

Press statement: 18th December 2015

“International Migrants Day 2015 – marking the end of an unprecedented year for migration, displacement and refugee protection.”

This year the world witnessed unprecedented challenges, with the highest levels of forced displacement ever recorded. One in every 122 people worldwide has been forced to flee their homes.

There has never been a greater need to prioritise and effectively address refugee and migrant issues, nationally and internationally. While these issues are by no means new, the numbers of people seeking protection reaching the borders of Europe in 2015 surpassed 1 million people, a considerable increase on previous years.

Leonie Kerins, Director of Doras Luimní, said “Refugee protection is not just a matter of politics, quotas and legislation. There is a huge need for support services and resources to aid the effective integration of people at a local and national level. These issues do not just affect European and national politics - there are implications at societal level that must be effectively planned and addressed. ”

Kerins continued “Doras are very grateful for all the support we have received in Limerick throughout this year, which has been one of the most challenging we have faced to date. Not only is the workload massively increasing but it is also becoming more complex. While the refugee crisis and issues of forced displacement have dominated the media in recent months, we cannot forget that over 4,500 people continue to live in sub-standard conditions under the system of Direct Provision. For so many people, this Christmas will be the 10th year in institutionalised living while awaiting a decision on their asylum application. ”

National developments on the issue of Direct Provision progressed somewhat in early 2015 with the conclusion of the government’s Working Group, which recommended residency for long-term asylum seekers in Ireland. More recently, the new International Protection Bill was debated in the Dáil but failed to include key recommendations made by NGOs in the sector on the right to work, the best interest of the child and family reunification rights.

Kerins commented “Doras are supporting Syrian refugees who have recently resettled in Ireland through our sub-office in Portlaoise, which has been very positive and inspiring to date. We remain deeply concerned however that the new Protection Bill may limit their right to family reunification thus further limiting the rights of refugees in Ireland. Additionally, the Government is now creating a two-tier system that prioritises newly arrived refugees and asylum seekers under the current resettlement and relocation commitments and is at risk of neglecting the long-term residents of

Direct Provision, who have suffered enormously under failed policies. While the Government are in the process of creating a new protection system, we cannot allow those who have been damaged by Direct Provision to be forgotten. Ireland must right the wrongs of the old system before bringing in the new.”

Doras Luimní continue to call for an end to Direct Provision, for increased resettlement quotas, and for adequate resources to allow support services to respond to the needs of refugees and migrants in Ireland.

If you would like to support the work of Doras Luimní, welcoming and assisting refugees and migrants in Limerick, visit www.dorasluimni.org for details or contact the office on 061310328.

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Editor's Notes:

- Doras Luimní is an independent, non-profit, non-governmental organisation based in Limerick which promotes the human rights of migrants through personal advocacy, integration development and collaborative advocacy campaigns.
- The International Protection Bill is available to view here: [IP Bill](#)
- The report of the Working Group on the Protection Process was published in June 2015 and outlines 170 recommendations for reform of the protection and Direct Provision systems. The report is available here: [Working Group report](#)