



Protection with Dignity

A Humane Response to Global Forced Displacement



The mission of the Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS) is to accompany, to serve and to advocate the cause of refugees and forcibly displaced persons worldwide. JRS programmes are found in over 50 countries providing assistance to refugees in camps, to people displaced within their own country, to asylum seekers in cities and those held in detention. JRS Ireland works primarily in the areas of asylum seeker support, integration, detention and advocacy.

Authors: Eugene Quinn & David Moriarty
Designed by: IMAGE PRINT
Printed by: IMAGE PRINT

© Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS) Ireland 2021

Photography

Ruben (Winner of the 2020 Baleskin Photo Competition): Cover Image.

Acknowledgments

This publication has been developed and published with generous support from Mísean Cara's Innovation Fund (Refugees, IDPs and Migrants theme) under the auspices of Irish Jesuits International, to contribute evidence and policy ideas on EU and Irish protection frameworks in the context of the global challenge of forced migration. JRS Ireland would also like to acknowledge the support of the Irish Jesuit Province, the contribution to this research paper made by Beatrice Grasso, Lucy Ray and colleagues throughout the JRS Europe network. In addition, we would like to thank Enda O'Neill, Tony O'Riordan SJ and David Walsh who reviewed early drafts of this paper and whose feedback was invaluable in shaping the final version.

INDEX

Preface: John Moffett, CEO, Misesan Cara

*Foreword: Bishop Alan McGuckian SJ, Chairperson,
Irish Bishops' Conference Council for Justice and Peace*

- 1. Introduction**
 - 1.1 Developing a Humane Response to Global Forced Displacement*
 - 1.2 Human Face of Forced Displacement: Dying to Live*

- 2. Growing Global Displacement**
 - 2.1 Global Forced Displacement Trends*
 - 2.2 Global Responses to Displacement*
 - 2.3 Church Response: A Global Call to Action*

- 3. Fortress Europe Returns**
 - 3.1 Erosion of Protection*
 - 3.2 Regional Forced Migration Data*
 - 3.3 Regional Response: EU Pact on Migration and Asylum*
 - 3.4 Impact of Covid-19: From Bad to Worse*
 - 3.5 Anti-Immigrant Sentiment in Europe*

- 4. Refugee Resettlement in Ireland**
 - 4.1 UNHCR Programme Refugees*
 - 4.2 Irish Refugee Protection Programme*
 - 4.3 Expanded Safe and Legal Pathways to Protection*
 - 4.4 IRPP Outcomes Phase 1: 2015-19*
 - 4.5 IRPP Phase 2: Enhanced Resettlement*

- 5. Reframing Response to Global Forced Displacement**
 - 5.1 Overview*
 - 5.2 Key Findings*
 - 5.3 A Humane Response: Recommendations*

References

Preface

In the world today, an estimated 82 million people – or one in 95 people on earth – are forcibly displaced, with a high concentration located in poor and fragile contexts, and many forced into very vulnerable situations as they flee violence and persecution, chronic poverty and hunger, and the impacts of the climate crisis. The Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) noted in June 2021 that, despite COVID19-related movement restrictions and calls for a global cessation of armed conflict, forced displacement continued to grow and now represents “the new 1%” of the world's population, many of them stranded and exposed to danger.

Girls and boys under the age of 18 account for some 42 percent of all forcibly displaced, and they are particularly vulnerable, especially when crises continue for years, the UN refugee agency noted.

Contrary to a situation where they find a safe haven where they can live and work in peace, however, international politics and border policies (not least in the EU) are tending towards shutting the door on asylum and migration – and shutting out forcibly displaced people. Refugees and internally displaced persons are among the marginalised and particularly vulnerable cohorts identified in Misesan Cara's strategic plan 2017-21, as it drew inspiration from the *Leave No One Behind* principle of the Sustainable Development Goals – and their call upon development actors to *Reach the Furthest Behind First*.

From Misesan Cara members' development initiatives on the ground across diverse countries, we have come to understand that we need to be alive to human dignity and support 'forced displacement' in its various shapes – including migration, climate-related displacement, and people trafficking, for example – rather than being bound to rigid, legalistic, and sometimes exclusionary definitions of people's status. This also chimes with the Missionary Approach to Development Interventions (MADI) framework, codified by Misesan Cara based on research into members' work, through which members reach, in their own words: 'the last, the least and the lost'.

Misesan Cara's strategy commits it to leverage members' strengths to contribute to sustainable and transformational change. In 2019, as part of giving effect to this, Misesan Cara introduced an Innovation Fund. One of the themes on which we invited member proposals was forced displacement; within that, one strand of work that members could propose was research and advocacy – especially on strategic themes or involving new partners or networks. We put out that call for innovative ideas because of the SDGs' logic of needing to act at all levels (local, national, regional and global) for equitable, sustainable development; our enhanced focus on contributing to systemic change; and the imperative to *Leave No One Behind* – knowing that forcibly displaced people were, and are, in many contexts.

We were convinced by our members' potential, individually and collectively, to harness data and present ideas that support marginalised communities to challenge injustice and realise their rights – which is where Misesan Cara's support for this JRS Ireland policy document originates.

Misesan Cara, as a member of Dóchas and Irish civil society's Coalition 2030 on the SDGs, has consistently made the case that Ireland and the European Union should honour human rights and Policy Coherence for Development commitments – in relation, for instance, to establishing systems for those seeking international protection, on the one hand, and their international statements, commitments, and human rights obligations on the other.

Through an initiative brought to us by Irish Jesuits International, JRS Ireland has brought together here research data, powerful human testimony, evidence-based analysis, and advocacy options (rooted in faith and missionary values) to help effect enhanced international protection for forcibly displaced people. This report, which we co-launch with JRS Ireland, weaves together a human rights focus, sustainable development and international protection practice and commitments, faith approaches and the Pope's teaching, in a contemporary and complementary blend combining strong values, analysis, evidence and recommendations.

We believe it contributes usefully to establishing realities, benchmarking achievements versus commitments, capturing trends, and offering principled and pragmatic ways forward on international protection for people forcibly displaced, within the context of human rights and international agreements.

Misean Cara is delighted to support the development of this report, *Protection with Dignity: A Humane Response to Global Forced Displacement*, and endorses its analysis and recommendations to Irish and EU stakeholders.

John Moffett, CEO, Misean Cara

Foreword

Pope Francis used shock tactics when he said that “*the Mediterranean has become Europe's largest cemetery*”. He was speaking at a recent ceremony in Sicily to mark the tragic deaths of an estimated 800 migrants in April 2015 who drowned en route from Libya to Italy after their boat capsized.

It was significant the first visit of Francis's papacy in 2013 was to the island of Lampedusa, to commemorate the thousands of migrants and refugees who have died trying to cross the Mediterranean in overcrowded and unsafe boats. Throughout his papacy he has condemned the “globalisation of indifference” to the fate of people fleeing violence and poverty. “*This symbol of so many tragedies of the Mediterranean Sea will continue to challenge the conscience of all and encourage the growth of a more united humanity*”.

Three years after the publication of *Sharing Responsibility, Saving Lives* the unnecessary loss of human life has tragically continued unabated. So too has the inadequacy of responses at global, regional and national level to the needs of forcibly displaced individuals, families and children arriving on our shores in search of refuge and protection. This week another 57 migrants died at sea trying to enter Europe. Each person who died had a name, a face and a story. Each had hopes and dreams for a better future when they reached a safe destination. Tragically they never did. Their deaths call out to each of us; they are unnecessary and avoidable.

According to the UNHCR there are now 82.4 million people forcibly displaced globally by conflict, persecution, environmental degradation and human rights abuses. The vast majority of the world's refugees, a full 86%, are hosted in developing or least developed countries. By contrast, the world's wealthiest nations, including Ireland have welcomed less than 15%. On the 70th anniversary of the 1951 Refugee Convention, former UN Secretary General, Ban Ki Moon, himself a former child refugee, urged wealthy states including the UK, Denmark and Australia to rethink what he called their ‘punitive approach’ when it comes to offering refugee protection. He rightly compared the ‘regressive asylum policies’ of the Global North with the generosity of developing nations.

In 2015 Pope Francis called on every parish, religious community, monastery and sanctuary in Europe to host a refugee family. The Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS) established ‘communities of hospitality’ as a consequence in several countries to provide short term accommodation solutions for forced migrants. Local families and religious congregations welcomed and hosted forced migrants in their homes as an alternative to poor living conditions in state reception centres or the threat of destitution. The experience of JRS's Communities of Hospitality project was of connecting local and forced migrant communities, creating positive opportunities for encounter, friendship and mutual understanding.

Fratelli Tutti is a call to action for each of us to open our hearts and to welcome the stranger. Pope Francis speaks of rights without borders. Rights are derived by virtue of our shared humanity and not our place of birth. He argues it is “*unacceptable that the mere place of one's birth or residence should result in his or her possessing fewer opportunities for a developed and dignified life. Development must not aim at the amassing of wealth by a few but must ensure human rights*” for all.

Protection with Dignity offers a policy and practical framework for a more humane response to forced displacement, globally and locally, prioritising at all times the preservation of life and the fair sharing of responsibility between countries for receiving and welcoming forced migrants with generosity and dignity. It amplifies the Gospel call to each of us as individuals, as communities, as parishes and as states to be hospitality in action, to respond with openness and generosity to people fleeing life threatening humanitarian crises.

+Alan Mc Guckian SJ.

Bishop Alan Mc Guckian SJ, Chairperson, Irish Bishops Conference Council for Justice and Peace

1. Introduction

**I wouldn't leave my country if I were not desperate. I had my life and I had everything.
But I didn't feel safe anymore. I was about to lose my life.
You need to hear that; you need to listen to that voice - *Waleed***

1.1 Developing a Humane Response to Forced Displacement

Forced displacement or migration refers to asylum seekers, refugees and other internally displaced persons, who have been forced to leave their homes due to war, conflict, poverty, political instability, human rights violations and environmental factors. In a year that marks the 70th anniversary of the 1951 Refugee Convention, known as the Geneva Convention, UNHCR have reported record numbers of forcibly displaced persons worldwide. The inherent vulnerabilities and challenges for this population requires a generous and humane response to their needs from receiving countries and regions.

Protection with Dignity: A Humane Response to Global Forced Displacement aims:

- To analyse global, regional and national forced displacement data and trends.
- To explore the impact of the Global Compact on Refugees and EU Pact on Migration and Asylum in addressing the needs of forcibly displaced persons seeking protection across the world and in Europe.
- To assess the effectiveness of the Irish Refugee Protection Programme (IRPP) in terms of quantitative and qualitative outcomes.
- To consider the barriers to delivery of protection with dignity in Irish resettlement programmes.
- To offer evidence-based recommendations to inform responses to the global resettlement need.

The research is informed by JRS's experience of accompanying, advocating and serving refugees and forcibly displaced persons across the globe. It builds on and draws on the insights of developing Church Social Teaching. The emerging recommendations will seek to inform policy and practice going forward in developing a more humane response to forced displacement, nationally and regionally, prioritising at all times the preservation of life, the fair sharing of responsibility between receiving countries and ensuring people seeking refuge and protection are received with generosity and dignity.

1.2 Human Face of Forced Displacement: Dying to Live

In his recent social encyclical, *Fratelli Tutti*, Pope Francis challenged us, individually and collectively, to see the human dimension of forced displacement and migration. "*Migrants are not seen as entitled like others to participate in the life of society, and it is forgotten that they possess the same intrinsic dignity as any person...No one will ever openly deny that they are human beings, yet in practice, by our decisions and the way we treat them, we can show that we consider them less worthy, less important, less human.*"¹

Behind the labels of asylum seeker, refugee, forced or economic migrant are people, each with a name, a face and an individual story of displacement. In *Sharing Responsibility, Saving Lives*, JRS Ireland sought to offer the human face of those who make the perilous journey to Europe through testimonies in *Journeys of Hope*.²

Similarly, each section of this paper will open with the voice of a forcibly displaced person from Syria, Afghanistan, Eritrea or South Sudan to bear witness to their journeys, losses, resilience and hopes. Drawn from interviews collated by Danielle Vella - Director of International Reconciliation Programs for the Jesuit Refugee Service – their full stories are published in *Dying to Live: Stories from Refugees on the Road to Freedom*.³

¹ Pope Francis (2020), *Fratelli Tutti*, Dicastero per la Comunicazione - Libreria Editrice Vaticana.

² Vella, D., (2016) 'Journeys of Hope', Brussels: Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS) Europe

³ Vella, D., (2020) 'Dying to Live: Stories from Refugees on the Road to Freedom', Rowman & Littlefield.

Dying to Live is a platform for people forced to flee their homes to tell their own stories in their own words. It is an effort to once again give voice to the men, women and children categorised by asylum and immigration systems and defined by the labels of asylum seekers, refugees, forced or economic migrants. These are the stories of Anwar and Hibah.

Anwar's Story

Anwar founded the *Bright Future School* in Pakistan, providing education to local Christian and Muslim children. He fondly remembers *"We had three hundred pupils, all studying together, and we welcomed those who were poor as well as those whose parents could afford to pay, because everyone is equal"*.

All was going well until *"a famous and powerful"* member of the Pakistan Taliban, named Abdullah, contacted Anwar and demanded he *"send the Christian children away"*. When Anwar refused, threats were made to set fire to the school. Yet Anwar refused to give in.

One night, Anwar was woken by someone banging on his door saying the school was ablaze. With two friends, he struggled for hours but could not quell the flames that had engulfed the school desks, which had been dragged outside and set on fire. When Anwar reported everything to the police, they did nothing. He says simply *"They were afraid"*.

Anwar eventually reopened the school but two weeks later, sitting at home with his wife and their four children, he heard shooting outside. Anwar's dog was shot and killed. Barely an hour later, Abdullah called and warned *"This time, we didn't kill you. The next time we come, we will kill you all"*. Anwar was afraid now.

The very next morning, a friend helped them to move far away to a city near Islamabad. The family stayed indoors and the children did not even leave to go to school. Even though Anwar's family had fled, their ordeal was not over. One day, while driving a motorbike with his friend riding pillion, three people walked into the middle of the road. In a split second, Anwar saw guns and tried to accelerate. He recalls *"One bullet came here"* – and touches his head behind his right ear. Anwar survived but *"my friend was shot in the back. He was my close friend, he was like my brother"*.

Hibah's Story

"My daughter kept saying, 'Bomb, bomb, bomb', until she was three years old" explains Hibah, who is originally from Aleppo, Syria.

This was after a bomb hit the mosque right behind the apartment where she lived with her husband and daughter. Hibah recalls her daughter was only *"a year and a half when it happened"* and that the couple spent the night huddled with their baby in the corner of a bedroom.

"Before, we used to hear the sounds of war in the city, yes, but never so close" says Hibah, *"When it happened, my bigger fear was that something would happen to my husband or my daughter, and then what would I do. That's what I kept thinking: 'If something happens to them, what will I do?'"*

In the morning, they left their home at dawn, never to return.

2. Growing Global Displacement

**I am not afraid. I know that when I leave this town, I'll do something better.
I trust myself. I know all is not lost - Jospin**

2.1 Global Forced Displacement Trends

2.1.1 Record Levels of Forced Displacement

At the end of 2020, 82.4 million people worldwide found themselves displaced by a combination of oppression, war, generalised violence and human rights abuses. In the course of the past ten years the levels of forced displacement have increased dramatically, now more than double the level of a decade ago (41 million in 2010). The 2020 level represents a four per cent increase on the 2019 total of 79.5 million. As a result, more than one per cent of the world's population – or 1 in 95 people – is forcibly displaced, compared with 1 in 159 in 2010⁴.

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
<i>Displaced persons worldwide</i>	65.3	65.6	68.5	70.8	79.5	82.4
<i>Refugees worldwide</i>	21.3	22.5	25.4	25.9	26	26.4
<i>Refugees in Europe</i>	4.3	5.1	6.1	6.5	6.5	6.7
<i>% of refugees in Europe</i>	20%	23%	24%	25%	25%	25%

Breaking down the headline number of 82.4 million forcibly displaced persons globally: 26.4 million were refugees, 48 million were internally displaced (IDPs), 3.9 million Venezuelans are displaced abroad and 4.2 million were asylum seekers. It is important to note that excluded from these figures are potentially millions of forcibly displaced people who have not registered claims for protection or who have travelled through irregular channels and *de facto* refugees fleeing life-threatening economic conditions and those displaced by natural disasters and environmental degradation who fall outside existing protection instruments.

It has been highlighted that ninety five percent of displacement occurs in the Global South. While the majority will stay in their own or neighbouring countries, forced migrants are '*demonstrating increased mobility, settling at greater distances both regionally and globally in attempts to access safety and livelihoods*'.⁶ In 2020, 86 percent of the world's refugees were hosted in developing countries; with only 14 percent hosted in wealthier nations in the Global North.⁷

2.1.2 Global Resettlement Need

<i>Region of Asylum</i>	<i>Total Projected Need 2022⁸</i>		<i>Total Projected Need 2021⁹</i>	
	<i>Cases</i>	<i>Persons</i>	<i>Cases</i>	<i>Persons</i>
Africa	162,948	593,598	(166,692)	(616,598)
Asia and the Pacific	39,286	106,400	(29,034)	(59,470)
Europe	106,700	401,740	(107,500)	(423,600)
Middle East and North Africa	91,857	315,778	(94,564)	(275,981)
<u>The Americas</u>	<u>17,662</u>	<u>55,640</u>	<u>(15,597)</u>	<u>(29,374)</u>
Grand Total	418,453	1,473,156	(403,287)	(1,445,383)

⁴ UNHCR (2021), 'Global Trends: Forced Displacement in 2020', Geneva: UNHCR.

⁵ UNHCR (Editions 2015 – 2020), 'Global Trends', Geneva: UNHCR.

⁶ Zetter, R. (2015) Protection in Crisis: Forced Migration and Protection in a Global Era. Washington, DC: Migration Policy Institute.

⁷ UNHCR (2021) Figures at a Glance. The UN Refugee Agency. Available online at: <https://www.unhcr.org/uk/figures-at-a-glance.html> (accessed 18 June 2021).

⁸ UNHCR (2021), UNHCR Project Global Resettlement Need 2022, Geneva: UNHCR

⁹ UNHCR (2020), UNHCR Project Global Resettlement Need 2021, Geneva: UNHCR

UNHCR has a role in resettling refugees to a third country due to identified risks and vulnerabilities that cannot be addressed in the country where they have sought protection. Resettlement involves the transfer of refugees from the first country of refuge (often camps in neighbouring countries to ongoing conflict and violence) to another state, which has agreed to receive and grant them permanent residence and protection.

Annually the total global resettlement need is based on regional estimates by UNHCR national offices. The total Projected Global Resettlement Need for 2022 is for 1,473,156 displaced persons. Resettlement offers a durable solution for some of the world's most vulnerable and at-risk refugees. It offers an opportunity for wealthy and more developed states to demonstrate solidarity and responsibility-sharing in responding to the needs of forcibly displaced persons worldwide.

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
<i>Projected Global Resettlement Need</i>	1,195,349	1,428,011	1,440,408	1,445,383	1,473,156
<i>Increased Global Resettlement Need</i>	4,830	232,662	12,397	4,975	27,773
Increase in Global Resettlement Need 2018 – 2022					277,807
Average Annual Increase in Global Resettlement Need					55,561

The UNHCR 2022 Projected Global Resettlement Need does not reflect the impact of the recent crisis and change of regime in Afghanistan, thus, the actual resettlement need next year is likely to be higher. Nevertheless, there has been a strong upward trend in the projected resettlement need over the past five years, Table 3 shows an increase in the global resettlement need of additional 277,807 persons in the period 2018-22.

Despite a projected need of resettlement places for 1.44 million refugees, only 22,700 were resettled in 2020, the lowest figure in nearly 20 years. While the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic has had an undeniably negative impact on the resettlement programme, the low quotas proposed by states have also been identified as a contributory factor. ¹¹

2.1.3 Refugee Producing and Hosting Regions

More than two-thirds of refugees worldwide (68%) come from five countries: the Syrian Arab Republic (6.6 million), Venezuela (4.0 million), Afghanistan (2.7 million), South Sudan (2.2 million) and Myanmar (1.1 million).

Ranking	Top 5 Countries of Origin	Refugees Overseas	Top 5 Hosting Countries	Refugees Hosted
1	Syria	6.7 million	Turkey	3.7 million
2	Venezuela	4.0 million	Colombia	1.7 million
3	Afghanistan	2.7million	Pakistan	1.4 million
4	South Sudan	2.2 million	Uganda	1.2 million
5	Myanmar	1.1 million	Germany	1.1 million

Several crises – some new, some resurfacing after years – forced people to flee within or beyond the borders of their country. Afghanistan, Somalia and Yemen continued to be hotspots, while conflict in the Syria stretched into its tenth year.

¹⁰ UNHCR (Editions 2018 – 2021), 'Projected Global Resettlement Needs', Geneva: UNHCR.

¹¹ UNHCR(2021) 'With refugee resettlement at a record low in 2020, UNHCR calls on States to offer places and save lives', available at <https://www.unhcr.org/en-ie/news/press/2021/1/600e79ea4/refugee-resettlement-record-low-following-2020-unhcr-calls-states-offer-places-save.html> [accessed 30 July 2021].

¹² UNHCR (2021), 'Global Trends: Forced Displacement in 2020', Geneva: UNHCR

In Ethiopia, more than one million people were displaced within the country during the year, while more than 54,000 fled the Tigray region into eastern Sudan. In northern Mozambique, hundreds of thousands escaped deadly violence, with civilians witnessing massacres by non-state armed groups in several villages, including beheadings and abductions of women and children. The outbreak of hostilities between Armenia and Azerbaijan left a devastating impact on civilians in both countries and displaced tens of thousands of people.

2.1.4 Impact of Covid-19

While the full impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on wider cross-border migration and displacement globally is not yet fully recorded, UNHCR data shows that in 2020 arrivals of new refugees and asylum-seekers were sharply down in most regions – about 1.5 million. Border closures and travel restrictions necessitated the temporary hold on many resettlement movements during the year. Many states, including Ireland, had to cancel resettlement selection missions.

Despite the many challenges in 2020, seventy five UNHCR operations still managed to jointly submit 39,534 refugees to twenty five countries. Keeping in mind a three-month hold on resettlement departures and other travel restrictions, a total of 22,770 refugees still departed to twenty two states. In 2021, the impact of COVID-19 remains significant as all resettlement actors struggle to regain their previous capacity.¹³

Global Forced Displacement: Key Facts and Figures

The key facts and figures from UNHCR on forced displacement globally, include:

- More than 1% of the world's population, 1 in 95 people, are forcibly displaced.
- 42% of the world's refugees are children. 1 million children were born as refugees in 2020.
- 86% of refugees are hosted in developing countries.
- 68% came from just five countries: Syria; Venezuela; Afghanistan; South Sudan; and Myanmar.
- The top five hosting countries are Turkey, Columbia, Germany, Pakistan and Uganda
- The Projected Global Resettlement Need in 2022 is 1.473million people.
- In the Covid-19 impacted year of 2020 a mere 22,770 refugees were resettled globally.

2.2 Global Responses to Displacement

2.2.1 International Legal Protection Framework

In the aftermath of World War II, the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees established the international legal basis for people seeking protection: “*To be recognised legally as a refugee, an individual must be fleeing persecution on the basis of religion, race, political opinion, nationality, or membership in a particular social group, and must be outside the country of nationality*”¹⁴. The 1967 Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees extended the scope of 1951 Refugee Convention, eliminating geographical restrictions to make the Convention ‘truly global’.

In the face of rising global displacement, seventy years after it signed the 1951 Refugee Convention (and the 1967 Protocol) remain the cornerstone of refugee protection. The fact there are 149 States parties to the 1951 Convention and/or its 1967 Protocol at the present time is evidence of its enduring relevance.

One of the major criticisms of the 1951 Convention is in relation to the definition of who is and is not a refugee; this definition reflected the experience of the preceding thirty years and especially the Second World War. Despite improvements by the 1967 Protocol, the definition remains relatively narrow, covering only people fleeing individual persecution by their governments.

¹³ UNCHR (2021), 'UNHCR Projected Global Resettlement Need 2022', Geneva: UNHCR

¹⁴ UN General Assembly (1951) Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, 28 July. United Nations, Treaty Series, vol. 189, p. 137. Available online at: <http://www.refworld.org/docid/3be01b964.html> (accessed 19 June 2021).

Emerging drivers of global forced migration have moved beyond traditionally defined persecution, including poor governance and political instability, intra-state conflict, and environmental change and resource scarcity. “*Lack of resources drives global forced migration by means of water shortages, unreliable food supplies, pollution, famine and climate change. These factors may not directly displace populations, but when combined with other elements, including generalised poverty, they do.*”¹⁵

Protection Gap: Climate Refugees

Climate change is the defining crisis of our time and displacement one of its most devastating consequences. On 9 August 2021, UN Secretary-General António Guterres said the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Report is a “code red for humanity”. The UN Secretary General warned “*The alarm bells are deafening, and the evidence is irrefutable: greenhouse gas emissions from fossil fuel burning and deforestation are choking our planet and putting billions of people at immediate risk*”.

The impact of climate change may both trigger displacement and worsen living conditions or hamper return for those who have already been displaced. Limited natural resources, such as drinking water, are becoming even scarcer in many parts of the world that host refugees. Crops and livestock struggle to survive where conditions become too hot and dry, or too cold and wet, threatening livelihoods. In such conditions, climate change can exacerbate existing tensions and adding to the potential for conflicts.

UNHCR has highlighted “*hazards resulting from the increasing intensity and frequency of extreme weather events, such as abnormally heavy rainfall, prolonged droughts, desertification, environmental degradation, or sea-level rise and cyclones are already causing an average of more than 20 million people to leave their homes and move to other areas in their countries each year*”¹.

There remains a major protection gap for people displaced across international borders by environmental factors. Environmentally displaced persons are not covered by the 1951 Refugee Convention or the 1967 Protocol. This urgently needs to be addressed. A positive development was the launch in 2012 by Switzerland and Norway of the Nansen Initiative, a state-led consultative process to build consensus on a Protection Agenda addressing the needs of people displaced across borders in the context of disasters and climate change.

The World Bank estimates 200 million people could be displaced globally by 2050 because of climate change. A 2019 Council of Europe PACE Resolution on the 'A Legal Status for Climate Refugees' calls on Member States to take “*a more proactive approach to the protection of victims of natural and man-made disasters*” and improve disaster preparedness mechanisms, both in Europe and in other regions.

¹ <https://www.unhcr.org/en-ie/climate-change-and-disasters.html>

2.2.2 Global Compact on Refugees

In light of the complex nature of contemporary drivers of displacement and the changing nature of protection needs, a coordinated global response is necessary. On 17 December 2018, the UN General Assembly affirmed the *Global Compact on Refugees* (GCR).¹⁶ The main objectives of the GCR are to: ease pressures on countries that welcome and host refugees; build self-reliance of refugees; expand access to resettlement in third countries and other complementary pathways to protection; and support conditions in countries of origin for safe return.

After two years of consultation and negotiation, the GCR, along with the accompanying *Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration*, marked a significant achievement¹⁷ for the international community and represented a positive recommitment to upholding and implementing international refugee law.¹⁸

¹⁵ Palattiyil G, Sidhva D, Seraphia Derr A, Macgowan M., (2021), 'Global trends in forced migration: Policy, practice and research imperatives for social work'. *International Social Work*. July 2021. doi:10.1177/00208728211022791 (accessed 2 August 2021)

¹⁶ United Nations, (2018) 'Global Compact on Refugees', A/73/12 (Part II).

¹⁷ Grandi, F. (2019) 'The Global Compact on Refugees: A Historic Achievement', *International Migration* vol. 57, IOM.

¹⁸ Danish Refugee Council, (2020) 'Exploring the impact of COVID-19 on the Global Compact on Refugees', Copenhagen: DRC.

The introduction of a Global Refugee Forum every four years was welcomed as a unique opportunity to bring together different actors (States, NGOs, donors and private sector) to make pledges, share good practices and report back on progress in implementation. The inaugural Global Refugee Forum was held in December 2019 and seen as an opportunity for the EU to demonstrate its commitment to implementation of the GCR¹⁹. Significant pledges were made (including by Ireland), but comprehensive data is not available yet on the impact of Covid-19 on delivery. However, headline statistics highlight that 48% of pledges are in progress.²⁰

Potential limitations of the Global Compact include: its non-legally binding status; and the absence of new or additional standards. The fact it was a compromise text, negotiated in the knowledge some nation states were disinclined to actively increase their share of responsibility for refugees, were known prior to affirmation of the GCR²¹ but warrant additional reflection.

Overview: Global Resettlement Forum Pledges by Ireland¹

- *Education*: To scale up funding with a focus on girls education and education in emergencies and protracted crisis. €250m in funding pledged over the next 5 years.
- *Resettlement*: To increase by one-third by 2023 the number of UNHCR refugees resettled annually.
- *Peacebuilding*: To support UN peacebuilding by funding the UN Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) with a commitment of at least €4.5m up until at least 2022.
- *Funding*: In line with Ireland's new development policy, *A Better World*, to provide 0.7% of GNI by 2030 in official development assistance and target that assistance towards the furthest behind first.

1) UNHCR Ireland, (2019) 'Ireland pledges support for refugees at Global Refugee Forum', available at <https://www.unhcr.org/en-ie/news/latest/2019/12/5dfa3c8d4/ireland-pledges-support-for-refugees-at-global-refugee-forum.html> and Department of Justice, (2019) 'Ireland commits to a new Refugee Protection Programme', available at <https://www.gov.ie/en/press-release/d4389b-ireland-commits-to-a-new-refugee-protection-programme/> [accessed 4 April 2021].

Legal Status

The GCR represents the political will and ambition of the international community²² and it acknowledges the relevance of international law, including human rights instruments and refugee law.²³ Provisions within the GCR also reflect pre-existing legal standards from international conventions and treaty law, which in themselves would be binding on States who ratified them.

However, the references to being guided by international human rights law rather than explicitly recognising that such law is directly applicable to refugees have been criticised.²⁴ Other commentators have also expressed disappointment at the voluntary nature of the GCR, noting in particular that the EU and its institutions clearly adopted a position advocating for such a non-binding status.²⁵

The GCR creates no new legal obligations, nor does it alter the mandate of UNHCR.²⁶ As was noted by the delegation of the European Union to the United Nations, the GCR is not about imposing additional burdens but rather is a reaffirmation²⁷ of the standards and principles contained within the UN Refugee Convention.²⁸

Despite this assertion, the depth of political division even at a regional level,²⁹ in terms of values and approach to forced migration, cannot be underestimated. In such a context it is notable that 181 states voted in favour of affirmation (and only 2 states - Hungary and the United States - ultimately opted to vote against).

¹⁹ European Council on Refugees and Exiles, (2019) 'Time to Commit: Using the Global Refugee Forum. Brussels: ECRE.

²⁰ UNHCR 'Pledges & Contributions Dashboard', available at <https://globalcompactrefugees.org/channel/pledges-contributions> [accessed 30 July 2021].

²¹ European Council on Refugees and Exiles, (2018) 'Global Means Global: Europe and the Global Compact on Refugees'. Brussels: ECRE.

²² See above: United Nations, 'Global Compact on Refugees', A/73/12 (Part II).

²³ Guild, E. & Allinson, K. 'The impact of the Global Compact on Refugees on the legal protection of refugee rights: What now for the 1951 Refugee Convention?', available at <https://protectproject.w.uib.no/what-now-for-the-1951-refugee-convention/> [accessed 30th July 2021].

²⁴ Pijnenburg, A. (2019) 'The Global Compact on Refugees and International Law: A Missed Opportunity?', Refugee Law Initiative, London: School of Advanced Study University of London.

²⁵ Boucher, F. & Gordemann, J. (2020) 'The European Union and the Global on Refugees and Migration: A Philosophical Critique', International Journal of Postcolonial Compacts Studies.

²⁶ Turk, V. (2019) 'The Promise and Potential of the Global Compact on Refugees', International Journal of Refugee Law, Volume 30, Issue 4, Oxford University Press.

²⁷ UNHCR, (2018) 'Media Fact Sheet: Global Compact on Refugees', Geneva: UNHCR.

²⁸ UN General Assembly, Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, 28 July 1951, United Nations, Treaty Series, vol. 189.

Responsibility Sharing

A laudable aim of the GCR is seeking to provide a basis for predictable and equitable burden- and responsibility-sharing of refugees between states.³⁰ It is worth noting that responsibility-sharing within the international refugee regime has long proven a contentious and challenging concept in terms of definition and agreed scope³¹ to achieve consensus on.

A paucity of mechanisms exist to effectively operationalise responsibility-sharing and it is largely determined by politics rather than established law.³² The GCR had envisaged development of a Three-Year Strategy 2019–21 on resettlement and complementary pathways in order to increase the actual number of global resettlement places and the availability of safe and legal pathways to protection.³³

Clearly though, given the inequitable distribution of refugees and forcibly displaced persons that exists today, ambitions must extend beyond mere financial support for States.³⁴ Otherwise, the world will remain one “*in which responsibility-sharing means some states keep all the refugees and some states pay all the money*”.³⁵ Notably in this regard, of the 285 financial pledges made at the end of 2019, responsibility-sharing attracted the second-highest number of commitments, a preference which was not mirrored in the non-financial pledges.³⁶

Climate Refugees

It is the Global Compact on Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, rather than the GCR, that addresses “*the adverse impacts of climate change and environmental degradation*,”³⁷ which includes natural disasters, desertification, land degradation, drought and rising sea levels. For migrants who are forced to leave their countries of origin due to environmental degradation, the compact clearly states that governments should work to protect climate refugees in the countries of their arrival by devising planned relocation and visa options if adaptation and return is not possible in their countries of origin.

In March 2018, the UN Human Rights Council adopted an outcome document that discussed the issue of cross-border movement of people brought about by climate crises from the perspective of human rights protection.

The document highlighted there are many people who do not fit the definition of “refugees” among those who are forced to migrate long distances and cross borders due to climate impacts. The legal system to protect their human rights is inadequate, as the “non-refoulement principle”, which states that people who have crossed borders should not be deported or repatriated to their original countries against their will, is not applied.³⁸

Governments are urged to “*incorporate the concept of human rights protection into the planning and implementation of climate change measures*”³⁹ including preventing large-scale displacement by allowing people to live in conditions that protect their human rights and promoting human rights-conscious planned relocation as a means of adapting to climate change. It is important that the cross-cutting challenge of climate change - and consequential increased displacement - is on the agenda for both global compacts.

“There are many people who do not fit the definition of “refugees” among those who are forced to migrate long distances and cross borders due to climate impacts”

29 Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS) Ireland (2018) 'Sharing Responsibility, Saving Lives: Reframing Ireland's Response to the EU Refugee Crisis and Beyond', Dublin: JRS Ireland.

30 See above: United Nations, 'Global Compact on Refugees', A/73/12 (Part II).

31 Deardorff Miller, S. (2019) 'High Hopes: The Global Compact for Refugees and Improving Responsibility Sharing', Refugee Law Initiative, London: School of Advanced Study University of London.

32 Betts, A. and Costello, C. and Zaun, N. (2017) 'A Fair Share: Refugees and Responsibility-Sharing', The Migration Studies Delegation, Stockholm: Delmi.

33 UNHCR (2019), 'The Three-Year Strategy (2019-2021) on Resettlement and Complementary Pathways', Geneva: UNHCR.

34 Statement of H.E. Archbishop Ivan Jurkovič, Permanent Observer of the Holy See to the United Nations (2019), available at <https://migrants-refugees.va/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/Statement-Ivan-Jurkovi%C4%8D-Permanent-Observer.pdf> [accessed 30 July 2021].

35 Nebehay, S. (2019) 'States pledge more than \$3 billion for refugees, asylum rights 'under threat': U.N', available at <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-un-refugees-idUSKBN1YM2GT> [accessed 26 April 2021].

36 Kainz, L. and Banulescu-Bogdan, N. and Newland, K. (2020) 'The Divergent Trajectories of the Global Migration and Refugee Compacts', Migration Policy Institute, Washington: MPI.

37 United Nations, (2018) 'Global Compact on Safe and Orderly Migration', A/73/195.

38 Human Rights Council (2018) 'The slow onset effects of climate change and human rights protection for cross-border migrants', A/HRC/37/CRP.4, OHCHR: Geneva

39 Ibid

Assessing Impact of Global Compact

Undoubtedly, the Global Compact on Refugees has admirable goals and vision to affect positive change for refugees and forcibly displaced persons worldwide. The challenge is to ensure the high-level commitments translate into actions that address the needs on the ground and impact positively on the lives of forced migrants and their families.

It is too early to fairly assess the impact which the GCR might have as a global response to growing forced displacement worldwide. At the end of 2021, the first High Level Officials meeting will be convened by UNHCR to review and monitor progress. UNHCR have argued that the Global Refugee Forum offered a starting point - creating the foundations for an enhanced response to forced migration – but also stressed the need for the implementation of pledges to realise the objectives of the GCR. ⁴⁰

The outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic put the GCR to its first severe test, highlighting gaps in implementation plans and accountability mechanisms ⁴¹ and also negatively impacting on pledge fulfilment. ⁴² Nevertheless, the GCR still represents a positive step forward, at the very least through the near universal recommitment of nation states to the international refugee protection regime. ⁴³

2.2.3 Coherent Global ODA Approach

Aid has a key role in supporting authentic development, conflict resolution and creating the conditions for peace when directed towards promoting the economic development and welfare of developing nations. Narrowing the focus to the issue of migration and agreements reached between donor States and recipients of assistance, it is important that aid is not tied to conditions that outsource protection obligations and undermine the right to seek protection in countries/ regions of destination. This buying out of protection obligations breaks down solidarity and allows wealthy nations to sidestep sharing responsibility for receiving people with a protection need.

Equally, richer countries have a role in resolving conflict and building peace in war-torn regions of the world.

Too often, we witness “outbreaks of tension and a build-up of arms and ammunition in a global context dominated by uncertainty, disillusionment, fear of the future, and controlled by narrow economic interests”. ⁴⁴

In Ireland, the stated aim of its Official Development Assistance (ODA) programme is to reduce poverty, support long-term development and provide humanitarian assistance. The Irish Government's 2018 policy for international development, *A Better World*, ⁴⁵ places a significant emphasis on contributing to the UN Sustainable Development Goals, in particular, by prioritising efforts and directing resources towards those “furthest behind”. This includes prioritising gender equality, reducing humanitarian need, climate action and strengthening governance.

Ireland also reaffirmed its commitment to achieving the long-standing goal of allocating 0.7% of Gross National Income (GNI) to Official Development Assistance. The new deadline for realising this target is now 2030, and prior to the economic shock of Covid-19, the Irish Government had outlined an indicative phased path towards achievement, as shown in Table 5.

Year	ODA (Millions)	ODA (%)
2023	1,400	0.5
2025	1,800	0.57
2027	2,100	0.62
2030	2,500	0.7

⁴⁰ UNHCR (2020). 'Outcomes of the Global Refugee Forum 2019', Geneva: UNHCR.

⁴¹ Danish Refugee Council, (2020) 'Exploring the impact of COVID-19 on the Global Compact on Refugees', Copenhagen: DRC.

⁴² Save the Children (2021), 'Refugee education one year on from the Global Refugee Forum and the impact of COVID-19', London: Save the Children.

⁴³ See above: Deardorff Miller, S. (2019) 'High Hopes: The Global Compact for Refugees and Improving Responsibility Sharing', Refugee Law Initiative, London: School of Advanced Study University of London.

⁴⁴ Document on Human Fraternity for World Peace and Living Together, Abu Dhabi (4 February 2019): L'Osservatore Romano, 3-5 February 2019.

⁴⁵ Government of Ireland (2019) 'A Better World – Ireland's Policy for International Development'.

⁴⁶ Written answers to Parliamentary Question (PQ 21963/19) by Seán Crowe T.D., Tuesday, 21 May 2019, Dáil Éireann Debates

While Ireland has been commended on numerous occasions for the quality and effectiveness of its overseas aid and its performance as a donor, the 2008 peak of 0.59%⁴⁷ was followed by a trend of decreasing annual ODA budgets as a result of the severe national and global recession. Furthermore, although Ireland's ODA has experienced growth in volume since 2015, this has not translated into progress towards the 0.7% target as the budget allocation has stagnated relative to GNI.⁴⁸ A positive increase in 2021 brought Ireland's ODA allocation to approximately 0.32% of GNI but the corollary of this is that a tripling of the budget will be required by the end of the decade to finally meet its target.⁴⁹

The commitment to increasing ODA to 0.7% of GNI by 2030 was one of the pledges made by Ireland to the Global Refugee Forum. ODA will have an important role in Ireland's response to forced displacement and its impact globally. Thus, it will require sustained political will and bravery to remain true to this pledge, especially as although the long-term economic implications of Covid-19 are unknown, it is certain the costs will be significant.

2.3. Church Response: A Global Call to Action

2.3.1 Church Social Teaching: Migration and Development

People like Anwar and Hibah should have the opportunity to remain in their homeland, support themselves and their families and lead fulfilling lives. Their decision to emigrate should be voluntary not forced by fear, violence, persecution or deprivation. Creating conditions for peace requires authentic and sustainable development. Pope Francis warns “*some economic rules have proved effective for growth, but not for integral human development*”.⁵⁰ Global inequality in wealth, power and resources and unjust economic rules fuel conflict and forced displacement.

Pope Francis in his 2021 Message for the World Day of Refugee and Migrants makes an appeal “*to journey together towards an ever wider “we” to all men and women, for the sake of renewing the human family, building together a future of justice and peace, and ensuring that no one is left behind.*” Francis calls for a more inclusive response to refugees, asylum seekers and forced migrants among us not as *other* but as a wider 'we'. We are offered the opportunity “*to break down the walls that separate us*” and “*to build bridges that encourage a culture of encounter*” and welcome.⁵¹

Populorum Progressio proposed 'peace was the new name for development'. The absence of peace – conflict, leads to forced displacement. But Pope Francis warns at the present time that situations of violence across the world “*have become so common as to constitute a real 'third world war' fought piecemeal*”.⁵² This has led with record numbers, more than 82 million men, women and children, forced to flee their homes.

The Vatican has sought to inform the development of a global response through the publication of a 20-point action plan for governments entitled: *Responding to Refugees and Migrants: Twenty Action Points*.⁵³

This action plan incorporates the key papal calls:

- *To Welcome*: Enhancing safe and legal channels for migrants and refugees. Migration should be safe, legal and orderly, and the decision to migrate voluntary.
- *To Protect*: Ensuring migrant and refugee rights and dignity.
- *To Promote*: Advancing integral human development of migrants and refugees.
- *To Integrate*: Enriching communities through wider participation of migrants and refugees.

⁴⁷ OECD (2014) 'OECD Development Co-operation Peer Reviews: Ireland 2014', OECD Publishing.

⁴⁸ OECD (2020) 'OECD Development Co-operation Peer Reviews: Ireland 2020', OECD Publishing.

⁴⁹ Department of Foreign Affairs (2020) 'Ministers welcome increased allocation for Overseas Aid', available at <https://www.dfa.ie/news-and-media/press-releases/press-release-archive/2020/october/ministers-welcome-increased-allocation-for-overseas-aid.php#:~:text=1%20%2D%20The%20allocation%20to%20overseas,of%200.31%25%20GNI%20this%20year> [accessed 30 July 2021].

⁵⁰ See above: Francis, (2020) Fratelli Tutti, Dicastero per la Comunicazione - Libreria Editrice Vaticana.

⁵¹ Message for 2021 World Day of Refugees and Migrants

⁵² See above: Francis, (2020) Fratelli Tutti, Dicastero per la Comunicazione - Libreria Editrice Vaticana.

⁵³ Migrants and Refugees Section, (2017) 'Responding to Refugees and Migrants: Twenty Action Points the Global Compacts', Vatican City: Integral Human Development.

“It is unacceptable that the mere place of one's birth or residence should result in his or her possessing fewer opportunities for a developed and dignified life. Development must not aim at the amassing of wealth by a few but must ensure human rights for all”

Contribution of the Catholic Church to the Global Compacts

The Vatican actively sought to inform the development of the Global Compacts as part of the mission of the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development and its Migrants and Refugees Section.

The work of the Migrants and Refugees Section is strategically carried out in collaboration with Catholic organisations in the field – including the International Catholic Migration Commission, Caritas and JRS. In 2017, it published its 20-point action plan for governments entitled: *Responding to Refugees and Migrants: Twenty Action Points*.² Grouped under four key headings – *to welcome, to protect, to promote, and to integrate* – the action plan was directed towards both compacts in recognition of the reality of mixed migration and the inherent dignity of the person, regardless of the immigration label attached.³

Some of the key actions points of relevance to the Global Compact on Refugees included the calls:

- To ban arbitrary and collective expulsions.
- To expand the number and range of alternative legal pathways for safe and voluntary migration and resettlement and to increase the scale to meet the UNHCR Annual Global Resettlement Need.
- To adopt national policies that provide equal access to education for migrant, asylum seeker and refugee learners of all levels.
- To adopt national policies which enable migrants, asylum seekers, and refugees to make the best use of their skills and capacities.
- To adopt laws, policies and practices which facilitate the local integration of migrants, asylum seekers and refugee populations.

The final texts of both the GCR and GCM were warmly endorsed by the Migrants and Refugees Section⁴ and reflective of the calls made. In particular, the structure of the GCM allowed for 15 of the Twenty Action Points to be identified within the 23 stated objectives.⁵

Recently, at the December 2019 Global Refugee Forum, the Permanent Observer of the Holy See to the United Nations - Archbishop Ivan Jurkovič – sought to reaffirm the centrality of the human person by calling on attendees to undertake the task of putting faces to the numbers and statistics used to categorise persons seeking refuge and also to pursue concrete solutions though burden and responsibility sharing.⁶

1) International Catholic Migration Commission, (2018) 'The Global Compacts and the Role of the Church', available at <https://www.icmc.net/2018/03/06/the-global-compacts-and-the-role-of-the-church/> [accessed 30 July 2021].

2) Migrants and Refugees Section, (2017) 'Responding to Refugees and Migrants: Twenty Action Points the Global Compacts', Vatican City: Integral Human Development.

3) Baggio, F. (2018), 'The Church's commitment towards the Global Compacts', Statement at The Holy See in the Preparatory Processes of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration and of the Global Compact on Refugees'.

4) Migrant and Refugees Section (2018) 'Adoption of the Global Compact on Migration', Prot. N.: MR0307/2018.

5) Czerny SJ, M. (2019), 'The Church contributing to the GCM and its implementation', Consultation on Implementing the Global Compacts, Berlin, 26 June 2019.

6) Statement of H.E. Archbishop Ivan Jurkovič, Permanent Observer of the Holy See to the United Nations (2019), available at <https://migrants-refugees.va/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/Statement-Ivan-Jurkovi%C4%8D-Permanent-ObsERVER.pdf> [accessed 30 July 2021].

2.3.2 Rights without Borders

The recent papal encyclical *Fratelli Tutti* calls each of us to open our hearts and to welcome the stranger in our midst. Pope Francis speaks of rights without borders. Rights are derived by virtue of our shared humanity and not our place of birth. He argues it is “unacceptable that the mere place of one's birth or residence should result in his or her possessing fewer opportunities for a developed and dignified life. Development must not aim at the amassing of wealth by a few but must ensure human rights” for all.

Francis refers to the nexus between development and forced migration. “Ideally, unnecessary migration ought to be avoided; this entails creating in countries of origin the conditions needed for a dignified life and integral development.”⁵⁴ He urges all to respond with openness and generosity to situations of forced migration.

The encyclical identifies concrete steps required in response to those who are fleeing grave humanitarian crises. Many of the steps are consistent with calls for positive policy change from refugee and migrant support NGOs advocating for more just and human asylum and immigration systems in Ireland and across the world.

These priority actions include: “increasing and simplifying the granting of visas; adopting programmes of individual and community sponsorship; opening humanitarian corridors for the most vulnerable refugees; providing suitable and dignified housing; guaranteeing personal security and access to basic services; ensuring adequate consular assistance and the right to retain personal identity documents; equitable access to the justice system; the possibility of opening bank accounts and the guarantee of the minimum needed to survive; freedom of movement and the possibility of employment; protecting minors and ensuring their regular access to education; providing for programmes of temporary guardianship or shelter; guaranteeing religious freedom; promoting integration into society; supporting the reuniting of families; and preparing local communities for the process of integration.”⁵⁵

But the Pope warns “in some host countries, migration causes fear and alarm, often fomented and exploited for political purposes. This can lead to a xenophobic mentality, as people close in on themselves, and it needs to be addressed decisively”.⁵⁶ These attitudes leading to the 'virus of racism' need to be challenged through intercultural dialogue and encounter.

Integration is a two-way process: “For the communities and societies to which they come, migrants bring an opportunity for enrichment and the integral human development of all”.⁵⁷ Newly arrived migrants also needs to be open to and respectful of the communities and cultures to which they have arrived. Pope Francis concludes that is why “we need to communicate with each other, to discover the gifts of each person, to promote that which unites us, and to regard our differences as an opportunity to grow in mutual respect”.⁵⁸

There is a Gospel call to local and global action in response to the emerging forced displacement needs across the world. For example, in an Irish Bishop's Conference Statement on 17 August 2021, Bishop Alan McGuckian SJ, responding to the crisis in Afghanistan urged that the speedier processing of asylum claims for Afghan applicants and the acceptance of additional refugees in Ireland as a policy priority.

Furthermore, Bishop McGuckian SJ encouraged ongoing and proactive interventions, stating “Ireland, as one of the wealthier nations of the world, must do more for forcibly displaced people in terms of welcome and integration through State and community supports. Yes, our hearts are deeply moved by the panicked scenes of people fleeing, but it should not take such scenes and circumstances to force governments to act.”⁵⁹

“For the communities and societies to which they come, migrants bring an opportunity for enrichment and the integral human development of all”

⁵⁴ See above: Francis, (2020) 'Fratelli Tutti', Dicastero per la Comunicazione - Libreria Editrice Vaticana.

⁵⁵ See above: Francis, (2020) 'Fratelli Tutti', Dicastero per la Comunicazione - Libreria Editrice Vaticana.

⁵⁶ See above: Francis, (2020) 'Fratelli Tutti', Dicastero per la Comunicazione - Libreria Editrice Vaticana.

⁵⁷ See above: Francis, (2020) 'Fratelli Tutti', Dicastero per la Comunicazione - Libreria Editrice Vaticana.

⁵⁸ See above: Francis, (2020) 'Fratelli Tutti', Dicastero per la Comunicazione - Libreria Editrice Vaticana.

⁵⁹ Irish Bishops Conference Statement, 17 August 2021

<https://www.catholicbishops.ie/2021/08/18/bishop-mcguckian-pray-for-afghanistan-ireland-must-do-more-for-forcibly-displaced-people> (Accessed 19 August 2021)

Faith Based Response: Building Communities of Hospitality and Best Practice

While NGOs, community and church groups are becoming increasingly involved in supporting the integration needs of persons arriving through newly established safe and legal pathways to protection in Ireland – civil society and faith-based stakeholders throughout the European region also remain critically important in supporting those seeking refuge and safety within its borders.

The JRS Welcome Project in France sees local families and communities opening their doors for refugees to stay with them for various lengths of time. The project began with just three people in Paris in 2009 and today is a hundreds-strong network in 15 cities all over France accommodating and welcoming thousands of forced displaced persons for short-term stays in their homes.

JRS in Europe established the Communities of Hospitality project (2016-18) with the aim to provide hospitality to refugees and forced migrants through day centres, cultural centres, family hosting schemes or simply through direct encounter. Communities of Hospitality sought to reduce xenophobia and discrimination by strengthening and promoting a culture of welcome, inclusion and understanding. The project was run in 10 national offices across Europe. Local families and religious congregations welcomed and hosted forced migrants in their homes as an alternative to poorly conditioned reception centres or the threat of destitution.

In 2020, with the support of JRS country offices throughout Europe, the Jesuit Refugee Service in Ireland undertook research to identify examples of good civil society practices. Those highlighted include, but were not limited to the following:

In Italy, the R.I.C.O project involves more than 35 religious congregations in the provision of hospitality to protection applicants via transitional housing options. Plateforme Citoyenne de Soutien aux Réfugiés provides shelter to those facing homelessness and destitution in Belgium, and local 'Housing Cafés' are run by Caritas for persons with refugee status.

NGOs and faith organisations in the UK work together to offer practical and emotional support while advocating for people's rights. Social counselling is provided by JRS to individuals and families in a reception facility run by the City of Munich, Germany; and in Essen, the diocese has made a house available to two Jesuits who live their together with several refugees, sharing everyday life with each other.

Throughout the EU Refugee Crisis and until the end of 2019, vulnerable asylum seekers in Macedonia could be accommodated in a JRS 'Safe House'. Also, the Integration House "Pedro Arrupe" continues to be operated by JRS in Serbia for unaccompanied and separated children, with a focus on education, socialization and integration of children into Serbian society. Language training, computer courses and psychosocial support is provided in Kosovo. In France, the JRS 'Welcome Project' supports families to host asylum seekers living on the streets.

In Spain, some centres of higher education, for example the Universidad Complutense of Madrid, have specific programmes for asylum seekers and refugees. Awareness raising campaigns challenging the negative perception about asylum seekers, refugees and forced migrants are organised and promoted in Portugal. Similarly, civil society organisations and solidarity groups provide a range of integration initiatives for persons seeking protection in Switzerland.

Finally, common throughout the region, were efforts by NGOs, civil society and faith-based groups to create opportunities for positive encounter and to build understanding between local communities and forced migrants.

Key Findings: Growing Global Displacement

Global Challenges

- *Global forced displacement reached record levels in 2020, with UNHCR reporting 82.4 million people forced to leave their homes worldwide, doubling over the last decade.*
- *Covid-19 severely impacted the capacity to resettle forcibly displaced persons with travel restrictions and borders closed. In 2020 less than 25,000 persons were resettled, the lowest level in 20 years and in the context of a projected global need of almost 1.5 million places.*
- *Seventy years after its signing, the 1951 Refugee Convention remains the cornerstone of refugee protection. The fact there are 149 States parties to the 1951 Convention and/or its 1967 Protocol at the present time is evidence of its enduring relevance.*
- *Yet there exist significant gaps in refugee protection, not least in relation to climate refugees. The World Bank estimates by 2050 up to 200 million persons may be forcibly displaced by climate change. This requires an urgent response at a global level.*

Global Responses

- *The Global Compact on Refugees (GCR) was affirmed by 181 states in December 2018 after two years of negotiation. It is an important global statement and commitment to respond more effectively to the needs of persons forcibly displaced worldwide.*
- *While the rhetoric and intention of the GCR is undoubtedly positive and well meaning, the fact that it is not legally binding, is voluntary and responsibilities can be bought out; has led to legitimate concerns it may not translate into meaningful change on the ground.*
- *The Global Refugee Forum pledges highlight the key role aid plays in sustainable and authentic development and in creating conditions for peace and prosperity. But it is important aid is not used as a tool to undermine the rights of protection seekers or to outsource protection obligations.*
- *Ireland's Official Development Assistance (ODA) halved from a high in 2008 of 0.59% of Gross National Income and increased to 0.32% after Budget 2021, still far short of the 0.7% target of GNI.*

Global Call to Action

- *Pope Francis urged all to respond openly and generously to refugees and forcibly displaced persons who we encounter. The Vatican has developed specific action points for Governments and Communities to implement the key elements of the global compact, which are built on and extended in the latest papal encyclical, Fratelli Tutti.*
- *While faith-based groups remain at the forefront of welcoming and responding to the needs of forced migrants and refugees arriving in Ireland and worldwide, there is an urgent call to action in the context of the growing level of global forced displacement, that those who have more should do more.*

Recommendation: National Governments must fully honour their Global Refugee Forum pledges, especially meeting enhanced resettlement commitments in the context of record levels of global forced displacement.
Ireland to increase by one third by 2023 the number UNCHR refugees resettled annually.

Recommendation: Overseas Development Aid commitments are increased globally to build the capacity of developing countries to address the root causes that lead to displacement. Resources should be ringfenced to address the specific needs of persons displaced by climate change.
Ireland must honour its Global Refugee Forum commitment to reach the ODA target of 0.7% of Gross National Income by 2030.

Recommendation: Developed countries and regions of destination to enhance safe and legal pathways to protection, including increasing and simplifying the granting of visas; adopting and supporting programmes of individual and community sponsorship; and offering generous and accessible humanitarian assistance programmes for persons fleeing emerging conflicts.
Ireland to respond to emerging conflicts and crises causing displacement through accessible humanitarian assistance programmes tailored to the most urgent needs on the ground.

Recommendation: Receiving countries to introduce policies and practices that enhance their models of reception and integration through the provision of suitable and dignified housing, ensuring equal access to public services and legal representation, supporting active participation in communities and challenging racism and racist attitudes in all forms.
Ireland to develop and resource appropriately a new National Migrant Integration Strategy.

Recommendation: A global call to action for civil society and faith-based groups to respond generously, openly and to welcome forcibly displaced persons and their families into their communities and parishes.
Irish Church and faith-based stakeholders to work together and develop a pilot parish-based sponsorship programme that offers additional resettlement/ relocation places to forcibly displaced persons.

3. Fortress Europe Returns

**They don't care about you. They don't care if you die. They don't know you.
What should they care about you? They just want their money – Tigiste**

3.1 Erosion of Protection

Reviewing the EU programmatic and policy response to the 2015-2017 Refugee Crisis, through resettlement and relocation schemes, it is noteworthy that only 35% (34,700) of the relocated places legally committed were ultimately fulfilled⁶⁰ and the modest resettlement targets were only achieved under the shadow of the controversial EU-Turkey deal.⁶¹ Analysing subsequent developments in the period 2018-20 there is a worrying erosion of protection in Europe and a focus on externalisation of asylum and border controls rather than upholding human rights.

Erosion of Protection: Fortress Europe Re-Emerges

In recent years there is increasing evidence that access to protection in Europe is under threat and that a Fortress Europe is re-emerging.

Push Backs

The 2018 JRS Europe report, *Forgotten at the Gates of Europe*¹, presented findings from a three-year project to monitor human rights violations at the borders of Europe. Interviews were conducted with forced migrants in Croatia, Greece, Italy, Malta, Romania, and the Spanish enclave of Melilla - locations that represent many individuals' first contact with European territory. Violent push-backs were recorded at several of points along the EU's external borders and even once interviewees were within EU territory, they reported being detained, purposely misdirected by authorities or simply not informed how to navigate the asylum process.

Search and Rescue Operations

In *Sharing Responsibility, Saving Lives* (2018), JRS commended the search and rescue operations that had saved 445,044 during the period under review. Since then, the approach has dramatically shifted towards prioritising enforcement against migrants; engaging third countries to intercept ships; and the criminalisation of NGOs that launched their own SAR operations². JRS continues to call, as recently as May 2021, for search and rescue operations to be launched by national and supranational authorities in order to save lives³.

Inhumane Reception

Until its destruction by fire in September 2020, the Moria camp on the island of Lesbos had become the latest tragic symbol of current European policy; providing overcrowded, undignified, and unsafe living conditions for thousands of refugees and other forced migrants at the gates of Europe. In response, JRS and others called for:

- Provision of appropriate accommodation for those displaced by the fire that destroyed the camp.
- Free access for humanitarian organisations to address urgent material needs.
- Regional and national level action to provide the necessary relocation options, not only for unaccompanied minors but also vulnerable families and individuals.
- An alternative reception model on the islands for new arrivals from Turkey which provides reception facilities on a transitional basis to show respect for human dignity and safeguard the right of every refugee, whatever their origin, to seek asylum.⁴

1) Jesuit Refugee Service Europe (2018) "Forgotten at the Gates of Europe: Ongoing protection concerns at the EU's external border", Brussels: JRS Europe.

2) European Parliamentary Research Service (2021) 'Search and Rescue in the Mediterranean', European Union.

3) Jesuit Refugee Service Europe (2021) 'Shipwreck in the Mediterranean', available at <https://jrseurope.org/en/news/shipwreck-in-the-mediterranean/> [accessed 30 July 2021].

4) Sant'Egidio, Jesuit Refugee Service and the Scalabrinian Sisters (2020) "Joint statement for Lesbos: may never go back to the way it was", available at <https://jrs.net/en/news/joint-statement-for-lesbos-may-it-never-go-back-to-the-way-it-was/> [accessed 30 July 2021].

⁶⁰ European Commission (2019) 'Progress report on the Implementation of the European Agenda on Migration', COM(2019) 481 final.

⁶¹ European Commission (2017) 'Report From the Commission to the European Parliament, the European Council and the Council: Fifteenth report on relocation and resettlement', 6 September 2017, COM(2017) 465 final.

3.2 Regional Forced Migration Data

Arrivals by Sea

In the years 2015-2017 the EU Refugee Crisis was defined by its scale. Significant increases in the number of refugees and forced migrants accessing European territory via the Mediterranean Sea resulted in asylum applications reaching record levels during 2015 (1,255,640). As can be seen in Table 6 trends in sea arrivals to Europe have dramatically changed in the intervening period, resulting in a 50% reduction since 2017.

	2015-2017	2018	2019	2020
<i>Arrivals by Sea</i>	1,550,132	116,644	102,431	88,149

Similarly, there has been a shift in the demographic of those seeking refuge. During 2015-2017, the East Mediterranean (encompassing the Western Balkan route) route facilitated greatest access to the European territory, largely driven by the conflict in Syria. As a result, Syria consistently featured as the top country of origin in terms of arrivals by sea. Following the effective closure of the Western Balkan route, as a result of the EU-Turkey deal,⁶³ the demographic of refugees and forced migrants arriving has significantly changed.

Year	Country of Origin	Number	Percentage of Total
2018	Guinea	14,400	12%
	Morocco	13,600	11%
	Mali	11,200	10%
2019	Afghanistan	28,500	28%
	Syria	19,600	19%
	Morocco	8,800	9%
2020	Tunisia	14,351	19%
	Algeria	9,426	13%
	Morocco	5,282	7%

Deaths at Sea

A distinguishable feature of the EU Refugee Crisis was the huge loss of life. In the period 2015-17 there was just under 12,000 deaths among 1,550,000 sea arrivals. Three years later the level of deaths among forced migrants entering Europe remained unacceptably high with just over 5,000 people perishing at sea between 2018 and 2020.

	2015-17	2018	2019	2020	2018-20
<i>Number of deaths at sea</i>	11,986	2,277	1,336	1,401	5,014
<i>Number of arrivals by sea</i>	1,550,152	116,664	102,431	88,149	307,244
<i>Deaths per '000 arrivals</i>	8	19	13	16	16
<i>Rate of deaths</i>	1 in 130	1 in 51	1 in 77	1 in 63	1 in 61

Although the number of deaths more than halved in the period 2018-20, the rate of deaths more has than doubled since the EU Refugee Crisis. The Mediterranean sadly remains a cemetery to many seeking to enter Europe, as Pope Francis asserted in visit to Lampedusa in 2013. The continued loss of life is preventable, and this reality of people dying entering Europe in search of safety and refuge is not acceptable.

⁶² UNHCR, 'Operations Portal - Mediterranean Situation', available at <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/situations/mediterranean> [accessed 30 July 2021] and UNHCR (2020) 'Refugee and Migrant Arrivals to Europe - Jan to Dec 2019 Factsheet'.

⁶³ European Union: Council of the European Union, EU-Turkey statement, 18 March 2016.

⁶⁴ UNHCR, 'Operations Portal - Mediterranean Situation', available at <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/situations/mediterranean> [accessed 30 July 2021].

Amadou's Story

Amadou left Libya in a nine-metre zodiac crammed with 150 people seeking refuge in Europe.

He dreaded the journey: *“I lived the worst moment of my story before we crossed. I asked myself, Why did this all happen? Why did I have to leave my country? I actually cried before it was so difficult for me”*.

Thirty-six of Amadou's fellow travellers died during the three-day voyage. He guessed they were very weak for one reason or another – because of pregnancy or because their hands had been pierced in prison – explaining *“They just got too tired”*. The bodies of those who died were thrown overboard.

Amadou finally reached Europe when the boat touched the shore of Lampedusa.

“The continued loss of life is preventable, and this reality of people dying entering Europe in search of safety and refuge should never be acceptable”

3.3 Regional Response: EU Pact on Migration and Asylum

3.3.1 Overview

In September 2020, the European Commission launched its new *Pact on Migration and Asylum*.⁶⁵ Labelled a “fresh start on migration”⁶⁶, the package of 9 instruments was presented as the Commission's new approach to migration and border management, ensuring coherence across internal and external migration policy.

There was public recognition that the current asylum and migration system was not fit for purpose and that the EU and its institutions had failed to fix it throughout the duration of the EU Refugee Crisis and beyond.⁶⁷ Previous reforms of the Common European Asylum System (CEAS) had been criticised for continuing a trend of externalisation and restriction in the European Union's asylum policy.⁶⁸ Developments such as the EU-Turkey deal – a clear departure from Europe's values and founding principles - further embedded the sense that protection in Europe was under threat, with the primary purpose to deny protection seekers access to Europe.

In contrast, the new EU Pact was presented as a long-term migration policy that could translate European values into practice and fundamentally protect the right to seek asylum⁶⁹. Positively, the Pact demonstrates the European Commission's efforts to engage in meaningful consultation with Member States⁷⁰. Furthermore, it is welcome that it adopts a holistic⁷¹ approach and shifts the narrative towards a positive framing of migration⁷².

Unfortunately, the negative aspects of the EU Pact identified by NGOs, academics and asylum seeker advocates far outweigh the positive elements contained within the proposals. Critics contend the new Pact will replicate the deficient and much maligned policies of the past⁷³, exacerbate the focus on externalisation of asylum and undermine efforts to increase solidarity and responsibility sharing.⁷⁴

⁶⁵ European Commission (2020), 'Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on a New Pact on Migration and Asylum', COM(2020) 609 final.

⁶⁶ European Commission (2020) 'A fresh start on migration: Building confidence and striking a new balance between responsibility and solidarity', IP/20/1706.

⁶⁷ See above: European Commission (2020) 'A fresh start on migration: Building confidence and striking a new balance between responsibility and solidarity', IP/20/1706.

⁶⁸ Jesuit Refugee Service Europe, (2017) 'The CEAS reform package: the death of asylum by a thousand cuts?', Brussels: JRS Europe.

⁶⁹ Statement by Commissioner for Home Affairs, Ylva Johansson at launch of new Pact on Migration and Asylum.

⁷⁰ The Catholic Church in the European Union (2020) 'Statement by the COMECE Working Group on Migration and Asylum on the EU Pact on Migration and Asylum Proposed by the European Commission', Brussels: COMECE.

⁷¹ Christian Group (2021) 'Comments on the EU new Pact on Migration and Asylum', available at https://jrseurope.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/19/2021/04/2021-04-ChristianGroup_EU_Pact_General-Comments.pdf [accessed 30 July 2021].

⁷² European Council on Refugees and Exiles (2020) 'The Pact on Migration and Asylum: it's never enough, never, never', available at <https://www.ecre.org/the-pact-on-migration-and-asylum-its-never-enough-never-never/> [accessed 30 July 2021].

⁷³ See above: Christian Group (2021) 'Comments on the EU new Pact on Migration and Asylum'.

⁷⁴ European Council on Refugees and Exiles (2020), 'Joint Statement: The Pact on Migration and Asylum: to provide a fresh start and avoid past mistakes, risky elements need to be addressed and positive aspects need to be expanded', available at <https://www.ecre.org/the-pact-on-migration-and-asylum-to-provide-a-fresh-start-and-avoid-past-mistakes-risky-elements-need-to-be-addressed-and-positive-aspects-need-to-be-expanded/> [accessed 30 July 2021].

3.3.2 Shortfalls in the EU Pact

Informed by Culture of Disbelief

The new Pact, critics assert, is informed by an assumption that within the mixed migration flows arriving in Europe, the majority of persons are not “genuine” asylum seekers and therefore not entitled to international protection.⁷⁵ This negative bias often featured in political debates during the EU Refugee Crisis, with a focus on recognition rates rather than the human stories of forced displacement and the life threatening and dangerous journeys made by men, women and children in search of safety and refuge. Recent research by the European Council for Refugees and Exiles (ECRE) has not only highlighted the need for a cautious approach when interpreting asylum statistics⁷⁶ but also found the majority of people claiming asylum in Europe in recent years have received a form of protection status or permission to remain.⁷⁷

Focus on Border Controls

There are significant concerns in relation to the heightened focus on border procedures within the new Pact. While border controls are recognised as a legitimate right of sovereign States, the strict border and return procedures outlined are criticised for undermining the right to seek asylum, offering fewer procedural rights and creating the potential for widespread use of detention.⁷⁸

Using the lens of Catholic Social Teaching, Caritas Europa has drawn attention to the overwhelming focus of migration prevention, which manifests in compulsory screening mechanisms and fast track asylum and return procedures.⁷⁹ For example, it has been highlighted that accelerated border procedures would become mandatory for persons whose nationality has an average European recognition rate of less than 20%⁸⁰ and the Platform for International Cooperation on Undocumented Migrants (PICUM) noted how continued detention for the entire duration of the asylum and return border procedures would now be permitted, without any obligation to prioritise alternatives to detention.⁸¹

Failure to Reform Dublin System

Many commentators have highlighted how the new EU Pact is predominantly a missed opportunity to fundamentally reform the Dublin system (rules which determine the Member State that is responsible for processing an individual applicant's claim for protection) and introduce a fairer European asylum system.⁸² Some commendable improvements were proposed – including the expansion of the definition of family to capture siblings and the recognition of the possession of a diploma or other qualifications from a Member State as a new criterion for determining responsibility.

Yet, key elements from the problematic Dublin system (such as the emphasis on country of first arrival) are maintained in the Pact, with the text often echoing the Dublin regulations and the Dublin IV Proposal.⁸³ This has led some commentators to conclude that responsibility for protection applications, in the majority of cases, will still largely be determined by which Member State was the first county of entry.⁸⁴

⁷⁵ See above: Christian Group (2021) 'Comments on the EU new Pact on Migration and Asylum'.

⁷⁶ European Council on Refugees and Exiles (2020) 'Asylum statistics in Europe: Factsheet', Brussels: ECRE.

⁷⁷ See above: European Council on Refugees and Exiles (2020) 'The Pact on Migration and Asylum: it's never enough, never, never', available at <https://www.ecre.org/the-pact-on-migration-and-asylum-its-never-enough-never-never/>

⁷⁸ See above: The Catholic Church in the European Union (2020) 'Statement by the COMECE Working Group on Migration and Asylum on the EU Pact on Migration and Asylum Proposed by the European Commission', Brussels: COMECE.

⁷⁹ Caritas Europa (2020) 'Caritas Europa first take on the new EU Pact on Migration and Asylum', available at <https://www.caritas.eu/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/Caritas-Europa-statement-on-EU-Pact-for-Asylum-and-Migration.pdf> [accessed 30 July 2021]

⁸⁰ See above: Christian Group (2021) 'Comments on the EU new Pact on Migration and Asylum'.

⁸¹ Platform for International Cooperation on Undocumented Migrants (2020) 'More detention, fewer safeguards: How the new EU Pact on Migration and Asylum creates new loopholes to ignore human rights obligations', Brussels: PICUM.

⁸² See above: European Council on Refugees and Exiles (2020), 'Joint Statement: The Pact on Migration and Asylum: to provide a fresh start and avoid past mistakes, risky elements need to be addressed and positive aspects need to be expanded'.

⁸³ Maiani, F. (2020) 'A “Fresh Start” or One More Clunker? Dublin and Solidarity in the New Pact', EU Immigration and Asylum Law and Policy, Odysseus Network.

⁸⁴ See above: Christian Group (2021) 'Comments on the EU new Pact on Migration and Asylum'.

Optional Solidarity

With the ongoing application of Dublin System rules and regulations, there is an increased need for a generous and binding solidarity mechanism. However, concerns have already been flagged that the relevant proposals within the new Pact will maintain the status quo of Member States with an external border unfairly assuming greatest responsibility for hosting new arrivals.⁸⁵ The flexible solidarity mechanism proposed will effectively allow Member States decide how they wish to show solidarity, essentially between relocation or financial assistance.⁸⁶ This encompasses the option of “return sponsorships” – whereby a sponsoring country would facilitate the return of a rejected asylum seeker from another Member State or assume responsibility for the return from their own territory after a defined period. In this regard, Caritas Europa, in their analysis of the new Pact, highlighted the perverse scenario that facilitating return could be considered as a “solidarity” mechanism on an equal status as relocation.⁸⁷

Externalisation Emphasis

One of the principal aims of the new Pact is to enhance cooperation with third countries across various facets of European migration policy. However, such cooperation is controversial and contentious with the recent experiences of the EU-Turkey deal and partnership with Libya⁸⁸ casting a dark shadow. The *comprehensive, balanced and tailor-made partnerships* envisaged in the new Pact are likely to be undermined by the overall focus on return and readmission within the proposals.⁸⁹ Moreover such cooperation would have to be conducted on a level playing field in order to be authentic and in the true spirit of partnership,⁹⁰ a principle absent in recent negotiations. As such, concerns remain that the new Pact will continue a trend of instrumentalising overseas development aid to meet EU migration policy interests⁹¹ and ultimately maintain a policy of externalising cost and responsibility.⁹²

“The comprehensive, balanced and tailor-made partnerships envisaged in the new Pact are likely to be undermined by the overall focus on return and readmission within the proposals”

3.4 Impact of Covid-19: From Bad to Worse

Throughout 2020, the Covid-19 pandemic dramatically impacted on migration flows. A 10% reduction in the number of irregular border crossings into the EU was observed – the lowest in 6 years – and the EU as a whole registered a 33% year-on-year decrease in asylum applications.⁹³ Furthermore, Covid-19 had a significant impact on resettlement to the European bloc with only 11,150 arrivals recorded against the 29,500 admissions pledged.⁹⁴ However, the negative consequences arising from the global pandemic were not limited to forced migration flows and border crossings but rather extended to the daily lived realities experienced by protection applicants in asylum systems throughout the region. In 2020, JRS Europe and country offices coordinated a mapping exercise to assess the impact of Covid-19 under the key thematic areas of Reception Systems (across 9 EU Member States); and Detention-related Policies (7 Member States). *From Bad to Worse: Covid-19 Aggravates Existing Gaps in the Reception of Asylum Seekers*⁹⁵ and *Covid-19 and Immigration Detention: Lessons Not Learned* made the following recommendations.

⁸⁵ See above: The Catholic Church in the European Union (2020) 'Statement by the COMECE Working Group on Migration and Asylum on the EU Pact on Migration and Asylum Proposed by the European Commission', Brussels: COMECE.

⁸⁶ Donatienne, R. and Yayboke, E. (2020) 'Deciphering the European Union's New Pact on Migration and Asylum', Center for Strategic and International Studies.

⁸⁷ See above: Caritas Europa (2020) 'Caritas Europa first take on the new EU Pact on Migration and Asylum'.

⁸⁸ NGO Joint Statement (2020) 'EU: Time to review and remedy cooperation policies facilitating abuse of refugees and migrants in Libya, available at https://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/supporting_resources/joint_statement_eu_financial_responsibility.pdf [accessed 30 July 2021].

⁸⁹ Christian Group (2021) 'Comments on Return Policies, Readmissions and Cooperation with Third Countries within the framework of the New Pact on Migration and Asylum', available at https://jrseurope.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/19/2021/04/2021-04-ChristianGroup_EUPact>Returns_Readmission.pdf [accessed 30 July 2021].

⁹⁰ See above: The Catholic Church in the European Union (2020) 'Statement by the COMECE Working Group on Migration and Asylum on the EU Pact on Migration and Asylum Proposed by the European Commission', Brussels: COMECE.

⁹¹ See above: Caritas Europa (2020) 'Caritas Europa first take on the new EU Pact on Migration and Asylum'.

⁹² See above: NGO Joint Statement (2020).

⁹³ Kirişçi, K. and Erdoğan, M. and Eminoğlu, N. (2020) 'The EU's “New Pact on Migration and Asylum” is missing a true foundation', Order from Chaos, The Brookings Institute.

⁹⁴ European Commission (2021) 'Migration statistics update: the impact of COVID-19' IP/21/232.

⁹⁵ UNHCR (2021) 'Update on UNHCR's operations in Europe', Executive Committee of the High Commissioner's Programme, Standing Committee 80th Meeting.

Jesuit Refugee Service Europe (2021) 'From Bad to Worse: Covid-19 Aggravates Existing Gaps in the Reception of Asylum Seekers', Brussels: JRS Europe and Integration Fund 2014-2020', available at [http://www.justice.ie/en/JELR/Pages/Irish_Refugee_Protection_Programme_\(IRPP\)](http://www.justice.ie/en/JELR/Pages/Irish_Refugee_Protection_Programme_(IRPP)) [accessed 30 July 2021].

Table 9: Recommendations Directed Towards National Authorities Beyond the Pandemic	
<i>Reception</i>	<i>Detention</i>
Ensure sufficient capacity in the reception network to accommodate every person making an asylum application in the country at any given time.	Establish alternatives to detention and apply them systematically, in accordance with the EU Returns Directive and the EU Reception Conditions directive.
Ensure that asylum seekers are referred to a reception place the moment an application is submitted.	<p>Work towards the harmonisation of detention conditions across Member States. In particular, establish national rules:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · On the unhindered access of external visitors to detention centres, including places such as hotspots or other de facto detention facilities, i.e. at border crossings. · To allow for the possibility for detainees to use mobile phones and internet. · To include adequate and accessible communication and IT infrastructure among the services that must be available in detention centres.
Ensure that reception facilities are adequately funded, equipped and staffed.	
Refrain from evicting people when the right to reception ends.	
Formally recognise that providing reception goes beyond providing meals and beds, and that social assistance, accompaniment and language training are an integral part of the reception of asylum seekers.	
Establish National Quality Standards for reception, to be implemented throughout their territories by all reception service providers.	
Recognise the advantages of small-scale, individual reception facilities for the dignity and well-being of asylum seekers, as well as for the public health and cohesion of the whole society.	

Table 10: Recommendations Directed Towards EU/European Institutions Beyond the Pandemic	
<i>Reception</i>	<i>Detention</i>
Monitor the implementation of the EU Reception Conditions Directive.	Reject any ideas such as the Commission's proposal to oblige Member States to provide no less than three months as an initial period of detention.
Clearly foresee in EU legislation that asylum seekers must receive a certification of the fact that they have made an asylum application.	Clearly include in the Returns Directive a provision obliging Member States to provide migrants with at least a temporary regular status when there are no reasonable prospects for removal.
Reject proposals excluding certain categories of applicants from the right to reception	Monitor the implementation of alternatives to detention.
Ensure the monitoring of the compliance with the EU Reception Conditions Directive, and to work towards the establishment of European Quality Standards for reception conditions	Amend the Reception Directive to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · An obligation for Member States to establish national, publicly available guidelines on the rules concerning the access of NGO and other external visitors into detention facilities. · An obligation for Member States to allow the use of mobile phones and internet. · An obligation for Member States to ensure that adequate communication and IT infrastructure is available in detention centres.
	Refrain from adopting any new legislation that introduces or expands the use of detention.
	Ensure standards are applicable to 'hotspots' and other facilities at the EU external borders where people might be kept in de facto detention.

3.5 Anti-Immigrant Sentiment in Europe

Despite efforts to establish common asylum policy across the region, the depth of political division exposed in the EU during the 2015-2017 EU Refugee Crisis and the fallout from the bloc's ineffectiveness in responding, has emboldened far-right and anti-immigrant voices. The coming power of nationalist and inward-looking parties in Hungary (Fidesz) and Poland (Law and Justice Party) have created a more hostile environment for migrants in the EU. Viktor Orban's has targeted, in propaganda, enemies of the Hungarian state, including asylum seekers whom he argues “are *'economic migrants' who threaten Europe's culture and even survival*”.⁹⁶

Mirroring the opportunistic nature of populist politics globally, far-right groups in Europe used the EU Refugee Crisis to over-represent the asylum issue as a national threat, and to gain space in the public debate.⁹⁷ Anti-migrant attitudes were noted to significantly increase since 2015 in Member States such as Italy and Austria.⁹⁸ Further, far-right parties in Spain and Germany experienced periods of growth and overall, nationalist parties in 19 Member States saw their supporter base increase.⁹⁹ Some of the greatest negative change in attitudes towards migration was caused by deliberate anti-migrant government led campaigns.¹⁰⁰

In response, increased efforts were undertaken in advance of the 2019 European Parliament elections by civil society to counter far-right rhetoric¹⁰¹ and JRS also launched its first European voter campaign, *'The Power to Vote'*, to encourage European citizens to vote while keeping in mind the rights of refugees and asylum seekers.

Meanwhile, the consequences of the 2016 decision of the British electorate to leave the EU continue to unfold. While voter motivations varied, there was a clear public narrative focused on restricting immigration and gaining greater control over national borders. The referendum has since been identified as triggering an immediate and significant increase (15%-25%) in recorded hate crime.¹⁰² However, negative attitudes towards forced migrants are not merely the preserve of fringe groups or individuals. Prior to the official departure of the United Kingdom from the European Union on 31st December 2020, efforts to effectively fast-track deportations, were highlighted and severely criticised by JRS and others.¹⁰³

Overall, since 2015 there has been a growing polarisation in politics and political perspectives across Europe. There is an emerging East-West divide, with a lurch to the right led by Hungary and Poland, advocating a more hard-line immigration stance and stricter control of internal borders. This polarisation impacts EU policy making leading to significant accommodations and opt-outs options for Member States from solidarity and responsibility sharing mechanisms to ensure agreements can be passed.

Immigration and issues of race and identity have become lightning rods for divided public opinions across the EU. This growing polarisation was illustrated in May 2021 with the initial vilification online on conservative forums, followed by a robust defence among liberals, of a Spanish Red Cross volunteer who embraced an exhausted Senegalese forced migrant on the beach in Ceuta.¹⁰⁴ This polarisation is mirrored at the political level between Member States in the approach to migration management and external border controls.

⁹⁶ Simon, K., (2015), 'The success of the illiberal vision -Orban's rise to power'. Available at <https://dpartblog.wordpress.com/2016/05/20/the-success-of-the-illiberal-vision> (Accessed 28 September 2021)

⁹⁷ Rea, A., Martiniello, M., Mazzola, A., Meuleman, B. (2019) 'The Refugee Reception Crisis in Europe. Polarized Opinions and Mobilizations', Brussels: Éditions de l'Université de Bruxelles.

⁹⁸ Messing, V. and Ságvári, B. (2019) 'Still Divided but More Open - Mapping European attitudes towards migration before and after the migration crisis', Budapest: Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung.

⁹⁹ BBC (2019) 'Europe and right-wing nationalism: A country-by-country guide', available at <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-36130006> [accessed 30 July 2021].

¹⁰⁰ See above: Messing, V. and Ságvári, B. (2019) 'Still Divided but More Open - Mapping European attitudes towards migration before and after the migration crisis', Budapest: Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung.

¹⁰¹ European Council on Refugees and Exiles (2019) 'Countering the Far Right has to Continue in Election Countdown', Brussels: ECRE.

¹⁰² Carr, J., Clifton-Sprigg, J., James, J., Vujic, S. (2020) 'Love Thy Neighbour? Brexit and Hate Crime', Bonn: IZA Institute of Labor Economics.

¹⁰³ Townsend, M. (2020) 'UK races to deport asylum seekers ahead of Brexit', available at https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2020/dec/06/uk-races-to-deport-asylum-seekers-ahead-of-brex-it?CMP=Share_iOSApp_Other [accessed 30 July 2021].

¹⁰⁴ Kassam, A. (2021) 'Spanish aid volunteer abused online for hugging Senegalese migrant', available at <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/may/20/spanish-aid-volunteer-luna-reyes-abused-online-for-hugging-african-migrant> [accessed 30 July 2021].

Key Findings: Fortress Europe Returns

- *Reviewing the period 2018-20, there has been an erosion of access to protection in Europe through pushbacks at the external borders, replacing search and rescue with enforcement and inhumane living conditions in refugee camps, especially in Greece. All these developments act as a deterrent to protection seekers and refugees entering Europe.*
- *Although the number of arrivals by sea have fallen year on year, there has not been a corresponding reduction in the rate of deaths. 5,000 have perished at sea trying to enter Europe from 2018-20.*
- *The EU Pact on Migration and Asylum was finalised in 2020, recognising that the current system was not fit for purpose. Unfortunately, the negatives outweigh the positives: replicating many of the deficient policies of the past; excessively focusing on externalisation; and undermining efforts to increase solidarity and responsibility sharing. Of particular concern was the option for Member States to buy out their protection obligations, undermining core EU values of solidarity and respect for human rights.*
- *The impact of Covid-19 is captured in the title of a recent report by JRS Europe looking at the pandemic's impact on reception conditions 'From Bad to Worse'. The negative consequences arising from the global pandemic were not limited to the dramatic reduction in forced migratory flows and border crossings but further extended to worsening living conditions experienced by protection applicants in asylum systems across the region.*
- *Nationalist Governments in Hungary and Poland and Far-right groups across Europe used the EU Refugee Crisis to weaponise the asylum issue as a national threat, and to gain space in the public debate. Anti-migrant attitudes were noted to significantly increase since 2015 in Member States such as Italy and Austria. In the UK there has been a surge in hate crime and racist and xenophobic incidents following BREXIT.*
- *There has been a growing polarisation between Member States and divided public opinion in Europe on the approach to migration management and external border controls.*

Recommendation: Member States including Ireland should show leadership in challenging policies and practices that undermine access to protection for asylum seekers in Europe and at its borders.

Recommendation: Unnecessary loss of life at sea must be prevented, adequately resourced life-saving search and rescue missions should recommence in the Mediterranean, with responsibility for rescued persons equitably shared through an agreed solidarity mechanism.

Recommendation: Develop and establish, at EU Level, implementable solidarity mechanisms that ensure an equitable distribution of responsibility for receiving and welcoming refugees and forced migrants in Europe, using relocation to avoid border states assuming a disproportionate share.

Recommendation: Other regional asylum and migration policy priorities at EU level should include: Pursuing mutually beneficial partnerships with third countries that focus on quality and quantity of aid; Ensuring people applying for international protection at the EU external borders are channelled into the asylum procedure at the earliest possible juncture.

Recommendation: Individual Member States and EU Institutions to review the key learnings from the impact of Covid-19 on reception systems and detention-related policies and adopt appropriate actions to future- and pandemic-proof regional asylum systems.

Recommendation: Ireland is not immune to the 'virus of racism'. The development of a new National Action Plan against Racism is timely and welcome. In addition, the long-awaited Hate Crime legislation needs to be put in place as a matter of urgency and migrant integration strategies promoting integration and challenging racism be adequately resourced and implemented in each local authority area.

4. Refugee Resettlement in Ireland

I have no dream. I don't see anything, just I see that the guys who came with me on this journey...some are succeeding. They have gone and I am under the bridge. It's hopeless
– Qammar

4.1 UNHCR Programme Refugees

In 1998, Ireland was among the first six countries in Europe to establish a resettlement programme. The Irish Refugee Resettlement Programme has been in operation since 2000 and is run by the Irish government in collaboration with UNHCR. Under the Programme, refugees who cannot go home because of continued war or fear of persecution and who live in perilous situations or have specific needs may be resettled.

Year	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Number of resettled persons	192	20	35	39	76	96
% of total resettled persons in EU-28 ¹⁰⁶	2.7%	0.4%	0.9%	0.8%	1.5%	1.5%

Between 2000 and 2019, over 3,000 refugees from almost 30 nationalities were resettled to Ireland.¹⁰⁷ As programme refugees have already been determined by UNHCR to meet the 1951 Refugee Convention definition of a refugee, they are not required to apply for refugee status in Ireland.

4.2 Irish Refugee Protection Programme

In response to the humanitarian crisis developing on the borders of Southern Europe, the Irish Refugee Protection Programme (IRPP) was established by Government decision on 10 September 2015. Ireland chose to voluntarily 'opt in' to EU Resettlement and Relocation Programmes under the *EU Agenda for Migration*. Under this programme, the Irish State pledged to accept 4,000 persons relocated from 'hotspots' in Hungary, Italy and Greece or resettled from UNHCR refugee camps in Lebanon.

Mechanism	Pledge
Relocation	
<i>Council of the European Union Decision (2015/1523)</i>	600
<i>Council of the European Union Decision (2015/1601)</i>	2,022 ¹⁰⁹
Total Relocation	2,622
Resettlement	
<i>Government Decision (09/06/15)</i>	520
<i>Government Decision (06/07/16)</i>	260
<i>Government Decision (29/11/16)</i>	260
Total Resettlement	1,040
Other	
<i>Government Decision (10/11/2016) to accept unaccompanied minors from Calais</i>	200 (maximum)
<i>Mechanism as yet undecided</i>	138
Total	4,000

105 Clare Daly T.D., (2015) [20851/15] Tuesday 26 May 2015, Dáil Éireann Debate, Unrevised.

106 Source: Eurostat, available at <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/tgm/table.do?tab=table&init=1&language=en&pcode=tps00195&plugin=1> [accessed 31 July 2021].

107 Source: UNHCR Ireland, available at <https://www.unhcr.org/en-ie/resettlement-58c923ff4.html> (accessed 31 July 2021)

108 Brendan Ryan T.D., (2017) [19783/17] Tuesday 2 May 2017, Dáil Éireann Debate, Vol. 948 No.1, Unrevised.

109 Of the total of 2,022 under Council Decision 2015/1601 - 910 have yet to be assigned to either Italy or Greece by the EU Commission.

Although the IRPP did not have an official end date officially attached, the EU Relocation programme had a 2-year time limit, and it was widely understood that IRPP targets would be met by the end of 2017.

<i>Mechanism</i>	Target	Arrived by end 2017	Outstanding
<i>Resettlement Strand</i>	1,040	785	255 (25%)
<i>Relocation Strand</i>	2,622	755	1,867 (71%)
<i>UAMs (Calais)</i>	200	30	170 (85%)
<i>No mechanism</i>	138	0	138 (100%)
Total	4,000	1,570	2,430 (61%)

Ultimately only 1,540 persons would successfully arrive in Ireland via EU Programmes within the stated 27-month timeframe.¹¹¹ 785 were resettled from Lebanon and 755 relocated from Greece. An additional 30 unaccompanied minors were resettled from Calais following a closing of the camp. Thus, in total by 31 December 2017 there were 1,570 beneficiaries of the Irish Refugee Protection Programme - 39% of the target.

This significant shortfall on original pledges mirrored other EU Member States. As reported in the *Sharing Responsibility, Saving Lives* ¹¹² (2018), among the main reasons for not meeting pledges were operational difficulties in 'hotspots', in particular Italy and Hungary, and the lack of suitable accommodation in the community as a consequence of a national housing crisis in Ireland.

4.3 Expanded Safe and Legal Pathways to Protection

In the period 2018-19 the IRPP sought to honour its outstanding commitments and pledges. This was achieved through a combination of enhancement of existing programmes and an expansion of safe and legal pathways to protection in the State.

Firstly, it expanded the initial successful resettlement programme offering additional places under this strand. Secondly, it launched an International Humanitarian Assistance Programme to enable persons with protection status to 'sponsor' family members to join them in Ireland. Finally, Ireland 'opted in' to *ad hoc* voluntary responsibility-sharing arrangements agreed by the European Commission with Member States ¹¹³ in relation to search and rescue missions carried out in the Mediterranean and the need to relocate vulnerable forced migrants from ports and camps in Member States at the borders of Europe.

4.3.1 IHAP

The Irish Refugee Protection Programme Humanitarian Admission Programme (IHAP) was launched in mid-2018 as an additional and complimentary mechanism to family reunification. The programme offered Irish citizens and persons with refugee status or subsidiary protection status the opportunity to “propose” to the Minister for Justice and Equality for eligible family members to join them in Ireland. An initial commitment of 540 places was made but subsequently increased to 740. The introduction of the IHAP was a positive effort to address the shortfall in the delivery of Ireland's commitments. The broad definition of eligible family members was particularly welcome given the much-criticised narrowing of eligibility (for non IHAP applicants) introduced by the 2015 International Protection Act. ¹¹⁴

¹¹⁰ Figures provided in private correspondence with UNHCR Ireland.

¹¹¹ Irish Government News Service 'Minister Flanagan announces Ireland will resettle 600 refugees in 2018', available at http://www.merriestreet.ie/en/News-Room/Releases/Minister_Flanagan_announces_Ireland_will_resettle_600_refugees_in_2018.html [accessed 13 March 2018].

¹¹² *Sharing Responsibility, Saving Lives* (2018)

¹¹³ European Council on Refugees and Exiles (2019) 'Relying on Relocation: ECRE'S Proposal for a Predictable and Fair Relocation Arrangement following Disembarkation', Brussels: ECRE.

¹¹⁴ Hinds, R. (2018), "A family belongs together" Refugees' experiences of family reunification in Ireland', Irish Refugee Council, Nasc and Oxfam.

In the last open call for IHAP applications, the proposed beneficiaries had to be nationals of one of the following ten countries and be residing in that country, a neighbouring country and/or be registered with UNHCR: Syrian Arab Republic, Afghanistan, South Sudan, Somalia, Sudan, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Central African Republic, Myanmar, Eritrea, Burundi.

However, the design and implementation of the programme significantly hindered its effectiveness due to:

- *Country of Origin*: Beneficiaries were restricted by nationality. The Department of Justice and Equality identified the top ten source countries of refugees (listed above) and prohibited applications, regardless of need or vulnerability, from countries not on the agreed list. For example, Iraq was not included and resulted in a large number of ineligible applications.¹¹⁵
- *Status*: Similarly, persons with humanitarian leave to remain were excluded from participation.
- *Duration*: Although two calls for proposals were launched, each provided potential proposers with extremely tight timeframes to fulfil all the necessary requirements. The first call was open from 14 May to 30 June 2018 and the second ran from 20 December 2018 until 8 February 2019.
- *Housing*: The priority attached to “proposers” that could accommodate family members was effectively a de facto condition of the application. This was further complicated by the reality faced by proposers in receipt of housing supports, whereby they could not access enhanced payments until additional family members arrived in Ireland and as a result could not secure accommodation in advance.

Critics of the IHAP also noted that the temporary nature of the programme created further uncertainty for those seeking reunification with family members.¹¹⁶ In recent times, the impact of Covid-19 has further hampered the programme due to associated problems with obtaining visas and travel documentation.¹¹⁷ By the end of the 2018/19 IHAP programme, the Department of Justice had recorded the arrival of 159 beneficiaries (21% of the 740 available places) in the State. By July 2020, a further 117 were reported to have arrived.

The recent conflict in Afghanistan has thrown into the spotlight the role of humanitarian assistance programmes (HAP) in emerging humanitarian crises that lead to large scale forced displacement. The Irish Government has signalled its intention to launch a Afghan specific HAP. While this development is to be welcomed, it is important that any once-off humanitarian scheme is additional to existing resettlement commitments.

4.3.2 Search and Rescue (SAR)

It is noteworthy the new EU Pact on Migration and Asylum has been welcomed by Irish officials on numerous occasions, expressing support for a comprehensive and holistic approach to addressing the issue of migration¹¹⁸ and stressing the urgency for EU action due to the continued loss of life in the Mediterranean.¹¹⁹

The role of the Irish Navy in rescuing more than 17,000 people at sea during the 2015-2017 EU Refugee crisis was commendable. However, the controversial question of what happens after rescue at sea and of how responsibility is equitably shared across EU Member States - to receive and process protection claims of those saved - has never been effectively addressed and answered. During 2018-19 Ireland responded positively to the plight of forced migrants stranded on rescue ships in the Mediterranean due to the unilateral actions of some EU Member States.

¹¹⁵ Joint Committee on Justice and Equality (2019) 'International Protection (Family Reunification) (Amendment) Bill 2017: Discussion', Dáil Debates Wednesday 6 February 2019.

¹¹⁶ Groarke, S. and Brazil, P. (2020) 'National Statuses Granted for Protection Reasons in Ireland', Dublin: The Economic and Social Research Institute.

¹¹⁷ Written answers to Parliamentary Question (PQ19592/20) by Duncan Smith T.D., Thursday, 30 July 2020, Dáil Éireann Debates

¹¹⁸ Department of Justice (2020) 'Minister McEntee attends the virtual informal meeting of Justice and Home Affairs Ministers hosted by the German Presidency', available at <https://www.gov.ie/en/press-release/f111b-minister-mcentee-attends-the-virtual-informal-meeting-of-justice-and-home-affairs-ministers-hosted-by-the-german-presidency/> [accessed 30 July 2021].

¹¹⁹ Department of Foreign Affairs (2020) 'Statement by Minister for European Affairs Byrne on the EU Commission's New Pact on Migration', <https://www.dfa.ie/news-and-media/press-releases/press-release-archive/2020/september/statement-by-minister-for-european-affairs-byrne-on-the-eu-commissions-new-pact-on-migration.php> [accessed 30 July 2021].

163 places were committed to support Member States affected by migration in the Mediterranean:

- 58 persons from Sicily and Malta (2018).
- 5 unaccompanied minors from Malta (2019).
- 2 persons from each vessel docking in the Mediterranean, subject to maximum of 100 (2019).

A total of 72 persons arrived to Ireland under this mechanism to date.¹²⁰

4.3.3 Calais Special Project

During the operation of phase 1 of the IRPP, the Irish Government responded positively to the plight of unaccompanied minors previously resident in the controversial Calais camp (the “Jungle”), by committing to accepting up to a maximum of 200 young people. 13 missions were undertaken to France but the level of interest in coming to Ireland did not ultimately meet the ambition of the commitment set.¹²¹ Positively however, unlike any other Member State involved in relocating unaccompanied minors, Ireland offered the beneficiaries of this initiative programme refugee status. 41 young persons were identified, assessed and successfully brought to Ireland and placed under the care of TUSLA.

4.3.4 Unaccompanied Minors

In 2018, as an act of solidarity with Greece,¹²² Ireland agreed accept up to 36 unaccompanied minors in need of international protection. However, although similar commitments were made to provide these children and young people with programme refugee status upon arrival, no unaccompanied minors under this strand were successfully brought to Ireland in 2019. Delays in bringing beneficiaries to Ireland would ultimately be compounded by the Covid-19 pandemic but initially stemmed from the State's capacity being determined by the available care placements, TUSLA resources and existing commitments to those already in Ireland.¹²³ In June 2020, the first 8 unaccompanied minors arrived in the State.¹²⁴ The slow progress made towards achieving the relatively modest target was the subject of criticism, particularly following the destruction of the Moria camp and the resultant commitment to accept an additional 4 children.¹²⁵

4.4 IRPP Outcomes Phase 1: 2015-19

4.4.1 Overall Delivery

Table 14 summarises overall delivery by IRPP 2015-19 commitments, actual arrivals and outstanding places.

Strand	Commitment	Arrivals	Outstanding
<i>Relocation</i>	1,022	1,022	-
<i>Resettlement</i>	1,985	1,913	72 ¹²⁷
<i>IHAP 2018/2019</i>	740	159	581
<i>Search & Rescue (SAR)</i>	163	72	91
<i>Calais Special Project (Unaccompanied Minors)</i>	41	41	-
<i>Unaccompanied Minors</i>	36	-	36
<i>Mechanism as yet undecided</i>	13	-	13
Total 2015 – 2019	4,000	3,207	793

¹²⁰ Department of Justice (2020) 'Minister McEntee launches Call for Applications for funding under the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund 2014-2020', available at [http://www.justice.ie/en/JELR/Pages/Irish_Refugee_Protection_Programme_\(IRPP\)](http://www.justice.ie/en/JELR/Pages/Irish_Refugee_Protection_Programme_(IRPP)) [accessed 30 July 2021].

¹²¹ Written answers to Parliamentary Question (PQ17594/18) by Niall Collins T.D., Thursday, 24 April 2018, Dáil Éireann Debates.

¹²² Department of Justice (2018) 'Minister Flanagan agrees to invite up to 36 unaccompanied minors to Ireland from Greece', available at http://www.justice.ie/en/JELR/Pages/PR18000_390 [accessed 30 July 2021].

¹²³ Written answers to Parliamentary Question (PQ 29746/20) by Pádraig O'Sullivan T.D., Tuesday, 20 October 2020, Dáil Éireann Debates.

¹²⁴ Seanad Éireann (2020) 'Unaccompanied Minors and Separated Children', Seanad Éireann Debates, Vol. 271 No. 4.

¹²⁵ Oxfam Ireland (2020) '18 Irish NGOs sign open letter requesting urgent relocation of young refugees displaced by Moira fire', available at <https://www.oxfamireland.org/blog/ngos-request-urgent-relocation-young-refugees> [accessed 30 July 2021].

¹²⁶ Sourced from Written answers to Parliamentary Question (PQ19592/20) by Duncan Smith T.D., Thursday 30 July 2020, Dáil Éireann Debates; Department of Justice (2020) 'Minister McEntee launches Call for Applications for funding under the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund 2014-2020'.

¹²⁷ Of this, 30 persons had been interviewed and selected during missions to Lebanon and Jordan in 2019.

[press-release-archive/2020/september/statement-by-minister-for-european-affairs-byrne-on-the-eu-commissions-new-pact-on-migration.php](http://www.justice.ie/en/JELR/Pages/PR20000_390) [accessed 30 July 2021].

At the end of 2019 the protection needs of 793 refugees or forcibly migrants still remained unmet, because the original pledges of 4,000 places made by the Irish Government in September 2015 had not been fully honoured. It should be noted that the State has reiterated its commitment to realising these 793 remaining places.¹²⁸

Despite the accommodation challenges, JRS Ireland believes that Ireland could and should do more given the scale and the level of global forced displacement. In *Sharing Responsibility, Saving Lives*, JRS estimated Ireland's share of the projected global protection need, leading to a call for an additional 1,500 resettlement places annually for the period 2018-2019. This was echoed in the Irish Refugee and Migrant Coalition *Pathways to Protection*¹²⁹ paper, which called on Ireland to resettle 4,500 persons in the period 2018-2020 in order to take an equitable share of the global resettlement need.

4.4.2 Experience of IRPP Beneficiaries

Efforts to research the qualitative experience of beneficiaries of the Irish Refugee Protection Programme have been undertaken and there is some evidence that challenges exist across a range of integration indicators. However, further and more in-depth contemporary research is required.

Following the expansion of its remit in 2017, the Office of the Ombudsman began visiting IRPP Emergency Reception and Orientation Centres (EROCs) and noted the unrealistic expectations residents reportedly were given before arrival in Ireland. In particular, there was a commonly held belief among beneficiaries that housing in local communities would be arranged within a matter of weeks and all health issues would be addressed.¹³⁰ In reality, the rate of move-on was initially severely inhibited by the housing crisis. By July 2020, while 98% of relocated persons and 78% of resettled persons were reported to be successfully housed, 400+ individuals had still failed to effectively transition to independent living.

A further issue identified in the 2018 report by the Office of the Ombudsman was the feeling among some residents of social exclusion and segregation from the local community. The limited opportunities for residents to establish local linkages were further constrained by the use of on-site EROC schools - the Ombudsman for Children ultimately noting that the decision to exclude resident children from mainstream education delayed their integration [and that of their families] into host communities.¹³¹ Additionally in the case of children and young people, the length of time spent in EROC accommodation also negatively impacted on integration and mental health, with recent research suggesting that the process of settling and integrating was effectively postponed during this period.¹³² In this regard, it should be noted that the remit of the National Standards for Direct Provision, published in 2019, was not extended to EROC. This would appear to exempt EROC operators from undertaking and evidencing efforts to develop integration actions plans, local communication strategies and other positive community focused initiatives in line with the National Standards.

Finally, research findings presented by HSE Social Inclusion earlier this year, indicate concerning trends in terms of language proficiency, access to employment and mental wellbeing among IRPP beneficiaries. Anecdotally, JRS Ireland is aware of concerns about the low level of English language attainment among Syrian refugees, even those in Ireland some time, which impacts their capacity to find work and to fully integrate.

Sharing Responsibility, Saving Lives highlighted that a two-tier system of case processing and accommodation and integration supports between IRPP beneficiaries and people applying through the Irish asylum process had emerged. However, it is timely after 5 years that the efficacy of the resettlement support model is assessed. In this regard, JRS Ireland welcomes the 2021 efforts recently initiated by the IRPP and the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) to explore the challenges and needs that resettled refugees have experienced in Ireland and to gather input directly from IRPP beneficiaries. This is especially important in light of the extent to which the IRPP resettlement model of support was used to inform the Day Advisory Group¹³³ recommendations and transition supports for persons granted status in the White Paper to End Direct Provision.

¹²⁸ See above: Written answer to Parliamentary Question (PQ19592/20) by Duncan Smith T.D., Thursday, 30th July, Dáil Éireann Debates.

¹²⁹ Irish Refugee and Migrant Coalition (2017) 'Pathways to Protection and Inclusion – Ireland's Role in Global Refugee Protection and Migration Movements', Dublin: IRMC.

¹³⁰ Office of the Ombudsman (2018) 'The Ombudsman and Direct Provision – The Story So Far', Dublin: Office of the Ombudsman.

¹³¹ Ombudsman for Children's Office (2019) 'Annual Report 2019', Dublin: Ombudsman for Children's Office.

¹³² Ní Raghallaigh, M. and Smith, K. and Scholtz, J. (2019) 'Safe Haven - The Needs of Refugee Children Arriving in Ireland through the Irish Refugee Protection Programme: An Exploratory Study', Dublin: Children's Rights Alliance.

¹³³ Government of Ireland (2021) 'Report of the Advisory Group on the Provision of Support including Accommodation to Persons in the International Protection Process'.

4.5 IRPP Phase 2: Enhanced Resettlement

Year	Resettlement Commitment
2020	650
2021	700
2022	750
2023	800
Total	2,900

At the end of 2019, the Irish Government announced the second phase of the IRPP and committed to accepting 2,900 persons in the period 2020-23 through the mechanisms of resettlement and community sponsorship¹³⁴. It is expected 100 persons will be housed annually through Community Sponsorship 2020-23. It had been envisaged, prior to the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic, that the 2020 commitment would largely comprise of Syrian refugees resident in Jordan and Lebanon and a group of 150 Eritrean refugees resident in Ethiopia.

Prioritisation of resettlement is to be welcomed. However, whilst acknowledging the significant and unavoidable impact which the pandemic has had on the State's ability to meet its targets, these commitments were made in a pre-pandemic context. In that respect, it is worth noting that they do not align with the projected Global Resettlement Need for the same period. Based on the JRS metric developed in *Sharing Responsibility, Saving Lives* and discounting the 2018-2019 spike,¹³⁵ Ireland would need to commit to offering 5,000 resettlement places by end of 2023 in order to meet its fair share of the Projected Global Resettlement Need.

Furthermore, of the 2,900 persons pledged for resettlement in Ireland between 2020 and 2023, it is expected that 100 persons will be housed annually through community sponsorship. Established in 2018 on a pilot basis in Ireland, the community based sponsorship programme involves private citizens and community based organisations providing direct assistance to refugees settling in their locality through a structured programme of supports. Community Sponsorship Ireland was informed by the Canadian model and developed in cooperation with the Global Refugee Sponsorship Initiative (GSRI), UNHCR, the Irish Refugee and Migrant Coalition and other NGOs including the Irish Red Cross, Nasc and the Irish Refugee Council. Sponsoring groups are required to demonstrate they have a minimum of €10,000 to support a sponsored family and are assisted by regional support organisations funded by the State. To date, 13 families (55 individuals) have arrived in Ireland.

However, one of the foundational values of Community Sponsorship Ireland was the principle of *enhancement* – building national capacity to provide additional resettlement places.¹³⁶ NGOs consulted in the design phase strongly emphasised the need for additionality as the State should always bear primary responsibility for the delivery of refugee resettlement. The European Council on Refugees and Exiles and others have also previously highlighted the need for private sponsorship places to always be in addition to existing resettlement pledges.¹³⁷

Unfortunately, that additionality principle is under threat in the Irish context, as the next phase of the IRPP envisages approximately 14% of commitments being met by communities. While it is positive to note that Ireland did win an international award at the United Kingdom Community Sponsorship Awards Ceremony in October 2019, the numbers benefitting from the programme remain small. Although there are clear benefits to arriving refugees and host communities in engaging in community sponsorship, the ability to scale up delivery is a challenge.

Overall, JRS Ireland welcomes the emphasis in the IRPP second phase on enhanced resettlement. However, with record levels of forced displacement reported globally and facing ever greater numbers as a result of climate change, there is a need to revise annual resettlement targets steeply upwards. It is vital in the context of a national housing crisis, the accommodation needs of resettled persons are ring-fenced under *Housing for All*. Community sponsorship is a valuable emerging pathway to protection that can provide additional capacity to the State in meeting the accommodation and support needs of resettled refugees and forced migrants in Ireland.

¹³⁴ Written answers to Parliamentary Question (PQ32868/20) by Duncan Smith T.D., Tuesday, 3rd November 2020, Dáil Éireann Debates.

¹³⁵ The spike in the Global Resettlement during 2018-2019 unfairly skews the average annual increase in recent years. JRS Ireland has used the lowest period of increase, i.e. 2017-2018, and applied this annually for the period 2020-2023 in the equation which continues to apply the European Commission's Resettlement Key used during the EU Refugee Crisis.

¹³⁶ Department of Justice and Equality (2018) 'Community Sponsorship Ireland – Initial Policy Framework', Dublin: Department of Justice and Equality

¹³⁷ European Council on Refugees and Exiles (2017) 'Protection in Europe: Safe and Legal Access Channels - ECRE'S Vision of Europe's Role in the Global Refugee Protection Regime: Policy Paper 1', Brussels: ECRE.

Key Findings: Refugee Resettlement in Ireland

- *In the period 2018-20 under review Ireland has expanded safe and legal pathways to protection. The Irish Government has been proactive and responded positively to ad-hoc initiatives, the needs of migrants rescued at sea by NGOs and most recently to the plight of residents from Moria camps.*
 - *The IRPP Phase 1 did not meet its overall target to offer 4,000 resettlement or relocation places. There were practical and operational difficulties in hotspots and in Lebanon that hampered delivery. By the end of this phase on 31 December 2019, almost 800 (20%) of committed places were unfilled.*
 - *The qualitative outcomes for IRPP beneficiaries in terms of key integration indicators are being reviewed. Some preliminary research findings highlight significant challenges and concerns.*
 - *Assessing the efficacy of the resettlement model is important as it is being used to underpin transition supports for persons granted status in the White Paper on Ending Direct Provision.*
 - *Covid-19 means that in 2020, it was impossible to meet Year 1 resettlement targets due to travel restrictions arising from the pandemic.*
 - *The total Government resettlement commitments of 2,900 places between 2020-23 for IRPP Phase 2 fall well short of what is required to meet Ireland's fair share of the Projected Global Resettlement Need. Using a distribution key JRS estimates a total of 5,000 resettlement places should be pledged.*
 - *The rollout of the Community Sponsorship programme is a welcome development. Although at the present time the numbers benefitting are relatively low and not additional to existing State commitments, the positive impact on beneficiaries and receiving communities is significant.*
- ##### *It is vital in the context of a national housing crisis, the accommodation needs of resettled persons are ring-fenced under Housing for All.*

***Recommendation:** An in-depth qualitative review of the outcomes of IRPP Phase 1 to be conducted as soon as practicable with a particular focus on validating the efficacy of the resettlement model, identifying areas for improvement, and addressing any weaknesses in the model and shortfalls in integration outcomes.*

***Recommendation:** Accelerate arrivals under resettlement programmes to catch up on commitments, once Covid-19 travel restrictions are fully lifted, to ensure vulnerable refugees and forcibly displaced persons can receive the protection and support they are seeking. Total resettlement targets should be revised upwards to 5,000 places from 2020-23 to ensure Ireland is taking an equitable share of the global resettlement need.*

***Recommendation:** The development of Humanitarian Assistance Programmes as a tool to facilitate safe and legal access to protection in response to emerging conflicts leading to large scale displacement. This emergency resettlement response must be additional to existing Government commitments.*

***Recommendation:** Mainstreaming the successful Community Sponsorship Programme pilot to be guided by the founding principle of enhancement, ensuring it is an additional safe and legal route to international protection and not in place of existing State commitments.*

***Recommendation:** Initiate dialogue among faith-based stakeholders and church groups to harness goodwill and coordinate resources towards implementation of the White Paper on Ending Direct Provision and exploring parish-based options to provide accommodation and integration supports to forced migrants.*

5. Reframing Response to Global Forced Displacement

I hope for a better life. I know everything can change for me...I still have a lot of brothers, a lot of friends who could never manage to run away, but still we hope for peace and God's blessings – Martin

5.1 Overview

UNHCR reported record levels of forced displacement of 82.4 million people in 2020, double the numbers a decade earlier. High profile crises in Afghanistan and Tigray and less visible conflicts in Yemen and Venezuela have led to ever greater numbers of men, women and children fleeing their homes in search of safety and protection. The impact of climate change is clear and devastating for the planet and one of the consequences will be increasing displaced from their homes due to rising sea-level, natural disasters and environmental degradation. By 2050 the World Bank estimates there will be up to 200 million climate refugees.

Global threats to safety require global responses. Rhetoric needs to be translated into action at global, regional and local levels. A more humane framework in response to global forced displacement need is required that places the dignity of displaced persons at its centre. The key findings of this research, evidenced by the personal testimony of Anwar, Hibah, Jospin, Tigiste, Amadou, Qammar and Martin whose words and stories attest to the lived experience of forced migration, is an urgent call to action.

5.2 Key Findings

5.2.1 Growing Global Displacement

1. **Record Numbers:** Global forced displacement is at a record level with UNHCR reporting 82 million people forced to leave their homes worldwide, doubling over the last decade.
2. **Negative Impact of Covid-19:** Covid-19 severely impacted the capacity to resettle forcibly displaced persons with travel restrictions and borders closed. In 2020 less than 25,000 persons were resettled, the lowest level in 20 years and in the context of a projected global need of almost 1.5 million places.
3. **International Protection Framework:** Seventy years after its signing, the 1951 Refugee Convention remains the cornerstone of refugee protection. The fact there are 149 States parties to the 1951 Convention and/or its 1967 Protocol at the present time is evidence of its enduring relevance.
4. **Climate Refugees:** Yet there exist significant gaps in refugee protection, not least in relation to climate refugees. The World Bank estimates up to 200 million persons may be forcibly displaced by climate change by 2050. This requires an urgent response at a global level.
5. **Global Compact on Refugees:** The Global Compact on Refugees (GCR) was affirmed by 181 states in December 2018 after two years of negotiation. It is an important global statement and commitment to respond more effectively to the needs of persons forcibly displaced worldwide.
6. **Shortfalls in Global Response:** While the rhetoric and intention of the GCR is undoubtedly positive and well meaning, the fact that it is not legally binding; is voluntary; and responsibilities can be bought out, has led to legitimate concerns it may not translate into meaningful change on the ground.
7. **Role of Overseas Development Aid:** The Global Refugee Forum pledges highlight the key role aid plays in sustainable and authentic development and in creating conditions for peace and prosperity. It is important aid is not used as a tool to undermine the rights of protection seekers or to outsource protection obligations.
8. **Ireland's ODA:** Ireland's Official Development Assistance (ODA) halved from a high in 2008 of 0.59% of Gross National Income and increased to 0.32% after Budget 2021, still far short of the 0.7% target of GNI.
9. **Church Response:** Pope Francis has sounded a call to action in responding openly and generously to refugees and forcibly displaced persons who we encounter. The Vatican has developed specific action points for Governments and Communities to implement the key elements of the global compact, which are built on and extended in the latest papal encyclical, Fratelli Tutti.
10. **Global Call to Action:** While faith-based groups remain at the forefront of welcoming and responding to the needs of forced migrants and refugees arriving in Ireland and worldwide, there is an urgent call to action in the context of the growing level of displacement that those who have more should do more.

5.2.2 Fortress Europe Returns

1. **Erosion of Protection:** Reviewing the period 2018-20, there has been an erosion of access to protection in Europe through pushbacks at the external borders, replacing search and rescue with enforcement and inhumane living conditions in refugee camps, especially in Greece. All these developments act as a deterrent to protection seekers and refugees entering Europe.
2. **Deaths at Sea:** Although the number of arrivals by sea have fallen year on year, there has not been a corresponding reduction in the rate of deaths. 5,000 have perished at sea trying to enter Europe from 2018-20.
3. **EU Pact on Migration and Asylum:** The EU Pact on Migration and Asylum was finalised in 2020, recognising that the current system was not fit for purpose. Unfortunately, the negatives outweigh the positives: replicating many of the deficient policies of the past; excessively focusing on externalisation; and undermining efforts to increase solidarity and responsibility sharing. Of particular concern was the option for Member States to buy out their protection obligations, undermining core EU values of solidarity and respect for human rights.
4. **Covid-19 Impact:** The impact of Covid-19 is captured in the title of a recent report by JRS Europe looking at the pandemic's impact on reception conditions 'From Bad to Worse'. The negative consequences arising from the global pandemic were not limited to the dramatic reduction in forced migratory flows and border crossings but further extended to worsening living conditions experienced by protection applicants in asylum systems across the region.
5. **Anti-Immigrant Sentiment:** Nationalist Governments in Hungary and Poland and Far-right groups across Europe used the EU Refugee Crisis to weaponise the asylum issue as a national threat, and to gain space in the public debate. Anti-migrant attitudes were noted to significantly increase since 2015 in Member States such as Italy and Austria. In the UK there has been a surge in hate crime and racist and xenophobic incidents following BREXIT.
6. **Growing Polarisation:** There has been a growing polarisation between Member States and divided public opinion in Europe on the approach to migration management and external border controls.

5.2.3 Refugee Resettlement in Ireland

1. **Expanded Safe and Legal Pathways to Protection:** In the period 2018-20 under review Ireland has expanded safe and legal pathways to protection. The Irish Government has been proactive and responded positively to ad-hoc initiatives, the needs of migrants rescued at sea by NGOs and most recently to the plight of residents from Moria camps.
2. **Missed Targets:** The IRPP Phase 1 did not meet its overall target to offer 4,000 resettlement or relocation places. There were practical and operational difficulties in hotspots and in Lebanon that hampered delivery. By the end of this phase on 31 December 2019, there was almost 800 (20%) of committed places unfilled.
3. **Integration Outcomes:** The qualitative outcomes for IRPP beneficiaries in terms of key integration indicators (housing, language acquisition, employment and community linkages) are being reviewed. Some preliminary research findings highlight challenges and concerns in relation to these categories.
4. **Resettlement Model:** Assessing the efficacy of the resettlement model is important as it is being used to underpin transition supports for persons granted status in the White Paper on Ending Direct Provision.
5. **Global Resettlement Need:** The total Government resettlement commitments of 2,900 places between 2020-23 for IRPP Phase 2 fall well short of what is required to meet Ireland's fair share of the Projected Global Resettlement Need. Using a distribution key JRS estimates a total of 5,000 resettlement places should be pledged over the four-year period.
6. **Covid Impact:** Covid-19 means that in 2020, the first year of the second phase of the IRPP, it was not possible to meet resettlement targets due to travel restrictions arising from the pandemic.
7. **Community Sponsorship:** The rollout of the Community Sponsorship programme was a welcome development. Although the numbers are low and are not additional to existing State commitments, the positive impact on beneficiaries and receiving communities is significant.
8. **Accommodating Resettled Persons:** It is vital in the context of a national housing crisis, the accommodation needs of resettled persons are ring-fenced under *Housing for All*.

5.3 A Humane Response: Recommendations

Table 16: Protection with Dignity: A Humane Response to Global Forced Displacement	
Global Response: Equitably Sharing Responsibility for Forced Displacement Worldwide	
Recommendation	Key Actions
<i>National Governments must fully honour their Global Refugee Forum pledges, especially meeting enhanced resettlement commitments in the context of record levels of global forced displacement.</i>	Ireland committed to resettle 2,900 persons in the period 2020-23. An increase by one-third by the year 2023 on this total pledge would be an additional 900+ places. JRS Ireland estimates this needs to be enhanced significantly further to an additional 2,100 places, leading to 5,000 resettlement places in a four-year period for Ireland to take an equitable share of the projected global resettlement need.
<i>Overseas Development Aid commitments are increased globally to build the capacity of developing countries to address the root causes that lead to displacement.</i>	Increasing ODA in real terms will enable Ireland to achieve 0.5% by 2025 and 0.7% by 2030. Further, in response to the increasing global displacement need, Ireland could accelerate the timeframe as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 1,800 million in 2023; - 2,100 million in 2024; - 2,500 million (0.7%) in 2025. Resources should be ringfenced to address the specific needs of persons displaced by climate change.
<i>Developed countries and regions of destination to enhance safe and legal pathways to protection.</i>	The expanded safe and legal pathways could include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - increasing and simplifying the granting of visas; - adopting and supporting programmes of individual and community sponsorship; - and offering generous and accessible humanitarian assistance programmes for persons fleeing emerging conflicts. Ireland to respond to emerging conflict crises causing displacement through accessible humanitarian assistance programmes tailored to the most urgent needs on the ground.
<i>Receiving countries to introduce policies and practices that enhance their models of reception and integration.</i>	This could be achieved through <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the provision of suitable and dignified housing; - ensuring equal access to public services and legal representation; - supporting active participation in communities and challenging racism and racist attitudes in all forms. Ireland to develop and resource appropriately a new National Migrant Integration Strategy and local integration plans.
<i>A global call to action for civil society and faith-based groups to respond generously, openly and to welcome forcibly displaced persons and their families into their communities and parishes.</i>	Irish Church and faith-based stakeholders to work together and develop a pilot parish-based sponsorship programme that offers additional resettlement/ relocation places to forcibly displaced persons.

Table 17: Protection with Dignity: A Humane Response to Global Forced Displacement	
Regional Response: Reversing Return to a Fortress Europe	
Recommendation	Key Actions
<i>Individual Member States such as Ireland to show leadership in challenging policies and practices that undermine access to protection for asylum seekers in Europe and at its borders.</i>	This could include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - advocating for relocation as the preferred mechanism for solidarity and responsibility sharing; - ensuring people applying for international protection at the EU external borders are channelled into the asylum procedure at the earliest possible juncture.
<i>Unnecessary loss of life at sea must be prevented: Adequately resourced life-saving search and rescue missions should recommence in the Mediterranean.</i>	The recommencement of life-saving search and rescue operations is urgent and necessary to prevent unnecessary loss of life in the Mediterranean. The Irish Navy could recommit its vessels to these EU wide missions.
<i>Develop and establish, at EU Level, implementable solidarity mechanisms that ensure an equitable distribution of responsibility for receiving and welcoming refugees and forced migrants in Europe.</i>	All EU Member States need to take a fair share of responsibility for receiving and welcoming refugees and forced migrants in Europe. There needs to be appropriate solidarity mechanisms agreed and developed to ensure the dignity of arriving forced migrants is upheld and to take pressure off border states. Responsibility for rescued persons at sea could be equitably distributed through an agreed solidary mechanism.
<i>Individual Member States and EU Institutions to review the key learnings from the impact of Covid-19 on reception systems and detention-related policies and adopt appropriate actions in order to future- and pandemic-proof regional asylum systems.</i>	Among the appropriate actions Members States could adopt include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ensuring sufficient capacity in the reception network to accommodate every person making an asylum application in the country at any given time and; - establishing alternatives to detention and applying them systematically.
<i>With growing anti-immigrant sentiment in Europe, Ireland is not immune to the ‘virus of racism’. The development of a new National Action Plan against Racism is timely and welcome.</i>	In addition to developing a National Action Plan Against Racism and a new National Migrant Integration Plan; local migrant integration strategies that promote integration, celebrate diversity and challenge racism must be developed, adequately resourced and implemented in each local authority area. The long-awaited Hate Crime legislation should be introduced as a matter of urgency.

Table 18: Protection with Dignity: A Humane Response to Global Forced Displacement	
Ireland's Response: Enhanced Refugee Resettlement Needs	
Recommendation	Key Actions
<i>An in-depth qualitative review of the outcomes of IRPP Phase 1 to be conducted as soon as practicable with a focus on validating the efficacy of the resettlement model, identifying areas for improvement, and addressing any weaknesses in the model and shortfalls in integration outcomes.</i>	<p>This review process could have a number of strands:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - completion and publication of research initiated by the IRPP and IOM exploring the challenges and needs that resettled refugees have experienced in Ireland and; - undertaking further research to explore the experience and outcomes for beneficiaries of other IRPP programmes. - identifying improvements and addressing weaknesses in the IRPP resettlement model and feed into the Irish Protection Support Service Transition Board.
<i>Accelerate arrivals under resettlement programmes, once travel restrictions are lifted, to ensure vulnerable refugees and forcibly displaced persons can access the protection and support they need.</i>	<p>An acceleration could help achieve the 2020-2023 commitments but would require targets to be substantially increased to catch up</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 2020-2021: Est 300 lower due to Covid-19 restrictions. - 2022: 1,200 (increase of 60% on existing 2022 target). - 2023: 1,400 (increase of 75% on existing 2022 target). <p>In fact, the total resettlement targets should be revised further upwards to 5,000 places for the period 2020-23 if Ireland is to take an equitable share of the global resettlement need. Accommodation needs of resettled persons must be 'ring-fenced' under <i>Housing for All</i>.</p>
<i>The development of Humanitarian Assistance Programmes as a tool to facilitate safe and legal access to protection in response to emerging conflicts leading to displacement.</i>	<p>Tailored Humanitarian Assistance Programmes would be a mechanism to respond quickly to displacement and humanitarian needs arising from emerging conflicts and crises. This would require a streamlining of visa application processes. This emergency resettlement response must be additional to existing Government commitments.</p>
<i>Mainstreaming the successful Community Sponsorship Programme pilot, ensuring it is an additional safe and legal route to protection and not in place of existing State commitments.</i>	<p>The Community Sponsorship annual targets should provide additional resettlement places to those committed to by the State annually. The commitment to support sponsoring communities needs to continue through Regional and National Support organisations. The State should support sponsoring communities with accommodation provision, through access to the HAP scheme and other Department of Housing supports.</p>
<i>Initiate dialogue among faith-based stakeholders and church groups to harness goodwill and coordinate resources towards welcoming and supporting refugees and forcibly displaced persons in Ireland.</i>	<p>A network of faith-based stakeholders and church groups could be convened to consider available options and resources, especially accommodation, to respond to the needs of forced migrants in Ireland. There could be a role in assisting the implementation of the White Paper on Ending Direct Provision. Also, it could explore a parish-based pilot to expand accommodation and integration supports to forced migrants.</p>

References

Publications

- Baggio, F. (2018), 'The Church's commitment towards the Global Compacts', Statement at the The Holy See in the Preparatory Processes of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration and of the Global Compact on Refugees'.
- Betts, A. and Costello, C. and Zaun, N. (2017) 'A Fair Share: Refugees and Responsibility-Sharing', The Migration Studies Delegation, Stockholm: Delmi.
- Boucher, F. & Gordemann, J. (2020) 'The European Union and the Global on Refugees and Migration: A Philosophical Critique', International Journal of Postcolonial Compacts Studies.
- Carr, J., Clifton-Sprigg, J., James, J., Vujic, S. (2020) 'Love Thy Neighbour? Brexit and Hate Crime', Bonn: IZA Institute of Labor Economics.
- Czerny SJ, M. (2019), 'The Church contributing to the GCM and its implementation', Consultation on Implementing the Global Compacts, Berlin, 26 June 2019.
- Danish Refugee Council, (2020) 'Exploring the impact of COVID-19 on the Global Compact on Refugees', Copenhagen: Danish Refugee Council.
- Deardorff Miller, S. (2019) 'High Hopes: The Global Compact for Refugees and Improving Responsibility Sharing', Refugee Law Initiative, London: School of Advanced Study University of London.
- Department of Justice and Equality (2018) 'Community Sponsorship Ireland – Initial Policy Framework', Dublin: Department of Justice and Equality.
- Document on Human Fraternity for World Peace and Living Together, Abu Dhabi (4 February 2019): L'Osservatore Romano, 3-5 February 2019.
- Donatienne, R. and Yayboke, E. (2020) 'Deciphering the European Union's New Pact on Migration and Asylum', Center for Strategic and International Studies.
- European Council on Refugees and Exiles (2017) 'Protection in Europe: Safe and Legal Access Channels - ECRE'S Vision of Europe's Role in the Global Refugee Protection Regime: Policy Paper 1', Brussels: ECRE.
- European Council on Refugees and Exiles, (2018) 'Global Means Global: Europe and the Global Compact on Refugees'. Brussels: ECRE.
- European Council on Refugees and Exiles (2019) 'Countering the Far Right has to Continue in Election Countdown', Brussels: ECRE.
- European Council on Refugees and Exiles, (2019) 'Time to Commit: Using the Global Refugee Forum. Brussels: ECRE.
- European Council on Refugees and Exiles (2019) 'Relying on Relocation: ECRE'S Proposal for a Predictable and Fair Relocation Arrangement following Disembarkation', Brussels: ECRE.
- European Council on Refugees and Exiles (2020) 'Asylum statistics in Europe: Factsheet', Brussels: ECRE.
- European Commission (2019) 'Progress report on the Implementation of the European Agenda on Migration', COM(2019) 481 final.
- European Commission (2017) 'Report From the Commission to the European Parliament, the European Council and the Council: Fifteenth report on relocation and resettlement', 6 September 2017, COM(2017) 465 final.
- European Commission (2020), 'Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on a New Pact on Migration and Asylum', COM(2020) 609 final.
- European Commission (2021) 'Migration statistics update: the impact of COVID-19' IP/21/232.
- European Commission (2020) 'A fresh start on migration: Building confidence and striking a new balance between responsibility and solidarity', IP/20/1706.

- European Parliamentary Research Service (2021) ‘Search and Rescue in the Mediterranean’, European Union.
- European Union: Council of the European Union, EU-Turkey statement, 18 March 2016.
- Francis, (2020) ‘Fratelli Tutti’, Dicastero per la Comunicazione - Libreria Editrice Vaticana.
- Government of Ireland (2019) ‘A Better World – Ireland’s Policy for International Development’.
- Government of Ireland (2021) ‘Report of the Advisory Group on the Provision of Support including Accommodation to Persons in the International Protection Process’.
- Grandi, F. (2019) ‘The Global Compact on Refugees: A Historic Achievement’, International Migration vol. 57, IOM.
- Groarke, S. and Brazil, P. (2020) ‘National Statuses Granted for Protection Reasons in Ireland’, Dublin: The Economic and Social Research Institute.
- Hathaway, J. (2018) ‘The Global Cop-Out on Refugees’, International Journal of Refugee Law, 2018, Vol 30, No 4.
- Hinds, R. (2018), ‘“A family belongs together” Refugees’ experiences of family reunification in Ireland’, Irish Refugee Council, Nasc and Oxfam.
- Irish Refugee and Migrant Coalition (2017) ‘Pathways to Protection and Inclusion – Ireland’s Role in Global Refugee Protection and Migration Movements’, Dublin: IRMC.
- Jesuit Refugee Service Europe, (2017) ‘The CEAS reform package: the death of asylum by a thousand cuts?’, Brussels: JRS Europe.
- Jesuit Refugee Service Europe (2021) ‘From Bad to Worse: Covid-19 Aggravates Existing Gaps in the Reception of Asylum Seekers’, Brussels: JRS Europe.
- Jesuit Refugee Service Europe (2021) ‘Covid-19 and Immigration Detention: Lessons Not Learned’, Brussels: JRS Europe.
- Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS) Ireland (2018) ‘Sharing Responsibility, Saving Lives: Reframing Ireland’s Response to the EU Refugee Crisis and Beyond’, Dublin: JRS Ireland.
- Jesuit Refugee Service, (2006) ‘JRS Position on Migration and Development for the High Level Dialogue on Migration Development at the United Nations 14-16 September, 2006’.
- Jesuit Refugee Service Europe (2018) ‘“Forgotten at the Gates of Europe: Ongoing protection concerns at the EU’s external border, Brussels: JRS Europe.
- Kirişci, K. and Erdoğan, M. and Eminoğlu, N. (2020) ‘The EU’s “New Pact on Migration and Asylum” is missing a true foundation’, Order from Chaos, The Brookings Institute.
- Migrants and Refugees Section, (2017) ‘Responding to Refugees and Migrants: Twenty Action Points the Global Compacts’, Vatican City: Integral Human Development.
- Maiani, F. (2020) ‘A “Fresh Start” or One More Clunker? Dublin and Solidarity in the New Pact’, EU Immigration and Asylum Law and Policy, Odysseus Network.
- Migrant and Refugees Section (2018) ‘Adoption of the Global Compact on Migration’, Prot. N.: MR-0307/2018.
- Messing, V. and Ságvári, B. (2019) ‘Still Divided but More Open - Mapping European attitudes towards migration before and after the migration crisis’, Budapest: Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung.
- Ní Raghallaigh, M. and Smith, K. and Scholtz, J. (2019) ‘Safe Haven - The Needs of Refugee Children Arriving in Ireland through the Irish Refugee Protection Programme: An Exploratory Study’, Dublin: Children’s Rights Alliance.
- OECD (2014) ‘OECD Development Co-operation Peer Reviews: Ireland 2014’, OECD Publishing.
- OECD (2020) ‘OECD Development Co-operation Peer Reviews: Ireland 2020’, OECD Publishing.
- Ombudsman for Children’s Office (2019) ‘Annual Report 2019’, Dublin: Ombudsman for Children’s Office.
- Office of the Ombudsman (2018) ‘The Ombudsman and Direct Provision – The Story So Far’, Dublin: Office of the Ombudsman.
- Pijnenburg, A. (2019) ‘The Global Compact on Refugees and International Law: A Missed Opportunity?’, Refugee Law Initiative, London: School of Advanced Study University of London.

- Platform for International Cooperation on Undocumented Migrants (2020) ‘More detention, fewer safeguards: How the new EU Pact on Migration and Asylum creates new loopholes to ignore human rights obligations’, Brussels: PICUM.
- Rea, A., Martiniello, M., Mazzola, A., Meuleman, B. (2019) ‘The Refugee Reception Crisis in Europe. Polarized Opinions and Mobilizations’, Brussels: Éditions de l’Université de Bruxelles.
- Save the Children (2021), ‘Refugee education one year on from the Global Refugee Forum and the impact of COVID-19’, London: Save the Children.
- Statement by Commissioner for Home Affairs, Ylva Johansson at launch of new Pact on Migration and Asylum.
- The Catholic Church in the European Union (2020) ‘Statement by the COMECE Working Group on Migration and Asylum on the EU Pact on Migration and Asylum Proposed by the European Commission’, Brussels: COMECE.
- Turk, V. (2019) ‘The Promise and Potential of the Global Compact on Refugees’, International Journal of Refugee Law, Volume 30, Issue 4, Oxford University Press.
- United Nations, ‘Global Compact on Refugees’, A/73/12 (Part II).
- UNHCR (Editions 2015 – 2020), ‘Global Trends’, Geneva: UNHCR.
- UNHCR (Editions 2018 – 2021), ‘Projected Global Resettlement Needs’, Geneva: UNHCR.
- UNHCR, (2018) ‘Media Fact Sheet: Global Compact on Refugees’, Geneva: UNHCR.
- UNHCR (2019), ‘The Three-Year Strategy (2019-2021) on Resettlement and Complementary Pathways’, Geneva: UNHCR.
- UNHCR (2021) ‘Update on UNHCR’s operations in Europe’, Executive Committee of the High Commissioner’s Programme, Standing Committee 80th Meeting.
- UN General Assembly, Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, 28 July 1951, United Nations, Treaty Series, vol. 189.
- UNHCR (2020) ‘Refugee and Migrant Arrivals to Europe - Jan to Dec 2019 Factsheet’.
- Vella, D., (2020) ‘Dying to Live: Stories from Refugees on the Road to Freedom’, Rowman & Littlefield.
- Vella, D., (2016) ‘Journeys of Hope’, Brussels: Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS) Europe
- Zetter, R., (2015) ‘Protection in Crisis: Forced Migration and Protection in a Global Era’, Washington, DC: Migration Policy Institute

Online Sources

- BBC (2019) ‘Europe and right-wing nationalism: A country-by-country guide’, available at <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-36130006>.
- Caritas Europa (2020) ‘Caritas Europa first take on the new EU Pact on Migration and Asylum’, available at <https://www.caritas.eu/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/Caritas-Europa-statement-on-EU-Pact-for-Asylum-and-Migration.pdf>.
- Christian Group (2021) ‘Comments on the EU new Pact on Migration and Asylum’, available at https://jrseurope.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/19/2021/04/2021-04-ChristianGroup_EU_Pact_General-Comments.pdf
- Christian Group (2021) ‘Comments on Return Policies, Readmissions and Cooperation with Third Countries within the framework of the New Pact on Migration and Asylum’, available at https://jrseurope.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/19/2021/04/2021-04-ChristianGroup_EUPact>Returns_Readmission.pdf.
- Department of Foreign Affairs (2020) ‘Ministers welcome increased allocation for Overseas Aid’, available at <https://www.dfa.ie/news-and-media/press-releases/press-release-archive/2020/october/ministers-welcome-increased-allocation-for-overseasaid.php#:~:text=1%20%2D%20The%20allocation%20to%20overseas,of%200.31%25%20GN%20this%20year.>
- Department of Foreign Affairs (2020) ‘Statement by Minister for European Affairs Byrne on the EU Commission’s New Pact on Migration’, <https://www.dfa.ie/news-and-media/press-releases/press->

[release-archive/2020/september/statement-by-minister-for-european-affairs-byrne-on-the-eu-commissions-new-pact-on-migration.php](https://www.justice.ie/en/JELR/Pages/Irish_Refugee_Protection_Programme_(IRPP)).

- Department of Justice (2020) ‘Minister McEntee launches Call for Applications for funding under the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund 2014-2020’, available at [http://www.justice.ie/en/JELR/Pages/Irish_Refugee_Protection_Programme_\(IRPP\)](http://www.justice.ie/en/JELR/Pages/Irish_Refugee_Protection_Programme_(IRPP)).
- Department of Justice (2018) ‘Minister Flanagan agrees to invite up to 36 unaccompanied minors to Ireland from Greece’, available at http://www.justice.ie/en/JELR/Pages/PR18000_390.
- Department of Justice, (2019) ‘Ireland commits to a new Refugee Protection Programme’, available at <https://www.gov.ie/en/press-release/d4389b-ireland-commits-to-a-new-refugee-protection-programme/>.
- Department of Justice (2020) ‘Minister McEntee attends the virtual informal meeting of Justice and Home Affairs Ministers hosted by the German Presidency’, available at <https://www.gov.ie/en/press-release/fl11b-minister-mcentee-attends-the-virtual-informal-meeting-of-justice-and-home-affairs-ministers-hosted-by-the-german-presidency/>.
- European Council on Refugees and Exiles (2020) ‘The Pact on Migration and Asylum: it’s never enough, never, never’, available at <https://www.ecre.org/the-pact-on-migration-and-asylum-its-never-enough-never-never/>.
- European Council on Refugees and Exiles (2020), ‘Joint Statement: The Pact on Migration and Asylum: to provide a fresh start and avoid past mistakes, risky elements need to be addressed and positive aspects need to be expanded’, available at <https://www.ecre.org/the-pact-on-migration-and-asylum-to-provide-a-fresh-start-and-avoid-past-mistakes-risky-elements-need-to-be-addressed-and-positive-aspects-need-to-be-expanded/>.
- European External Action Service, (2018) ‘European Union remarks at UNHCR briefing in New York on the Global Compact on Refugees’, available at https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/44572/eu-remarks-%E2%80%93-united-nations-unhcr-briefing-global-compact-refugees_en.
- Guild, E. & Allinson, K. ‘The impact of the Global Compact on Refugees on the legal protection of refugee rights: What now for the 1951 Refugee Convention?’, available at <https://protectproject.w.uib.no/what-now-for-the-1951-refugee-convention>.
- International Catholic Migration Commission, (2018) ‘The Global Compacts and the Role of the Church’, available at <https://www.icmc.net/2018/03/06/the-global-compacts-and-the-role-of-the-church/>.
- Jesuit Refugee Service Europe (2021) ‘Shipwreck in the Mediterranean’, available at <https://jrseurope.org/en/news/shipwreck-in-the-mediterranean/>.
- Kassam, A. (2021) ‘Spanish aid volunteer abused online for hugging Senegalese migrant’, available at <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/may/20/spanish-aid-volunteer-luna-reyes-abused-online-for-hugging-african-migrant>.
- NGO Joint Statement (2020) ‘EU: Time to review and remedy cooperation policies facilitating abuse of refugees and migrants in Libya’, available at https://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/supporting_resources/joint_statement_eu_financial_responsibility.pdf.
- Oxfam Ireland (2020) ‘18 Irish NGOs sign open letter requesting urgent relocation of young refugees displaced by Moira fire’, available at <https://www.oxfamireland.org/blog/ngos-request-urgent-relocation-young-refugees>.
- Sant’Egidio, Jesuit Refugee Service and the Scalabrinian Sisters (2020) ‘Joint statement for Lesbos: may never go back to the way it was’, available at <https://jrs.net/en/news/joint-statement-for-lesbos-may-it-never-go-back-to-the-way-it-was/>.
- Statement of H.E. Archbishop Ivan Jurkovič, Permanent Observer of the Holy See to the United Nations (2019), available at <https://migrants-refugees.va/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/Statement-Ivan-Jurkovi%C4%8D-Permanent-Observers.pdf> [accessed 28 April 2021].

- Townsend, M. (2020) 'UK races to deport asylum seekers ahead of Brexit', available at https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2020/dec/06/uk-races-to-deport-asylum-seekers-ahead-of-brex-it?CMP=Share_iOSApp_Other.
- UNHCR (2021) 'With refugee resettlement at a record low in 2020, UNHCR calls on States to offer places and save lives', available at <https://www.unhcr.org/en-ie/news/press/2021/1/600e79ea4/refugee-resettlement-record-low-following-2020-unhcr-calls-states-offer-places-save.html>.
- UNHCR, 'Towards a Global Compact on Refugees', available at <http://www.unhcr.org/towards-a-global-compact-on-refugees.html>.
- UNHCR Ireland, (2019) 'Ireland pledges support for refugees at Global Refugee Forum', available at <https://www.unhcr.org/en-ie/news/latest/2019/12/5dfa3c8d4/ireland-pledges-support-for-refugees-at-global-refugee-forum.html>.
- UNHCR 'Pledges & Contributions Dashboard', available at <https://globalcompactrefugees.org/channel/pledges-contributions>.
- UNHCR, 'Operations Portal - Mediterranean Situation', available at <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/situations/mediterranean>.

Other Sources

- Written answers to Parliamentary Question (PQ17594/18) by Niall Collins T.D., Thursday, 24 April 2018, Dáil Éireann Debates.
- Joint Committee on Justice and Equality (2019) 'International Protection (Family Reunification) (Amendment) Bill 2017: Discussion', Dáil Debates Wednesday 6 February 2019.
- Seanad Éireann (2020) 'Unaccompanied Minors and Separated Children', Seanad Éireann Debates, Vol. 271 No. 4.
- Written answers to Parliamentary Question (PQ 21963/19) by Seán Crowe T.D., Tuesday, 21 May 2019, Dáil Éireann Debates.
- Written answers to Parliamentary Question (PQ19592/20) by Duncan Smith T.D., Thursday, 30 July 2020, Dáil Éireann Debates.
- Written answer to Parliamentary Question (PQ 32868/20) by Duncan Smith T.D., Thursday, 3rd November, Dáil Éireann Debates.
- Written answers to Parliamentary Question (PQ 29746/20) by Pádraig O'Sullivan T.D., Tuesday, 20 October 2020, Dáil Éireann Debates.

