SICAP

Social Inclusion &
Community Activation
Programme

The Role of SICAP in Supporting New Communities

*Learning Brief
by Pobal*

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BACKGROUND

The Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP 2018 – 2022) is the Irish Government's primary social inclusion programme.[1] It is funded by the Irish Government through the Department of Rural and Community Development (DRCD) and co-funded by the European Social Fund (ESF) under the Programme for Employability, Inclusion and Learning (PEIL) 2014 - 2020. SICAP is managed at a local level by 33 Local Community Development Committees (LCDCs), with support from local authorities. It is implemented nationally by 46 Local Development Companies (LDCs) across 51 lot areas and aims to reduce poverty and promote social inclusion and equality in Ireland through supporting communities and individuals via community development, engagement and collaboration. One of SICAP's primary target groups is new communities and this research paper explores the role that SICAP plays in addressing the barriers to social inclusion experienced by members of new communities in Ireland.

Within SICAP, new communities consist of the following three categories:

Migrants experiencing socio-economic disadvantage:

A migrant is an individual who was born outside the island of Ireland but is currently living in Ireland, irrespective of whether they have attained Irish citizenship. For the purposes of SICAP, a disadvantaged migrant is a migrant (as defined above) who is also experiencing some form of social or economic disadvantage e.g. has a language barrier, is long-term unemployed or economically inactive.

Asylum seekers:

Asylum seekers are people from outside the European Economic Area (EEA) who are seeking to be recognised as refugees and are waiting for the authorities to decide on their applications. People in this process are legally entitled to stay in the state until their application for protection is decided. They also have a right to a fair hearing of that application and to an appeal if necessary. [I]

Refugees:

A refugee is a person from outside the EEA who is forced to leave their country due to a well-founded fear of persecution. They are unable to return to their home country for reasons related to race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or political opinion. Ireland has a legal responsibility to determine who is a refugee and to extend its protection to such a person. This includes those who have been given leave to remain in Ireland.

I. Irish Refugee Council website

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[1] SICAP 2018 – 2022 is the successor programme to SICAP 2015 – 2017.

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

- New communities make up a high proportion (14%) of SICAP clients, and to date 5,430 disadvantaged migrants, 1,168 asylum seekers and 851 refugees across Ireland engaged in the programme.

- Each of the new community groups have **different socio-economic characteristics.** For example, refugees are more likely to be educated at secondary level or below than migrants, asylum seekers and other SICAP clients. Asylum seekers are much more likely to be economically inactive than all other clients due to the legal restrictions they face around employment.

- Asylum seekers and refugees are at a high risk of social and economic disadvantage and experience **multiple barriers to social inclusion**. In particular, they are more likely to live in a jobless household, be at risk of homelessness or in challenging living arrangements and experience a transport barrier than other SICAP clients. The location of Direct Provision centres, often on the outskirts of towns, can **leave asylum seekers disconnected** from the urban centres, as evidenced by the high proportion (66%) of asylum seekers experiencing transport barriers. Furthermore, the trauma and mental health issues experienced by asylum seekers and refugees (often due to their reason for seeking asylum) are difficult to address due to gaps in the availability of mainstream mental health services in Ireland.

- **Local Development Companies (LDCs) use multiple approaches** to engage individual members of new communities, recognising that they are not homogenous groups and factors like nationality and cultural background play an important role in the process. Evidence of **good practice approaches** are present within the programme and documented in the report, including community outreach, SICAP events and functioning referral pathways.

- SICAP is clearly **aligned with national and international integration frameworks**. The programme contributes specifically to **five key factors of integration** that have been set out within these frameworks: employment, education, access to services, social connection and political participation. Strong examples of good practice are evident across each of these factors and included in the report.

- Disadvantaged migrants, asylum seekers and refugees received different types of supports through SICAP, **tailored to their specific needs**. Programme evidence also shows that the **intensity and mix of supports** delivered to SICAP clients are important factors influencing the progression of some groups to employment and self-employment, especially asylum seekers and refugees. This highlights the importance of applying a **case management** and **person-centred** approach, which is intended to be responsive to people's needs. It also speaks to the evidence of the greater barriers to economic and social inclusion faced by asylum seekers and refugees in Ireland and **underlines the level of support that they require** to address these barriers to progress into employment or self-employment.

- Similarly to other SICAP clients, a relatively small proportion (6%) of disadvantaged migrants, asylum seekers and refugees progressed into employment. However, differences were noted in the types of jobs occupied by the new community groups. As an example, asylum seekers and refugees were more likely to progress into lower pay jobs in the food, drink and tobacco production sector than other clients. While one in ten of migrants progressed into self-employment, only eight asylum seekers and 23 refugees set up their own business.

- Analysis showed that the characteristics of clients may have played a role in the progression of disadvantaged migrants, asylum seekers and refugees into employment or self-employment, particularly gender, educational profile and economic status. For example, asylum seekers and refugees with educational attainment above secondary level were more likely to get a job than those with lower levels. This was not the case for migrants or other clients.

- **Functioning referral systems** within SICAP enabled the programme to refer members of new communities to other services or organisations for additional support (e.g. Local Employment Services, Education and Training Boards). Furthermore, **collaborative and coordinated approaches** with partner organisations were an effective way of ensuring that new communities could access a comprehensive suite of supports, particularly asylum seekers living in Direct Provision centres.

- The activities, events and courses delivered by SICAP provided the spaces for new communities to meet new people and **develop social connections**. The programme also supported local community groups targeting new communities to organise and participate in local events (e.g. through dance, music), thereby creating opportunities for the groups to **celebrate their culture** and **interact with others** in the area.

HIGH LEVEL RECOMMENDATIONS

1.	Promote SICAP's role within the wider sector working with new community groups
2.	Recognise that asylum seekers face specific or unique challenges and barriers to social inclusion in Ireland and develop strategies to enable SICAP to better respond to their needs
3.	Identify and agree best practice approaches, and develop relevant guidelines within the programme
4.	Deliver capacity building to SICAP implementers
5.	Reflect on resource requirements

INTRODUCTION

Evidence shows that migrants, refugees and asylum seekers (new communities) face numerous barriers to social and economic inclusion in Ireland, including language barriers, racism and discrimination, mental health issues and structural barriers to accessing employment and education opportunities. The Government's national Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP) recognises that targeted interventions are needed to support the integration of new communities in Ireland. Since SICAP's inception in 2015, *new communities* have been a primary target group of the programme.

Members of new communities are supported by SICAP through interventions with individuals and groups. At **individual** level, members of new communities engage with SICAP for a variety of reasons, including personal development and improved wellbeing, to get a job or to set up their own business. At group level, SICAP delivers targeted supports to **Local Community Groups** (LCGs) that represent and/or work with members of new communities. The programme also promotes **collaborative work** amongst agencies to address social exclusion issues and organises information and support **events** that target new communities across the country.

On behalf of the Department of Rural and Community Development (DRCD), Pobal conducted research to explore the role that SICAP plays in addressing the barriers to social inclusion experienced by members of new communities in Ireland. Data was sourced from the programme's database (*IRIS*[2]*),* LDCs' annual progress reports, LDCs' case studies and semi-structured interviews with staff members from six LDCs across the country. Using quantitative and qualitative methods, (see Annex F for detailed Methodology), the research looked at the experiences of disadvantaged migrants, asylum seekers and refugees supported by SICAP between January 2018 and December 2019. This included examining:

- the extent to which new communities were reached by the programme;
- the socio-economic profile of each of the new community groups;
- the strategies used to engage new communities; and,
- the types of supports received and progression pathways achieved by the new community groups on SICAP.

CONTEXT

New communities in Ireland

While it is difficult to estimate the number of **migrants experiencing disadvantage**[3] in Ireland as this is a category specific to SICAP, in 2016 12% of the Irish population were non-Irish nationals.[4] Of these, almost 70% were from 10 countries - Brazil, France, Germany, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Spain, and the UK. The most recent data from UNHCR[5] indicates that there were 7,795 **refugees** living in Ireland in 2019. The highest proportion

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[2] An online system where LDCs record profile, intervention and output data for each beneficiary of the programme.
[3] Throughout the remainder of this document, the SICAP grouping of "migrants experiencing socio-economic disadvantage" will interchangeably be referred to as "disadvantaged migrants" or "migrants".
[4] Census, 2016. Non-Irish nationals refer to all migrants living in Ireland, including refugees and asylum seekers.
[5] UNHCR website detailing the number of refugees living in Ireland. It includes individuals recognised as refugees under the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, its subsequent protocol, those recognised in accordance with the UNHCR Statute, individuals granted complementary forms of protection, those enjoying temporary protection, as well as those in refugee-like situations. In the absence of Government figures, UNHCR has estimated the refugee population in many industrialised countries based on 10 years of individual asylum-seeker recognition.

of refugees (37%) came from Syria, followed by Zimbabwe (6%), Iraq (5%), Afghanistan (5%), and Democratic Republic of the Congo (5%).

As of November 2019,[6] there were approximately 7,558 **asylum seekers** living in Ireland; 6,058 of whom were accommodated in 39 Direct Provision centres and circa 1,500 who were in short-term accommodation in 37 hotels and guesthouses. The most recent data[7] shows that 56% of asylum seekers living in Ireland were from Africa (e.g. Zimbabwe and Nigeria), 24% were from Asia (e.g. Pakistan and Bangladesh) and 18% were from Eastern Europe (e.g. Albania and Georgia). A summary of the entry pathways to Ireland that migrants, asylum seekers and refugees can follow is provided in Annex E.

Policy context

Globally, countries have developed different models and frameworks to promote the integration of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers in their communities. Examples of robust models demonstrate holistic approaches to integration – that is, they recognise the various barriers that newcomers face and address these by promoting the multiple strategies that contribute to social inclusion. Examples include the models used by the UK, Canada and New Zealand, more details of which are provided in Annex C. Current Irish policy defines integration as the "ability to participate to the extent that a person needs and wishes in all of the major components of society without having to relinquish his or her own cultural identity."[8] This involves newcomers' participation in the economic, social, cultural and political life of Ireland. The *Migrant Integration Strategy 2017 – 2020* is the key document outlining the Irish Government's approach to the integration of newcomers to the country.[9] Similarly to the UK and Canadian approaches, the strategy recognises the need for a multi-dimensional and multi-directional approach to integration.[10] It also aims to address the various economic, social and cultural barriers faced by newcomers in Ireland. National evidence of these barriers is presented in Annex D.

PROGRAMME COVERAGE

New communities made up a high proportion (14%, 7,449) of SICAP clients. The majority (73%, 5,430) were disadvantaged migrants, 16% (1,168) were asylum seekers and the remaining 11% (851) were refugees. SICAP has also supported 255 LCGs that primarily target new communities, equating to 7% of all LCGs supported by the programme.

While the highest share of new communities were disadvantaged migrants, they represent 1% of all migrants[11] living in Ireland. At the same time, SICAP has engaged a substantial proportion of asylum seekers (15%) and refugees (11%) living in the country.

The vast majority of migrants (81%), asylum seekers (76%) and refugees (78%) supported by the programme live in urban areas across the country. While asylum seekers mostly live in urban areas, Direct Provision centres are

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[6] Department of Justice and Equality: http://justice.ie/en/JELR/Pages/PR19000285
[7] Reception and Integration Agency, November 2018
[8] Department of Justice and Equality, 2016.
[9] It is intended to cover EEA and non-EEA nationals, including economic migrants, refugees and those with legal status to remain in Ireland. As such, asylum seekers have not been factored into this strategy. The rights of asylum seekers in Ireland are secured under the International Protection Act 2015. http://revisedacts.lawreform.ie/eli/1998/act/21/revised/en/html#SEC37
[10] Department of Justice and Equality, 2016.
[11] Non-Irish nationals sourced from Census 2016

often situated on the outskirts of towns with limited, affordable public transport options available.[12] This, alongside the fact that asylum seekers are not entitled to apply for a driving licence,[13] leaves asylum seekers disconnected from the urban centres, as evidenced by the high proportion (66%) of asylum seekers on the caseload experiencing transport barriers. Asylum seekers, and refugees on the Irish Refugee Protection Programme, tend to be housed in a mix of Direct Provision centres,[14] emergency reception and accommodation centres[15] and local authority housing that is located outside of Dublin, as reflected in the maps demonstrating the geographic distribution of the new community groups in Annex B.

Each of the new community groups were less likely to live in disadvantaged areas than other SICAP clients, with migrants in particular being more likely to live in affluent (17%) or marginally above average (35%) areas. These findings are in keeping with the national evidence which indicates that the migrant population is highly centralised in urban areas and tends to live in affluent areas, with strong educational profiles and where private rented accommodation is plentiful.[16]

Depending on the local context, such as availability of services and/or the population size of new communities, SICAP implementers adopt flexible approaches to working with the target group through:

- bridging the gap and delivering key supports to new communities; and/or
- working in collaboration with other services in the area.

This wide reach and the flexibility afforded by the programme, make SICAP a unique player amongst the different stakeholders that support new communities in Ireland.

PROFILE OF NEW COMMUNITIES ON SICAP

Region of origin

Migrants, asylum seekers and refugees supported by SICAP arrived in Ireland from different regions of the world. Reflecting national population data,[17] the majority of disadvantaged migrants were from the EU, the majority of asylum seekers were from Africa, and over two thirds of refugees were from African or Asian countries. Given the greater barriers to social and economic inclusion experienced by Black people in Ireland, it is notable that SICAP has engaged a higher proportion of new communities of Black background, relative to the non-Irish national population.[18] **This indicates that the programme is reaching a key cohort of new communities who are facing high levels of disadvantage in Ireland.**

Socio-economic characteristics

Disadvantaged migrants, asylum seekers and refugees differ significantly from each other as well as other SICAP clients in terms of their socio-economic characteristics (Table 1).

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[12] Joint Committee on Justice and Equality, December 2019.
[13] www.nasc.ie
[14] There are currently two Direct Provision centres (4% of total), alongside the reception centre in Balseskin in Dublin. Seven temporary accommodation centres (28% of total) are also located in Dublin: Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth, March 2021
[15] None of the emergency reception and accommodation centres (three) are located in Dublin and none of the refugees on the Irish Refugee Protection Programme have been housed in local authority housing in Dublin: Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth, March 2021
[16] Economic and Social Research Institute, June 2019
[17] Source: Census, 2016, RIA November 2018, UNHCR 2019
[18] Census 2016

Table 1. Description of disadvantaged migrants, asylum seekers and refugees' socio-economic characteristics

Characteristic	Evidence
Age	Reflecting national[19] and international[20] evidence, migrants, asylum seekers and refugees were more likely to be younger than other clients on the caseload, with the majority falling in the 25-45 age band.
Gender	In line with international evidence,[21] asylum seekers and refugees on the caseload were significantly more likely to be male. However, in contrast with the most recent population data,[22] a greater proportion of disadvantaged migrants were female. Amongst some new community groups, traditional gender norms create barriers to LDCs engaging with women. Finding ways to safely and sensitively overcome these barriers has been challenging for the LDCs.
Educational attainment	The lowest levels of education were observed amongst refugees, with over 70% educated at secondary level or below, as compared to half of migrants and slightly more than half of asylum seekers. However, variations were observed based on the region of origin or route of entry of the new community groups. For example, asylum seekers and refugees from Africa were much less likely to be educated above secondary level than migrants from Africa. This is likely linked to the countries they are arriving from, with migrants from Africa possibly coming from more stable and developed countries, such as South Africa, and asylum seekers and refugees coming from countries where access to education has been disrupted due to conflict or other humanitarian crises, such as Democratic Republic of the Congo.
Economic status	The vast majority of asylum seekers were economically inactive at registration. Asylum seekers identify as economically inactive for different reasons to all other clients. Due to the legal restrictions they face around employment, they were much more likely to be economically inactive than all other clients. Refugees were more likely than all other groups to be long-term unemployed, while migrants were more likely to be employed.

Analysis also showed that asylum seekers and refugees were more likely to **face multiple barriers** to social inclusion than migrants and other clients. In particular, they were more likely to live in a jobless household, experience a transport barrier and be at risk of homelessness or in challenging living arrangements (see Annex A, Table A.6 for more details). The latter likely reflects the fact that asylum seekers who have received status to remain in Ireland are not able to find other accommodation due to the housing crisis. In May 2019, the Irish Refugee Council highlighted the fact that "there are currently almost 700 people stuck in Direct Provision although they have received status to remain in Ireland. This is due to a number of factors, most pertinently difficulties accessing housing."[23] LDCs also highlighted other challenges experienced by new communities, many of which reflect the national evidence base:

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[19] Census 2016
[20] Eurostat, 2020: https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Asylum_statistics#Age_and_gender_of_first-time_applicants
[21] Eurostat, 2020: https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Asylum_statistics#Age_and_gender_of_first-time_applicants; UNHCR, 2019
[22] Census 2016
[23] Irish Refugee Council, May 2019. Pg. 30

- limited **English language** proficiency,
- **mental health issues** or trauma, which are difficult to address due to gaps in the availability of mental health services in Ireland,
- lack of understanding of **Irish systems** (e.g. employment, health) and
- **racism and discrimination.**

Altogether, this suggests that migrants, asylum seekers and refugees have **different needs and motivations** for joining SICAP and require different types of supports.

ENGAGEMENT STRATEGIES

As part of this research, Pobal explored how LDCs engage the different new community groups on the programme. No one common engagement strategy for either migrants, asylum seekers or refugees emerged across the programme. Rather LDCs use **multiple approaches** to engage individual members of new communities, recognising that migrants, asylum seekers and refugees are not homogeneous groups and factors like **nationality and cultural background** play an important role in the process.

The quantitative analysis indicated that nationality or cultural background was an important factor in determining how some members of new communities learned about SICAP e.g. EU migrants were more likely to be referred to the programme by the Department of Social Protection (DSP) than African or Asian migrants. Furthermore, a low proportion of asylum seekers and refugees were referred to SICAP by the DSP. This suggests that some new community groups have limited engagement with formal employment services, potentially due to their sense of **distrust in Irish institutions**, a barrier identified by a number of LDCs during the interview process; or the legal entitlements of asylum seekers to work in Ireland. At the same time, migrants, asylum seekers and refugees were all more likely than other clients to learn about SICAP from their family or friends, highlighting the **importance of social bonds and networks** amongst new communities for facilitating engagement with service providers.

A variety of good practice approaches to engaging new communities have been identified amongst the LDCs:

- **Research:** LDCs were very cognisant of the diverse nature of new communities in Ireland, and recognised the importance of research to learn about and understand the groups' different cultures, backgrounds and needs at the outset. This included conducting desk-based reviews of existing data and research about the target group (e.g. local census data), and engaging with other agencies to learn about their experiences working with the target group.
- **Community outreach:** LDCs recognised the importance of community outreach and trust building within the community to reach migrants, asylum seekers and refugees. This requires a significant investment of time by the LDCs and was especially evident in the approaches taken by some to engage with Direct Provision centres opening up in their area, with staff travelling out to the centres to offer their support.
- **Identifying existing leaders** within the community was also considered a good starting point for engagement.

> *"We also look for leaders within the community...we look to see if there is anyone there pursuing studies who might be a leader for us to access the migrant community in a safe way. If we find*

However, challenges were raised around the engagement of female members of some new community groups, with LDCs describing how traditional gender norms were creating barriers to women and girls' participation in SICAP activities. For example, an LDC described how one male leader in a migrant community was "happy for the boys to be educated and play sports but not so happy for the girls to be involved". (Interview 2)

- **Addressing barriers:** through the provision of funding or other supports, a number of LDCs have addressed key barriers, such as childcare and transport, to facilitate the participation of new communities in SICAP activities and events. In the absence of professional translation services in the area, some LDCs also described working with peer translators to overcome the language barriers experienced by members of new communities. However, they also noted that this brings with it its own challenges around the quality of the translation, alongside the appropriateness of using peer translators in some situations.

- **SICAP events:** LDCs identified community events, often designed around food or culture, as a useful tool for introducing new communities to SICAP, after which necessary supports can be provided. In general, the use of soft approaches to engage new communities was considered effective e.g. cooking courses, English language courses, community events.

Diverse Food, Diverse Communities

In towns across south-east Cork, SECAD Partnership has organised "SECAD Celebrating Multiculturalism through Food" for the past 3 years – a multicultural food festival with the aim of creating linkages across different nationalities in the community. Transport is provided for residents of Direct Provision centres to facilitate their participation in the event. This food-based approach is designed to build trust with members of new communities, after which solutions to the challenges that they face can be identified and supported through SICAP. These include improving English language proficiency and promoting access to personal development, education and employment supports.

Figure 1. Participants at a SICAP intercultural food event in Co. Cork

- **Referrals:** the strong partnerships that LDCs have developed with other agencies were noted as particularly effective in generating referrals of new communities to the programme. This speaks to the importance of functioning referral systems within the programme. Further to this, some LDCs leveraged their partnerships with other agencies or services, who already work with specific new community groups. Through these partnerships, the LDCs brokered introductions to the new community groups and informed them about SICAP supports. Amongst others, Family Resource Centres, Education and Training Boards and Local Employment Services were noted by the LDCs as useful partners through which they could engage members of new communities.

Connections through cricket

Utletsi is a resident of the Mount Trenchard Direct Provision centre since 2017. He had received a good education in his home country and was very active in sport through school. He had studied classical piano and bass guitar through his local church. However, due to racial and religious issues in his home country, it was not safe for him to stay.

When he arrived in Ireland he applied for asylum and was placed in Mount Trenchard Direct Provision centre, which sits on the outskirts of Foynes, Co. Limerick. Once there he found it difficult to adjust to the isolation and boredom of life in the centre.

> *"Transport is a big problem here. My daily routine was wake up and get some exercise, eat, talk to some people in the centre and go to bed. It was not very good for my health".*

In 2018, West Limerick Resources (WLR) consulted the residents of the centre and learned about their need for social interaction and engagement with the local community. One way they felt this could be achieved was through sports with one sport in particular standing out – cricket. Through SICAP, WLR partnered with some local agencies to organise a volunteer day at the local cricket pitch to help upgrade the facility and create a connection between the club and the centre. Residents from Mount Trenchard, staff from General Motors (GM), alongside members of the cricket club were all invited to participate. The plan was to paint the club fences and rooms, after which the volunteers would play a cricket match together.

A total of 26 people from 10 different nationalities came together on the day. While the painting was successfully completed, the interactions amongst the volunteers proved to be the biggest success of the day. Conversations about the asylum process, foreign nationals working in Ireland, as well as the local context of life in Limerick created an opportunity for increased understanding of different cultures and circumstances. According to José, a GM employee,

> *"We thoroughly enjoyed this opportunity. Got to help improve the facility as well as interact with the lads and understand some of the difficulties faced by them."*

Furthermore, Limerick Sports Partnership has since rolled out a sports programme in Mount Trenchard, providing much needed variety and stimulus for the residents.

Utletsi was one of the residents who volunteered for the cricket day.

> *"I had a great day in Adare. While we were painting we started talking with the others there. It was great to be involved in a group where I could laugh and talk about different things like music and food and other things. Some guy started teaching us phrases in Irish. The game of cricket was also great fun and it got competitive."*

Since the volunteer day, Utletsi has become very involved in the sports programme in the University of Limerick, as well as undertaking other training in IT and employability skills. He has a new outlook and a plan for his future in Ireland.

ROLE OF SICAP IN THE INTEGRATION OF NEW COMMUNITIES

The programme applies a holistic approach to addressing the barriers to social inclusion experienced by new communities in Ireland, with interventions being delivered at individual, group and community level in response to their specific needs. The programme is also clearly aligned with national and international integration frameworks, including Ireland's Migrant Integration Strategy,[24] the UK's Indicators of Integration Framework 2019,[25] Canada's Settlement and Integration Model[26] and New Zealand's migrant and refugee integration strategies.[27]

Analysis shows that SICAP contributes specifically to five key factors of integration that have been set out within these frameworks. (Figure 2) The following sections provide an overview of the role SICAP plays in contributing to each of these elements and include examples of good practice.

Figure 2. The five key factors of integration that SICAP contributes to

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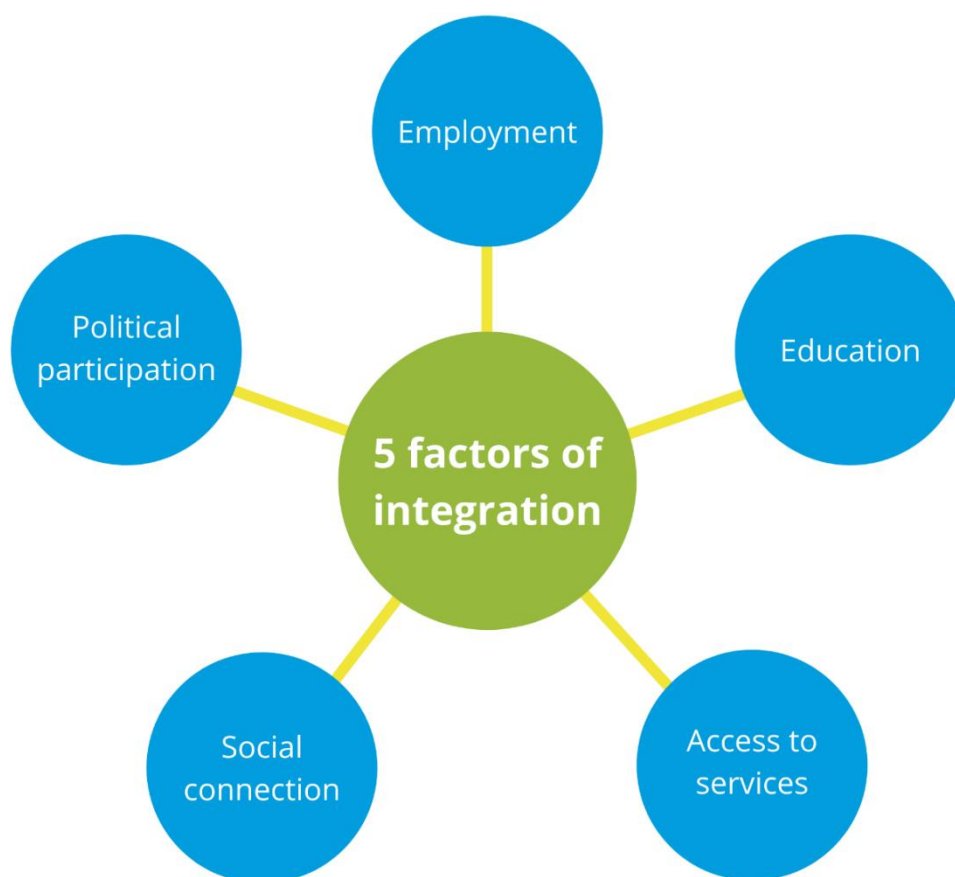
[24] Department of Justice and Equality, 2016.
[25] UK Home Office, 2019
[26] Prince, C. 2019
[27] Immigration New Zealand

WHAT ROLE DOES SICAP PLAY IN PROMOTING EMPLOYMENT AMONGST NEW COMMUNITIES?

Employment is a key factor supporting the integration of newcomers – it "provides a mechanism for income generation and economic independence"[28] and also facilitates other elements of integration, such as improved language skills, and relationship and network development. In line with this, the participation of newcomers in economic life in Ireland is a key element of the Government's Migrant Integration Strategy.

<u>Right to work for new communities in Ireland</u>

European Economic Area (EEA) migrants and refugees are fully eligible to work in Ireland.

Migrants from outside of the EEA require employment permits.

Since June 2018, **asylum seekers** who have been waiting nine months for a first instance decision are eligible to work or set up their own business in Ireland, subject to 6-month renewal. However, if an individual has already received a first instance decision and is awaiting an appeal, they are not eligible to work. *Note: changes were introduced in January 2021, whereby asylum seekers who have been waiting 6 months for a first instance decision are eligible to work, subject to 12-month renewal. (www.inis.gov.ie)*

A large proportion of new communities received interventions supporting employment and self-employment.

SICAP recognises that employment, including self-employment, reduces the barriers to social inclusion experienced by new communities in Ireland. To this end, LDCs deliver a variety of interventions that support migrants, asylum seekers and refugees to access jobs or set up their own business. To date, new communities have received an average of two labour market supports (total of 2,257 people received 5,272 supports) and three pre-start-up self-employment supports (total of 1,390 people received 4,979 supports) through SICAP. Examples of such supports include CV development, mock interviews and business planning advice.

Table 2: Number and proportion of SICAP clients who received labour market and pre-start-up self-employment supports, by category

Category	Labour market supports	Pre-start up self-employment supports
Migrants	28% (1,532)	23% (1,233)
Asylum seekers	38% (448)	6% (65)
Refugees	33% (277)	11% (92)
Other SICAP clients	34% (15,584)	26% (11,769)

Interestingly, asylum seekers were more likely than all other clients to receive labour market supports, highlighting what LDCs have described as an eagerness amongst asylum seekers to participate in economic and social life in Ireland (Table 2). On the other hand, low numbers of asylum seekers and refugees received pre-start-up self-

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[28] UK Home Office, 2019

employment supports, as compared to disadvantaged migrants and other clients. This is potentially linked to the structural barriers to employment experienced by asylum seekers in Ireland. Furthermore, it's possible that asylum seekers and refugees find it more difficult to access the social and economic capital that Lucas describes as being key to entrepreneurship amongst newcomers in Ireland.[29] Only three asylum seekers on SICAP who set up their own business were eligible for BTWEA[30] or STEA[31] support. Additionally, and in contrast with 14% of migrants who set up their own business, none of the asylum seekers or refugees received an enterprise start-up grant through the programme. At the same time, it is worth noting that 77% of migrants and 70% of refugees who set up their own business received the BTWEA, highlighting the important role that SICAP plays in supporting clients to access this scheme.

Table 3. Number and proportion of SICAP clients who progressed into employment and self-employment

Category	Progressed into employment	Progressed into self-employment
Migrants	6% (333)	9% (482)
Asylum seekers	6% (67)	1% (8)
Refugees	6% (51)	3% (23)
Other SICAP clients	7% (3,348)	11% (5,222)

Similarly to other SICAP clients, a relatively small proportion (6%) of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers supported by SICAP have **progressed into employment.** (Table 3)

At the same time, migrants, asylum seekers and refugees were all less likely to **progress into self-employment** than other SICAP clients (11%), with very few asylum seekers (8) and refugees (23) setting up their own business. (Table 3)

As outlined in Table 4, analysis[32] found that a number of characteristics of clients may have played a role in their progression to employment and self-employment.

Types of jobs

Asylum seekers and refugees were more likely to get jobs in the **food, drink and tobacco production sector** than other clients. This reflects the national evidence around newcomers disproportionately occupying these types of jobs.

A much higher proportion of refugees than all other clients entered into **health care roles.** At the same time, a greater proportion of migrants entered into **clerical roles** than asylum seekers and refugees.

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[29] Lucas, S., 2016. "Explaining the low rate of migrant self-employment in the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland"
[30] Back to Work Enterprise Allowance
[31] Short-term Enterprise Allowance
[32] Note: due to the small numbers of asylum seekers and refugees who got a job, statistical analysis was not possible.

Characteristics	Summary of analysis
Gender	• **Male asylum seekers** were more likely to get a job than females. • **Males** across all groups were more likely than females to enter into full-time employment. • Across all groups, **men** were more likely to set up their own business than women.
Educational profile at registration	• Asylum seekers and refugees with educational attainment **above secondary level** were more likely to get a job than those with lower levels. This was not the case for migrants or other clients. • Migrants and refugees educated **above secondary level** were more likely to establish their own business than those with lower levels. There was no difference observed amongst the eight asylum seekers who progressed.
Economic status at registration	• Across all groups, people who were **unemployed for one year or less** at registration were more likely to get a job than all other clients. It is also notable that a greater proportion of asylum seekers who were economically inactive at registration progressed into employment than all other economically inactive clients on the caseload. This highlights the eagerness of asylum seekers to participate in economic life, despite the structural barriers that they face. • Migrants, asylum seekers and refugees who were **long-term unemployed** were more likely to set up their own business.

Programme evidence also shows that the **intensity and mix of supports** delivered to SICAP clients are important factors influencing the progression of some groups. It is clear that asylum seekers require a greater intensity of interventions to get a job or set up their own business than all other clients on the caseload. For example, asylum seekers who got a job received an average of six interventions, as compared to an average of five interventions received by migrants and refugees who got a job, and four interventions received by other clients. In addition, asylum seekers and refugees require a greater mix of supports to progress into employment and self-employment i.e. a suite of personal development, employment related and/or lifelong learning supports. This speaks to the evidence of the greater **barriers to economic and social inclusion** faced by asylum seekers and refugees in Ireland and underlines the level of support that they require to address these barriers to progress into employment or self-employment. It also highlights the importance of SICAP's individual case management approach, as described in the Good Practice section below.

Good Practice

"So when a new client comes to me, whether they are from a new community or Irish, I always start from a coaching approach." (Interview 5)

The **person-centred approach** is central to the LDCs' way of working with individuals, irrespective of their nationality or ethnic background. This involves working closely with individuals to determine their personal goals and objectives, identify their needs and requirements and co-develop their personal action plans. Thereafter, SICAP supports and interventions are **tailored to respond to each individual's needs,** including the provision of referrals to other services or organisations, as required. This responsive approach takes place through a minimum of two interventions that are delivered by the LDCs to each person on a **one-to-one** basis.

Figure 3. Izz and Eman at their café in Cork City

Izz Café

Izz and Eman were asylum seekers from Palestine, living in Direct Provision in Cork, with an interest in setting up their own café selling the traditional, Palestinian food that Eman cooks. To better prepare for this venture, Izz decided to participate in SECAD's start-your-own-business course, which was delivered through SICAP. Through this course, he developed and refined the café business plan and strengthened his financial skillsets, such as preparing cash flow projections. He also received ongoing mentoring supports from SECAD, who then assigned Izz and Eman a business mentor from the local community to support them further.

Deciding to first establish a stall at the local food market, Izz and Eman received positive feedback from the community, after which they were able to save enough money to open their café in a fixed premises in Cork City. It is positive to note that the café has continued to operate and serve the community during the COVID-19 pandemic.

WHAT IS THE ROLE OF SICAP IN SUPPORTING NEW COMMUNITIES TO ACCESS EDUCATION?

Internationally, education is recognised as an important component of integration[33] and features strongly in the Government's Migrant Integration Strategy. Given that language barriers hinder newcomers' ability to fully participate in economic and social life, access to local language classes is particularly important for them. Education also creates opportunities for employment through the development of personal skills and professional qualifications or competencies, and it also facilitates social connection and interaction with others in the community.

The majority of new communities have participated in a course through SICAP.

SICAP supports people, especially those facing educational disadvantage, to engage with lifelong learning opportunities using community development approaches. This includes providing information about different educational or training options, delivering specific training programmes or referring people to other courses that are relevant to their own personal objectives. While SICAP offers migrants, asylum seekers and refugees the same lifelong learning opportunities that other clients can avail of, LDCs also **adapt existing courses and develop new courses** to address the specific needs of new communities in Ireland. To date, over half (53%, 3,966) of all members of the new communities on the caseload have participated in 5,984 course placements through SICAP.

Members of new communities and particularly asylum seekers (65%) were **more likely** to participate in lifelong learning activities[34] than other SICAP clients (48%). This was likely driven by a number of factors: a **greater need for specific training** amongst the new community groups in Ireland; the younger age profile of asylum seekers; lower education levels; and the unique circumstances of asylum seekers living in Direct Provision centres, who have limited employment rights and yet are eager to participate in Irish society.

The types of courses taken by migrants, asylum seekers and refugees reflect the **different needs** of the three groups.

- Over one third (38%, 2,828) of new communities sat **unaccredited courses**.[35] Migrants were more likely to participate in these types of courses than all other groups and this was primarily driven by the English language needs of migrants on the caseload. This reflects the variation in nationality across the three groups, with a greater proportion of asylum seekers and refugees arriving from Africa, including Anglophone countries. At the same time, a higher proportion of asylum seekers and refugees sat **personal development courses** than migrants. This likely relates to the more complex needs and barriers experienced by asylum seekers and refugees, and in turn, LDCs' utilisation of soft approaches to engage them with the programme. Examples of personal development courses delivered to asylum seekers and refugees include mindfulness and wellbeing, healthy eating, and confidence building classes.

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[33] UK Home Office, 2019; Prince, C. 2019, Immigration New Zealand
[34] Lifelong learning activities include courses, work experience or apprenticeships.
[35] Courses that have specific learning outcomes based on a set curriculum but are not certified by a recognised body e.g. QQI.

- Amongst those who sat courses, asylum seekers were more likely than all other groups to sit **industry certified courses**,[36] while refugees were more likely to sit **accredited courses**.[37] The type of accredited and industry certified courses – HACCP,[38] safe pass, health assistant courses – that both asylum seekers and refugees took suggests that they utilise lifelong learning opportunities **to prepare for specific employment opportunities** in Ireland. This link was also observed in the type of jobs that they progressed into, such as asylum seekers occupying roles in the food, drink and tobacco production sector and refugees entering into health care roles.

The majority of each of the new community groups had successfully completed their courses by the end of 2019. For example, 91% of asylum seekers, 77% of migrants and 75% of refugees successfully completed their personal development courses. They also made good progress with their English language skills, with 70% of migrants, 57% of asylum seekers, and 67% of refugees successfully completing their language courses. LDCs also indicated that migrants, asylum seekers and refugees who participated in courses through SICAP attained additional benefits, especially **improved confidence** and greater **social connection**.

Good practice

- **The navigation of Irish systems** is a key challenge faced by new communities in Ireland. In response to this, a number of LDCs have **developed courses and workshops** on this topic, focusing on issues such as accessing healthcare and navigating the employment system in Ireland.
- A number of LDCs deliver conversational English language classes using the *Fáilte Isteach*[39] model. In addition to strengthening people's proficiency with the English language, this approach is considered effective for:
  - Engaging members of new communities with SICAP
  - Informing members of new communities about local Irish culture, current affairs i.e. by using such topics as class material
  - Building relationships amongst new communities and with the local Irish community who volunteer as tutors.
- By **involving members of new communities** in their work (i.e. through recruiting staff, training volunteers, engaging peer translators), some LDCs were better placed to overcome cultural and language barriers in their work. In some cases, this included involving new communities in the development of modules or courses to meet the needs of migrants, asylum seekers and refugees in the area.

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[36] A course after completion of which, a person is designated with a certification or qualification that assures their qualification to perform an industry specific task or job e.g. Safe Pass, forklift driving. These courses do not lead to a qualification nationally recognised under the NFQ.

[37] Quality assured courses that have passed through a rigorous evaluation process and are officially recognised as such by a relevant authorisation body e.g. QQI. They lead to a qualification nationally recognised under the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ).

[38] Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point

[39] *Fáilte Isteach* is a community project involving predominantly older volunteers who welcome migrants through conversational English classes. It was developed by Third Age in 2006 in response to the difficulties that new migrants were experiencing integrating into the local community: www.thirdageireland.ie

Upskilling local volunteers

Empower – the LDC in Fingal – identified a need to upskill local volunteers, who are representative of their multicultural communities, to have the relevant qualifications to participate in community development work in their area. A total of 50 people completed the "Certificate in Leadership in Intercultural Communities" in TU Dublin in 2019, which resulted in members of new communities attaining a third level qualification. Some have since progressed into jobs in the community development sector, having been equipped to undertake this work in an intercultural setting.

"Since I finished the course I got a job as a Community Employment Supervisor for a project in Balbriggan, which is the first Roma specific project ever in Ireland. We support members of the Roma community in housing, education and healthcare."

– Giusepe, Musicantia

Figure 4. Participants in the Leadership in Intercultural Communities course

HOW DOES SICAP SUPPORT NEW COMMUNITIES TO ACCESS SERVICES?

The ability to access public services, such as health, education and housing, is a key marker of the integration of newcomers into a host country.[40] Access to such services ensures newcomers have the opportunity to fully participate in economic and social life. This concept is strongly promoted in Ireland's Migrant Integration Strategy, which stresses the importance of supporting migrants to "access and navigate public services."

Clear referral pathways enable new communities to access the supports that they need.

A range of organisations and services are available at a local, regional and national level to provide additional and specialised support for new communities in Ireland e.g. legal advice, health supports or education supports. The programme plays a role in helping members of new communities to access these services and to date, 11% (602) of migrants, 10% (86) of refugees and 9% (101) of asylum seekers were **referred** to other organisations or services. The majority were referred to employment or education related services, including the Department of Social Protection, Local Employment Services, and Education and Training Boards.

Furthermore, collaboration is a core element of SICAP's approach to social inclusion and LDCs are encouraged to work with other organisations or services to reduce duplication and to ensure their clients can access a comprehensive suite of supports in an effective and efficient manner. To this end, LDCs have participated in 56 **collaborations** that address the needs of new communities in Ireland.[41] These collaborations tend to involve a wide range of organisations e.g. Department of Social Protection, Education and Training Boards, Citizens' Information and organisations that represent newcomers to Ireland, such as the Irish Refugee Council. The vast majority (89%) were focused on addressing social exclusion and inequality issues.

Good practice

A number of examples of good practice are evident in SICAP where LDCs participated in **coordinated approaches** with their partner organisations to support new communities in their area. This was particularly evident in the manner LDCs supported asylum seekers living in Direct Provision centres. It should be noted that, despite such coordination, LDCs highlighted confusion amongst different service providers as to who is responsible and best placed to support asylum seekers to address their administrative issues e.g. accessing PPS numbers.

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[40] UK Home Office, 2019
[41] Current understanding of the programme suggests that the number of collaborations is under-reported by LDCs.

Coordinated approach to the delivery of services

In response to the introduction of a new Direct Provision centre in Kenmare in November 2018, South Kerry Development Partnership (SKDP) participated in an inter-agency group that was set up to collaboratively support the people living in the centre. The group included representatives from Citizens Information, An Garda Síochána, the HSE, Kenmare Family Resource Centre, DSP, Kerry ETB and SKDP. Each agency took on roles that were relevant to their expertise, such as Kerry ETB, who registered people for ESOL classes and Citizens Information, who informed the asylum seekers about their rights. A homework club and coffee mornings were organised by the Family Resource Centre and the HSE organised *"Understanding Trauma"* Workshops for the local public and support agencies.

SKDP, through SICAP, also played an important role and provided a range of supports to the asylum seekers in Kenmare. Their Community Development Officer provided guidance and support to a newly formed LCG, *Kenmare Welcome Group*, which received a Pride of Place award in 2019 in recognition of their work to support the integration of asylum seekers in their community. The asylum seekers were also linked into other community groups in the area, such as the Kenmare Men's Shed and the Lone Parents Group. SKDP trained 13 tutors to deliver *Fáilte Isteach*'s conversational English classes and individuals were supported to access a range of courses, including financial support to access UCC's Sanctuary Scholarship Fund (e.g. entrance exam fees). Manual handling courses were delivered to 35 people close to the time they were expected to receive their right to work and an LES day (alongside other appointments) was organised to create CVs for those eligible to work.

Taking this comprehensive, inter-agency approach to supporting asylum seekers in Kenmare was one of the key learnings identified by SKDP from this experience. They viewed it as crucial to ensuring a coherent approach by each of the agencies and also for building trust with the residents of the Direct Provision centre.

WHAT IS THE ROLE OF SICAP IN SUPPORTING NEW COMMUNITIES TO BUILD SOCIAL CONNECTIONS?

The importance of social connection for newcomers to Ireland is promoted in Ireland's Migrant Integration Strategy, including:

- Enabling the celebration of national identities or cultures of newcomers,
- Facilitating interaction between newcomers and the host community through cultural and sporting activities.

SICAP events and activities create the spaces for new communities to meet other people.

SICAP **creates many opportunities** for newcomers to strengthen their social connections in Ireland by organising activities and events, and delivering courses and workshops that members of new communities participate in. LDCs described how migrants, asylum seekers and refugees' participation in such activities helped them to build friendships and develop new support networks in Ireland.

> *"That young Syrian girl that came on the Foundation 4 Life programme had very little confidence and her English was limited and at the end of the programme awards ceremony she got up and gave a lovely speech and talked about how it helped her and her personal development and how she made friends and felt part of Irish society." (Interview 6)*

The programme also works with local community groups that represent new communities in Ireland e.g. Galway African Diaspora, Rohingya Action Ireland, Ballyjamesduff Brazilian Community Group and Bluebell Intercultural Group. LDCs have invested time and resources in supporting these groups to **organise and participate in local events** e.g. through dance, music. This creates opportunities for the groups to **celebrate their culture** and interact with others in the community.

Good practice

- A number of LDCs have organised **intercultural events** in their communities as a means to bringing people from different nationalities together to learn and celebrate diversity in their area e.g. food festivals. This provides newcomers with the opportunity to meet and develop relationships with people within and outside their own nationality or culture.

Cultural events

Through SICAP, Galway City Partnership (GCP) supports the LCG, *Galway African Diaspora*, to provide **free cultural events** and build cross-cultural empathy through music in Galway. In 2019, GCP supported the group to develop an action plan for the year, successfully apply for funding and, organise a number of events, including monthly **African music sessions, community dance and drumming events**, and performances at local markets. *Galway African Diaspora* also support other community groups to have music at their events.

- **Children and families' activities**, such as sport or recreational activities, were recognised by LDCs as a useful tool for bringing people from different cultures together. SICAP has delivered 46 activities for children and families of new communities to date, with 1,249 children or young people and 1,598 parents or guardians in attendance. For example, Dublin City Community Co-operative (DCCC) organised two Intercultural Family Days in 2019. Activities on the day included cultural performances and art exhibitions, and between 150-200 participants attended on both occasions. According to DCCC, the involvement of migrant groups and stakeholders, such as the Reception and Integration Agency, in weekly planning meetings ahead of the events, was a key factor contributing to their success.

- Some LDCs were involved in efforts to create **greater understanding of cultural diversity** within their communities. For example, in 2019, South Dublin County Partnership delivered in-house diversity training for their staff and also provided training on hate crime to the local Public Participation Network (PPN). In Wexford, the LDC collaborated with *Doras Luimní* and local volunteers, to deliver a train-the-trainer module to dispel rumours about immigration in the area, instead providing facts in clear and easily understood language and formats. As a result of the workshop, a successful funding application was submitted to the Communities Integration Fund of the Department of Justice to develop Wexford-specific awareness resources for an Anti-Rumours campaign on the topic of immigration.

Figure 5 below shows members of the Rohingya community in Carlow participating in a local cultural event. Carlow County Development Partnership (CCDP) has been supporting the integration of the Rohingya community in Carlow since they first arrived in the county over ten years ago. This support has been delivered through SICAP since the programme's inception in 2015 and has led to the formation of Rohingya Action Ireland, a community group that focuses on addressing the issues faced by the Rohingya people locally, nationally and internationally. In 2019, Rohingya Action Ireland, alongside CCDP and Carlow College, were invited to present their work to the UN's Human Rights Council in Geneva.

Figure 5. Rohingya community participating in a local event in Co. Carlow

Bottom-up approaches to integration

In 2016, a member of Leitrim's migrant community approached Leitrim Development Company (LDCo), expressing an interest in setting up a local group to support migrants in south Leitrim. In response, LDCo invited local members of the migrant community to meet, discuss their needs and explore the idea of setting up a group in the area. Soon after, the Leitrim International Community Group (LICG) was formed, with the purpose of promoting cultural awareness and understanding in the county and enabling cultures to celebrate special holidays or days of importance in their countries. The need to enhance integration in the county was also identified by the group members.

Following this initial start-up stage, the SICAP Community Development Worker facilitated the group to undertake committee skills training, develop aims and objectives for the group, and produce an action plan. The following mission statement was also agreed:

'Our objective is to raise awareness of different cultures in Leitrim, to bring everyone together in a shared space and to reduce racism.'

In 2018, LICG received a small grant under SICAP to host intercultural events. These events promoted national days of interest from around the world, including Nigerian Independence Day, Newroz Kurdish New Year, Holi Hindu Spring Festival, Estonian Independence Day, Mexican Day of the Dead and Panama Day, and were held in central locations in Leitrim to involve as many local people as possible. At the same time, LICG linked with other local community groups and participated in existing community events, including the St Patrick's Day Parade, Carrick Water Music Festival and Carrick Carnival. The group also worked closely with LDCo to welcome Syrian refugee families who arrived in Carrick-on-Shannon and Drumshanbo in 2017/18, and organised a meet-and-greet event in the local community.

LICG currently has over 40 active members from several countries including Syria, Kurdistan, Nigeria, Mexico, Estonia, Ireland, Bangladesh and Poland. Events are attended by between 50-80 people. A number of members have progressed into education and training programmes, through information supports provided by the group. Friendships and links with the local community have also developed, contributing to improved integration in the community.

Figure 6. Participants at Nigeria Independence Day celebrations in Carrick-on-Shannon

According to Lola Gonzalez, Chairperson of LICG *'Being involved in LICG has helped me connect more with the community in Carrick-on-Shannon and other immigrants in the county. It has given me tools to advance and integrate into Irish life. The SICAP programme has helped the group grow and reach their goal of integration.'*

Ayokunmi Fagbo, originally from Nigeria stated that *'LICG has brought us all together. We now stop to say hello to each other on the street. We support each other, we are no longer strangers to each other.'*

WHAT ROLE DOES SICAP PLAY IN PROMOTING THE POLITICAL PARTICIPATION OF NEW COMMUNITIES IN IRELAND?

The political participation of newcomers in their host country is an essential component of integration.[42] This includes registering to vote, joining political parties and running for election, where legally eligible to do so. It ensures that the needs of new communities are adequately represented and incorporated in public policy and decision making.

Ireland has an inclusive approach to political participation at local level.[43] However, participation rates amongst non-Irish nationals are relatively low. In light of this, the promotion of political participation amongst new communities in Ireland is required and has been emphasised in the Migrant Integration Strategy. Furthermore, the strategy encourages newcomers' contribution to policy and service development.

SICAP supports new communities to understand and exercise their rights.

A key strength of SICAP is the programme's flexibility to respond to the specific needs of target groups. This is particularly evident in relation to the advice the programme has provided to migrants, asylum seekers and refugees around their right to vote in Ireland, with some LDCs building such information into their lifelong learning courses.

SICAP also recognises that it is important that representatives of new communities **participate in local decision making structures** and fora. In the main, LDCs facilitate this participation by **building the capacity** of local community groups to confidently contribute to such structures. To date, 44 groups targeting new communities have received this type of support.

Good practice

- In the run-up to the 2019 local elections, a number of LDCs **organised workshops or developed course modules** on the topic of political participation in Ireland, specifically for members of new communities. This involved raising awareness about people's right to vote and explaining the Proportional Representation voting system. Some LDCs also **facilitated dialogue** with the candidates who were running for election.

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[42] EPACE Theme Publication, 2010
[43] Immigrant Council of Ireland, April 2020

- Some LDCs have created **ambassador programmes**, where they build the capacity and confidence of people from new communities to represent their interests and contribute to relevant decision making processes. In Wexford, the LDC delivered ambassador training to residents of the local Direct Provision centre. The aim of the training was to familiarise the group with the Irish system of government and politics and to strengthen their ability to advocate for themselves on various media platforms and with local or national government.

Raising voices

"Basically, they structured us to be grown, empowered and outspoken women."

Amal is an Islamic Women's Association based in Dublin 8, which aims to provide culturally specific services for women and children from Muslim and non-Muslim backgrounds in Ireland. Through SICAP, the South West Inner City Network[I] (SWICN), has been supporting the development and activities of Amal. In particular, SWICN has been supporting younger women and girls by **exploring identity, rights, empowerment and cultural differences.**

Through this work, SWICN and Amal produced two short films,[II] which address the issues faced by young people born in Ireland to migrant parents. This gave the young women an opportunity to express themselves and raise their voices to issues that matter to them. The first film *"My Hijab – My Choice"* was a direct response to the EU High Court ruling that allows companies to prohibit their staff from wearing visible religious symbols in the workplace. This issue was very important to young women wearing a hijab, creating anxiety and uncertainty for their futures.

The second film, *"What a Day"*, was created in partnership with other young women in SWICN's The Clubhouse (a safe and creative learning environment for young people). This film captured the issue of discrimination and being different, and the consequent realities that young women from migrant backgrounds face in their everyday lives in Ireland. The film was submitted to the REEL YOUTH Festival and also won Best Short Film in the Creative Tech Fest 2018.

Not only did this work result in Amal being able to raise important issues in their community, but it also helped the young women to develop their skillsets, grow in confidence and meet new people. In the words of Lena Goumaa, who participated in both videos:

"They literally taught us the purposes of life and how to become adult and how to actually deal with things and real life situations. Basically, they structured us to be grown, empowered and outspoken women."

I.   *SWICN is a member of Dublin City Community Co-operative.*
II.   *Note: while the videos created by the Amal group were not directly funded by SICAP, the planning, developmental and preparatory work took place with the support of SICAP staff.*

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE IMPLEMENTATION

While it is evident that SICAP contributes to a number of key factors of integration, it is important to note that the consistency of implementation varies cross the country. This is because SICAP implementation depends on:

- the internal strategies of LDCs and the approaches that they take,
- the availability of resources to support their work,
- local needs i.e. the concentration of new communities in the area versus other services or agencies that may already be working with new communities.

Through learning from SICAP implementation to date and utilising best practice to inform future programming, there is an opportunity to improve the consistency of implementation going forward. Table 5 sets out five recommendations intended to strengthen the implementation of SICAP across the country, specifically the supports that the programme delivers for new communities in Ireland.

Table 5. Programme recommendations for future implementation

Programme Recommendations	
Promote SICAP's role within the wider sector working with new community groups	Given the flexibility afforded to SICAP implementers, the programme is well placed to: • Fill the gap when there are limited services available for new communities in the area; • Work in collaboration with other service providers to support new communities across the country; • Create a link between new communities and other formal services In light of this, we recommend further defining SICAP's unique position and added value within the sector. From this, strategic awareness raising of SICAP's role should be promoted across key stakeholders, to ensure clear referral pathways to and from the programme are established to enable new communities to access relevant services and supports (e.g. housing, health, legal advice, further education). At the same time, and as demonstrated by this research project, SICAP gathers a substantial amount of information about new communities, from which important findings are discerned. We recommend decision makers utilise such findings to engage in evidence based policy level discussions about disadvantaged migrants, asylum seekers and refugees in Ireland, including in relation to the planned policy changes regarding Direct Provision that are currently outlined in the Programme for Government.

Recognise that asylum seekers face specific or unique challenges and barriers to social inclusion in Ireland and develop strategies to enable SICAP to better respond to their needs.	Given the specific barriers to social inclusion experienced by asylum seekers in Ireland (e.g. living in challenging housing circumstances, limited employment rights), we recommend removing asylum seekers as a category within the new communities target group and instead, identifying asylum seekers as a standalone target group within the programme. By doing so, the different needs of asylum seekers can be more strategically addressed by LDCs, especially those with a high number of asylum seekers living in their area.
	It is positive to note that SICAP has engaged a substantial proportion (15%) of asylum seekers living in Ireland. Further to this, we recommend strengthening the referral pathway between the International Protection Accommodation Service[44] and SICAP to enable asylum seekers who enter Ireland and require tailored supports (e.g. English language classes; social connections), to have the opportunity to access these supports as quickly as possible through SICAP's case management approach.
	Evidence shows that asylum seekers (and refugees) may experience trauma and mental health issues related to their reason for seeking asylum (e.g. gender based violence, experience of war). However, as noted by LDCs, the gaps in mental health service provision in Ireland mean that asylum seekers struggle to access relevant supports. Given SICAP's level of engagement with asylum seekers, the programme has an opportunity to partially fill this gap. We recommend engaging with the HSE and identifying appropriate capacity building for LDC staff that will equip them to provide a safe and sensitive first response to the mental health needs of asylum seekers (e.g. mental health first aid), while referrals to mainstream services remain outstanding. This upskilling of LDC staff will also benefit other clients on the SICAP caseload who are experiencing mental health issues.
Identify and agree best practice approaches, and develop relevant guidelines within the programme	Building on the examples of good practice documented in this paper, alongside other expertise and guidance that exists in the sector, we recommend developing practical guidelines around the best practice approaches to engaging and working with disadvantaged migrants, asylum seekers and refugees in Ireland.

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[44] The International Protection Accommodation Service are responsible for the procurement and overall administration of State provided accommodation and ancillary services for international protection applicants. (http://www.ria.gov.ie/)

Reflecting on the findings from this paper and the ESRI study on pre-employment supports,[45] (and in keeping with Government policy[46]) we also recommend providing further guidance around the intensive supports required for people with complex needs. This process should be evidence based and participatory in nature, involving representatives from LDCs, LCDCs and other organisations and services that work with new communities at a local and national level. An output of this process could be the development of pathways of change for asylum seekers, refugees and disadvantaged migrants, capturing the mix of different approaches and supports that they may need to meet their personal objectives. This then could be used as a basis for developing a more standardised approach to supporting this target group across the programme.

We also recommend developing a clear set of monitoring indicators for any future SICAP programme, that are specific to the circumstances of new community groups. This will provide a better understanding of the socio-economic status of disadvantaged migrants, asylum seekers and refugees supported by the programme, and also provide greater insight and learning into how change and progression happens through SICAP.

Deliver capacity building to SICAP implementers	To ensure SICAP delivers supports to members of new communities in a safe and sensitive manner, we recommend delivering expert-led (including from within the programme) capacity building for SICAP implementers in the following areas (and in addition to the mental health training mentioned above): • Cultural sensitivity awareness; and • Gender equality programming i.e. working with gender sensitive approaches We also recommend improving the programme level understanding of locally available services by conducting a comprehensive review or mapping of local services, which will be made available to key stakeholders and will inform the role of SICAP going forward.
Reflect on resource requirements	Additional financial investment will be required to strengthen and support the work of SICAP with new community groups going forward. We recommend reflecting on the following requirements:

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[45] Economic and Social Research Institute, September 2020
[46] The Pathways to Work Strategy 2016-2020 also promotes increasing the frequency of 1-2-1 engagement between Case Officers and unemployed people to at least one engagement per month for people already long-term unemployed, or assessed at being at high risk of becoming long-term unemployed, and at least once every two months for other jobseekers.

- Dedicated staff time (if needed) for LDCs in areas with a relatively high representation of new communities, bearing in mind the greater level and intensity of support that asylum seekers and refugees need to progress into employment or self-employment.
- Professional translation services that SICAP implementers can avail of to support their engagements with members of new communities.
- Ongoing capacity building requirements, including those described above.

ANNEX A – TABLES OF RESULTS

Characteristics

The tables below present the characteristics of disadvantaged migrants, asylum seekers, refugees and other clients on the SICAP caseload between January 2018 and December 2019. Statistical analysis was conducted using the Chi-square test to determine whether there is a statistically significant difference in the socio-economic characteristics across the new community groups i.e. whether the characteristics varied based on whether an individual was categorised as a disadvantaged migrant, asylum seeker, refugee or other SICAP client. As demonstrated below, a statistically significant difference (p-value <0.05) was observed for each of the characteristics.[47]

Gender

Table A.1 Proportion of disadvantaged migrants, asylum seekers, refugees and other SICAP clients broken down by gender

Indicator	Disadvantaged migrants	Asylum seekers	Refugees	Other SICAP clients	Chi-square result
Male	42%	58%	58%	52%	X-squared = 206.66 df = 3 p-value < 2.2e-16
Female	58%	42%	42%	48%	

Age

Table A.2 Proportion of disadvantaged migrants, asylum seekers, refugees and other SICAP clients broken down by age band

Indicator	Disadvantaged migrants	Asylum seekers	Refugees	Other SICAP clients	Chi-square result
15-24 years old	10%	15%	18%	18%	X-squared = 1334.9 df = 15 p-value < 2.2e-16
25-35 years old	31%	45%	32%	23%	
36-45 years old	35%	30%	31%	24%	
46-54 years old	16%	8%	15%	19%	
55-65 years old	7%	2%	4%	13%	
Over 65	1%	0%	1%	3%	

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[47] Due to rounding some of the figures across the tables add to more than 100%.

Educational attainment

Table A.3 Proportion of disadvantaged migrants, asylum seekers, refugees and other SICAP clients broken down by educational attainment at registration

Indicator	Disadvantaged migrants	Asylum seekers	Refugees	Other SICAP clients	Chi-square result
Educated above secondary level	50%	44%	30%	37%	X-squared = 404 df = 3 p-value < 2.2e-16
Educated secondary level or below	50%	56%	70%	63%	

Economic status

Table A.4 Proportion of disadvantaged migrants, asylum seekers, refugees and other SICAP clients broken down by economic status at registration

Indicator	Disadvantaged migrants	Asylum seekers	Refugees	Other SICAP clients	Chi-square result
Economically inactive	16%	78%	25%	19%	X-squared = 2680 df = 9 p-value < 2.2e-16
Employed	25%	3%	12%	23%	
Short-term unemployed	30%	16%	24%	27%	
Long-term unemployed	29%	2%	39%	31%	

Spatial disadvantage

Table A.5 Proportion of disadvantaged migrants, asylum seekers, refugees and other SICAP clients broken down by spatial disadvantage

Indicator	Disadvantaged migrants	Asylum seekers	Refugees	Other SICAP clients	Chi-square result
Affluent	17%	4%	8%	7%	X-squared = 1314.7 df = 12 p-value < 2.2e-16
Disadvantaged	16%	28%	27%	32%	
Marginally above average	35%	16%	21%	25%	
Marginally below average	32%	51%	41%	35%	
Other	1%	1%	2%	1%	

Social inclusion barriers

Table A.6 Proportion of disadvantaged migrants, asylum seekers, refugees and other SICAP clients experiencing barriers to social inclusion

Indicator	Disadvantaged migrants	Asylum seekers	Refugees	Other SICAP clients	Chi-square result
Jobless household	37%	82%	71%	40%	X-squared = 1249.5 df = 6 p-value < 2.2e-16
Lone parent	12%	20%	14%	13%	X-squared = 62.76 df = 3 p-value = 1.512e-13
Transport barrier	22%	66%	46%	21%	X-squared = 1649 df = 6 p-value < 2.2e-16
Homeless or affected by housing exclusion	7%	40%	18%	4%	X-squared = 3138.9 df = 6 p-value < 2.2e-16
Person with a disability	4%	3%	4%	9%	X-squared = 231.04 df = 6 p-value < 2.2e-16

How did individuals hear about SICAP?

Table A.7 Proportion of disadvantaged migrants, asylum seekers, refugees and other SICAP clients broken down by their referral pathway to the programme

Indicator	Disadvantaged migrants	Asylum seekers	Refugees	Other SICAP clients	Chi-square result
DSP service or programme	26%	6%	10%	30%	X-squared = 1185.6 df = 18 p-value < 2.2e-16
Engagement in SICAP activity	6%	9%	13%	4%	
Friends / family	29%	27%	24%	19%	
Local community group	10%	23%	24%	14%	
Other organisation	16%	18%	24%	20%	
Publicity/ social media/ website	13%	16%	4%	11%	
Requested but not provided	1%	1%	2%	2%	

Interventions

The tables below present the proportions of disadvantaged migrants, asylum seekers, refugees and other clients who received different types of interventions through SICAP. Statistical analysis was conducted using the Chi-square test to determine whether there is a statistically significant difference in the types of interventions received across the new community groups i.e. whether the interventions delivered varied based on whether an individual was categorised as a disadvantaged migrant, asylum seeker, refugee or other SICAP client. As demonstrated below, a statistically significant difference (p-value <0.05) was observed for each of the intervention types. A statistical difference was also observed with respect to the number of interventions each of the groups received.

Number of interventions

Table A.8 Proportion of disadvantaged migrants, asylum seekers, refugees and other SICAP clients broken down by number of interventions received

Indicator	Disadvantaged migrants	Asylum seekers	Refugees	Other SICAP clients	Chi-square result
2 interventions	33%	33%	34%	35%	X-squared = 82.106 df = 9 p-value = 6.161e-14
3 interventions	20%	20%	19%	22%	
4-5 interventions	23%	23%	23%	23%	
6 or more interventions	25%	24%	24%	20%	

Personal skills, wellbeing and capabilities interventions

Table A.9 Proportion of disadvantaged migrants, asylum seekers, refugees and other SICAP clients who received personal skills, wellbeing and capabilities interventions

Indicator	Disadvantaged migrants	Asylum seekers	Refugees	Other SICAP clients	Chi-square result
Received personal skills, wellbeing and capabilities supports	26%	38%	37%	20%	X-squared = 414.68 df = 3 p-value < 2.2e-16
Did not receive	74%	62%	63%	80%	

Information about lifelong learning

Table A.10 Proportion of disadvantaged migrants, asylum seekers, refugees and other SICAP clients who received information about lifelong learning (LLL)

Indicator	Disadvantaged migrants	Asylum seekers	Refugees	Other SICAP clients	Chi-square result
Received information about LLL	44%	55%	49%	36%	X-squared = 339.06 df = 3 p-value < 2.2e-16
Did not receive	56%	45%	51%	64%	

Labour market supports

Table A.11 Proportion of disadvantaged migrants, asylum seekers, refugees and other SICAP clients who received labour market supports

Indicator	Disadvantaged migrants	Asylum seekers	Refugees	Other SICAP clients	Chi-square result
Received labour market supports	28%	38%	33%	34%	X-squared = 81.473 df = 3 p-value < 2.2e-16
Did not receive	72%	62%	67%	66%	

Pre-start-up self-employment supports

Table A.12 Proportion of disadvantaged migrants, asylum seekers, refugees and other SICAP clients who received pre-start-up self-employment supports

Indicator	Disadvantaged migrants	Asylum seekers	Refugees	Other SICAP clients	Chi-square result
Received self-employment supports	23%	6%	11%	26%	X-squared = 346.51 df = 3 p-value < 2.2e-16
Did not receive	77%	94%	89%	74%	

Referrals to other organisations or services

Table A.13 Proportion of disadvantaged migrants, asylum seekers, refugees and other SICAP clients who received a referral to another organisation or service

Indicator	Disadvantaged migrant	Asylum seeker	Refugee	Other SICAP clients	Chi-square result
Received	11%	9%	10%	9%	X-squared = 31.148 df = 3 p-value = 7.912e-07
Did not receive	89%	91%	90%	91%	

Outputs

The tables below present the proportions of disadvantaged migrants, asylum seekers, refugees and other clients who progressed through SICAP. Statistical analysis was conducted using the Chi-square test to determine whether there is a statistically significant difference in the types of outputs achieved across the new community groups i.e. whether each of the outputs achieved varied based on whether an individual was categorised as a disadvantaged migrant, asylum seeker, refugee or other SICAP client. As demonstrated below, a statistically significant difference (p-value <0.05) was observed for each of the outputs.

Participated in a lifelong learning activity

Table A.14 Proportion of disadvantaged migrants, asylum seekers, refugees and other SICAP clients who participated in a lifelong learning activity

Indicator	Disadvantaged migrant	Asylum seeker	Refugee	Other SICAP clients	Chi-square result
Participated in LLL activity	51%	65%	50%	48%	X-squared = 132.73 df = 3 p-value < 2.2e-16
Did not participate in LLL activity	49%	35%	50%	52%	

Progressed into employment

Table A.15 Proportion of disadvantaged migrants, asylum seekers, refugees and other SICAP clients who got a job

Indicator	Disadvantaged migrant	Asylum seeker	Refugee	Other SICAP clients	Chi-square result
Got a job	6%	6%	6%	7%	X-squared = 14.262 df = 3 p-value = 0.00257
Did not get a job	94%	94%	94%	93%	

### Progressed into self-employment

Table A.16 Proportion of disadvantaged migrants, asylum seekers, refugees and other SICAP clients who set up their own business

Indicator	Disadvantaged migrant	Asylum seeker	Refugee	Other SICAP clients	Chi-square result
Set up a business	9%	1%	3%	11%	X-squared = 216.75 df = 3 p-value < 2.2e-16
Did not set up a business	91%	99%	97%	89%	

ANNEX B – NATIONAL LEVEL MAPS

The following figures present the national geographic distribution of members of new communities supported by SICAP. Figures B.1, B.2 and B.4 also include the location of Direct Provision centres[48] in Ireland. These maps highlight the widespread coverage of the programme. They also show that new communities tend to live in urban areas across Ireland.

Figure B.1 All new communities supported by SICAP, alongside the location of Direct Provision centres in Ireland

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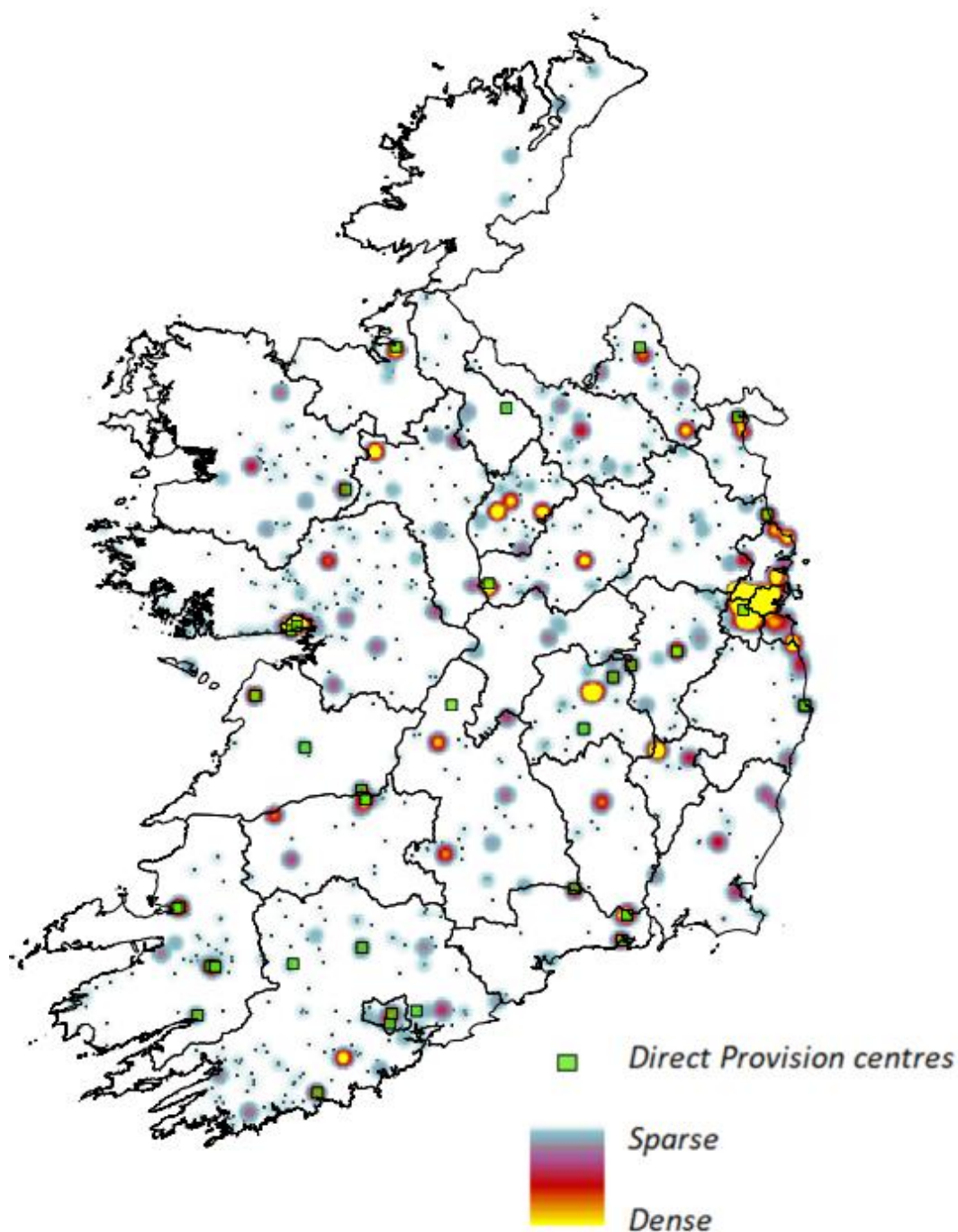
[48] The location of Direct Provision centres was sourced from the International Protection Accommodation Service, dated March 2020. Pobal estimated their location based on addresses provided.

Figure B.2 All new communities supported by SICAP, alongside the location of Direct Provision centres in Dublin
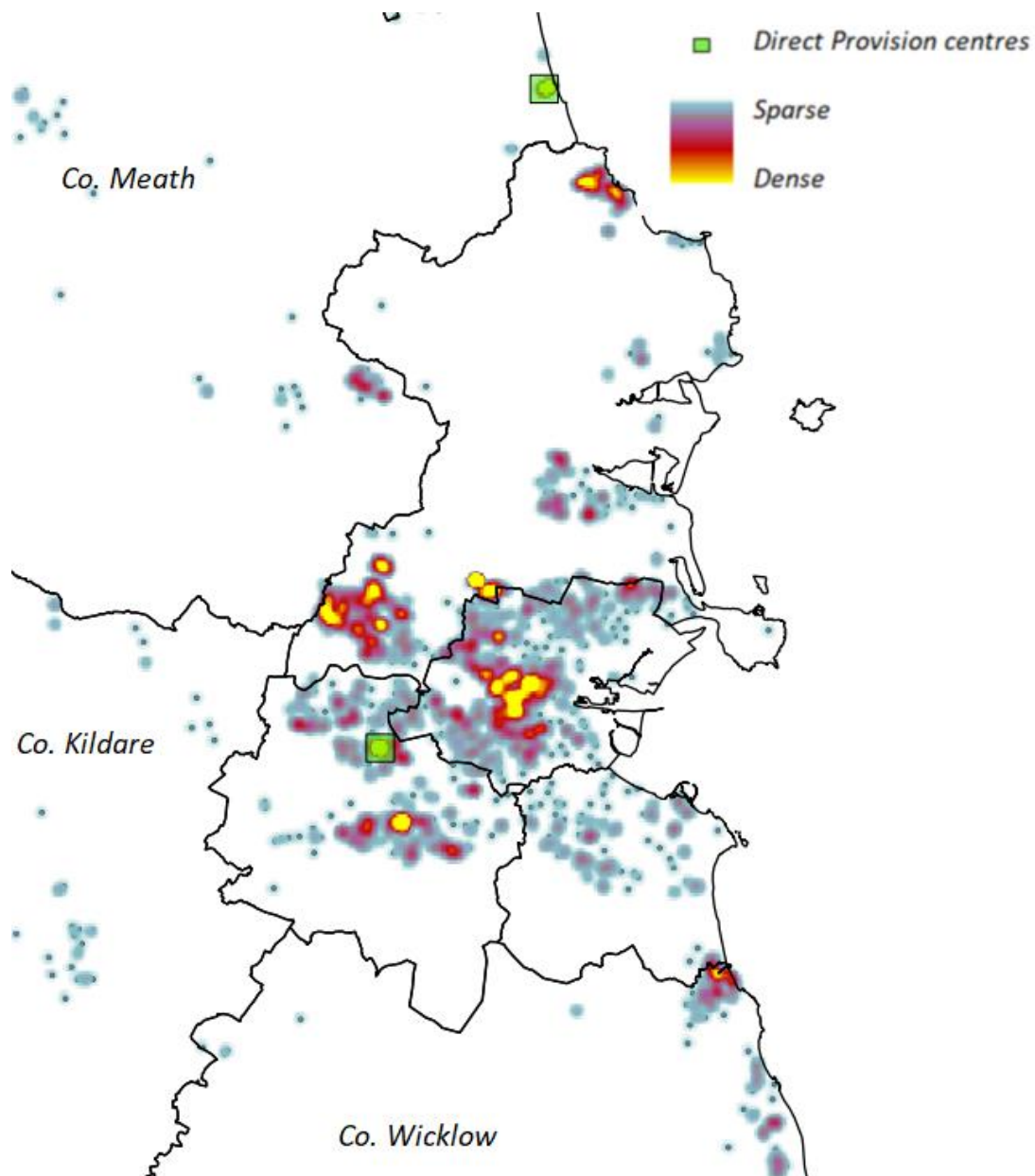
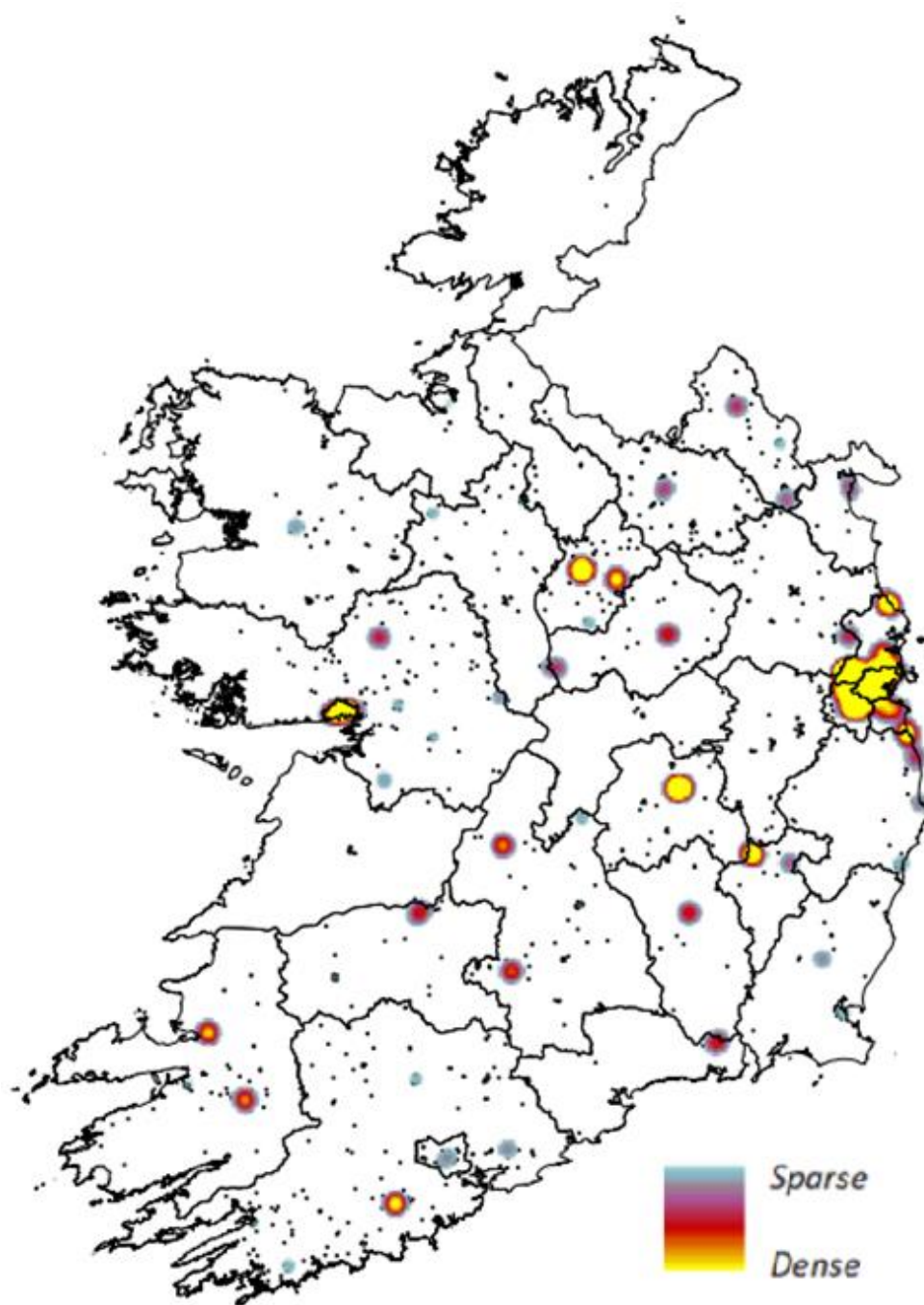Figure B.3 Geographic distribution of migrants supported by SICAP

Figure B.4 Geographic distribution of asylum seekers supported by SICAP, alongside the location of Direct Provision centres in Ireland
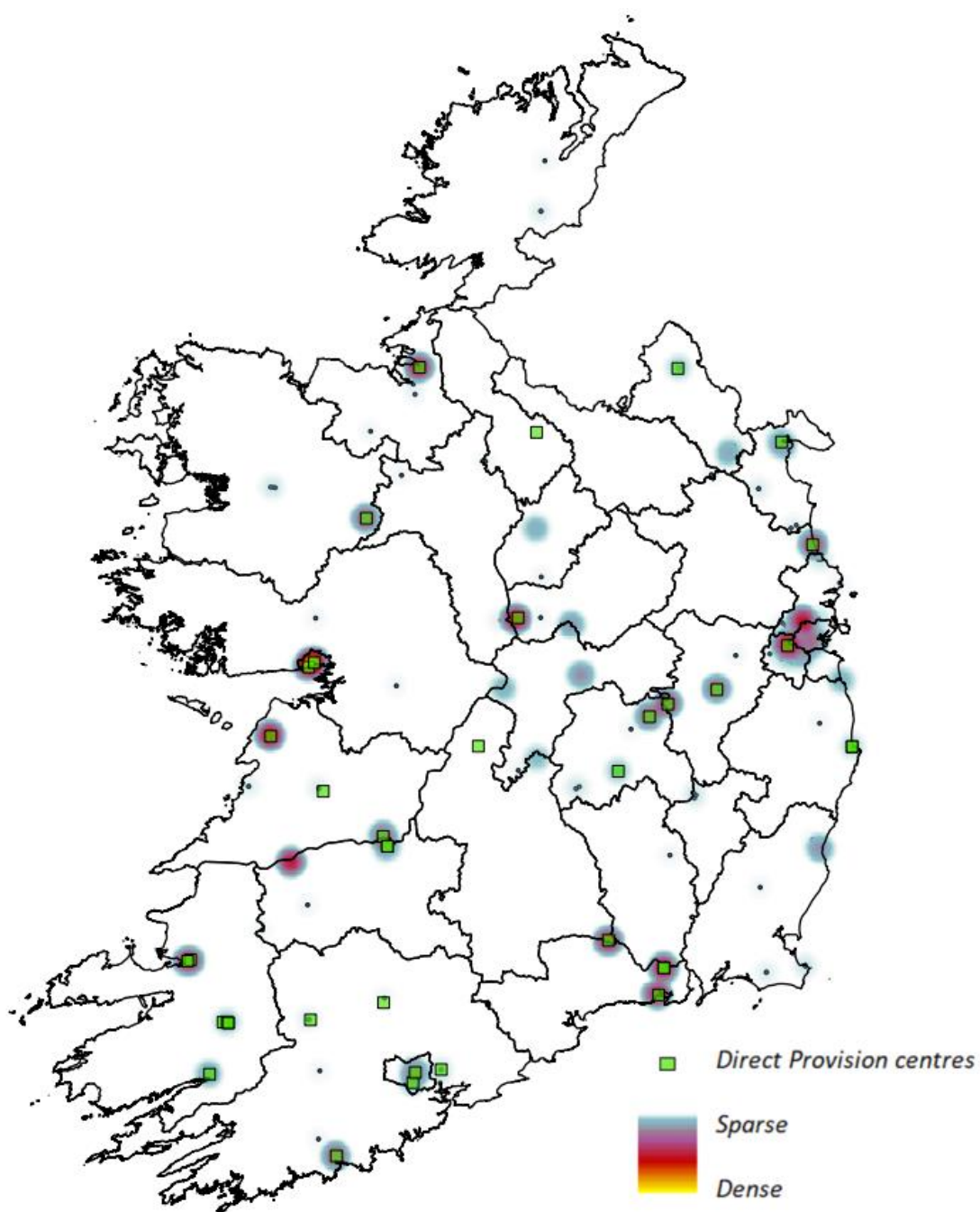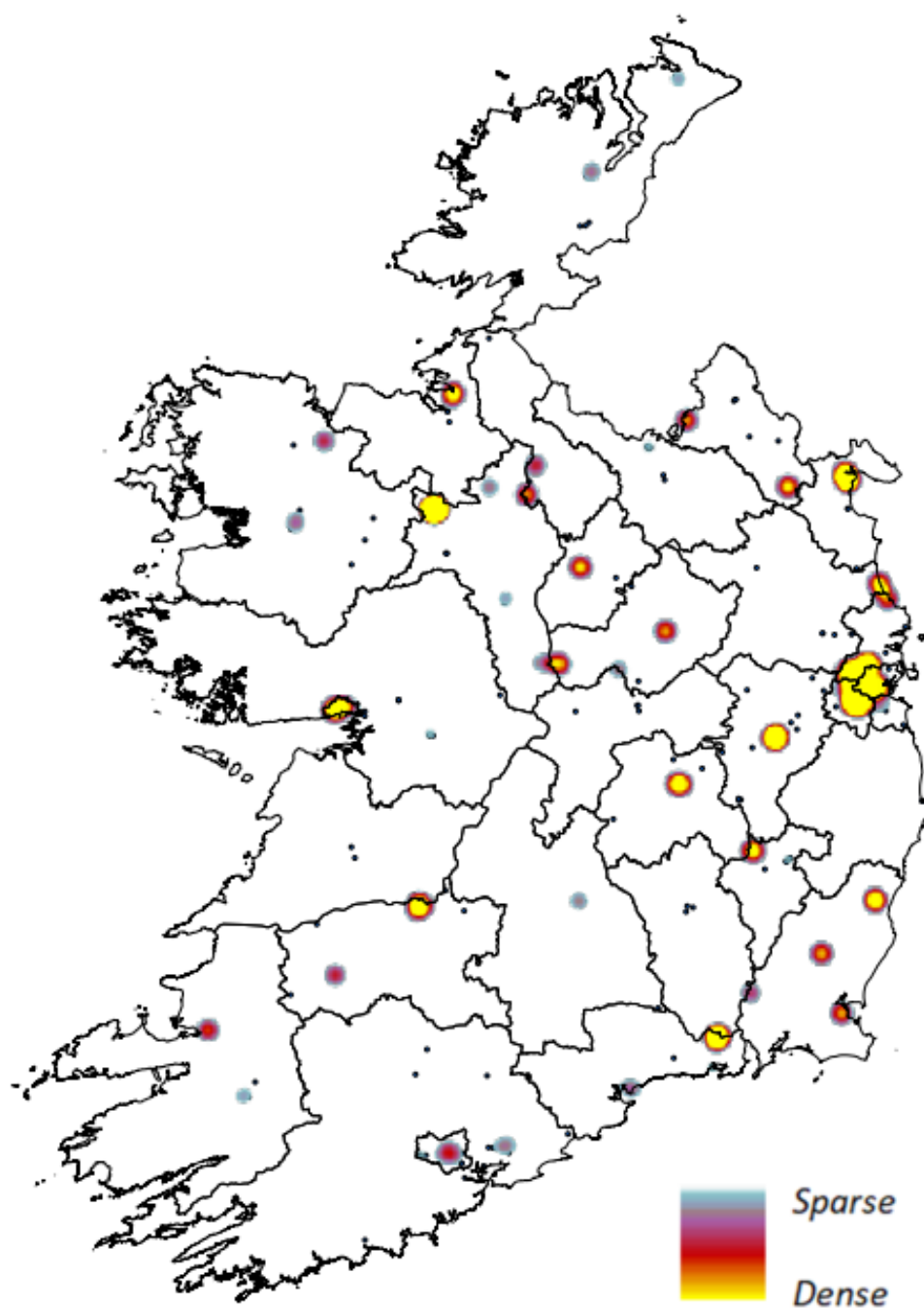
Figure B.5 Geographic distribution of refugees supported by SICAP

Sparse

Dense

ANNEX C – INTERNATIONAL MODELS OF INTEGRATION

United Kingdom

The UK's *Indicators of Integration framework 2019* (Figure C.1) consists of 14 key domains that are of central importance to integration. While there is no hierarchy amongst the domains, it is anticipated that a structured approach across each of the domains will contribute towards integration. These domains are categorised into four headings:

1. **Markers and means:** includes five domains (work, housing, education, health and social care, and leisure), which demonstrate progress towards integration, while also serving as a means to achieving greater integration.
2. **Social connections:** incorporates the different types of relationships that contribute to integration:
   a. social bonds – connections with others with a shared identity;
   b. social bridges – connections with people of a different background; and
   c. social links – connections with institutions, including local and national Government services.
3. **Facilitators:** includes the facilitating factors for the process of integration: language, culture, digital skills, safety and stability. A distinction between language and culture is considered important, while digital skills are becoming more necessary for people to access rights and services. Evidence also indicates that personal safety and social stability are crucial to allow people to engage with services and others.
4. **Foundation:** rights and responsibilities represent the basis upon which the process of integration can take place.

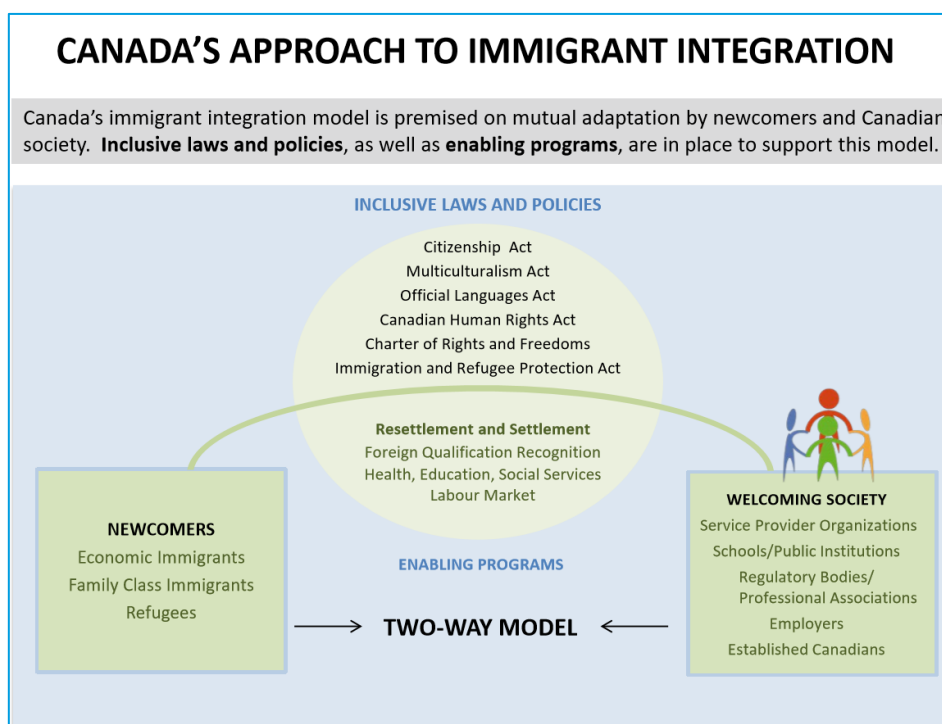*Figure C.1 The UK's Indicators of Integration framework*
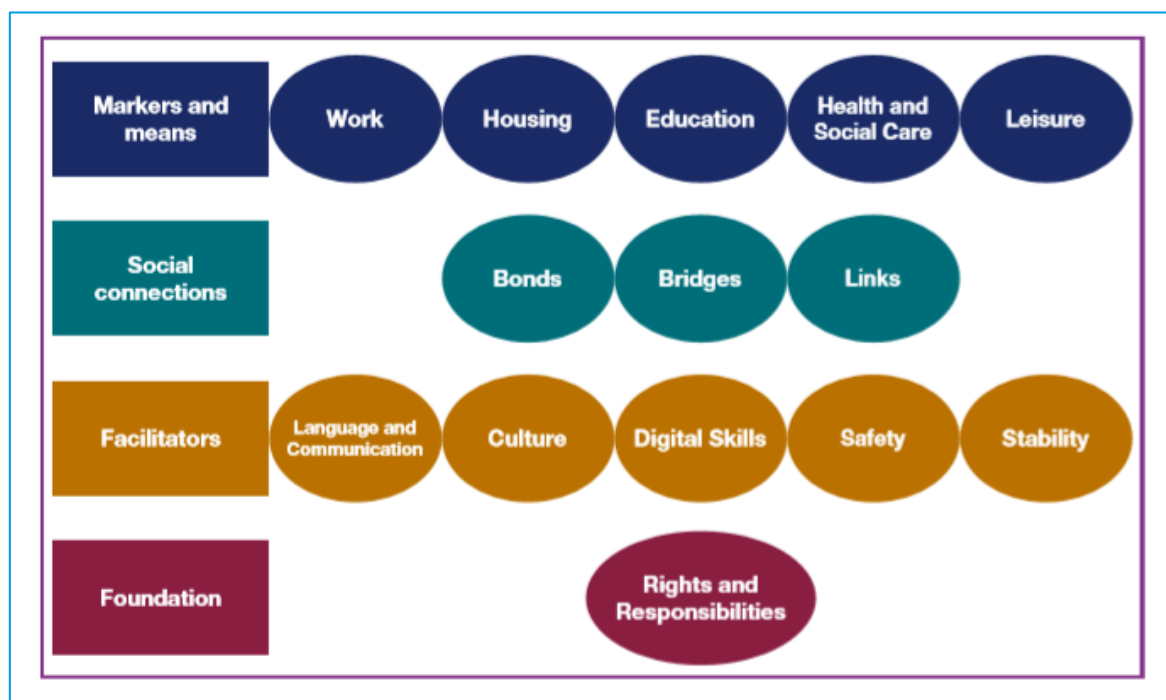
Canada

As demonstrated in Figure C.2 below, Canada's immigrant integration model is premised on mutual adaptation by newcomers and Canadian society.[49] The model is supported by inclusive laws and enabling programmes that empower newcomers to become actively involved in their communities. This begins with pre-arrival services, such as providing economic immigrants with information to support job readiness and networking, and providing refugees or humanitarian immigrants with information to prepare for initial settlement challenges. An assessment of newcomers' needs is important to determine the relevant social, economic, cultural, educational and health services that they need to successfully integrate into Canadian society. This can include:

- language learning,
- supporting access to settlement services: childcare, transport,
- orientation: enabling newcomers to navigate services, find jobs and fully participate,
- developing community connections,
- employment supports, and
- transitional supports for Government assisted refugees: includes reception and temporary housing, assistance in finding long-term housing.

The Canadian federal Government funds over 500 organisations to deliver settlement/integration services across the country (outside Quebec), while many are also funded by provinces or territories.

Figure C.2 Canada's approach to immigrant integration

CANADA'S APPROACH TO IMMIGRANT INTEGRATION

Canada's immigrant integration model is premised on mutual adaptation by newcomers and Canadian society. **Inclusive laws and policies**, as well as **enabling programs**, are in place to support this model.

INCLUSIVE LAWS AND POLICIES

Citizenship Act
Multiculturalism Act
Official Languages Act
Canadian Human Rights Act
Charter of Rights and Freedoms
Immigration and Refugee Protection Act

Resettlement and Settlement
Foreign Qualification Recognition
Health, Education, Social Services
Labour Market

ENABLING PROGRAMS

NEWCOMERS
Economic Immigrants
Family Class Immigrants
Refugees

→ **TWO-WAY MODEL** ←

WELCOMING SOCIETY
Service Provider Organizations
Schools/Public Institutions
Regulatory Bodies/
Professional Associations
Employers
Established Canadians

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[49] Prince, C. 2019

New Zealand

Similarly to the United Kingdom's integration framework, the New Zealand Government's 'New Zealand Migrant Settlement and Integration Strategy'[50] is guided by five key outcome areas: Employment, Education and training, English language, Inclusion, and Health and wellbeing. Its overall goal is to support migrants in New Zealand to integrate and fully participate in all aspects of New Zealand life (Figure C.3)

Figure C.3 New Zealand's migrant integration strategy

Separate to the Migrant Settlement and Integration strategy, New Zealand also has a 'Refugee Resettlement Strategy'[51] which is specifically aimed at refugees, with five different goals: Self-sufficiency, Participation, Health and wellbeing, Education and Housing. This reflects the unique challenges facing refugees as they integrate.

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[50] New Zealand Now website, Immigration New Zealand, Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment,
[51] Immigration New Zealand, Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment 2013

ANNEX D – BARRIERS TO SOCIAL INCLUSION EXPERIENCED BY NEW COMMUNITIES IN IRELAND

Table D.1 Description of barriers to social inclusion experienced by newcomers to Ireland

Barrier	Evidence
Limited proficiency in the English language	Limited proficiency in the English language impacts individuals' ability to understand their rights, to engage with other community members and to participate in the labour market and education. Prevalence of this barrier amongst new communities in Ireland has been documented in numerous reports.[52]
Access to employment opportunities	A range of barriers to newcomers accessing employment and self-employment opportunities in Ireland have been identified. Structural and legal barriers to employment are experienced by asylum seekers, who were granted partial rights to employment for the first time in June 2018: those who have been waiting nine months for a first instance decision are eligible to work or set up their own business in Ireland, subject to 6-month renewal.[53] *Note: changes were introduced in January 2021, whereby asylum seekers who have been waiting 6 months for a first instance decision are eligible to work, subject to 12-month renewal. (www.inis.gov.ie)* A recent ESRI study[54] shows that Black non-Irish nationals were only 0.4 times as likely as White Irish people to be employed. A further ESRI study suggests that ethnic discrimination may be influencing the poorer labour market outcomes[55] achieved by Black non-Irish individuals in Ireland, especially Black Africans.[56] Discrimination in accessing jobs in the Irish labour market has also been noted by civil society organisations in Ireland. An MRCI[57] study with over 100 migrants indicated that migrant workers are concentrated in service sectors, such as food, retail and personal household services, sectors that account for a large proportion of minimum wage jobs. This was increasingly observed during the COVID-19 pandemic; migrants were particularly vulnerable to loss of employment as they were over-represented in the tourism, food, retail and hospitality sectors, which were hardest hit by the pandemic.[58] OECD data indicates that the self-employment rate[59] of migrants from EU countries (10%) and non-EU countries (9%) in Ireland was lower than that of the Irish-born population (14%).[60] Research demonstrated that lower self-employment rates among migrants on the island of Ireland was linked to their limited social and economic capital (e.g. migrants often do not own assets, which in turn impedes their ability to access financial resources).[61]
Racism and discrimination	There is also substantial evidence of discrimination within the workplace in Ireland. A recent Equality and Discrimination survey (Q1 2019)[62] found that one in five people from non-white ethnic

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[52] Economic and Social Research Institute, November 2018; Maynooth University, Wezesha and Dunglave Associates, 2019
[53] Irish Naturalisation and Immigration Service's website: http://www.inis.gov.ie/en/INIS/Pages/labour-market-access
[54] Economic, Social and Research Institute, 2018.
[55] Labour market outcomes refer to the employment status and quality of jobs attained by migrants
[56] Economic and Social Research Institute, June 2020.
[57] Migrant Rights Centre Ireland, November 2015.
[58] Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection, May 2020
[59] Self-employment as a percentage of total employment (15-64 years old)
[60] OECD/European Union, 2019
[61] Lucas, S., 2016.
[62] Central Statistics Office, July, 2019

within the workplace	backgrounds experienced workplace discrimination in Ireland, while ESRI research[63] indicated that a wide range of people (White EU-East, White non-EU, Black Irish, Black non-Irish and Asian Irish) were 1.5 to 3.4 times more likely than White Irish people to experience discrimination in the workplace.
Access to higher level education	Students from different countries have different access routes to higher level institutions in Ireland. While the Free Fees Initiative[64] applies to EEA[65] students and students who have official refugee status,[66] asylum seekers can only access third level education if they can cover the costs of EU or non-EU fees, get the fees waived or access private grants or scholarships.
Recognition of qualifications	Obtaining recognition of qualifications gained outside of the EU can be very challenging in Ireland, and may lead to situations where non-Irish nationals are underemployed or are overqualified for the positions they are in. Such challenges are particularly evident in the construction, health and social care industries and are also experienced by Irish migrants returning to Ireland with qualifications acquired outside of the EU.[67]
Political participation	Everyone aged 18 years or older, and resident in Ireland regardless of their nationality, is entitled to vote in local elections and to run for local election.[68] This includes refugees and asylum seekers, while EU citizens are also entitled to vote in European elections. However, while 12% of the Irish population are non-Irish nationals[69] (Census 2016), just 0.3% of elected Councillors in Ireland were from a migrant background in 2019, highlighting the low participation rates amongst non-Irish nationals in local politics in Ireland.
Mental health issues	Refugees and asylum seekers may also experience physical and mental health issues related to their reason for seeking asylum (e.g. gender based violence, experience of war). People who have experienced these types of trauma have heightened needs and require specialist support. However, gaps are present in the mental health supports that are available.[70]
Cultural sensitivity awareness	"Cultural sensitivity is being aware that cultural differences and similarities between people exist without assigning them a value – positive or negative, better or worse, right or wrong."[71] It means that people from different cultures understand and respect each other's characteristics and do not value or rank one culture over another. Absence of such sensitivity from support providers can deter newcomers from engaging with services for support.

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[63] Economic and Social Research Institute, 2018.
[64] Under the Free Fees Initiative, the Department of Education and Skills pays the tuition fees to third level institutions on behalf of undergraduate students. However, most institutions collect an annual student contribution, which currently has a maximum rate of €3,000.
[65] Including Switzerland
[66] Including those granted leave to remain in Ireland
[67] Indecon, February 2018. Pg 57
[68] Citizens Information, 22 August 2019
[69] This does not include people with dual Irish nationality, who are classified as Irish in the census.
[70] Joint Committee on Justice and Equality, December 2019. Pg. 29
[71] Dabbah, M., Red Shoe Movement.

ANNEX E – PATHWAYS OF ENTRY TO IRELAND

EEA (and Swiss) nationals do not require a visa to enter Ireland. They also do not need an Irish Residence Permit to live in Ireland nor do they need an employment permit to take up employment or self-employment in the country.[I] General Irish policy promotes the sourcing of labour from within EEA states, although where skills shortages exist, employment permits may be granted to non-EEA citizens to supplement the existing labour force.[II]

Migrants from non-EEA countries require long-stay visas if they wish to enter the country for work or study purposes, after which they must register for an Irish Residence Permit if they intend to stay for longer than 90 days. Except in limited circumstance, non-EEA nationals require an employment permit to work in Ireland.[III]

To apply for **international protection** in Ireland, an individual must fear returning to their country of origin or country of former habitual residence or nationality. Their application is examined and processed by the International Protection Office (IPO), which sits within the Immigration Service Delivery (previously called INIS). The IPO determines whether the applicant qualifies for refugee status or subsidiary protection.[IV] In circumstances where the applicant does not qualify for refugee or subsidiary protection status, the Minister for Justice can grant them permission to remain in the State for another reason (e.g. family circumstances). Individuals who are granted international protection in Ireland are entitled to access employment, education, travel, health and social welfare benefits in the same manner that Irish citizens are entitled. They can also reside in Ireland for a specified period of not less than three years, which is renewable, subject to conditions. The Minister for Justice can revoke a refugee declaration under a number of circumstances, such as the circumstances that led to them being recognised as a refugee no longer exist or having been convicted of a serious crime, the person poses a threat to the community in the State.[V] However, evidence shows that this is not often applied in practice.[VI]

Since 2000, the Irish Government has also operated a **refugee resettlement programme** in collaboration with UNHCR. "Between 2000 and 2019, over 3,000 refugees from almost 30 nationalities were resettled to Ireland."[VII] As the refugee status of these individuals had already been determined by UNHCR, they did not need to apply for refugee status in Ireland. A person granted refugee status can apply for citizenship through naturalisation in Ireland "once they have acquired 3 years of reckonable residency. Residency is calculated from the date of arrival in the State."[VIII]

The Government set up the new Irish Refugee Protection Programme (IRPP) in 2015 to coordinate the admission of up to 4,000 people under resettlement and relocation programmes, in response to the global refugee crisis. A new phase was announced in December 2019, whereby a further 2,900 refugees will be welcomed to Ireland by 2023.[IX] The decision on the country of origin/country of refuge of the persons to be resettled is taken by the Minister in consultation with the Minister for Foreign Affairs and appropriate Government Departments and agencies.

[I] Citizens Information website, 8 November 2018

[II] Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation official website

[III] Citizens Information website, 31 January 2020

[IV] International Protection Office official website

[V] Citizens Information website, 3 January 2017

[VI] Economic and Social Research Institute, February 2019

[VII] UNHCR in Ireland official website

[VIII] Citizens Information website, 15 November 2019

[IX] Department of Justice and Equality official website

ANNEX F – METHODOLOGY

The research project used a mixed methods approach involving quantitative and qualitative analysis of secondary and primary data. The quantitative data was sourced from IRIS, an online system where LDCs record profile, intervention and output data for each beneficiary of the programme. The qualitative data came from LDC annual progress reports, LDC case studies and semi-structured interviews with six LDCs across the country: **Carlow County Development Partnership, Dublin City Community Co-operative, South West Mayo Development Company, SECAD Partnership, South Kerry Development Partnership, and Wexford Local Development**. As part of data preparation, 1,801 records (3% of total the individuals) in the Individuals dataset were excluded from the analysis for a variety of reasons.[72]

The quantitative analysis was mainly descriptive and focused on assessing differences across disadvantaged migrants, refugees, asylum seekers and other clients at three levels:

- Individual characteristics – gender, age, economic status, education level, social inclusion barriers
- Interventions – number of interventions and type of support
- Outputs/outcomes – type of output

This analysis was conducted using *Power BI* and *R Studio*[73] and detailed results can be found in Annex A. National level maps presenting the geographic distribution of disadvantaged migrants, asylum seekers and refugees on the caseload were developed using *ArcGIS* and are included in Annex B. The six LDC interviews were conducted, recorded and later transcribed by Pobal's Monitoring, Analysis and Outcomes team.

The following limitations should be noted:

- Individual data collected during the registration process is self-reported by participants.
- Some information about new communities that would be useful for analysis purposes is not collected by the programme e.g. length of time living in Ireland.
- While we considered conducting logistic regression analysis to determine the factors that contribute to a specific outcome, the data for some of the groups was limited. Once more data becomes available, more complex analysis can be conducted.
- Due to time constraints it was not possible to get input from all LDCs. The selection of the LDCs for interviews was based on Pobal's understanding of SICAP's work with new communities at a local level, alongside recommendations received from the Irish Local Development Network.[74] Therefore the interviews have not captured all of the experiences and challenges of LDCs' work in this area.
- The research did not engage with SICAP participants themselves to hear directly about their experience of the programme.

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[72] Due to a very low number of records, 62 individuals who identified as other gender were excluded. This was to ensure relevant statistical analysis disaggregated by gender was conducted. Data for 1,314 Individuals who did not provide a response when asked whether they belonged to any of the new communities category was excluded. As the data is self-reported by the individual, data quality issues were identified when nationality was examined and 28 records were excluded for asylum seekers or refugees with an EEA nationality. An additional 397 records were excluded due to data entry errors for exit dates.

[73] *R* is a programming language and software environment for statistical computing and graphics.

[74] The Irish Local Development Network is the representative body for Local Development Companies in Ireland.

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