

Impact Report 2021

Nasc, the Irish word for 'link', empowers migrants to realise and fulfil their rights.



Nasc

Migrant & Refugee Rights

Chair of the Board of Trustees

Dr Fiona Donson

Nasc's s Annual Report 2021 sees the organisation moving slowly out of the shadow of the Covid-19 pandemic. As things returned to some degree of normality, Nasc was able to consolidate its core activities despite the world remaining somewhat uncertain.

Nasc's principal activities in 2021 were focused on providing services to migrants, refugees and international protection applicants (asylum seekers). The organisation's Advocacy Service was able to resume providing a limited in-person service, with strict Covid-19 protocols in place. While it was very positive to once again be able to see service users in person the majority of queries continued to be dealt with by phone, video call or email.

Beyond the Advocacy Service, many other activities expanded. We were able to expand our social work initiatives working with children and young people including families transitioning out of direct provision and families reuniting in Ireland.

Nasc continued to advocate for the end of direct provision and the reform of the international protection process. The Catherine Day Working Group, of which Nasc was a member, published their seismic report in towards the end of 2020 setting out the steps to be taken to end direct provision. This report has provided a focal point for our ongoing advocacy work in this area and while we remain hopeful that change will come it is clear that the process is far from complete. Our inclusion and integration work found renewed strength as they moved to combine the best of online services and the development of refreshed in person activities. The Connect project facilitated the release of a video, made by young migrants, calling for expanded access to further and higher-level education for those currently locked out of financial support. While our Gateway Women's Project continued to provide online English language and other classes to refugee and migrant women ensuring that women remained connected to a community despite the Covid-19 restrictions.

Global events continued to inform and impact on Nasc's work. Responding to the crisis in Afghanistan was a key focal point of our work and we were able to collaborate with the Irish Refugee and Protection Programme (IRPP) and community groups in Cork to bring Afghan women's rights activists to safety here.

Nasc's community sponsorship team continued to lead the way in developing this important approach. We were very pleased that through their work we were able to support community groups to welcome Syrian refugee families who successfully resettled in Ireland.

The range of projects set out in this report illustrates the depth of work carried out by Nasc. The organisation is growing steadily but continues to punch above its weight as a result of a passionate and dedicated team. The activities are ably supplemented by Nasc's outstanding advocacy work which is rooted in bringing a strong, measured and credible voice in Cork, nationally and increasingly, at the international level. Nasc continues to be at the forefront of highlighting both the problems of direct provision and the need to embrace an effective alternative.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all our funders without whom none of this work would have been possible. In particular our long-standing supporters, The Tomar Trust, the Cork Kerry Community Health Team, the Musgrave Trust, Cork City Council, the European Commission and the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth through the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund 2014-2020, the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth through the National Integration Fund, the One Foundation and The Ireland Funds. Thank you to Foundation Internationale for their support for our work evacuating Afghans to Ireland, RTE Toy Show Appeal and the Community Foundation of Ireland, Rethink Ireland through the Digital Connections fund, Tusla and the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart for their support for our work with children and young people. We'd like to thank for Rethink Ireland and the Cork Chamber for supporting our Gateway Project via the Sustainable Cork Fund and to the ETB for their support with English classes. In addition, we need to thank all our individual donors and corporate donors who help to keep our work going.

Nasc continues to grow from strength to strength and has achieved amazing results as society slowly sought to return to "normal service" during 2021. The Board of Nasc are privileged to oversee the expanding and impactful activities of an organisation built on community and cooperation. We all bring important skills and enthusiasm that are essential in helping the organisation achieve its ambitious goals. While in addition, the core team is supplemented by interns and volunteers who play a vital role in Nasc's overall work. Personally, I am sad to say that this is my last report as Chair. I am proud to have been part of the Nasc family, a committed group of people who believe in the links that bind us all.



Nasc Board of Trustees 2021

Dr. Fiona Donson: Chairperson
Dr. Amanullah De Sony
Brenda Cooper
John Dennehy

Dr. Liam Thornton (Secretary)
Ravita Joyce
Sheila McGovern



CEO

Fiona Hurley

I am very proud to introduce the 2021 Impact Report which highlights our key activities across all of our areas of work. This is my first time providing the opening address as CEO and I would like to extend the warmest of thank yous to the extraordinary team of staff and volunteers at Nasc. I'd also like to acknowledge the incredible leadership of Fiona Finn who was CEO throughout 2021, and to whom, Nasc is deeply indebted for her vision for the organisation and her tireless advocacy on behalf of migrants and refugees. I'd also like to thank Maria Bateson and Julie O' Leary from our Community Sponsorship and Advocacy Team respectively who were both instrumental in our work throughout 2021 and who moved on to new opportunities in 2022.

Despite continuing Covid-19 uncertainty and lockdowns, our team continued to deliver information, advocacy, classes and support to refugees, migrants and international protection applicants across Ireland. The humanitarian crisis precipitated by the Taliban takeover of Afghanistan in August 2021 created a huge surge in inquiries from Afghan-Irish individuals and families seeking to bring their family members to safety in Ireland. Our Advocacy Team provided information and support to over 90 individuals and families. Our Community Sponsorship team worked closely with the Irish Refugee Protection Programme to bring Afghan human rights activists to Ireland where we worked with some incredible groups and individuals who rallied to provide support. We owe a debt of gratitude to everyone who responded to our request for help.

Some highlights of the year included the publication of the White Paper on Ending Direct Provision in February 2021. This government paper set out a pathway to ending direct provision in Ireland by 2024. This was a moment of hope for the thousands of people with lived experience of direct provision themselves and to everyone who had spent years or decades advocating for an end to direct provision. Unfortunately, the government have been unable to deliver on the commitments as yet. Nasc continues to strongly advocate for the end to direct provision and this will remain a priority until such time as we have a functioning reception system that upholds the dignity and human rights of everyone seeking protection in our State.

The publication of the Regularisation Scheme for Undocumented People was a second key highlight of 2021. Described by the Minister for Justice as a 'once in a generation' scheme, the details of the long-awaited scheme were published in December 2021. Nasc would like to extend a warm thank you to everyone who donated to our fundraiser to help pay for the application fees for those in need.

I'd like to thank the Board of Trustees for their continued work and dedication to Nasc over 2021. The Trustees give their time and expertise generously and freely and their support and guidance is invaluable.

Finally, I must acknowledge the individuals and communities it is our privilege to work with. Their resilience and courage is inspirational to all of us.



Advocacy Service

Brian Collins

2021 marked another immensely busy year for Nasc's Advocacy Service. The pandemic continued to have a significant impact on the way we worked, with the ongoing suspension of our walk-in service. However, we successfully provided detailed information, support and advocacy to our clients on a remote basis, and as the year moved on, we were happy to be able to return to face-to-face appointments at our offices.

Funding

We would like to acknowledge the funding provided by the Asylum Migration and Integration Fund 2019 – 2022 (AMIF), for our 'Connecting Communities' project which is co-financed by the European Commission under the Asylum Migration and Integration Fund 2019 – 2022 and is supported by the Department of Justice, the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration & Youth and Cork City Council. The second Advocacy Service project 'Building Communities Together' is funded through the National Integration Funding Programme and is supported by the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration & Youth through the Migrant Integration Policy and Inclusion Unit. Support was also provided by private philanthropy through the Ireland Funds and the Tomar Trust.

Context

A few notable developments nationally and internationally impacted our work, as we pivoted to address the emerging needs of our clients. Following the Taliban offensive in August 2021, the Advocacy team provided intensive advice and support to individuals who wanted to bring their family members from Afghanistan to safety in Ireland. The Irish Government approved the Afghan Admission Programme (AAP) on 28 September 2021, and it opened for applications on 16 December 2021. The programme offered temporary Irish residence to people whose freedom or safety is at risk, whether resident in Afghanistan or certain neighbouring countries, having fled from Afghanistan since 1 August 2021 and who have close family members in Ireland. Up to 500 places were made available for beneficiaries under the programme, however proposers were required to demonstrate the ability to financially support all successful beneficiaries on arrival in the State, until they can support themselves. In addition, it was a requirement for proposers to be able to provide accommodation for all successful beneficiaries on arrival in the State.

On 3 December 2021, a scheme to regularise long-term undocumented migrants was announced by the Government. The scheme was administered by the Department of Justice and eligible applicants were required to demonstrate that on the day that the scheme opened, they had a period of four years' (three years for those with children) residence in the State without a valid immigration permission. A separate scheme was also announced to allow for applicants for international protection to apply to the International Protection Office (IPO) to gain a residency permission if they had been in the asylum process for a minimum of two years. The Advocacy team provided detailed advice and support to those interested in applying under the relevant schemes.

As a result of the pandemic, many of the relevant departments processing applications were not working to full capacity in 2021, and Nasc continued to advocate on behalf of our clients in order to try to resolve their cases in as expeditious a manner as possible.

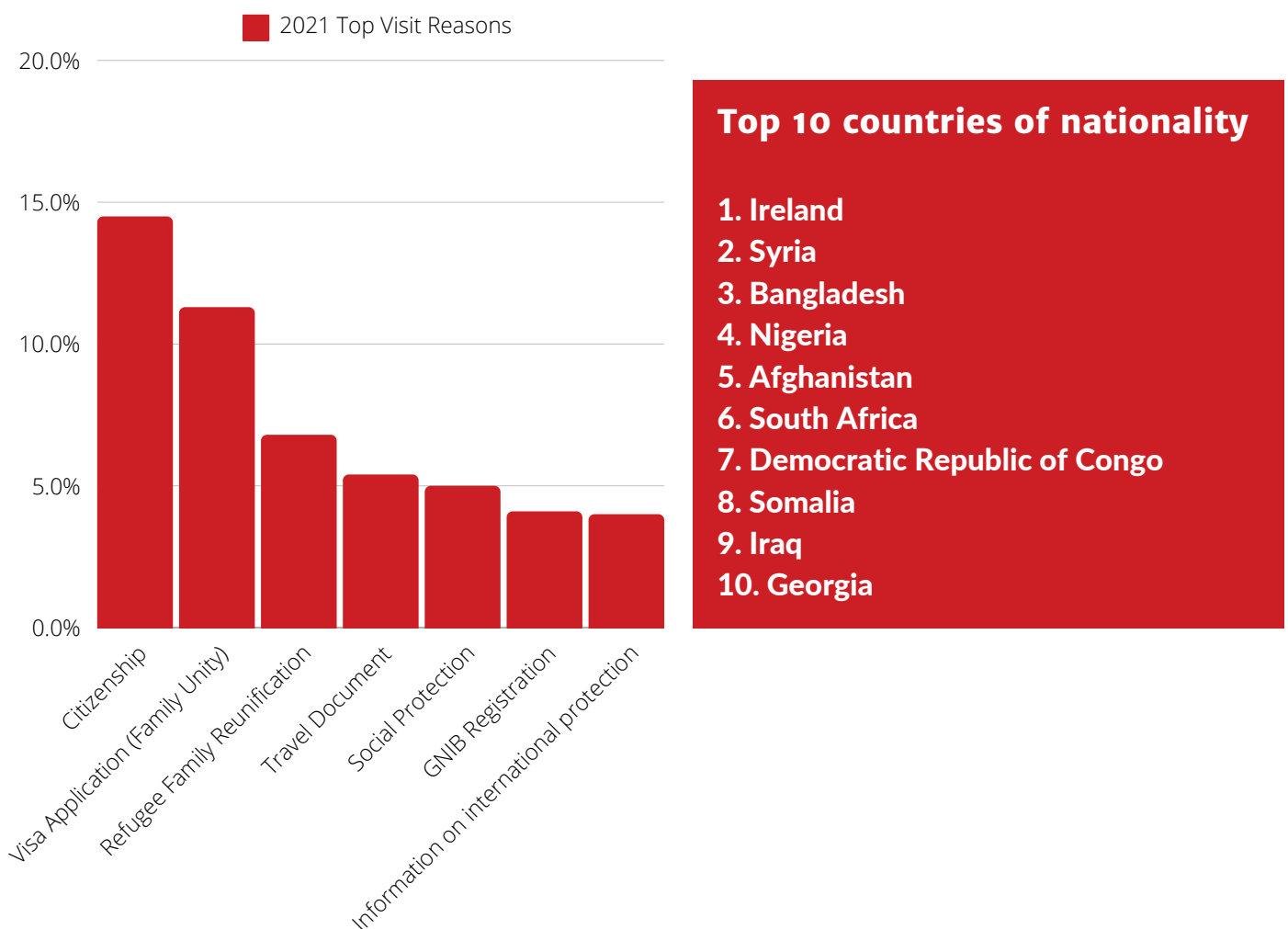
In December 2021, the Minister for Justice announced the ninth and final temporary extension of immigration and international protection permissions. This applied to permissions due to expire between 15 January 2022 and 31 May 2022 and included permissions already extended by the previous temporary extensions since March 2020. This extension allowed persons resident in Ireland with a valid permission in March 2020, to remain until 31 May 2022.

Staffing

In 2021, the Advocacy Service team comprised Julie O' Leary, Advocacy Service Manager, Natalia McDonald, Advocacy Officer and Mark Durning, Advocacy Officer. Mark moved on from Nasc during the year and Brian Collins joined the team as Advocacy Officer in August 2021. We are grateful to Grace Phelan and Fiona Walsh, our Advocacy Service volunteers, who assisted us greatly in providing our service during the year.

Service numbers

In 2021, the Advocacy Service delivered 1968 interventions to 977 unique clients, and just under a third of the clients we interacted with registered with us in 2021. Our clients came from over 100 different countries.





Connect Youth Project

Susan Mackey

The Connect project went through some exciting new changes in 2021. While we continued our vital work with 14–24 year-olds, we had the opportunity to broaden services offered through our *New Beginnings* programme this year. In total, we supported 131 asylum seekers, refugee and migrants this year through the Connect project. Our most frequent activity involved supporting access and integration of children and young people into schools, further education, training and employment.

We further extended our reach to children and young people living in remote Direct provision centres and communities through the provision of more digital supports to aid communication, learning and provide therapeutic supports for young people throughout the pandemic. This work was supported by Rethink Ireland's Digital Solutions Fund and provided the much-needed supports to overcome the digital divide for the most disadvantaged of learners.

In January 2021 we started a project called 'Our Lives, Our Futures' (supported by IHREC). This involved 22 participants on the Connect project that have had difficulty accessing or were locked out of further education because of their immigration status. Together these young people produced a powerful video '*I Dream*' to highlight this inequality and call for change and we were delighted that the video and the young people involved were featured on RTE News. We also produced an information booklet to provide guidance for those seeking further education and for support workers of asylum seekers and refugees.

Another common strand of our work involved helping young people to understand their asylum and immigration needs, get their voice heard in the asylum process and become active participants in important decisions effecting their lives. Access to healthcare, mental health and integration continued to be a regular support again this year and we linked many participants to therapeutic and wellbeing supports to help them deal with trauma and loss whilst also connecting them to new activities in their community. Homelessness, housing and poverty needs also featured increasingly this year and we supported 52 children and young people to remain in safe and secure housing.

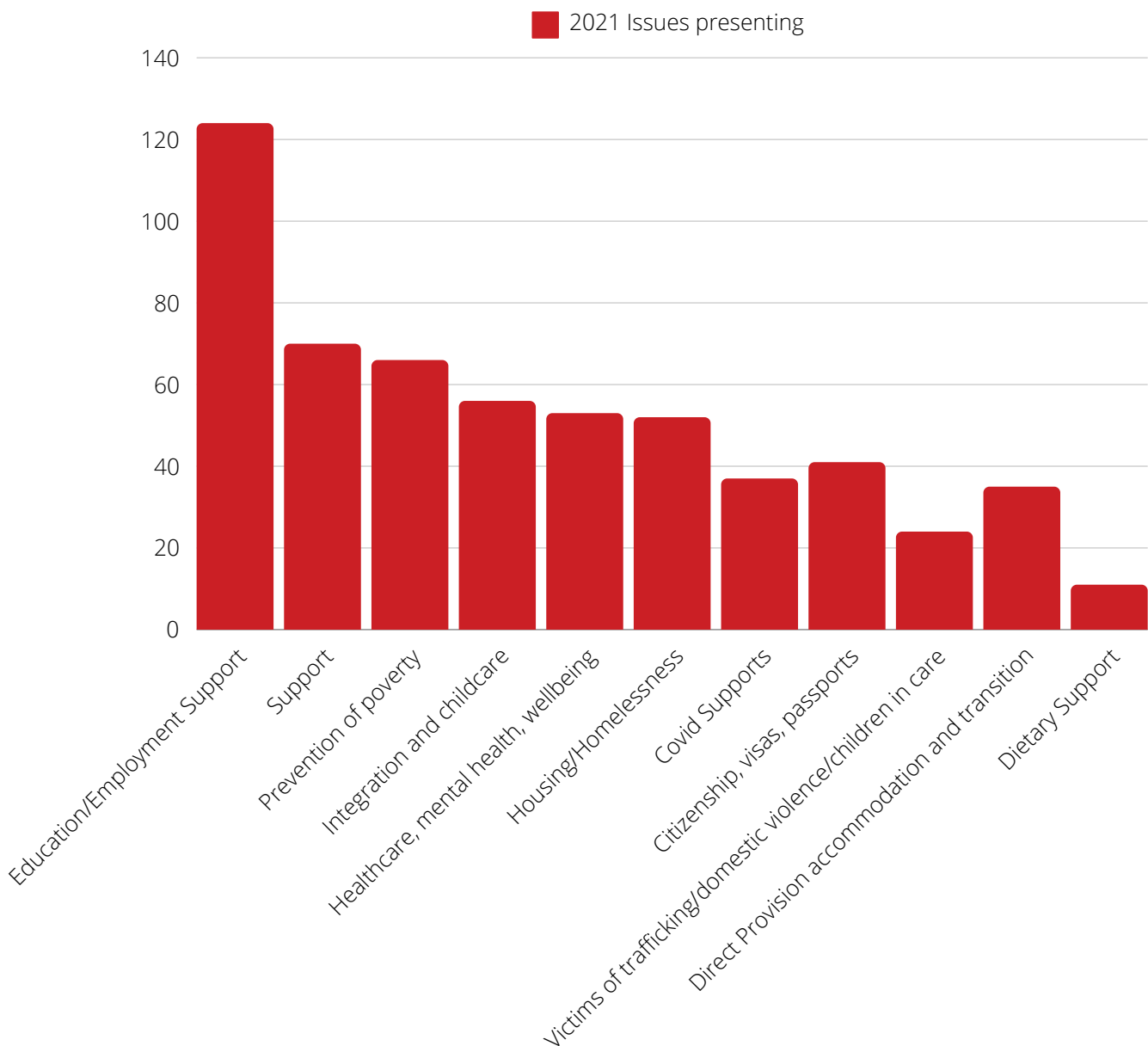


We continued our collaborative work with social work teams, guardian ad litem, education and health workers to help provide the wraparound supports needed by the most vulnerable of refugee children and young people. This included children and young people impacted by trafficking, domestic violence, abuse and neglect. On average each child and young person received 4 in-depth interventions and this totalled 569 interventions overall.

A special word of thanks goes to the wonderful additions to our team this year, Eilis Ni Laoi, New Beginnings Social Worker, Charlene Jollivet, Elisabeth Ahouso, Gift Okoro and Riches Uwoghiren.

Funding

We'd like to acknowledge the support provided by Tusla and by the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart. We'd also like to thank Rethink Ireland for their support through the Digital Solutions Fund.



New Beginnings

Eilis Ni Laoi

2021 saw the piloting of The New Beginnings project which provides support to refugee children arriving in Ireland under family reunification and the children of families transitioning out of the reception system of Direct Provision into community life. Significant research points to the relationship between transitioning from Direct Provision and the experience of poverty, deprivation, social isolation, and marginalisation. It is a challenging time that can cause upheaval in a child or young person's life often resulting in anxiety and insecurity. Refugee families can be plunged into chronic poverty as they attempt to financially support newly arrived children and spouses in the initial weeks and months following reunification. These needs had previously been identified by Nasc through our own work and through our 2020 research 'Invisible People: The integration support needs of refugee families reunified in Ireland'.

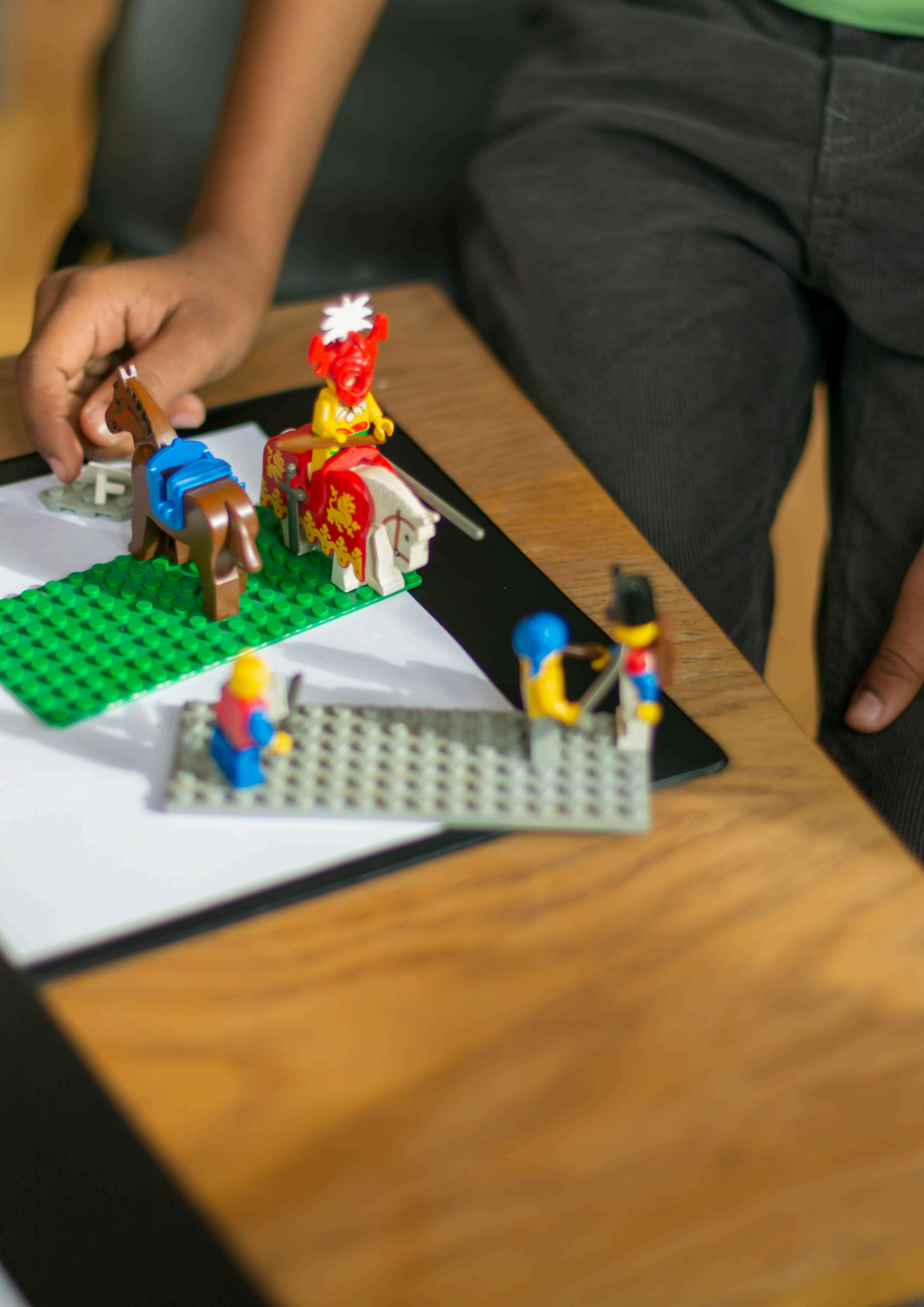
The New Beginnings project works with young people and families who are particularly vulnerable in and around the time of the transitions while moving out of direct provision or joining their family members through refugee family reunification. Families often experience overwhelming challenges in accessing essential services and meeting their children's basic needs. The project works to prevent homelessness, alleviate poverty, and meet basic and essential need to improve living conditions and outcomes. The programme aids children and families to access education and provides much needed intensive English language support. It also connects children and families to mainstream essential services such as social welfare, access to healthcare, housing, therapeutic and general wellbeing services as well as the delivery of hands on practical and transitional support such as assistance with moving costs and household items alongside resettlement, orientation and integration supports.

The project emphasises direct engagement with children and young people before, during, and after their reunification with family or transition from Direct Provision, a detailed assessment of each child and family's individual and unique needs is carried out. Utilising a social work approach the project provides holistic, targeted, and wrap around supports to ensure that the identified needs are met in an effective efficient and meaningful way. Successful outcomes for our children and families include increased ability to understand, speak and write English, improved retention and participation in education, increased quality of life, mental health and wellbeing, equity of access to a variety of mainstream services, prevention of homelessness and poverty and achieving a sense of belonging and inclusion through community links and the building of relationships.

Thank you to our English teachers, translators, and volunteers for your contribution to the success of the project. Finally, to the children, young people and families that this project works alongside thank you for allowing us to be a part of your New Beginnings.

Funders

I would like to extend a huge thank you to the New Beginnings funders - RTE and The Toy Show Appeal administered by the Community Foundation for Ireland. Also, a heartfelt thank you to Rethink Ireland for supporting and, believing in, the Building Connections programme.



Policy & Communications

Fiona Hurley

Nasc's Policy & Communications work was again in 2021 dominated by the issues of direct provision and international protection and the humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan. Nasc was involved in anti-racism work both locally and nationally. Throughout the year Nasc made submissions to national and international consultations on human rights issues in Ireland on issues from domestic, sexual and gender-based violence to equity of access to higher level education. Nasc made submissions to the Universal Periodic Review mechanism and were invited to contribute to consultations by the Anti-Racism Committee.

Direct Provision

The publication of the White Paper on Ending Direct Provision sparked hope that there was, for the first time, a clear timeline for ending direct provision. Nasc partnered with Dr. Liam Thornton and UCD Sutherland School of Law in the immediate aftermath of the White Paper publication to run a 4-part series of webinars with expert contributors dissecting the commitments in the White Paper.

By mid 2021, Covid 19-related delays to the international protection system saw waiting times of 2 years or longer for international protection applicants to be called for a first substantive interview at the International Protection Office. Nasc began working with other civil society groups nationally to push for action on the White Paper.

Nasc successfully applied for funding through the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission (IHREC) grants scheme for research tracking the implementation of the White Paper on Ending Direct Provision. The project, *Ending Direct Provision? One Year On* will combine an evidence-based score card with qualitative research by a peer researcher. The research began in late 2021.

Our Lives, Our Futures

Nasc received funding from the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission (IHREC) 2020-2021 grants scheme to highlight the inequalities in accessing further and higher education for migrant young people who do not qualify for SUSI grants. The project began in January 2021 and culminated in the release of a video made by young people with the assistance of Nasc and production company Piquant. We wanted to empower young people to learn about advocacy and to help participants learn how to use their voices to push for change. We would like to thank the inspirational speakers who contributed to our public webinars including Gift Okoro, Sandrine Ndahiro, Mamobo Orog, Councillor Uruemu Adejinmi and Ejiro Ogbevoen.

Hate crime

Nasc was an active member of the National Coalition Against Hate Crime throughout 2021. Nasc made extensive submissions on the General Scheme of the Criminal Justice (Hate Crime) Bill 2021. Nasc was subsequently one of four organisations and academics called before the Oireachtas to give evidence to the Joint Oireachtas Committee on Justice on the General Scheme of the Criminal Justice (Hate Crime) Bill.

Gateway Women's Project

Claire Mackey

Gateway Women's Project is a holistic programme working to empower migrant and refugee women and promote integration and inclusion. Our aim is to tackle disadvantage, poverty and social exclusion by providing English language, wellbeing and creative classes, and assisting with rights, entitlements and access to education and employment. We provide social work support for issues such as mental health, poverty and domestic abuse and link women with additional support services. The programme empowers participants to grow in confidence and creates a pathway for future learning, training and employment. Participants report increased confidence and ability to communicate and feel empowered and supported to pursue their goals for their life in Ireland.

In 2021, Gateways delivered online English language classes to 38 students, taught at 4 levels of English. With the help of our English teacher Mary-Anne Oke, 8 of our higher-level students achieved a QQI level 4 in English studies. Our popular conversation classes continued with a mixture of online classes and a return to in-person classes. As public health restrictions eased in June 2021, participants were able to meet again in-person for our cultural tours and we were thrilled to meet once again in person.

During the summer months we secured a premises for our in-person creative classes, which was kindly offered to us by Tian Herbert of Shine, mental health recovery. 20 women participated in our in-person creative classes including art, crochet and knitting. In July and August, Gateway teamed up with Shine to contribute to their Steps of Hope campaign producing artwork based on the theme of hope which was then displayed on billboards around Cork city.



As the pandemic continued and restrictions tightened and lifted repeatedly, our team became concerned about the impact of the pandemic on our participants and their families. Therefore, additional wellbeing supports were introduced. Gateways ran our first “Amaris” strengths-based wellbeing group which was facilitated by counsellor Toufik Messabih of Lib multicultural counselling. We also ran well-being through creativity classes, which promoted stress relief, peer support, problem sharing and problem solving. The Gateways project has continued to provide a support network and a safe space for women to learn and receive the help they require.

The Gateway Team

would like to extend a huge thank you to the Gateways team, including the indispensable Kiren Khalid, and dedicated teachers Mary-Anne Oke and Mary O’ Mahony for their ongoing commitment and essential contribution to Gateway. On behalf of all the team I would like to extend a very special thanks to our amazing volunteers Aine O’Mahony and Laura Cullen for their commitment, energy and enthusiasm.

Funders

Thank you to all the funders of the Gateway Women's Project throughout 2021. This includes Rethink Ireland, Cork Chamber of Commerce and the Department of Rural and Community Development for their support through the Sustainable Cork Fund. The Cork Education and Training Board continued to support Gateway through the provision of English language classes. Our Conversation Cafés were supported by the Communities Integration Fund administered by the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth. Our Creative Connections, creative and wellbeing programme, was funded by the Begin Together Fund of the Community Foundation of Ireland.

In Numbers



38 women participated in online English language classes.



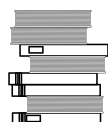
Participants came from 15 countries across the world.



8 women awarded a QQI Level 4 in English.



25 women took part in conversation cafes.



6 women transitioned to further education or employment.



25 women took part in our in-person creative and wellbeing classes.



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Integration

Cecilia Amabo

Nasc's Integration Project is part of the Connecting Communities project which is funded by Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund 2014-2020 and supported by the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth.

In 2020 we noted that the plan to develop, with Cork City Council and local stakeholders, a Migrant Integration Strategy for Cork City had been significantly impacted by Covid-19 with work on the Integration Plan paused in 2020. In 2021 we were able to resume our work however, we had lost many important months for public consultations etc. With Covid-19 creating uncertainty on whether restrictions might be re-introduced, a decision was taken to revise our initial plans of carrying out a 'traditional' integration strategy.

Instead, a decision was made to pivot towards a migrant-led approach, capturing a snapshot of the rich diversity of Cork City by providing a space for migrants who have made Cork their home in different times in history to freely share their experiences via storytelling and interviews. The pandemic had shown that Ireland's migrant workforce were the backbone of essential services but that even those who were now Irish citizens faced additional challenges, often separated from their extended families by international borders that were closed for months or years. The pandemic had also unleashed a wave of racism, particularly racism targeting those of Asian ethnicity. In light of the extraordinary few years which had highlighted the importance of communities, we were keen to go beyond statistics like the number of people from migrant backgrounds in the workforce and capture the sense to which people felt like they belonged in Cork.

We decided that we would extend invitations to 25 people from migrant backgrounds to take part in the project. We thought carefully about who to invite to be part of the project. We wanted to have a cross-section of people from migrant and refugee backgrounds and, in order to get a broad perspective, invite participants who had unique insight into the needs of their communities through their work or their voluntary activities. Work on scoping the new project and preparing interview questions continued throughout the latter half of 2021. The report, *We Are Cork: Voices from a Diverse City* will be published in 2022.

As Integration Officer, I also attended meetings both locally and nationally on behalf of Nasc and contributed to research. I represented Nasc at INAR meetings. I was delighted to be asked to join the Steering Group for the IHREC-funded research *Ending Direct Provision? One Year On*, an important piece of research tracking the implementation of the White Paper on Ending Direct Provision through both empirical research and through the recruitment of a peer researcher.

Community Sponsorship

Majo Rivas

After an extraordinary and challenging 2020, the Covid-19 pandemic continued to have a huge impact on our work. Nationally, missions to Lebanon were suspended for long periods due to travel restrictions and remaining Covid-19 related guidelines continued to restrict our efforts to expand Community Sponsorship to the level we would have ideally desired. Nevertheless, the Nasc team continued its work supporting Community Sponsorship Groups (CSGs) and several of these groups welcomed families during the year which, in pandemic times, meant that families were required to isolate on arrival, either in Mandatory Hotel Quarantine or in designated locations. The Nasc team went above and beyond to support families during their isolation periods, providing interpretation supports, delivering shopping, conveying health information to families.

In the first half of the year, Nasc assumed responsibility as a Regional Support Organisation for Area 5, covering the counties of Wexford, Waterford, Carlow, Kilkenny and Laois. As a result, we were delighted to welcome Maria Bateson who returned to the Community Sponsorship in the summer of 2021 to assist in the expansion of Community Sponsorship in the South-East. Maria joined Nael Saoud, the Community Sponsorship Officer for Area 2.

Supporting new and established groups

Throughout the year, we continued to support groups which had formed and welcomed families previously. One of the groups completed their commitment; both the group and family reported that their experience was rewarding and very successful. Despite increased uncertainty around resettlement and travel capabilities, we continued to walk groups through the preparation process and to offer training online. We provided supports to 2 groups in East Cork which had completed were formerly supported by another organisation; while Nasc was not directly responsible for supporting these groups, we stepped in to fill the gaps as their original support organisation was no longer in place. We were delighted that 5 groups completed their applications and were approved to welcome a family during the year. The Community Sponsorship team would also like to extend their appreciation to the members of the Advocacy Team, who supported us and the groups we worked with by providing pre-arrival training to the groups and also supported the families with queries around family reunification and travel documents. It truly takes a village.

Over the course of the year, we also worked with 3 new groups, one in Cork, Kerry and Waterford respectively. Through the year, a large part of our work was keeping groups motivated and connected with one another. We hosted several online meet ups between groups so they could share their experiences; as well as offering information sessions to newcomer groups who were interested in getting involved. Indeed, the increased use of online technology also facilitated the delivery of online training as most people had become accustomed to video conferencing. In addition to core training modules provided to Community Sponsorship Groups, Nasc also helped facilitate a training webinar on trauma sensitive approaches in the context of the Syrian refugee journey. This training was developed alongside with HSE's Social Inclusion unit. All community

sponsorship groups, existing and emerging were invited to attend and a total of 150 people attended the first training of this type; this was replicated later in the year. This is a rare example of a silver lining from this year, and we hope to continue to take advantage of the panoply of platforms available to us so that we can continue to boost connectivity.

Afghanistan

In August 2021, the world watched the rapidly unfolding events in Afghanistan in dismay and people in Ireland were not indifferent to the Afghan plight. Two of the formal Community Sponsorship Groups supported by Nasc welcomed Afghan families and Community Sponsorship served as a roadmap for other groups that were not formally part of the Programme but were gearing to welcome people from Afghanistan. Nasc drew on its expertise as a Regional Support Organisation to help formulate a 'hybrid' community sponsorship model, whereby groups and communities were activated quickly to respond to the urgent needs of people fleeing from Afghanistan. As part of this, extensive pre-arrival supports were provided, including connection with the Community Sponsorship training package, information resources and regular contact with the groups and individuals arriving from Afghanistan.

Programme Development

We have continued to help develop Community Sponsorship materials alongside our programme partners. At a national level, Nasc played a key role alongside other stakeholders in creating a framework to facilitate programme scaling. Nasc continued to work in partnership with Quality Matters to develop a high-quality national training programme for future CSGs coming on stream. This work included drafting and reviewing training materials and developing a high-quality suite of online training and videos. These are key to the programme's future scalability and promotion and undoubtedly a great resource as Covid-19 remains a concern. At a national level, Nasc played a key role alongside other stakeholders in creating a framework to facilitate programme scaling. Nasc continued to work in partnership with Quality Matters to develop a high-quality national training programme for future CSGs coming on stream. This work included drafting and reviewing training materials and developing a high-quality suite of online training and videos.

Looking forward and outward

The Community Sponsorship team also participated in dialogues exploring challenges and opportunities at international level. We participated in research by the Migration Policy Institute ~ (MPI) Europe on the scalability of the programme in the Irish context. Nasc's work was also featured in a newsletter published by the Global Refugee Sponsorship Initiative (GRSI) and participated in the 2021 CSO Community Sponsorship Champion Series, a series of best practice workshops developed by GRSI and Amnesty International.

We look forward to continuing our work with groups and families on the programme, and, hopefully, to better times ahead.

Funder

We would like to acknowledge the support of the Asylum Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF) 2014 - 2020 which is administered by the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth.



محمد سامح



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Photo credit: The One Family Project
13th Sept 2021

