for the academic year 2017-2018, and the initiative ECIYC started in 2017. The other social integration initiatives mentioned (Irish Music Academy, African Days) run every year, except from the anti-rumour campaign that took place between 2014 and 2016.

³⁴ Interview with the IWG Chair, 12/03/2019; Interview with Doras Luimni, 13/03/2019.

³⁵ Helen O' Grady (Doras Luimni) (2008). Barriers to the Labour Market for Refugees and Persons with leave to remain in Limerick. Available at: <http://dorasluimni.org/wp-content/uploads/pdf/publications/barrierstolabour.pdf>.

There have been some challenges in the implementation of the different measures. However, the fee waivers from the University of Sanctuary and the gratuity of the language courses have encouraged the attendance of refugees and asylum seekers to these programmes that they could not have otherwise afforded. But other factors prevent their enrolment in the programmes, such as the difficulty of reaching the different teaching locations from the direct provision centres, the lack of infrastructure for studying within the centres, and organising mealtimes outside the centres. Here it is interesting to note that the shortcomings of the direct provision system mentioned above are preventing the implementation of some measures that aim to fill its gaps.

To solve these issues, the University of Limerick organised transport from the centres to the university twice a day, and a partnership with the Students Union has allowed meals to be provided to the beneficiaries of the University of Sanctuary's scholarships.³⁶ However, it is still difficult for students to study after class, given that they cannot stay in the university's library after the last bus to the direct provision centres, and there are no appropriate spaces to study in the centres.³⁷ Another challenge for asylum seekers receiving the scholarship was to open bank accounts to receive the grant, but this problem has been resolved with the help of the Bank of Ireland.³⁸

In general, the lack of financial and human resources for scaling up/institutionalising the initiatives has been highlighted as another problem. The founder of the ECIYC initiative, which raises funds to help asylum seekers' parents to buy school supplies for their children, has explicitly stated this as an obstacle, as she organises the initiative by herself in her spare time (see the box below).³⁹ The lack of funding has also been highlighted by the Limerick City and County representative, the IWG Chair, and the representatives of the NGOs Doras Luimni and Jesuit Refugee Service interviewed.⁴⁰

2.5 Outcomes, impacts, and results of the specific policy

The combination of the initiatives to complement basic housing and income support offered under the direct provision system has had positive impacts in the area. Several refugees and asylum seekers have been able to attend free education and training, access employment and benefit from additional financial support to pay for their children's school supplies. For the community as a whole, the combination of these initiatives has a positive impact in terms of openness, increased tolerance, etc. For instance, there has been an increasing number of events related to diversity and integration over the past few years; and the money raised

³⁶ Interview with the University of Limerick, 12/03/2019.

³⁷ Interview with University of Limerick students benefiting from the University of Sanctuary scholarship, 12/03/2019.

³⁸ Interview with the University of Limerick, 12/03/2019.

³⁹ Interview with ECIYC, 13/03/2019.

⁴⁰ See the references to the interviews in Annex.

through charity events has been steadily increasing in recent years. In terms of impacts, the following can be outlined:

- **Information provision and integration support:** Doras Luimni provides information and support to 1,200 refugees and asylum seekers per year;
- **Language courses:** the level of English knowledge is quite high among the refugee and asylum seeker population (although this can also be attributed to the number of asylum seekers and refugees arriving in Limerick coming from English-speaking countries, as Chapter 1.2 shows);
- **Access to higher education:** 39 scholarships have been granted in the framework of the University of Sanctuary in the years 2017-2018 and 2018-2019 (21 for Mature Student Access Certificate programme; eight in the four-year bachelors' programme). For the academic year 2019-2020, the university has committed to waiver fees for a further 15 students and 10 Mature Student Access Certificates, which means a total of 32 students for this year;
- **Income support:** ECIYC has raised money to support 60 children in 2017 and 80 children in 2018; and
- **Social integration, awareness raising:** the number and length of community-related events increases every year, according to the city and county council.

As regards the resettlement programmes, in the 2017 cohort, six individuals from six families out of 20 families have found employment. Occupations include:⁴¹

- Delivery driver & security
- Working in bakery owned by a Syrian refugee family based in Cork, which was featured on RTE news⁴²
- Chef in a restaurant
- Chef in pizza shop
- Delivery driver for restaurant
- Delivery driver

After the resettlement programme funding stops, those refugees who have not found employment can still benefit from the advice and information centre run by Doras Luimni. As the NGO was contracted by the city and county council in order to provide support for resettlement, it is already known by the resettlement's refugees and support is continuing in some form after the end of the financing period. According to Doras Luimni, it is rare that refugees find employment immediately after their arrival, so the limited number of employed people in the 2017 cohort does not come as a surprise.⁴³ Furthermore, the impacts of the University of Sanctuary in terms of employability of asylum seekers and refugees in general remain to be seen, as the programme was launched in 2017 and the students have not graduated yet.

⁴¹ Email received from Doras Luimni on 20/03/2019.

⁴² Available at: <https://www.rte.ie/news/regional/2018/0121/934852-syrian-refugee-opens-bakery-business-in-cork/>.

⁴³ Interview with Doras Luimni, 13/03/2019.

The box below presents the story of Every Child is Your Child initiative launched by the asylum seeker Donnah Vuma. Although the initiative is small scale and has a small budget, it is a good example of how different actors interact with each other to compensate for the shortages of the direct provision system.

Box 1: Every Child is Your Child

Every Child is Your Child was started in 2017 by Donnah Vuma, an asylum seeker from Zimbabwe who arrived in Ireland in 2014. Resident of the direct provision centre of Knockalisheen and mother of three children, she had difficulties in paying for the additional cost of sending her children to school (uniforms, books, transport, etc.) She decided to organise an annual fundraising dinner in order to collect money to distribute to asylum seekers' families in her situation.

The actors involved included:

- The NGO Doras Luimni which helped with handling the fund;
- In the first year, another charity helped to pay for the price of the venue, which was already at discounted thanks to an agreement with the venue itself. In the second and third years, the Limerick City Council paid for the venue; and
- Shops and artists from the area gave away some pieces of art to sell in an auction.

As a result, 130 tickets with a value of EUR 30 were sold in the first year, which helped support 60 children. In the second year, 80 children were supported. The initiative is now in its third year and is expected to help an increased number of children.

In addition, Donnah initiated a **Backpack Drive** in 2018, which organises collection backpack and school supplies at various drop-offs of the country. The initiative helped 600 children across Ireland, which corresponds to the entire child asylum seeker's population of Ireland.

Donnah Vuma is a student at the University of Limerick (she is one of the beneficiaries of the University of Sanctuary scholarship) and organises both initiatives in her spare time.

3 Conclusions and lessons learnt

The integration of refugees and asylum seekers in Limerick is promoted by a set of initiatives framed and implemented by different actors: the provision of information and support from the NGO Doras Luimni, language courses, scholarships from the University of Limerick, fundraising events from ECIYC. These initiatives all aim to complement and fill in the gaps of the direct provision system: lack of privacy, overcrowded conditions, isolation, poverty, lack of education, lack of information on processes and job opportunities, etc. These different barriers to refugee and asylum seeker integration have been tackled with positive results in terms of education and training, employment, but also the openness/awareness of the rest of the population.

However, it is difficult to draw conclusions from the Limerick experience that could be applied to other territories for a number of reasons. First, the reliance on some key committed actors to provide support, and not a long-term institutional setting. Second, the lack of institutionalised human and financial resources, especially the absence of a set budget for integration. It should also be noted that important challenges remain, notably for refugees to find employment and decent housing after they leave the direct provision system.

This research leads to the following lessons. First, absorption capacities of the different areas are not enough to guarantee the successful integration of the refugee and asylum seeker population. While the number of asylum seekers in the different territorial areas of Ireland is supposed to reflect the available capacities in the direct provision centres, common standards need to be set in order to guarantee that centres are not overcrowded, have the necessary space for family life, are not too isolated from the urban centres, etc.

Second, it is important that they are financed over time through a set budget. Indeed, the Limerick experience shows that relying solely on the budget of the Intercultural Cities Programme and, occasionally, from different local policy budgets, can be a barrier to the development and scaling up of these initiatives in the long run.

Related to the above, initiatives also need a proper institutional setting. In the case of Limerick, the IWG could be set as the principal point for developing and monitoring the different initiatives, as several stakeholders have suggested. The involvement of the Limerick City and County Council has also been emphasised as desirable in order to trigger more political involvement.

Finally, the Limerick experience shows that creating a network of committed organisations can help achieve policy objectives. Indeed, the involvement of different actors in almost all the initiatives described has been emphasised as a strength of the policy ecosystem in Limerick.

In the coming years, the impacts of the different policies developed should be clearer, as most of them have been implemented fairly recently. Furthermore, the outcome of the local elections in May 2019 should determine whether more institutionalised funding and further involvement of the Limerick City and County Council is possible.

References

- Asylum Information Database – Overview of the legal framework, Republic of Ireland. Available at: <https://www.asylumineurope.org/reports/country/republic-ireland/overview-legal-framework>.
- Census for Limerick City and County (2016) Available at: [http://census.cso.ie/sapmap2016/Results.aspx?Geog_Type=CTY31&Geog_Code=2AE19629148F13A3E055000000000001#SAPMAP_T10_1001](http://census.cso.ie/sapmap2016/Results.aspx?Geog_Type=CTY31&Geog_Code=2AE19629148F13A3E05500000000001#SAPMAP_T10_1001).
- City of Limerick (2017) Belonging to Limerick: Connecting People and Communities. Available at: <https://www.limerick.ie/sites/default/files/media/documents/2018-04/Item%203%20Draft%20Integration%20Plan%202017-21.pdf>.
- Conor Lally (2019) “Number of asylum claims reaches 10-year high”. The Irish Times. Available at: <https://www.irishtimes.com/news/social-affairs/number-of-asylum-claims-reaches-10-year-high-1.3745511>.
- Department of Justice and Equality – Irish Refugee Protection Programme. Available at: [http://www.justice.ie/en/JELR/Pages/Irish_Refugee_Protection_Programme_\(IRPP\)](http://www.justice.ie/en/JELR/Pages/Irish_Refugee_Protection_Programme_(IRPP)).
- Doras Luimni website, “Direct Provision”. Available at: <http://dorasluimni.org/direct-provision/>.
- Doras Luimni website, “Anti-rumours campaign”. Available at: <http://doras.org/anti-rumours-campaign/>.
- Email received from Doras Luimni on 20/03/2019.
- Helen O’ Grady (Doras Luimni) (2008). Barriers to the Labour Market for Refugees and Persons with leave to remain in Limerick. Available at: <http://dorasluimni.org/wp-content/uploads/pdf/publications/barrierstolabour.pdf>.
- Irish Research Council, Irish Refugee Council (2016). Transition from Direct Provision to life in the community; Jesuit Refugee Service Ireland (2015). Right to Work – Evaluating the Case for Extending the Right to Persons Seeking Protection in Ireland.
- Irish Refugee Protection Programme (2018) IRPP Statistics - 26 February 2018. Available at: http://www.integration.ie/en/isec/pages/irpp_statistics.
- International Protection Office (2018) Monthly Statistical Report December 2018. Available at: <http://ipo.gov.ie/en/IPO/IPO%20Statistics%20December%202019-FINAL.pdf/Files/IPO%20Statistics%20December%202019-FINAL.pdf>.
- Know Reset (2013) Country Profile – Ireland. Available at: http://www.know-reset.eu/files/texts/00164_20130705130333_knowresetcountryprofileireland.pdf.
- Limerick Leader (2018) “UL to offer scholarships worth EUR 1.8 million to refugees ad asylum seekers”. Available at: <https://www.limerickleader.ie/news/home/319370/ul-to-offer-scholarships-worth-1-8-million-to-refugees-and-asylum-seekers.html?fbclid=IwAR2lxI75Iz-Fm0OmywE7sEYCWZFucxabc6p3BCKk8aaBuuiUP85wKsU1kmg>.
- Limerick municipal district (2016) Available at: http://census.cso.ie/sapmap2016/Results.aspx?Geog_Type=MD2014&Geog_Code=C87338E0-A7B9-4305-B7F2-FC23410FEFE2#SAPMAP_T2_200.
- Limerick Post (2018). “Upcoming extravaganza to raise funds for parent awaiting approval of refugees status.” Available at: https://www.limerickpost.ie/2018/05/01/upcoming-extravaganza-to-raise-funds-for-parent-awaiting-approval-of-refugee-status/?fbclid=IwAR04XMtbO68p-YzCufpe01PrJ6sMEZSv_fxidUxBhOrrY-vfm8rMx5BKIPw.
- Paul Partnership Limerick (2016). Limerick Metropolitan Area – Socio-Economic and Demographic Profile. Available at: <https://www.paulpartnership.ie/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/Limerick-Metropolitan-Area-Profile-Census-2016.pdf>.
- Refugee Legal Aid Information – Resettlement in Ireland. Available at: <http://www.refugeelegalaidinformation.org/resettlement-ireland>.
- RIA (2018) Monthly Report October 2018. Available at: <http://www.ria.gov.ie/en/RIA/October%202018%20monthly%20report%20updated%20.pdf/Files/October%202018%20monthly%20report%20updated%20.pdf>.
- RTE (2018) Syrian refugee opens bakery business in Cork. Available at: <https://www.rte.ie/news/regional/2018/0121/934852-syrian-refugee-opens-bakery-business-in-cork/>.
- University of Limerick (2018) New four-year scholarships for asylum seekers and refugees. Available at: <https://www.ul.ie/news-centre/news/new-four-year-scholarships-asylum-seekers-and-refugees>.

University of Limerick, Irish Music Academy website. Available at: <https://www.ul.ie/engage/node/1791>.

List of interviewees

Type of organisation	Organisation
Local authority	Limerick City and County Council
University	University of Limerick
Working group	Limerick Integration Working Group
Non-profit organisation	Doras Luimni
Community organisation	Every Child is Your Child

List of Annexes

Annex I Impacts

Table 3: Financial impacts and their indicators – regional/local level

Impacts	Selected indicators	Last available data*	Forecast of growth or decrease in ten years**	Forecast of growth or decrease in twenty years*	Source	Regional / local***
Public revenues	Average social security contributions and taxes (payroll/business) per employed refugee ^{44,45}	/	/	/	/	/
Public revenues	Consumption tax on spending of refugees per refugee ⁴⁶	/	/	/	/	/
Public spending	Spending on integration and initial reception measures ⁴⁷ per refugee	EUR 21.60 per person per week (2018) (AS spend on average two years in the system)	-	-	RIA	National
Public spending	Extra spending on integration into education system (per refugee pupil)	Budget of free language course for the University of Limerick Budget of access course	=	=	University of Limerick	Local
Public spending	Education spending per pupil per year in country (total population ⁴⁸)	EUR 6,464 per pupil per year on primary education in Ireland / EUR 8,100-8,300 on secondary education / EUR 8,597 on third-level education (2014)	+	+	OECD	National

⁴⁴ Here it is mainly asked whether data exist and if interviewees have views on the matter. Please leave the space blank if there is no evidence available.

⁴⁵ Calculated by average values for the active population with a discount for immigrants from literature.

⁴⁶ Here it is mainly asked whether data exist and if interviewees have views on the matter. Please leave the space blank if there is no evidence available.

⁴⁷ Housing, sustenance, language course, employment integration courses other integration courses

⁴⁸ The assumption is that after some time the spending amounts will be comparable to the amounts spent on the native population.

		EUR 1.8 million scholarship from University of Limerick				
Public spending	Health care spending per person and year in the country (total population ⁴⁹)	EUR 4,706 per head (2017)	-	-	OECD	National
Public spending	Housing subsidies per person and year in the country (total population ⁵⁰)	EUR 535 million in total (2018)	+	+	Government	National

Table 4: Economic impacts and their indicators

Impacts	Selected indicators	Last available data*	Forecast of growth or decrease in ten years**	Forecast of growth or decrease in twenty years*	Data source	Regional / local***
Employment (rate)	Number and proportion (%) of refugees finding a job (at arrival)	560 AS granted with work permit (2018)	+	+	Government	National
	Number and proportion (%) of refugees finding a job (within five years)	/			Case studies Past studies	Regional
	Number and proportion (%) of refugees finding a job (in the longer terms)	/			Case studies Past studies	Regional
Entrepreneurship	Number and proportion (% of self-employed amongst those finding a job) of new enterprises founded by refugees ⁵¹	/			Case studies Past studies	National
Underemployed or not employed low skill workers	Number and proportion of long-term unemployed refugees ⁵²	/			Case studies Past studies	Regional
	Number and proportion of underemployed refugees ⁵³	/			Case studies Past studies	Regional

⁴⁹ The assumption is that after some time the spending amounts will be comparable to the amounts spent on the native population.

⁵⁰ The assumption is that after some time the spending amounts will be comparable to the amounts spent on the native population.

⁵¹ Calculated on the basis of historic precedence of past immigrant flows.

⁵² Calculated on the basis of historic precedence of past immigrant flows.

⁵³ Calculated on the basis of historic precedence of past immigrant flows.

	Number and proportion of precariously employed refugees ⁵⁴	/			Case studies Past studies	Regional
--	---	---	--	--	------------------------------	----------

Table 5: Social and political impacts and their indicators

Impacts	Selected indicators	Last available data*	Forecast of growth or decrease in ten years**	Forecast of growth or decrease in twenty years*	Data sources	Regional / local***
Demography	Impact on dependency ratio	/	/	/	Case studies and extrapolations from existing population projections	National
Cultural diversity	No quantitative indicator	Increase of events celebrating diversity in Limerick (Africa Days, Sikh Community events, soccer leagues, etc.)	+	+	Limerick City Council	Local
Security	Impact on crime rate (of refugee/total population)	Almost no incidents caused by racism in Limerick	=	=	Limerick City Council	Local
Perception	Perception rates for immigration as a problem	80% of Irish think that the integration of most immigrants in successful	=	=	Special Eurobarometer 469	National
Political tensions caused by migration	Relevance of immigration in political debates and elections	One asylum seeker candidate for local elections in Dublin / various initiatives to encourage migrants to vote across Ireland (including by Doras Luimni)	+	+	/	National

⁵⁴ Calculated on the basis of historic precedence of past immigrant flows.

Annex II Policy and actors classification

Table 6: Policy classification: different types of policies for different targets at Country and local level

Category	Types	Country-level policies targeting:		Regional or local-level policies targeting:		Assessment*
		Asylum seekers	Refugee status holders	Asylum seekers	Refugee status holders	
Initial reception, emergency measures, and referrals	Emergency housing Emergency health care Basic subsistence needs Reception and recognition provisions Residence permits Family reunification Settlement restrictions Referrals Distinguishing between exceptional and ordinary reception procedures	One reception centre in Dublin Three EROC centres for relocation and resettlement	Three EROC centres for relocation and resettlement			1
Relocation	Sharing responsibility of receiving refugees		IE has committed to accept 2,622 AS from Greece and Italy under the EU Relocation Strand			2
Resettlement	Humanitarian corridors		IE has committed to accept 1,040 refugees in 2016 and 2017 under the resettlement programme		83 refugees resettled in Limerick Support services outsourced to the NGO Doras Luimni	2
Housing / accommodation	Housing/accommodation Housing support	37 Direct Provision centres	Housing subsidies (rent supplement, Rental Accommodation Scheme, Housing Assistance Payment)	Three direct provision centres in the Limerick area		2
Healthcare	Emergency/urgent healthcare Full health care		National healthcare system			1
Social assistance and income support	Social assistance services Income support, eligibility for welfare benefits	Direct provision income (EUR 21.6 per person per week)		Social assistance provided by NGOs	Social assistance provided by NGOs	2

Education and training	School enrolment and attendance Adult education Vocational education and training	AS and refugees' children are enrolled in school	Idem	AS and refugees can access Mature Student Access courses from UL AS and refugees can benefit from the UL scholarship (University of Sanctuary programme) Free language courses offered by UL and DL	Idem	3
Labour market access/ integration	Skills assessment/validation Active labour market policy (counselling, mentoring, job search assistance, entrepreneurship promotion, and social networks) Grants and preparatory courses Employment subsidies, apprenticeships, traineeships, on-the-job trainings, temporary/voluntary work Unemployment benefits	AS eligible to work since 2018	Refugees are eligible to unemployment subsidies	Advice and information provided by NGOs	Advice and information provided by NGOs	3
Social and political integration	Early orientation programmes (language, practical orientation, civic education etc.) Integration programmes such as sport, culture, diversity promotion Political participation (local level) Residence and religion rights			Advice and information provided by NGOs Cultural diversity events (Africa Days) Intercultural Cities Programme	Idem	4

*Assessment:

0 no policy in this domain

1 there is a policy, but information on the policy results achieved are not available

2 information on the policy results is available and it highlights relevant problems in terms of effectiveness and/or efficiency

3 information on the policy results is available and shows positive trends; the policy is perceived as able to address the problem in an effective or efficient way

4 the policy in this domain is a good practice/a benchmark.

Table 7: Actors classification: A picture of the actors involved in the asylum seekers and refugees' system at Country level

Levels	Bureaucrats*	Politicians*	Experts*	Special interest*	Diffused interest*
International	European Commission Council of Europe UNHCR	MEPs	Knowledge Centre on Migration and Demography Migration Policy Centre Eurostat	European Council on Refugees and Exiles	Oxfam, International Red Cross
National	RIA Irish Naturalisation and Immigration Service Department of Justice and Equality	MPs	Different Universities of Sanctuary (Dublin, Cork, Limerick) Central Statistics Office	Migrant Rights Centre Ireland Places of Sanctuary Ireland Immigrant Council of Ireland Jesuit Refugee Service Doras Luimni	/
Regional	Limerick City and County Council	Local MPs	University of Limerick	Limerick Integration Working Group community members Jesuit Refugee Service Doras Luimni	/
Local	Limerick City and County Council	Mayor (James Collins)	/	As above	/

Annex III Network analysis

Table 8: Actors classification: The actors involved in the specific intervention under analysis

Levels	Bureaucrats* ⁵⁵	Politicians*	Experts*	Special interest*	Diffused interest*
International	Council of Europe (Intercultural Cities Programme) UNHCR (resettlement) Department of Justice and Equality (IRPP)	/	/	/	/
National	RIA (Direct Provision)	/	/	/	/
Regional	Limerick City and County Council (Anne Rizzo)	/	University of Limerick (John Lannon, Mairead Moriarty)	Limerick Integration Working Group (Eugene Quinn) IWG community members (African Community, Filipino Community, etc.) NGOs: Jesuit Refugee Service (Eugene Quinn), Doras Luimni (Sean McSweeney, Aideen Roche) Other initiatives: ECIYC (Donnah Vuma)	
Local	Limerick City and County Council (Anne Rizzo)	Mayor (James Collins)	/	As above	Redemption Church, St Vincent de Paul, Bank of Ireland (Enablement Fund), University of Limerick's Student Union

⁵⁵ * Bureaucratic actors are those actors that base the legitimacy of their intervention in the policy process on the claim that formal rules and procedures confer them a specific responsibility in the process; political actors are those actors that base the legitimacy of their intervention on the fact of representing citizens as they enjoy citizens' consensus; experts are those actors that base the legitimacy of their intervention in the policy process on the claim of having the knowledge needed in order to solve the problem; special interest actors (grey nodes) are those actors that base the legitimacy of their intervention on the fact that they are directly affected by the policy decision, meaning that they will try to maximise the benefit/cost ratio from their specific point of view; general interests actors (pink nodes) are those actors that base the legitimacy of their intervention in the policy process on the fact that the interests they represent are general (e.g. NGOs, etc) and on the fact that they represent groups that cannot defend their interests by themselves.

Table 9: Mapping the actors and the roles

Actors (please specify the name of the actor as in the previous table)	Role in the network								
	Setting the legal framework	Political responsible	Technical responsible	Financing	Programming the intervention	Coordinator in the implementation phase	Policy implementer	Monitoring and data collection	Actors mobilising relevant resources (legal, political, knowledge, human resources)
Council of Europe (Intercultural Cities Programme)	X			X					
UNHCR	X				X				
Department of Justice and Equality	X	x		X	x				
RIA						x	x	x	
Limerick City and County Council		x		x					x
Limerick Integration Working Group (chair)	x				x	x			x
Limerick Integration Working Group (community members)	x						x		
Mayor		x							
Jesuit Refugee Service			x	x					x
Doras Luimni			x	x		x	x	x	x
University of Limerick			x	x			x	x	x
ECIYC							x		x

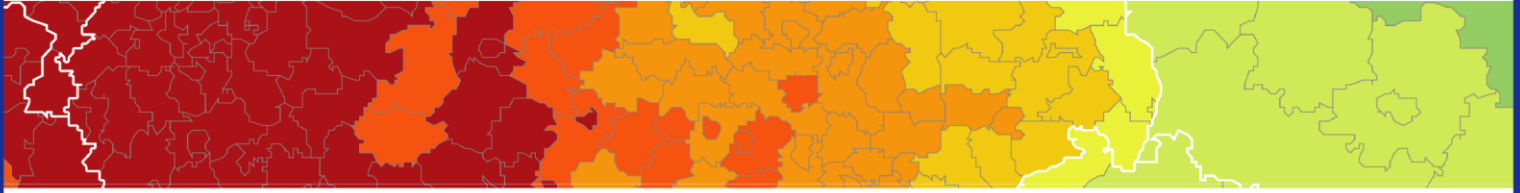
	Role in the network								
Actors (please specify the name of the actor as in the previous table)	Setting the legal framework	Political responsible	Technical responsible	Financing	Programming the intervention	Coordinator in the implementation phase	Policy implementer	Monitoring and data collection	Actors mobilising relevant resources (legal, political, knowledge, human resources)
Other charities (Redemption Church, Saint Vincent de Paul)				x					
Bank of Ireland				x					

Table 10: Relationship matrix - PROGRAMMING PHASE

	Council of Europe	UNHCR	Department of Justice and Equality	RIA	Limerick City and County Council	Limerick Integration Working Group (chair)	Limerick Integration Working Group (members)	Mayor	JRS	Doras Luimni	University of Limerick	ECIYC	Charities	Bank of Ireland
Council of Europe														
UNHCR														
Department of Justice and Equality		X												
RIA														
Limerick City and County Council	X	X	X											
Limerick Integration Working Group (chair)					X									
Limerick Integration Working Group (community members)					X	X								
Mayor			X		X	X	X							
Jesuit Refugee Service					X	X	X	X						
Doras Luimni		X			X	X	X	X	X					
University of Limerick					X	X	X	X	X	X				
ECIYC					X	X	X		X	X				
Charities														
Bank of Ireland														

Table 11: Relationship matrix - IMPLEMENTATION PHASE

	Council of Europe	UNHCR	Department of Justice and Equality	RIA	Limerick City and County Council	Limerick Integration Working Group (chair)	Limerick Integration Working Group (members)	Mayor	JRS	Doras Luimni	University of Limerick	ECIYC	Charities	Bank of Ireland
Council of Europe														
UNHCR														
Department of Justice and Equality		X												
RIA														
Limerick City and County Council		X	X	X										
Limerick Integration Working Group (chair)					X									
Limerick Integration Working Group (community members)					X	X								
Mayor			X	X	X	X	X							
Jesuit Refugee Service				X	X	X	X	X						
Doras Luimni		X		X	X	X	X	X	X					
University of Limerick					X	X	X	X	X	X				
ECIYC					X	X	X		X	X				
Charities											X			
Bank of Ireland											X		X	



ESPON 2020 – More information

ESPON EGTC

4 rue Erasme, L-1468 Luxembourg - Grand Duchy of Luxembourg

Phone: +352 20 600 280

Email: info@espon.eu

www.espon.eu, [Twitter](#), [LinkedIn](#), [YouTube](#)

The ESPON EGTC is the Single Beneficiary of the ESPON 2020 Cooperation Programme. The Single Operation within the programme is implemented by the ESPON EGTC and co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund, the EU Member States and the Partner States, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland.