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# Good Practice Sharing

**Supplementary support for migrants and refugees: housing, social, educational and health assistance:**

**Irish Refugee Council: A Place to Call Home**

**Dr John Hobbs**

*Senior Lecturer Economics, EU Project Co-Ordinator  
School of Business, Munster Technological University*

[John.hobbs@mtu.ie](mailto:John.hobbs@mtu.ie)

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# Irish Refugee Council

The Irish Refugee Council provide services and support for people seeking protection and people recognised as refugees in Ireland and advocate for humane and dignified protection procedures and responses to people fleeing persecution.



Press Release: Irish Refugee Council budget submission calls for Child Benefit or equivalent payment



30 Years 30 Voices: The Power of Protection



'Now I live on the road': new report on homelessness among people seeking protection

## IRC Priorities

- Deliver high quality support and advice to people in the protection process and people who have been granted status
- Provide holistic integration supports from the day a person arrives in Ireland
- Support and protect children and young people in the protection process
- Raise public and political awareness and advocacy
- Evidence based research and policy
- Pilot best practice models
- Build capacity among key actors to bring about positive changes in practice and policy

# 'A Place to Call Home'

## • Problem Addressed:

- Having access to adequate and affordable housing is often considered a basic need (Russell et al., 2021), as well as an important component of integration (Penninx and Garcés-Mascareñas, 2016).
- Adequate housing allows migrants to work, to be in education and to participate in society more broadly. Moreover, in many societies, homeownership is considered as a marker of social and economic success. However, due to a myriad of factors, migrants may face inequalities in housing tenure and affordability in Ireland.
- Migrants may, for example, be younger, have different housing preferences because they do not intend to stay in Ireland long-term or have a lower income from work, limiting their ability to buy a home. In addition, they may be limited by the characteristics of the property market, the banking sector and credit regulations of the host country, as well as facing discrimination in the rental housing market (Gusciute et al., 2022).
- Set against a backdrop of the current Irish housing market, which is characterised by limited availability and affordability, the challenges faced by some migrant groups may be especially large (McGinnity et al., 2022; Russell et al., 2021).

*Younger*



HIGH  
LOW INCOME

## Housing Preferences



Accommodation Crisis  
2022:

Response and  
Recommendations

5 October 2022

Irish  
Refugee  
Council  
30 years

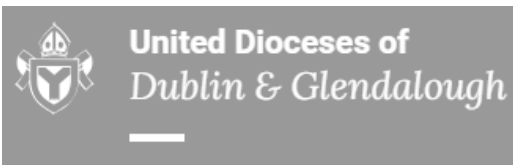
# 'A Place to Call Home'

## • How Objectives are reached:

- Irish Refugee Council has a dedicated housing team who work with people who have been through the protection process in Ireland and have received their status to help them realise their housing rights. This is mainly through advice and advocacy on social housing applications, access to HAP, and homeless services.

## *IRC mainly support's people:*

- Transitioning from direct provision
- ✓ 'Housing Application Morning' and 'HAP / Tenancy finding workshop' run every week
- Arriving on Family Reunification
- ✓ workshop every second week which helps you prepare for your family's arrival.
- Accessing Homeless Services
- ✓ For those given a notice of termination by their landlord or in danger of becoming homeless
- From the Horn of Africa (Somalia, Ethiopia, Kenya)
- ✓ Working with 'Horn of Africa' community group to support people with housing-related issues.



# 'A Place to Call Home'

- **Resources Needed:**

Cost of developing and rolling out the 'A Place to Call Home' Programmes @ Irish Refugee Council:

- 2.5 x Staff in the Housing Programme team at the Irish Refugee Council (To Manage the A Place Called Home Programme) approx. cost €150,000

- **Evidence of Success:**

Concrete outcomes in 2022 include:

- 631 people provided with information and advice.
- 221 housing applications and Housing Assistance Payment paperwork processed.
- 236 people facing homelessness supported.
- 48 families who arrived through family reunification supported.
- 350 people in Direct Provision received orientation on securing accommodation in Ireland.
- 4 housing policy submissions made.

- **Timeline:**

January 2022

December 2022

Housing supports programmes  
Running since 1989

# 'A Place to Call Home'

- **Potential for Learning or Transfer:**

- One of the reasons that the 'A Place to Call Home' programme have been successful and could be transferred is that the programme empowers refugees and migrants to take ownership of their needs, through understanding the current housing situation in Ireland, showcasing how to complete and prepare the relevant housing application forms and supporting documentation including reference letters, understanding how the HAP (housing assistance payment) works and finally how to submitting your application to relevant local authorities and in Ireland. Furthermore, the Irish Refugee Council has developed strong connections through their Housing Programme with organisations such as the United Dioceses of Dublin and Glendalough congregations, as well as members of the public donating properties for those seeking refuge in Ireland. There are great opportunities for sharing this critical process of building relationships with key supports who can help the refugee clients of IRC.

- **Challenges Encountered:**

- Continuous funding of programmes is a constant challenge for the Irish Refugee Council.
- Constraints on future planning because of a lack of long-term security of tenure, non-standardised leases, utilization of different rental mechanisms to support clients is problematic (Rent supplement vs HAP vs private means).
- Working with partners who provide access to accommodation needs to be very sensitively handled, and also to ensure that there are no problems with the tenants when they move in and respect the facilities.

- **Further Information:**

- [Aoife Coleman](#), Housing Officer, Irish Refugee Council.



- Web: <https://www.irishrefugeecouncil.ie/Listing/Category/housing>

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# Thank you!

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**Dr John Hobbs,**  
Project Manager SIRM,  
Senior Lecturer MTU, Bishopstown, Cork

**Mobile:** +353 86 8091294

**Email:** [john.hobbs@mtu.ie](mailto:john.hobbs@mtu.ie)