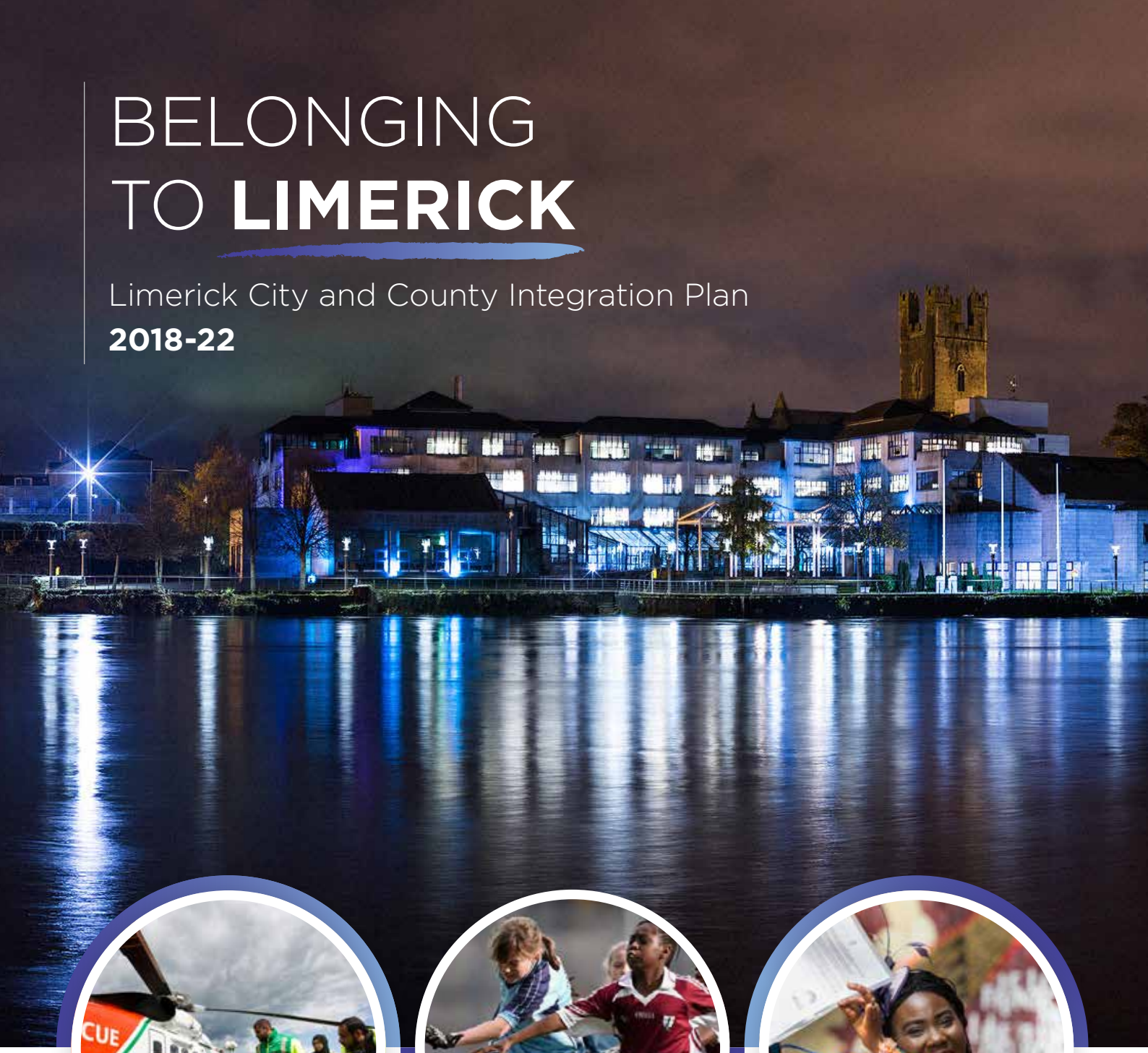
# BELONGING TO **LIMERICK**

Limerick City and County Integration Plan
**2018-22**



LIMERICK **INTEGRATION WORKING** GROUP
Connecting Communities

# CONTENTS


Foreword ... 3
Chairperson's Introduction ... 4
**Section A: Integration Working Group Role Vision and Values** ... 6
1. Integration Working Group. ... 8
2. Integration Plan Vision and Values. ... 10
3. IWG Integration Planning Process ... 12
**Section B: Thematic Strategic Plans** ... 14
**Integration Theme 1: Language, Education and Lifelong Learning** ... 16
**Integration Theme 2: Information, Advice and Direct Support Services** ... 18
**Integration Theme 3: Access to Public Services** ... 20
**Integration Theme 4: Intercultural Awareness** ... 22
**Integration Theme 5: Active Citizenship and Supporting Communities** ... 24
**Section C: Key Statistical Data** ... 26
4. Census 2016: Profile of Limerick's Migrant Population ... 28
**Section D: EU, National and Local Policy Review** ... 32
5. EU Integration Policy Priorities ... 34
6. National Integration Strategies ... 35
7. Local Policy Context ... 38
**Section E: Integration Research Methodology and Key Findings** ... 40
8. Integration Research Methodology. ... 42
9. Integration Needs Analysis 2017: Key Findings ... 43
**Section F: Appendices** ... 46



**Author:** Eugene Quinn
**Designed by:** www.obriencreative.ie
**Printed by:** IMAGE PRINT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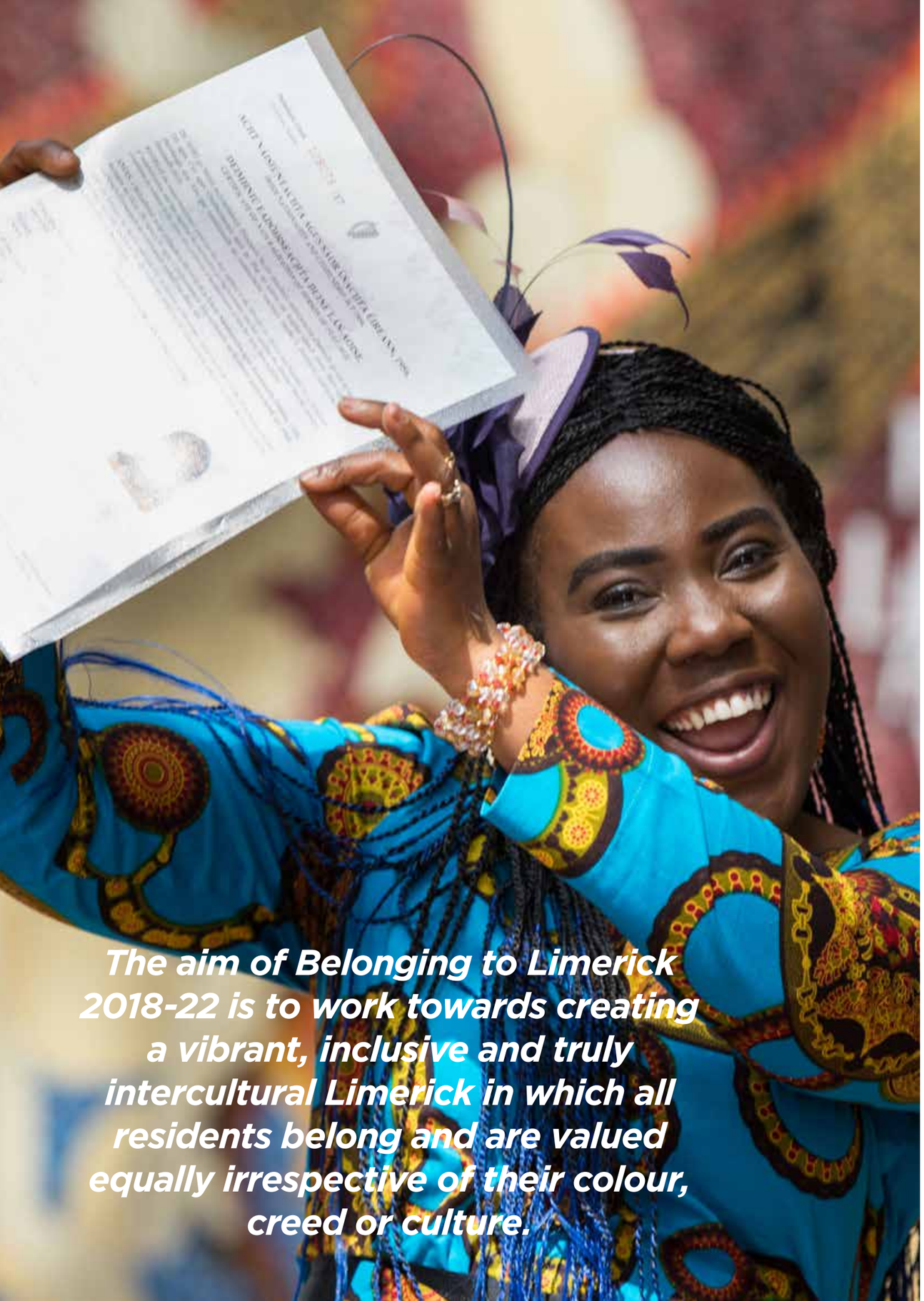
**Photography:**
Limerick Sports Partnership Main Cover, Page 37
Doras Luimní Page 37
West Limerick Resources Page 37
Limerick City and County Council Pages 1, 5, 6-7, 8, 10, 18, 31, 37
True Media: Main Cover, Pages 2, 14-15, 16, 20, 22, 24, 26-27, 32-33, 37, 39, 40-41, 46

The Limerick Integration Working Group would like to sincerely thank all participants who contributed to the planning process, integration research and stakeholder consultations, and each person who took time to complete a survey, participate in a focus groups or just shared their experiences.

Especially, we would like to acknowledge the generosity and work of the University of Limerick Research Team (Dr James Carr, Dr Elaine Vaughan and Dr Ann Marcus Quinn) in conducting the Limerick Integration Needs Analysis 2017, which informed the development of this strategy.

Also, to express our gratitude to Dr Eileen Humphreys and the Central Statistics Office who shared key statistical data and tables from Census 2016.

*Belong to Limerick* has been published with the generous support of the Community Integration Fund 2018. We would like to thank all those who gave the Limerick Integration Working Group permission to use their images, including those provided by www.bigstockphoto.com.






# FOREWORD

The Limerick Integration Working Group (IWG) has been at the forefront in promoting the integration of migrant communities in Limerick.

The IWG is an example of how cooperation between the local authority, state bodies, community and voluntary agencies can be effective and lead to improved outcomes for all people, local and migrant, who live in Limerick.

*Integrating Limerick: Limerick City and County Integration Plan 2010-12* was Limerick's first integration strategy for the city and county with the aim of promoting a vibrant, inclusive and dynamic society in Limerick in which all residents are valued, regardless of their nationality, religion or ethnic background.

Towards Intercultural *Limerick: Limerick City and County Integration Plan 2013-16* built on the progress achieved under the first plan, by taking the next steps towards the development of Limerick as a welcoming, inclusive and intercultural region.

And now, *Belonging to Limerick: Limerick City and County Integration Plan 2018-22* seeks to further advance the aim of developing a dynamic and diverse Limerick that ensures all can fully participate in the social, cultural and economic life of Limerick.

The aim of the new Integration Plan 2018–22 is to work towards creating a vibrant, inclusive and truly intercultural society in Limerick in which all residents belong and are valued equally, regardless of their colour, creed or culture.

Limerick City and County Council is committed under its Limerick Corporate Plan 2015-19 to *"actively promote diversity, equality and partnership and ensure due regard for human rights in everything we do"*, while this commitment has been reiterated under the Local Economic and Community Plan 2016-21.

It is heartening to see the evolution in this integration strategy in addressing the current and future needs of migrant communities in the region, which indicates that earlier integration strategies put in place are working.

This can be seen in a myriad of outlets including festivals and events around Limerick, which are enriched, by the participation and often leadership of migrant communities.

This new strategy is an important next step in building a truly intercultural Limerick, a Limerick that will benefit everyone.

**Cllr James Collins**
Mayor of the City and
County of Limerick

**Conn Murray**
Chief Executive
Limerick City And County Council

# INTRODUCTION

*Belonging to Limerick 2018-22* is the third integration plan developed for the region. The concept of belonging was at the heart of Limerick's bid to be European City of Culture 2020. Belonging encapsulated a vision, a strategy and a future for Limerick and beyond. It is a desire and a hope for migrants to belong. People who have come to Limerick from all over the world to live, to study, to work, to invest or simply to find refuge and protection.

Limerick shares the vision underpinning the national *Migrant Integration Strategy 2017-20: A Blueprint for All*, of an integrated society in which migrants are facilitated to play a full part in Irish society - a society in which migrants have the opportunities they need to lead full lives; to enjoy the benefits of living in Ireland; and to make a contribution to Irish life and society.

The local authority committed under Limerick Corporate Plan 2015-19 to *"actively promote diversity, equality and partnership and ensure due regard for human rights in everything we do"*. A commitment reiterated under the Local Economic and Community Plan 2016-21 to *"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"*.

This new five year integration plan places an emphasis on diversity advantage and the positive contribution migrants bring to places and regions of destination. *"Economic, management and psychological research have demonstrated that diversity brings considerable benefits for organisations and cities in terms of increased innovation, productivity and ability to solve problems."* (Intercultural Cities (ICC), 2017). We believe migration and diversity are good for business, for innovation, for education, for communities and society in general.

Diversity advantage has implications for policy making since involving people from diverse backgrounds in policy design increases their effectiveness. From a policy perspective, the challenge is to devise and implement strategies for integration that can help to tap into the potential benefits of diversity while minimising its costs.

The Limerick Integration Working Group (IWG) is responsible for coordinating the implementation of this Integration Plan. There are 19 statutory, community and voluntary and migrant representative groups in the IWG, strongly committed to progressing integration measures, celebrating diversity and enhancing social cohesion in the region.

A principal aim in developing this plan is to ensure that the voice and experience of migrants who have made Limerick their home is at its heart. The University of Limerick (UL) Research team made this a central tenet in the design and delivery of the *Limerick Integration Needs Analysis 2017* that informs the priority integration thematic strategies contained in this plan.

Limerick took an important step forward in participating as an Intercultural City (and Region) in the Council of Europe *Intercultural Cities* project. In November 2014 the intercultural cities charter was formally signed by the Mayor of Limerick. This opens up opportunities for Limerick to maximise best practice and the diversity advantage by learning from other participating European cities and regions, including, Barcelona, Copenhagen, Rotterdam, London Lewisham, San Sebastian and Limassol. This integration strategy meets one of the key requirements of this project.

Nevertheless, there is a leadership challenge for Limerick City and County Council to ensure that the strategies to promote integration under the five priority thematic areas in this plan are fully implemented and adequately resourced.

Migration and diversity offer a huge opportunity for Limerick. This plan emphasises the positive side of the balance sheet. Migration is good for the economy, addressing skills shortages, adding flexibility, capacity and diversity to the labour force and helping to create a more attractive environment to locate culturally diverse international business and investment. Too often public narrative focusses on the challenges and costs of migrant integration. Migrants, on other hand, perceive themselves as assets, bringing innovation, language skills and new ways of thinking. As one migrant stated simply "I want to be part of the solution". Our hope is that this integration plan will enable this desire to belong and to contribute positively to Limerick.

Finally, on behalf of the Limerick Integration Working Group I would like to express our deep appreciation and thanks to all organisations, groups and residents of Limerick City and County, migrant and local, who contributed to the development of this Plan.

We look forward to working together over the next five years to connect people and communities ensuring a sense of belonging in Limerick that is not predicated on colour, creed or culture.

Eugene Quinn

**Eugene Quinn**

National Director
Jesuit Refugee Service Ireland
(Chairperson, Limerick Integration Working Group)

# SECTION A

Integration Working Group Role, Vision and Values

# 1. INTEGRATION WORKING GROUP

## 1.1 IWG ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITY

The Integration Working Group (IWG) was established in late 2007. It operated originally under the auspices of the Social Inclusion Measures (SIM) committee of both Limerick City and County local authorities. The SIM Committees were in turn subject to the respective Limerick City Development Board and Limerick County Development Board. Following the reform of local government in 2013 and the merger of Limerick City and County Council, the IWG now reports to the Social Development Directorate.

After its formation in 2007, the initial aim of the IWG was to bring together statutory, non-statutory and voluntary bodies to share information and best practices on working with Limerick's culturally diverse population and providing appropriate responses to the integration needs of migrant and local communities.

Since 2009 the IWG has been responsible for coordinating the development of migrant integration strategies for delivery of services and the implementation of activities that promote the integration of migrants in Limerick City and County. The first plan was *Integrating Limerick: Limerick City and County Integration Plan 2010-12*, followed by *Towards Intercultural Limerick: Limerick City and County Integration Plan 2013-16.*

## 1.2 IWG FOCUS: MIGRANT INTEGRATION

The IWG focuses on migrant integration and the following groups and their families:

- Asylum seekers
- Migrant Workers (EU)
- Migrant Workers (Non-EU)
- International Students
- Refugees / Persons with Stamp 4 – Leave to Remain

The needs of members of the Traveller Community in Limerick, as an ethnic minority, are not addressed by the IWG as they fall within the remit of the Interagency Group for the Delivery of Services for Travellers.

## 1.3 IWG INTEGRATION DEFINITION

The IWG adopts the following definition of integration: *"Integration is a long-term multidimensional and dynamic process starting from the moment of arrival in Limerick. It aims at ensuring respect for diversity and equal opportunities for the participation of all residents of Limerick irrespective of cultural or religious background, age, gender or nationality. Integration takes place through the interaction of people and implies mutual understanding as well as shared rights and responsibility."*





## IWG MEMBERS

- African Community Representative
- An Garda Síochána
- Department of Social Protection
- Doras Luimní
- Health Service Executive
- Jesuit Refugee Service Ireland
- Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board
- Limerick City and County Council
- Limerick Filipino Community
- Limerick Sports Partnership
- Limerick Volunteer Centre
- Limerick Youth Services
- Our Lady of Lourdes FRC
- Midwest Interfaith Network
- Mary Immaculate College
- PAUL Partnership
- Polish Arts Festival Representative
- University of Limerick
- West Limerick Resources

# 2. VISION AND VALUES

## INTEGRATION VISION

The IWG endorses the vision in *Migrant Integration Strategy: A Blueprint for All* of an integrated society in which migrants are facilitated to play a full part in Irish society – a society in which migrants have the opportunities they need to lead full lives; to enjoy the benefits of living in Ireland; and to make a contribution to Irish life and society.

This underpins a vision for Limerick where migrants can fully participate in its economic, social and cultural life of the country and that Limerick society and institutions work together to promote integration.

- The basic values of Irish society are respected by all.
- Migrants are enabled and expected to participate in economic activity.
- Migrants interact with the host community and participate with them in cultural, sporting and other activities while also preserving their own traditions.
- Migrants have language skills sufficient to enable them to participate fully in society.
- Migrants have a knowledge of Ireland and Limerick, its history and culture.
- Migrants, and particularly their children, benefit fully from the education system.
- Migrants are enabled to celebrate their national, ethnic, cultural and religious identities, subject to the law.
- Migrants participate in politics and public life as provided for by law.
- Integration policies and measures are mainstreamed.
- Positive action measures are undertaken where appropriate to address specific migrant needs.
- Migrants and representative groups, contribute to policy and service development.
- Migrants get the necessary support to access public services on an equal basis.

## INTEGRATION VALUES

The Integration Working Group envisages the following values as prerequisites for integration:

### *Respect for Fundamental Rights*

Democratic structures and the rule of law, together with freedom of expression and other fundamental rights outlined in national and international law are to be respected by all people in Limerick.

### *Equality*

Equality requires that all members of Limerick society, especially those at risk of exclusion, be accorded equal treatment. Migrants should therefore be treated in the same way as any other members of the society. Providing equal opportunities requires special measures such as accessibility to rights and services, information and training.

### *Participation*

Participation is the lynchpin of integration – the two are inseparable. There can be no integration without participation and there can be no participation without an integration process taking place. All stakeholders in Limerick should strive to facilitate participation in order to make the economic, social, cultural and physical environment accessible and welcoming to migrants.

## DIVERSITY ADVANTAGE: ECONOMIC BENEFITS OF MIGRATION

The Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) has identified three areas in which immigrants have contributed to economies in the host/ receiving countries (OECD, 2014).

### *OECD: Migration good for the economy*

**Labour Market**

- Migrants accounted for 47% of the increase in the workforce in the United States and 70% in Europe over the past ten years.
- Migrants fill important niches both in fast-growing and declining sectors of the economy.
- Migrants are younger and are better educated than those nearing retirement.
- Migrants contribute significantly to labour-market flexibility, notably in Europe.

**The Public Purse**

- Migrants contribute more in taxes and social contributions than they receive in benefits.
- Labour migrants have the most positive impact on the public purse.
- Employment is the single biggest determinant of migrants' net fiscal contribution.

**Economic Growth**

- Migration boosts the working-age population.
- Migrants arrive with skills, language and innovation, contributing to human capital development of receiving countries.
- Migrants also contribute to technological progress.

First, migration has a demographic impact, not only by increasing the size of the population but also by changing the age pyramid of receiving countries. Migrants tend to be more concentrated in the younger and economically active age groups compared with host populations and therefore contribute to reduce dependency ratios (Gagnon, 2014).

Second, migrants arrive with skills and abilities, and so supplement the stock of human capital of the host country. More specifically, evidence from the United States suggests that skilled immigrants contribute to boosting research and innovation, as well as technological progress (Hunt, 2010).

The proportion of highly educated immigrants in OECD countries is rising sharply. The number of tertiary-educated immigrants in OECD countries showed an unprecedented increase in the past decade (up by 70%), reaching a total of almost 30 million in 2010/11.

> *"Diversity Advantage envisages migrants as a resource for local economic, social and cultural development, and not only as vulnerable groups in need of support and services."*

# 3. IWG INTEGRATION PLANNING PROCESS

## 3.1 INITIAL INTEGRATION PLANNING STAGES

A key emphasis in the planning process was participation by people who are affected by the outcomes. The process was designed to enable input not just at the beginning but also after an initial draft plan had been developed. The aim of the process design was to ensure that the plan would address the real integration concerns and needs of people on the ground.

The development of the Integration Plan involved the following stages:

a. Develop Statistical Profile of Limerick's Migrant Population
b. Review of EU, National and Local Policy Context
c. Mapping of Service Provision
d. Integration Needs Analysis

### *Statistical Profile of Limerick's Migrant Population*

Census 2016 provides an up to date profile of Limerick's migrant population. The data shows nearly one in ten persons usually resident in the region are migrants. Section D details the analyses of this population by age, gender and geographic location. The major concentrations of migrant diaspora in Limerick city (City Centre, Dooradoyle/ Raheen) and county (Newcaste West, Adare and Caherconlish) electoral districts are mapped. It examines language(s) ability, both English and first languages, educational attainment and principal economic status of this population. This primary data helps map areas of need but also of capacity within Limerick's migrant communities.

> *"There is a need to integrate policies as well as people."*

### *Review of EU, National and Local Policy Context*

It is vital the Integration Plan is situated within and coherent with policy frameworks and strategies at regional, national and local levels. Policies need to be integrated as well as people. A comprehensive review of all the relevant strategies are contained in this plan. The aim of this plan is to ensure that it meets the priority needs of migrants while progressing goals and objectives under the national *Migrant Integration Strategy 2017-20: A Blueprint for All* and key local strategic policies, *Limerick Corporate Plan 2015-19* and *Limerick Economic and Community Plan 2016-21*.





### *Mapping of Service Provision*

A UL research team conducted a survey of migrant service providers in the Limerick city and county. The responses have been collated and are the first stage of a wider mapping process of integration service provision in the region.

### *Integration Needs Analysis*

The aim of the needs analysis was to identify and prioritise the most urgent integration issues facing migrant communities in Limerick. This research also sought to consider the intercultural challenges and opportunities experienced in delivering and accessing services in Limerick City and County. The research tools used by the UL Research team were designed to ensure the voice and needs of ethnic minorities who access services and the integration experiences of service providers were listened to and heard.

Section E provides a more detailed description of the integration research methodology employed. It details the key findings from the *Integration Needs Analysis 2017*, underpinned by the voices of service users and service providers who engaged in focus groups conducted in Limerick city and county.

> *"The research tools were designed to ensure the voice and needs of migrants who access services and the integration experiences of service providers were listened to and heard."*

## 3.2 KEY THEMATIC STRATEGIES

The IWG identified five priority thematic areas to be included in the plan. The priority thematic areas were selected based on (a) migrant needs identified in the research (b) experience and knowledge of local service providers and migrant support groups and (c) a policy and literature review. Thematic Subgroups were convened to consider and develop outline strategic action plans under each of the headings.

The 5 priority integration themes chosen are:

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

Each of the five priority themes constitutes an individual section within the overall strategy. Section B contains the priority Integration Thematic Strategic Plans.

Each thematic plan outlines an overarching strategic goal followed by specific strategic goals and outcomes to be progressed over the five-year duration of the plan. Implementation will require more detailed annual operational plans, specifying concrete steps and actions, the resources available, a timeframe and the lead and partner organisations responsible for delivery.

## 3.3 STAKEHOLDER FEEDBACK

A further process of consultation was undertaken with all stakeholders and participants in the planning process when a draft integration plan was completed. Representatives of service providers, migrant representative organisations as well as individual migrants were also invited to give feedback at this stage of the Plan's development.

## 3.4 PLAN IMPLEMENTATION AND RESOURCES

The ongoing role of the IWG will be to oversee the implementation of the *Belonging to Limerick* in the years 2018–22. Operational Action Plans for each calendar year will be developed and delivered. Progress Reports will be compiled at mid-term and at the end of plan cycle to monitor actual delivery against the plan.

The most significant concern is that it will not be possible to implement this strategy at current resourcing levels, which are mostly voluntary. It will require the strong support of the local authority and other statutory agencies, to secure the necessary human and financial resources to ensure a successful implementation of the Plan.

> *"It will require the strong support of the local authority and other statutory agencies, to secure the necessary human and financial resources to ensure a successful implementation of the Plan."*

# SECTION B

Integration Thematic Strategic Plans

## Integration Theme 1:

# LANGUAGE, EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT

***Limerick is a place for learning and work***

### *Overarching Strategic Goal:*

The aim is to ensure all migrant learners will be informed of and have access to a range of language provision and educational opportunities, responsive to their diverse needs, which will enable enhanced progression options into further education and training. Furthermore, the plan seeks to overcome barriers and create pathways to migrant employment.

***Strategic Objectives:***

- To maintain and develop formal language and educational opportunities available to migrants residing in Limerick city and county
- To identify and provide informal language and learning opportunities to complement formal provision
- To ensure first languages will be recognised and valued
- To provide guidance to asylum seekers from the moment of arrival to maintain and enhance their skills and capacities in order to aid their long term integration prospects
- To support migrants to engage in further education and training that will increase their quality of life and enhance their employability
- To improve access to and support in further and third level education for asylum applicants and vulnerable migrants
- To enable educators and support agencies to develop the skills and competencies required to meet the intercultural needs of migrant learners, adult and children
- To assist migrants to get prior qualifications from countries of origin recognised in Ireland
- To ensure job-seeking and employment supports are accessible to migrants in Limerick
- To create pathways to employment for migrant communities and support ethnic entrepreneurship

***Strategic Outcomes:***

- Mapping of formal language and educational provision and information on services is made accessible to all migrants
- Voluntary language initiatives to provide migrants opportunities to learn and practice English are developed and supported
- Enhanced language ability of migrants to enable progression into training and further education
- Ongoing access to career guidance and further education support provided to asylum seekers from the moment of arrival
- Migrants feel their home languages are valued and respected
- Teachers receive training and supports to develop skills to address the needs of migrant learners
- Access to third level and further education is improved, especially for asylum seekers
- Migrants are aware of and accessing employment supports and training through Jobs Club, Local Employment Services and similar initiatives
- Higher employment and business start-ups in migrant communities

Integration Theme 2:

# INFORMATION AND ADVICE

***Limerick is a place that supports***



## INTEGRATION THEME 2:
## INFORMATION AND ADVICE

### *Overarching Strategic Goal*

The aim is to ensure all migrants living in Limerick city and county can easily access information and advice on migrant rights and entitlements, the asylum process, refugee resettlement and support services in the region. Accurate and accessible information will be available online to migrants in a language they understand. In addition, advice will be provided in clinics, individual consultations and outreach. Specialised services addressing the needs of vulnerable migrants, including asylum seekers, children in direct provision, women in the home or in isolated locations and trafficked women, will be supported.

***Strategic Aims:***

- To provide accessible online information to asylum seekers, people with status and migrant workers on intercultural and interfaith activities, resources and events in Limerick
- To ensure that migrants can access and receive up to date and accurate information on their rights, entitlements and obligations in a language they understand
- To advise and support protection applicants throughout the asylum process and persons granted status with the transition from Direct Provision into the community
- To provide outreach to asylum seekers and their families living in Direct Provision centres in the Limerick region
- To put in place integration supports and establish links with local communities and service providers for refugees resettled in Newcastle West and Limerick city under EU Programmes
- To prioritise the needs of children living and growing up in Direct Provision
- To reach out to and develop support services for vulnerable and hard to reach migrant groups, including trafficked women and undocumented persons
- To build capacity and enhance information exchange between organisations advising and supporting asylum seekers, persons with status, migrant workers and their families

***Strategic Outcome:***

- Advice and information available on key issues, including migrant rights and entitlements, social welfare, employment and citizenship, in a number of languages
- Online information resources that provide accurate and up to date information on integration services, activities and events, both to migrants and support organisations
- Ensuring asylum seekers receive a fair and transparent determination of their protection claim and that their rights are respected while awaiting a final decision
- Regular outreach to asylum seekers residing in Direct Provision centres in the area
- Delivering educational and developmental support to children, mitigating where possible the adverse effects of growing up in Direct Provision
- Establishing tailored supports and targeted interventions for vulnerable migrants, in particular, trafficked women and undocumented persons
- Reaching out to hard to reach groups to enable them participate more fully in their communities
- Provision of integration and resettlement support to Syrian and Iraqi refugees and their families resettled in Limerick under EU Programmes

## Integration Theme 3:

# EQUALITY OF ACCESS TO PUBLIC SERVICES

***Limerick is a place that serves equally***



## INTEGRATION THEME 3:
## EQUALITY OF ACCESS TO PUBLIC SERVICES

### *Overarching Strategic Goal:*

The aim is that migrants will have equality of access to public services, in particular, welfare, health, policing, housing and local government. Public services should be responsive to the intercultural needs of migrant service users and sensitive to their diverse cultural and religious traditions. Intercultural and diversity training will be essential for frontline staff to improve the experience of migrant service users and to avoid unnecessary conflict and frustration at the service interface. The provision of accessible and high quality interpretation and translations services will benefit both public service providers and migrant service users.

#### *Strategic Objectives*

- All: To ensure all frontline staff receive necessary intercultural and diversity training to enable them respond appropriately to the needs of migrants engaging with their services
- All: To enable public service providers access good quality interpreters and translators in a timely manner when the need arises
- "Local Government: To enhance cultural competency across all functions of Limerick City and County Council (LCCC) and to ensure culturally sensitive delivery in frontline Council services
- Housing: To provide an affordable dwelling of good quality and suitable to the needs of persons from diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds, including Syrian refugees under EU Programmes and persons with status transitioning from Direct Provision
- Policing: To improve the experience of migrants in Limerick accessing the services of An Garda Síochána (AGS) by ensuring they are responsive to intercultural needs
- Policing: To build relationships and strengthen communication channels between the Gardaí and migrant communities, representatives and support organisations
- Welfare: To ensure migrants can access their welfare entitlements readily
- Health: To continue to promote access, awareness and health information for migrants

#### *Strategic Outcome*

- Frontline staff across a range of public services completed intercultural awareness training
- Availability of high quality interpretation and translation services as required
- Improved access to and greater cultural sensitivity in the delivery of health, housing, welfare, policing and local government services for migrants
- Housing: Enhanced living experience for Council tenants from diverse ethnic backgrounds and suitable accommodation accessed by resettled refugees and persons with status
- Policing: Established communication channels between the Gardaí and migrants, with specific outreach and supports in place for asylum seekers in Direct Provisions and Programme Refugees
- Welfare: Delivery of frontline services by Department of Social Protection staff that are accessible and sensitive to language and cultural differences
- Health: Greater awareness and uptake of the full range of health services available to migrants and for persons living in Direct Provision and enhanced access to health and wellbeing initiatives
- Local Government: Enhanced cultural competency and culturally sensitive delivery across all Council functions

Integration Theme 4:

# CULTURAL AWARENESS AND ANTI-RACISM

***Limerick is a place to belong***



## INTEGRATION THEME 4:
## CULTURAL AWARENESS AND ANTI-RACISM

### *Overarching Strategic Goal:*

The aim is to promote a welcoming and inclusive environment in Limerick to ensure all persons irrespective of nationality, religious and cultural background feel they belong. This can be achieved by raising awareness among policymakers, the media and the wider community on the benefits and opportunities arising from integration and to challenge misinformation and myths around migration and migrants. A priority focus will be to engage with youth and children attending school to enhance understanding and knowledge of migration and integration issues, to ensure migrant youth do not become marginalised within communities or are subject to discrimination.

#### *Strategic Aims*

- To raise awareness on the benefits of diversity and create an environment in Limerick where all residents, local and migrant, feel welcome and a sense of belonging
- To campaign for inclusion of ethnic minorities in the economic, social and cultural life of Limerick
- To create intercultural spaces to facilitate connection and social interaction with migrant communities
- To collate cultural projects in the region and to explore research opportunities in the area of culture and diversity
- To increase cultural awareness among staff, parents and children in primary schools in Limerick
- To assist school and youth services in creating greater intercultural awareness and understanding among all students and combat racism experienced by migrant youth
- To enhance understanding of different faith and belief traditions and to promote interfaith dialogue
- To challenge racism in all forms where it occurs in Limerick

#### *Strategic Outcome:*

- Carry out public campaign across the different spheres of life and influence in Limerick promoting inclusion and belonging
- Mapping of cultural projects, local and international, in the region
- Explore research opportunities that will enhance cultural awareness and provide evidence base to underpin integration work in Limerick
- Wider public discourse of the opportunities and benefits arising from migration
- Identifying and developing intercultural spaces that will be available to promote integration and connect local and migrant communities in Limerick
- Connecting with schools and youth services that have a significant migrant representation
- Developing a greater understanding of the issues and concerns of migrant youth
- Raising intercultural awareness in schools among all students
- Providing training and assisting education and youth service providers to assist the development of intercultural policies and responding to incidents of racism
- Supporting interfaith initiatives that enhance mutual understanding and knowledge

Integration Theme 5:

# ACTIVE COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

***Limerick is a place that connects communities***



## **INTEGRATION THEME 5:** ACTIVE COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

### *Overarching Strategic Goal*

Integration occurs in a social context where members of local and migrant communities can meet and interact. The aim is to provide pathways for migrants to participate fully in the economic, social and cultural life of Limerick City and County. The migrant voice can be heard by improving representation and enhancing participation of migrants in community and voluntary activities in their local areas. Sports, music, food and the arts offer mediums to promote diversity and to create opportunities for active participation by all.

***Strategic Aim***

- To assist and strengthen migrant led representative groups to ensure that the migrant voice is heard on issues of concern and interest
- To increase participation by migrants in local community groups, grass root initiatives and key local decision-making bodies
- To encourage migrant participation in public celebrations and events and to provide opportunities to raise awareness of and learn about diverse cultures in Limerick
- To support cultural events that celebrate diversity in arts and culture and enhance the social and cultural life of Limerick
- To promote the role of volunteering as a starting point for engaging with and participating in local community activities
- To promote the integration and health of migrants in Limerick through participation in sport and physical activity
- To engage with and assist sporting organisations to be inclusive and welcoming of migrants as participants, coaches and volunteers

***Strategic Outcome:***

- Assistance and training delivered to build the capacities of migrant led representative groups in the region
- Provision of support for migrants seeking to engage more actively in their communities
- Increased migrant representation in key local decision making bodies and fora
- Greater participation by migrant communities in large public events and celebrations, local community groups and decision making bodies
- A calendar of public events established to celebrate the contribution that diverse communities make to Limerick including, Africa Day Celebrations (May 25), International Anti-Racism Day (Mar 21), World Refugee Day, (June 20) and International Day of Solidarity with Migrant Workers and their Families (December 18)
- Cultural initiatives promoting diversity reach a wider audience including Polish Arts Festival, World Recipe Exchange and Irish World Music Café
- Enhanced migrant participation in public sporting events such as Great Limerick Run, Women's Mini Marathon and Bike Week
- Targeted initiatives for individuals and children in Direct Provision to play sports and to be more active through running, cycling and other types of physical activity
- Building the capacities of migrants and increase participation in sports/leadership training and education
- Increased number of migrant volunteers and volunteering opportunity

# SECTION C

Key Statistical Data

# 4. CENSUS 2016: PROFILE OF LIMERICK'S MIGRANT POPULATION

## 4.1 LIMERICK USUALLY RESIDENT POPULATION

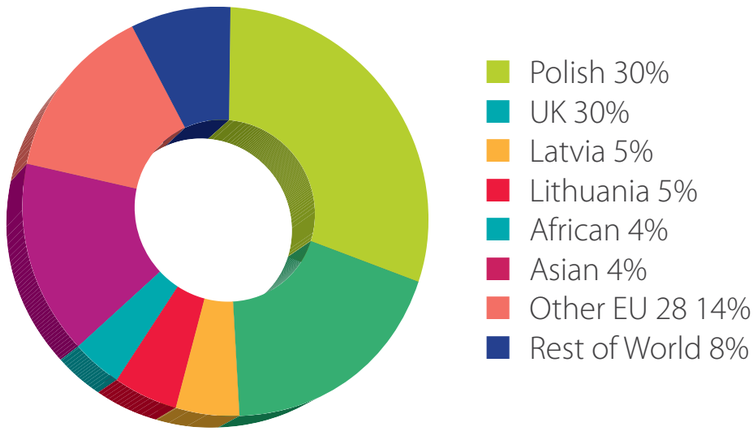
The 2016 Census of Population recorded the total population of Limerick City and County as 194,899. The "usually resident and present population" on Census night for Limerick City and County was 192,304.[1] In the state as a whole, 535,475 people, 11.4% of the usually resident population, described themselves as non-Irish nationals in Census 2016. An additional 104,784 identify as Dual Irish and other nationalities. Dual nationals are enumerated in the Census as Irish nationals. Of the non-Irish nationals in the state, 18,476 (9.6%) were living in Limerick City and County. A further 3,239 usually resident in Limerick City and County identify as Dual Irish and other nationalities. In Limerick County (former administrative area pre-amalgamation of city and county) there were 11,580 non-Irish nationals residing while in Limerick City there were 6,847 non-Irish nationals at the date of the census.

| | | Non-Irish Population | Dual Nationals | Total Usually Resident Population | % of Non-Irish Nationals |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **State** | Persons | 535,475 | 104,784 | 4,689,921 | 11.4% |
| | Males | 267,088 | | | |
| | Females | 268,387 | | | |
| **Limerick City and County** | Persons | 18,476 | 3,239 | 192,304 | 9.6% |
| | Males | 9,529 | | | |
| | Females | 8,947 | | | |

## 4.2 POPULATION BREAKDOWN BY NATIONALITY

Of the usually resident population in Limerick City and County, 88.8% indicated Irish nationality, 1.8% UK nationality, 2.9% Polish, 0.5% Lithuanian, 0.4% Latvian, 1.4% Other EU 28 and 2.6% rest of world which would include those with American, Australian, African, Asian and Russian backgrounds. 1.6% did not state their nationality, including those with no nationality.

***Census 2016: Limerick Non-Irish National Population by Nationality***




*1 The "usually resident and present" measure of population is used by the Central Statistics Office in presenting data on commuting patterns, nationality and households and families. It is lower that the de facto population (including those registered but not present on Census night) by approximately 1.5% for the state as a whole.*

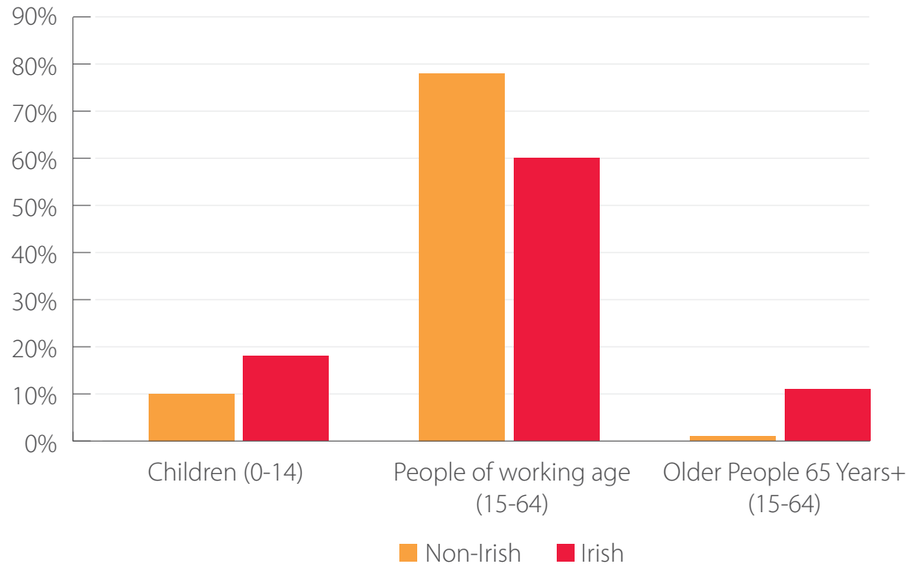




## 4.3 LIMERICK MIGRANT POPULATION BY AGE

The age structure of the migrant community in Limerick is significantly different to that of the overall population, with almost 81.7% of the population in the working ages compared to 63.6% of the overall population. Consistent with international experience the migrant population is on average much younger than the host Irish population.

***Census 2016: Breakdown of Population by Age***




## 4.4 GEOGRAPHIC CONCENTRATIONS OF NON-IRISH NATIONAL POPULATION

The non-Irish national population is dispersed across Limerick City and County.

There are stronger concentrations of non-Irish in Limerick City and Suburbs compared with the more rural areas and towns in the County. There is a clustering of non-Irish popluation in the City Centre, in Dooradoyle / Raheen, within Ballycummin Electoral Division (ED) and in Castletroy, within Ballysimon ED. The strongest concentrations of non-Irish national populations are in Electoral Divisions in the city centre. The EDs with the highest percentages of Non-Irish national population are as follows:

- Dock A, 51%
- Shannon A, 50.5%
- Market, 47%
- Custom House, 45.5%
- Dock B, 37.8%
- Dock D, 26%

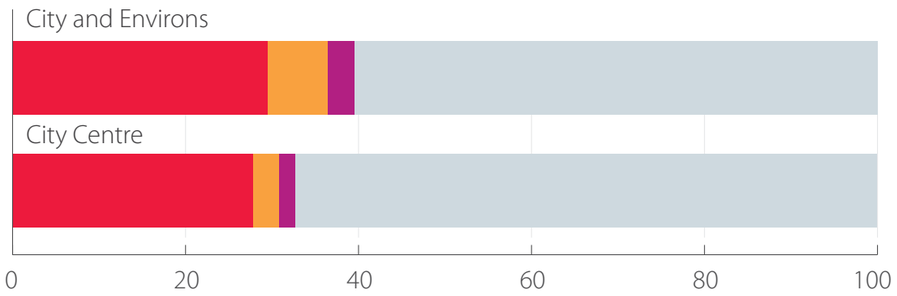
Indeed the increase in the absolute population and in the population densities in the core of Limerick City between 2011 and 2016 is connected to in-migration of new non-Irish nationals to live in the city centre.

There are some geographic concentrations in towns in the County, with Newcastlewest Urban Electoral Division having the highest percentage of population with non-Irish nationality (22.2%), followed by Adare South (9.1%) and Caherconlish West (8.1%).

## 4.5 MIGRANT POPULATION LANGUAGES AND ABILITY TO SPEAK ENGLISH

The graphic below charts the main other languages spoken by migrants residing in the City Centre and in Limerick City and Environs. In total there are more than 20 other languages spoken in Limerick. In the City Centre, 4,013 persons (45% of the usually resident population there) stated that they speak foreign languages. In the City and Environs, 15,081 persons (17% of the usually resident population) stated that they speak foreign languages. Of those who speak foreign languages, the single language spoken by the highest proportion is Polish (28% in the City Centre and 29% in the City and Environs) – see graphic below.

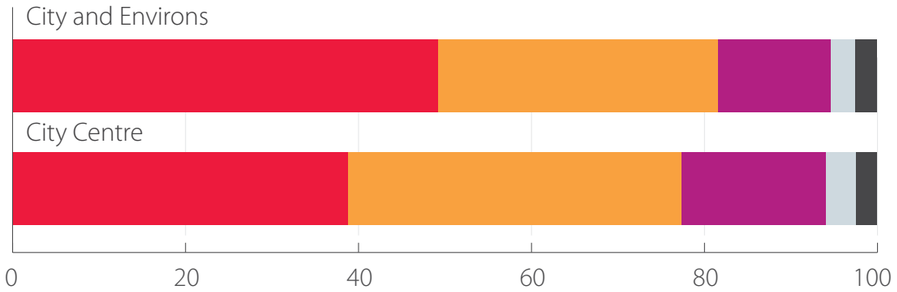
***Other Languages Spoken, Census 2016***




| | City Centre | City and Environs |
|---|---|---|
| Polish | 27.8 | 29.5 |
| French | 3.0 | 6.9 |
| Lithuanian | 1.9 | 3.1 |
| Other (not stated) | 67.2 | 60.5 |

The chart presents Census 2016 data regarding the ability to speak English among speakers of foreign languages in Limerick City and Environs[2] and in the City Centre. In the City Centre, the majority of non-Irish nationals have good ability to speak English. In the City and Environs, of those who speak foreign languages, over 81% can speak English very well (49.2%) or well (32.4%). In the City Centre, over 77% can speak English very well (38.8%) or well (38.6%).

***Speakers of Foreign Languages by Ability to Speak English, Census 2016***




| | City Centre | City and Environs |
|---|---|---|
| Very well | 38.8 | 49.2 |
| Well | 38.6 | 32.4 |
| Not well | 16.7 | 13.1 |
| Not at all | 3.5 | 2.8 |
| Not stated | 2.4 | 2.5 |

*2 The City and Environs is defined as the area including the former City Council administrative boundary, includes the City Centre, Limerick suburbs, Annacotty and Mungret and has a population of 91,333 (2016). The City Centre comprises the business area of the city centre in the 2010 City Development Plan and has a population of 9,315 (2016).*

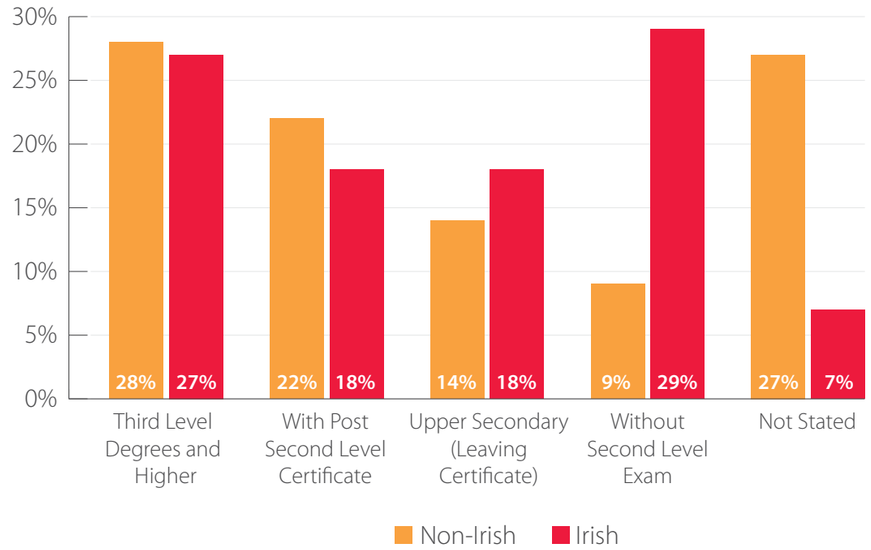




## 4.6 EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT AND PRINCIPAL ECONOMIC STATUS

Consistent with international experience the Census 2016 data shows that the migrant population is well-educated. 50% of the non-Irish population has a post Leaving Cert qualification or higher compared to 46% in the Irish population.

***Census 2016: Highest Level of Educational Attainment***




In terms of principal economic status, non-Irish nationals of working age are also more likely to be in work and contributing to the economy. In April 2016, 293,830 of the non-Irish national population in the state were at work, accounting for 14.9% of the workforce. Together, Polish and UK nationals comprised 42.1% of the entire non-Irish national working population. The economic recession in Ireland impacted on the non-national workforce. Data from Census 2016 showed that the unemployment rate among non-Irish nationals was 15.4%, compared with a rate of 12.6% among the Irish population.

While a break-down of principal economic status by nationality is not available at local level, it is the case that those parts of Limerick City and Environs with strong concentrations of non-Irish nationals also have a high proportion of the adult population at work. In the City Centre, 47.3% of the population aged 15 years and over are "at work" while the percentage "at work" for Limerick City and Environs is 47%. Generally, with the exception of the area around Steamboat Quay, the unemployment rates in those parts of the city with stronger concentrations of non-nationals had lower rates of unemployment. This is influenced, however, by the high and very high rates of unemployment recorded in Limerick City in 2016, especially in regeneration areas and the traditional social housing estates in the city.

# SECTION D

EU, National and Local Policy Review

# 5. EU INTEGRATION POLICY PRIORITIES

## 5.1 EU COMMON BASIC PRINCIPLES ON INTEGRATION (2004)

The EU Common Basic Principles (CBP) were agreed by all EU Member States in November 2004 and aim: "to assist Member States in formulating integration policies by offering them a … guide of basic principles against which they can judge and assess their own efforts."

1. Integration is a dynamic, two-way process of mutual accommodation by all immigrants and residents of Member States.
2. Integration implies respect for the basic principles of the European Union.
3. Employment is a key part of the integration process and is central to the participation of immigrants, to the contributions immigrants make to the host society, and to making such contributions visible.
4. Basic knowledge of the host society's language, history, and institutions is indispensable to integration; enabling immigrants to acquire this basic knowledge is essential to successful integration.
5. Efforts in education are critical to preparing immigrants, and particularly their descendants, to be more successful and more active participants in the society.
6. Access for immigrants to institutions, as well as to private goods and services, on a basis equal to national citizens and in a non-discriminatory way is a critical foundation for better integration.
7. Frequent interaction between immigrants and Member States citizens is a fundamental mechanism for integration.
8. The practice of diverse cultures and religions is guaranteed under the Charter of Fundamental Rights unless practices conflict with other inviolable European rights or with national law.
9. The participation of immigrants in the democratic process and in the formulation of integration policies and measures, especially at the local level, supports their integration.
10. Mainstreaming integration policies and measures in all relevant policy portfolios and levels of government and public services.
11. Developing clear goals, indicators and evaluation mechanisms are necessary to adjust policy, evaluate progress on integration and to make the exchange of information more effective.

## 5.2 EUROPEAN MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE ON INTEGRATION: ZARAGOZA DECLARATION (2010)

A declaration on integration was made at an EU Ministerial Conference held in Zaragoza, Spain on 15th and 16th April 2010, which resulted in the drafting of the Zaragoza Declaration. A comprehensive list of European Council conclusions, principles, agendas, pacts and communications dating back to 2002 are outlined in this declaration. They give evidence of the commitment of Ministers from all EU Member States to "promote integration as a driver for development and social cohesion by incorporating integration issues in a comprehensive way in all relevant policy fields".

The declaration gives particular attention to the areas of education, employment, comprehensive participation and an evaluation of integration policies based on the following core indicators: Employment; Education; Social inclusion; and Active citizenship

In terms of participation, the declaration emphasises "the role of local authorities and cities in dealing with intercultural challenges and developing and implementing integration programmes", as well as managing diversity and combating racism more effectively.

## 5.3 COUNCIL OF EUROPE: INTERCULTURAL CITIES PROGRAMME

Intercultural cities (ICC) is a flagship Council of Europe programme that assists local authorities in designing policies based on the application of a novel diversity management model called intercultural integration. This policy model relies on the notion of "diversity advantage"– treating migrants as a resource for local economic, social and cultural development, and not only as vulnerable groups in need of support and services.

Intercultural integration implies a strategic reorientation of governance and policies to encourage adequate representation, positive intercultural mixing and interaction, and institutional capacity to ensure equal access to rights and opportunities for all. The Intercultural cities programme offers a comprehensive methodology for helping cities develop their diversity strategies. In November 2014 the intercultural cities charter was formally signed by the Mayor of Limerick.





# 6. NATIONAL INTEGRATION STRATEGIES

## 6.1 PLANNING FOR DIVERSITY: THE NATIONAL ACTION PLAN AGAINST RACISM (2005-2008)

This plan was developed by the Irish Government following commitments made at the UN World Conference Against Racism in South Africa in 2001, and was sustained by the Social Partnership Agreement 2003-2005.

The plan's main aim is to "provide strategic direction to combat racism and to develop a more inclusive, intercultural society in Ireland based on a commitment to inclusion by design, not as an add-on or afterthought, and based on policies that promote interaction, equality of opportunity, understanding and respect."

The framework has five objectives:

1. Effective protection and redress against racism and other forms of discrimination
2. Recognition and awareness of diversity
3. Full participation in Irish society
4. Economic inclusion and equality of opportunity
5. Accommodating diversity in service provision.

## 6.2 MIGRATION NATION (2008)

This national policy statement on integration strategy and diversity management, Migration Nation was launched in 2008. As a government statement on integration it emphasises the need for a local focus to integration in practice and points out that "integration lives and breathes, and indeed dies, at the level of community."

The key principles that underpin this Government strategy on integration are:

- A partnership approach between the government and NGOs and civil society;
- A strong link between integration policy and wider state social inclusion measures, strategies and initiatives;
- A clear public policy focus that avoids the creation of parallel societies, communities and urban ghettoes; and a mainstream approach to service delivery;
- A commitment to effective local delivery mechanisms that align services to migrants with those for indigenous communities.

## 6.3 MIGRANT INTEGRATION STRATEGY: A BLUEPRINT FOR ALL (2017)

The Migrant Integration Strategy 2017-20 sets out the Government's commitment to the promotion of migrant integration as a key part of Ireland's renewal and as an underpinning principle of Irish society. The Strategy provides a framework for a range of actions to support migrants to participate fully in Irish life. The actions proposed are designed to support the integration process and address remaining barriers to integration.

The actions applicable to all Government Departments include the provision of:

- information to migrants in language-appropriate formats;
- ongoing intercultural awareness training for all frontline staff,
- signage in public offices indicating where interpretation is available;
- clear information on making a complaint about racist behaviour at service interface.

Specific actions are set out which are intended to address particular issues, including:

- the inclusion of a target of 1% for the employment of EEA migrants and people from minority ethnic communities in the civil service.
- the establishment by local authorities of networks aimed at reaching out to hard-to-reach migrant groups so to help them to engage with Government Departments and to provide information on their needs.
- the development of the second National Intercultural Health Strategy.
- the monitoring of current school enrolment policies over time to assess their impact on the enrolment of migrant students.
- the inclusion of a language component in education and training programmes for unemployed migrants with poor English proficiency.
- initiatives to ensure that migrant needs in relation to skills acquisition and labour market activation are addressed.
- initiatives to encourage the business sector to play a role in promoting integration.
- the establishment of a working group to examine data gaps in relation to migrant needs and experience.

## 6.4 SECTOR-SPECIFIC INTEGRATION STRATEGIES

### *6.4.1 Intercultural Health Strategy (2007- 2012)*

The Intercultural Health strategy promotes a socially inclusive approach to address the health and care needs of disadvantaged people from diverse cultures and ethnic backgrounds. A new Intercultural Health Strategy will be published in 2018.

Key issues to be prioritised are:

1. Information, language and communication
2. Service delivery and access to services
3. Developing a whole organisation approach
4. Working in partnership with minority ethnic communities

### *6.4.2 Integrated Workplaces: An Action Strategy to Support Integrated Workplaces (2008)*

The Office of the Minister for Integration and the Equality Authority funded *Integrated Workplaces* is a social partnership initiative organised by representatives of Congress, IBEC, the Small Firms Association, the Construction Industry Federation, Chambers Ireland, the Office of the Minister for Integration and the Equality Authority.

Integrated workplaces are defined as:

1. Free from discrimination and harassment
2. Are welcoming to all migrant workers and ethnic minorities
3. Acknowledge and provide for cultural and linguistic diversity
4. Take practical steps to achieve full equality in practice
5. Advocate for greater equality within a wider, culturally diverse community

### *6.4.3 An Garda Siochána's Diversity Strategy and Implementation Plan (2009-2012)*

This strategy commits to champion, value and accommodate diversity by combating racism and promoting an inclusive, intercultural Ireland. It intends to improve employment conditions, service delivery and policing practice across the "Nine Equality Grounds". Plan priorities are:

1. Deriving strategic benefit from diversity
2. Building partnerships with diverse populations
3. Reflecting our diverse society
4. Developing diversity competence for our staff
5. Enabling and managing diversity

### *6.4.4 Intercultural Education Strategy (2010-15)*

This Intercultural Education Strategy aims to ensure that:

1. all students experience an education that "respects the diversity of values, beliefs, languages and traditions in Irish society and is conducted in a spirit of partnership" (Education Act, 1998).
2. all education providers are assisted with ensuring that inclusion and integration within an intercultural learning environment become the norm.

The Intercultural Education Strategy was developed in recognition of the recent significant demographic changes in Irish society, which are reflected in the education system. The Strategy builds on existing work in this area and seeks to be of relevance for all sectors of education, in line with the high level goal of the Department of Education and Skills to "support and improve the quality, relevance and inclusiveness of education for every learner in our schools".

### *6.4.5 Culture 2025 - Éire Ildánach: A Framework Policy to 2025*

Culture 2025 is the first Framework Policy to embrace the whole cultural sector. It is the beginning of a journey rather than a destination – a journey that will bring together all those involved in the arts, film, broadcasting, visual arts, cultural heritage, the Irish language and Gaeltacht with Government departments and State agencies.

The Framework Policy highlights, amongst its key values, the importance of cultural diversity, informed by the many traditions now in Ireland and the inherent right of everyone to participate in the cultural life of the nation. Further, it provides for a focus on social integration in the context of Ireland's shift to a multicultural society with diverse cultural influences underpinned by certain key values.

# 7. LOCAL POLICY CONTEXT

## 7.1 LIMERICK CORPORATE PLAN (2015-2019)

This corporate plan sets out to define the Limerick we all desire to live, work, invest in and enjoy over the coming five years.

This plan envisages

- that the people of Limerick are supported by a professional, proactive and accessible local government structure which is at the heart of a wider public service.
- that Limerick is acknowledged for the inclusive participation of all citizens in the development of their community.
- that Limerick is the desired location for business development, cultural enrichment and educational opportunity.
- that Limerick and the Mid-West are competitive with other European locations in terms of business, tourism, quality of life and investment.

The Limerick City and County Council (LCCC) makes a social commitment

> *"We are committed to improving the quality of life for people and communities. We will support, develop and maintain quality recreational, cultural and civic facilities. We value safe and sustainable communities where people of all ages enjoy a good quality of life, a good home and a sense of pride in their place. We will actively promote diversity, equality and partnership and ensure due regard for human rights in everything we do."*

Under Aim 4, which seeks to promote a Socially Integrated, Healthy and Safe Limerick.

**Objective 4.1.** • Provide attractive and safe facilities and public spaces, which are fully accessible to all in our community.

**Objective 4.7.** • Promote equality and diversity across the functions of Limerick City and County Council. Make an assessment of the equality and human rights issues that are relevant to our functions, and of the policies, plans and actions that address them.

Under Aim 5, which seeks to Actively Engage with Our Communities.

**Objective 5.2.** • Ensure that work undertaken by inter-agency and community fora including the Public Participation Network, Comhairle na n-Óg, Limerick Older Adults Forum, Limerick Residents Forum, the Integration Working Group, the Traveller's Support Forum and other groups are supported and their interests considered in the formulation of our policies.

**Objective 5.4.** • Pursue voluntary participation and active citizenship as vital elements of vibrant and flourishing communities. This will enable community led development by bringing people, resources and planning together to make sure that all citizens play an active role in determining how their community will develop.

## 7.2 LOCAL ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY PLAN 2016-21

The purpose of the Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP), as provided for in the Local Government Reform Act 2014, is to set out, for a six-year period, the objectives and actions needed to promote and support the economic development and local and community development of the local authority area, both by itself directly and in partnership with other economic and community development stakeholders.

The overarching aim of the LECP is *"to promote the well-being and quality of life of citizens and communities"*. The LECP as a whole is to be prepared as an integrated plan, meaning that the various elements will work together to create mutually reinforcing strategies and action and, in the process, maximise the benefits to the local area and local communities.

The economic elements of the LECP will support economic development in the local authority area. The community elements, potentially, include the widest range of issues and policies that affect local communities across economic, social and environment / physical development.

The purpose of the community element is to promote local and community development across the local authority area, ensure coordination of publicly funded local and community development actions such that resources can be targeted on where they are needed most, resources can be shared where appropriate and duplication and inefficiencies can be avoided.

Under the Community Plan one of the opportunities identified arises from

> *"Increased diversity and potential to build on positive experiences of migration and Limerick as an Intercultural City (and County)."*

The LECP commentary recognises the positive contribution that diverse communities can make to enrich Limerick. It also notes there may be intercultural needs to address.

> *"While diversity in the population due to new cultural communities in both the city and parts of the county is enriching, this presents new challenges. For instance, schools and other services (health and local government services including housing) are required to meet different types of needs. This may require new support interventions (e.g., linked to language competence, different cultural norms and accommodating re-settlement of migrating populations seeking asylum)."*
> *(LECP, 2017, 67)*

Under Action Area 2.4 Employability and Work: Social Inclusion and Activation

To promote social inclusion of target groups at highest risk of exclusion.

Under Action Area 4.2 Capacity Building and Community Development

Implementation of actions to support equality, diversity and social integration involving different sections of communities in dialogue and working together on issues of common concern.

## 7.3 LIMERICK HERITAGE PLAN 2017-30

This plan recognises that Limerick City and County is becoming an increasingly ethnically, diversified and multicultural society, having potential to introduce different culture, traditions and creative experiences to Limerick. Heritage events can create positive interactions between people, including capacity building within the community through participation in events as representatives of the migrant community. Supporting the local community to learn about and experience the culture and heritage of these new communities contributes to a vibrant, inclusive and dynamic society where all residents are valued regardless of their ethnic background, and helps address isolation.

Under Section 2.2.10 Diversity and Integration, objectives for intercultural awareness under Limerick Heritage Plan 2017-30 are:

- To increase the public's awareness of Limerick's intercultural diversity and its heritage through supporting initiatives with ethnic communities to celebrate multiculturalism, heritage and traditions.
- To liaise with education providers, and other agencies to promote knowledge of Limerick's migrant community's heritage and culture.

# SECTION E

Integration Research Methodology and Key Findings

# 8. INTEGRATION RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

## 8.1. RESEARCH METHOD

The Research Team conducted research to inform the Limerick Integration Plan 2018-22. The focus of this study is to provide methodologically sound, research based insights on:

- 'Who is doing what' in the region in terms integration services?
- What are service providers' perceived key needs to be addressed in the next integration strategy?
- What are the perceived needs of service users in the region to inform the next integration strategy?

Upon completion, this aim of the research was to deliver:

- A directory of service providers supporting migrant integration in the region.
- Evidence based thematic insights on the integration needs in the region through the voices of service providers and users.

The University of Limerick (UL) Research Team consisted of:

- Dr James Carr, Lecturer, Department of Sociology, University of Limerick
- Dr Elaine Vaughan; Lecturer in Applied Linguistics
- Dr Ann Marcus-Quinn, Lecturer in Technical Communication and Instructional Design

## 8.2. RESEARCH OUTCOMES

### *Directory of Services*

The Research Team developed an online survey on integration services and integration needs in the Limerick region. The survey went live at the start of June 2017 and was open to submissions for the entire month. In that period 35 service providers completed the survey. 30 responses were received from service providers in Limerick city and 5 from county bases providers. The data received provides the starting point for a directory of services which will be developed over time.

### *Focus Groups*

Ethical Clearance was received from the University of Limerick to proceed with the research. Throughout July and August, 7 Focus Groups and 1 interview were conducted.

There were 4 service provider and 3 service user focus groups. One service provider and one service user focus group was held in the county, with the remainder conducted in Limerick city.

### *Integration Needs Analysis*

A report was developed based on information received from focus groups and interviews undertaken with members of both providers and users of integration services in Limerick city and county. The report is structured on a thematic basis. The findings contained therein represent the voices of service providers/users in the region who were invited to take part. In all, forty-six people took part in seven focus group discussions and one person participated in a one-to-one interview.





# 9. INTEGRATION NEEDS ANALYSIS 2017: KEY FINDINGS

## 9.1 THEMATIC AREAS

The UL Research team identified ten thematic areas for exploration. It is worth noting that these themes are not presented in terms of ranked importance. Although presented as distinct areas here, as a group these themes should not be viewed in isolation but taken holistically as related components required for successful integration in the region.

1. Communication
2. Education
3. Health
4. Housing
5. Service Provision - Institutional Considerations
6. Intercultural Platforms
7. Direct Provision
8. Youth Integration
9. Policing
10. Racism and Discrimination

A global observation from the design, data collection and analysis phases was the value placed on collaborative action and a need for coherence between strategy and services in the region.

A key commitment of the research process was that the voices of participants would inform the development of the integration strategy. Thus, the key findings in each thematic area are headlined by voices of service provider [SPP] and service user [SU] focus group participants.

## 9.2. KEY THEMATIC FINDINGS

### *1. Communication*

> *"That's a big issue for my tradition… because when someone dies we need the place, to be with the body overnight." [SU]*

*1.1 Communication with Migrants*

**1.1.1.** Communicate with migrants to ascertain needs on a regular basis.
**1.1.2.** Address new and emerging needs as communities grow.
**1.1.3.** Proactivity on the part of service providers.
**1.1.4.** Service providers need to be proactive in their communication with communities.
**1.1.5.** Develop and utilise community advocates to encourage partnerships.

*1.2 Communications with Service Providers*

> *"It always starts with the need, any service which we do should be in response to the need." [SPP]*

**1.2.1.** Service providers should endeavour to communicate to a greater degree.
**1.2.2.** Service providers should collaborate to a greater degree.
**1.2.3.** The IWG can fulfil a central role in facilitating communication and collaboration.
**1.2.4.** Share knowledge and insights to support each other.

### *2. Language and Education*

> *"…it's to get to know other people because even just going to a shop and asking for milk, there is migrants here for ten years they're not able to do that cos they only work in their own communities. …. And then after ten years' time they are embarrassed to actually say it I'm in Ireland ten years and I still can't speak [English]" [SPP]*

**2.1.** Provide opportunities for migrants to participate in accredited learning courses – this may require creativity in order to bypass restrictions placed on certain migrant cohorts in the region.

**2.2.** Support parents and children in language learning; regardless of how long they have been in the region.

**2.3.** Engage in outreach to encourage participation in education.

**2.4.** Provide both informal and formal accredited language learning opportunities.

**2.5.** Provide language provision in the 'off-term' time space.

**2.6.** Engage with educational bodies locally to address issues relating to qualification recognition.

### *3. Health*

> *"You have to; you have to have your own coping methods. Like we are fortunate to have that kind of intelligence but so many other people, we know it's not right, we know like …. The way they are coping it's not right." [SU]*

**3.1.** Health should be perceived as a core aspect of all activities in the integration of migrant communities in the region.

**3.2.** Migrants should be supported with information on how to negotiate the health system in Ireland.

**3.3.** Migrant communities in the region, particularly those in Direct Provision (DP). and programme refugees have real needs in terms of emotional and psychological supports – these need to be provided in a sustainable manner.

**3.4.** People living in DP require supports while they are in the system but also after they have been granted asylum or leave to remain. The DP system itself is having profound negative mental health impacts on those residing therein.

### *4. Housing*

> *"There's a big, big void when you leave the hostel which they can tell you. People come back as well after because they couldn't cope… there should be something done to be able to help these guys transition out of the hostel" [SU]*

**4.1.** Provide information to migrant communities on their rights and responsibilities.

**4.2.** Provide information to landlords/ladies on their rights and obligations.

**4.3.** People transitioning from Direct Provision need supports when it comes to accessing accommodation.

### *5. Institutional Considerations*

> *"a professional interpreter has to be used. Because if people are using friends and relatives often they're actually … putting their own agenda and their own spin on to things. And there isn't a kind of a neutrality there" [SPP]*

**5.1.** All staff require training in the area of cultural awareness.

**5.2.** This training must be sensitive to diverse communities and kept up-to-date.

**5.3.** Information must be shared across groups on language service provision.

**5.4.** Language services must be provided in a professional manner.

### *6. Intercultural Platforms*

> *"[An intercultural space] is clearly something that's lacking for a diverse and modern city. It's just a big gap... A place where people could come every day to socialise" [SPP]*

**6. 1.** Intercultural events branded as such, while important in their own right have a limited reach – rebrand and market to generate greater community participation.

**6.2.** Work with advocates across migrant communities in the region to encourage greater participation among a range of different immigrant groups.

**6.3.** Engage in sustainable platforms as opposed to one day events; 'piggy-back' on established event and inject an 'intercultural' element.

**6.4.** Create / Provide / Make available a Culture Space or Hub in the City – a space where integration can be encouraged organically.





### *7. Direct Provision*

> *"I applied for Limerick College of Further Education on one of the graphic design courses… and I had somebody who was going to pay for it as well. Everything ready but there's only one thing. I don't have accommodation in Limerick… just because of that I wasted a whole year basically…But after that … as I say I spent time in isolation." [SU]*

**7.1.** Review the supports (if any) that are available to people transitioning from Direct Provision (DP).

**7.2.** If none available, service providers should collaborate to provide a uniform approach to address the issues facing people transitioning from DP.

**7.3.** There is a need for service providers to engage with members of the legal profession locally and indeed nationally, to underscore the importance of representation of people in the DP system.

**7.4.** Inaccessibility of transportation is a serious issue in Limerick for migrants; while not solely a problem for people in DP, they are the group that is most affected. This needs to be addressed.

### *8. Youth Integration*

> *"observing in the City Centre, you don't really see young minorities in the City Centre as opposed to, after school, where you'd see a lot of young Irish people in groups. Ok some of those could be eastern European but in terms of black young people you know I don't think … you don't see them" [SPP]*

**8.1.** Take measures to include young communities, migrant and host in the integration process.

**8.2.** Engage with parents who may be unwilling for whatever reason to let their children participate in activities conducive to integration.

**8.3.** Support the mental wellbeing of young people transitioning from DP.

### *9. Policing*

> *"…it's just to meet, talk to people. I think that's a big thing for Gardaí is to try to build relationships… it's to break down that barrier or to get people to interact" [SPP]*

**9.1.** Develop community policing practices with all migrant communities in the region.

**9.2.** Outreach with communities in DP must be intensified to ensure positive relationships are established and maintained with the AGS.

**9.3.** Engage with communities to encourage the reporting of crime. Trust is a key element here.

### *10. Racism and Discrimination*

> *"… when people look at us, colour is the main thing they do not ask are you Muslim or non- believer or anything like this. They still jump on the colour" [SU]*

**10.1.** Recognise that racism and discrimination, overt and covert, are a reality for migrants.

**10.2.** Therefore, strategic actions that directly engage with combatting racism and discrimination should be prioritised.

**10.3.** Building confidence in migrants so that they feel empowered to report experiences of racism and discrimination.

**10.4.** Ensure that service provision staff are fully trained in relation to racism and discrimination.

**10.5.** Encourage businesses and providers of goods and services in the region to operate a zero-tolerance approach to racism through proactive anti-racism campaigning.

# SECTION F

Appendices



## GLOSSARY OF TERMS

**Asylum Seekers:** A person who seeks to be recognised as a refugee by Ireland's Department of Justice and Equality under the 1951 Geneva Convention.

**Direct Provision:** Support system for asylum-seekers where all accommodation costs, together with the cost of meals and snacks, heat, light, laundry, and maintenance are paid directly by the State. Asylum seekers in Direct Provision only have a right to work if they are waiting more than nine months for a decision at the first instance. Each adult and child residing in Direct Provision receive a weekly allowance of €21.60.

**Discrimination:** Unfair treatment of a person or group based on prejudice, bias, favouritism, bigotry, intolerance.

**Ethnicity:** Shared characteristics amongst a group of individuals based on common geography, culture, language, religion, traditions and ancestry which contribute to a person's identity. Ethnic groups are not easy to define – people can, and usually do, come from a number of different ethnic groups.

**Integration:** Integration is a long-term multidimensional and dynamic process starting from the moment of arrival in Limerick. It aims at ensuring respect for diversity and equal opportunities for the participation of all residents of Limerick irrespective of cultural or religious background, age, gender, disability or nationality. Integration takes place through the interaction of people and implies mutual understanding as well as shared rights and responsibility.

**Migrant Worker:** A person from another country who lives and works in Ireland and who is legally allowed to do so.

**Nationality:** The status of belonging to a particular nation by birth, origin or naturalisation.

**Racism:** A particular form of exclusion faced by minority ethnic groups based on the false belief that some 'races' are inherently superior to others because of their skin colour, nationality, ethnic or cultural background.

**Refugee:** A person who has been granted the legal right to stay in Ireland by the Department of Justice and Equality because they or their family would face persecution if they returned to their own country

**Trafficking:** Trafficking in persons shall mean the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, or of the abuse of power, for the purpose of sexual exploitation or forced labour.

## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|---|---|
| **AGS** | An Garda Síochána |
| **DSP** | Department of Social Protection |
| **DP** | Direct Provision |
| **ESOL** | English for Speakers of Other Languages |
| **ETB** | Education and Training Board |
| **EU** | European Union |
| **HSE** | Health Service Executive |
| **IRPP** | Irish Refugee Protection Programme |
| **IWG** | Integration Working Group |
| **JRS** | Jesuit Refugee Service |
| **LCCC** | Limerick City and County Council |
| **LECP** | Limerick Economic and Community Plan |
| **SIM** | Social Inclusion Measures |
| **UL** | University of Limerick |
| **WLR** | West Limerick Resources |

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The publication of
*Belonging to Limerick: Limerick City and County Integration Plan 2018-22*
was formally adopted by Limerick City and County Council on 28 May 2018

AN ROINN DLÍ AGUS CIRT AGUS COMHIONANNAIS
DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE AND EQUALITY

The publication of
*Belonging to Limerick: Limerick City and County Integration Plan 2018-22*
is supported by the Communities Integration Fund