

**“Doras Luimní welcome progress on Direct Provision but urge Government to advance all recommendations, including right to work.” (14<sup>th</sup> March 2017)**

Doras Luimní welcome and commend the progress made by Minister for Justice, Frances Fitzgerald, and her Department regarding Direct Provision and the implementation of the McMahon report recommendations to date. Significant progress has been made over the past 18 months with regard to long-term residents of Direct Provision, a considerable number of whom have now been granted permission to remain in Ireland and many of whom we have supported to transition to independent living in the community.

In addition, we welcome recent progress including the extension of the remit of the Ombudsman for Children and the Office of the Ombudsman, which will now be able to receive and investigate complaints from children and adults living in Direct Provision. Until now, children living in Direct Provision were the only children in Ireland not under the jurisdiction of the Ombudsman.

Leonie Kerins, Director of Doras Luimní, said: “This is an important step forward in relation to safeguarding residents of Direct Provision and protecting children in Ireland. Children living in Direct Provision are amongst the most vulnerable children in this country. Given the scale of violations and concerns raised by residents over the years, ensuring appropriate oversight and redress is critical.”

The extension of the remit of the Ombudsman was one of 173 recommendations contained within the [McMahon report](#).

Kerins added “We welcome and commend the significant progress made by the Minister and her Department regarding the implementation of the McMahon report recommendations to date but Ireland is still a long way off meeting international obligations. Progress made in the past 18 months should be seen as a first step towards developing an alternative non-profit reception system that respects human rights and is in line with international best practice.”

[According to the Minister](#), 92% of the recommendations contained within the McMahon report have been fully or partially implemented since 2015. Doras Luimní support the full implementation of the 173 recommendations outlined in the McMahon report, including those not currently being progressed by the Department, such as the right to work and access to education.

Ms Kerins continued “The right to work is a central tenet of human rights and refugee protection. If Ireland is to meet the EU’s minimum standards for reception conditions, the complete ban on employment must be reconsidered. Ireland’s policy of prohibiting asylum seekers from working is in stark contrast to almost all EU countries, where people are allowed to contribute and support themselves and their families. We welcome the progress made to date but we urge the Department to consider and progress all recommendations.”

Doras Luimní continue to call for an alternative non-profit reception system to be developed, that respects human rights and puts the best interests of the child at the centre of policy regarding reception conditions.

**ENDS**

## Notes:

- The Department of Justice published a second progress report of the implementation of the McMahon report recommendations, available here: <http://www.justice.ie/en/JELR/Pages/PR17000065>
- The full McMahon report/ report of the Working Group on Direct Provision and Supports for Asylum Seekers was published in June 2015, available here: <http://www.justice.ie/en/JELR/Pages/PR15000389>
- The EU Directive on Reception Conditions outlines the minimum standards for reception conditions of asylum seekers, including access to the labour market nine months after lodging an initial asylum application. Ireland has not opted in to this Directive: [https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/asylum/reception-conditions\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/asylum/reception-conditions_en)
- Ireland is one of two EU member states that ban asylum seekers from employment while they are awaiting an outcome on their application: the other EU member state is Lithuania.
- Press statement from the Ombudsman for Children is available here: <https://www.oco.ie/2017/02/children-in-direct-provision-will-now-share-equal-rights-with-other-children-in-ireland-ombudsman-for-children/>

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