



**“Effective right to work for asylum seekers further delayed by Government”  
(23rd January 2018)**

Despite the recent Supreme Court judgement and the forthcoming declaration of the ban on employment as unconstitutional, there has been almost no progress with regard to making employment rights an effective reality for asylum seekers in Ireland.

On 17th January, Minister Charlie Flanagan announced details of how the Government intends responding to the Supreme Court ruling, including transitional measures that will allow asylum seekers to apply to the Employment Permit scheme if they can secure a starting salary of €30,000 and contribute fees of €500 to €1,000.

Leonie Kerins, CEO of Doras Luimní said:

“The interim measures announced by the Minister are immensely restrictive and unsatisfactory. The Employment Permit scheme is not an effective right to work for asylum seekers and will have little if any impact on the people subsisting in Direct Provision on an income of just over €20 per week, awaiting progress on their cases.

We are disappointed to learn that so little progress has been made on this issue over the past eight months, since the Supreme Court judgement in May 2017. Minister Charlie Flanagan has simply announced his intention to further delay the implementation of work rights for asylum seekers, despite the clear requirement for action.”

Kerins continued:

“The international protection system in Ireland has long been marred by considerable delays in almost every facet of the process, leaving thousands of people to survive in emergency accommodation with limited rights for several years. While progress has recently been made to address the delays and human rights violations in theory, we continue to await real action and progress.”

Doras Luimní advocate for effective work rights with no restrictions for asylum seekers in Ireland. We call on the Government to take immediate and effective action to bring Ireland inline

with EU Member States and international human rights standards by granting access to the labour market and related vocational training opportunities.

Kerins concluded:

“We urge the Minister to take a human rights and evidenced-based approach to the right to work for asylum seekers. The experience of other EU countries tells us that effective access to work has economic, social and health benefits for our communities. Restrictive policies will only further compound the damage caused to individuals seeking protection in Ireland and will further delay integration into our communities.”

Doras Luimní call on our supporters to reach out to your political representatives, urging them to act quickly and effectively to help influence effective employment and integration opportunities for asylum seekers in Ireland.

## **ENDS**

Notes:

- Ireland is one of only two countries in the EU that bans employment for asylum seekers. The only other country to do so is Lithuania.
- On 30th May 2017, the [Supreme Court](#) stated that Ireland’s complete ban on employment for asylum seekers is unconstitutional. The Government was given 6 months to devise a response, before a judgement was made.
- On 9th February 2018, the Supreme Court will declare Ireland’s ban on employment unconstitutional.
- In response, the Government intends to opt-in to the [EU Directive on Reception Conditions \(recast\)](#), which requires States to grant access to the labour market no later than nine months following an initial decision. The Government intends implementing transitional measures, granting access to Employment Permits for asylum seekers, while it prepares to opt-in to the Directive, which could take upwards of 4 months.
- The right to work was a recommendation in the [McMahon report](#), published in June 2015, along with 172 recommendations for reform of the international protection and Direct Provision system.

## Contact details

Leonie Kerins, CEO, Doras Luimní.

Telephone: 061 310 328 Mobile: 0877447961 Email: [l.kerins@dorasluimni.org](mailto:l.kerins@dorasluimni.org)