

10.2. DIRECT PROVISION

INTRODUCTION – Why is this a Global Justice Issue?

Direct Provision is the system used to accommodate and provide basic welfare to people seeking asylum in Ireland. Direct provision centres are sometimes known as accommodation and reception centres and were originally conceptualised as a short-term system which receives and accommodates people for 6 months while they await the outcome of their asylum application.

The reality is that these centres actually can be people's homes for up to 10 years. This includes families with children, single males and females all living in the same buildings and sharing the same facilities. The standards of accommodation, living conditions and provisions vary from centre to centre and the majority are run by for-profit private contractors on behalf of the state. Most do not have access to facilities to cook for themselves and instead must eat at the set times, the food that is provided. Until 2018 asylum seekers had no right to work. Since 2018 there is restricted access once you have been waiting a minimum of 9 months for a first instance decision. Students can explore Ireland's policies around Direct Provision and asylum claims and whether they think these policies are fair.

GLOBAL GOAL and INDICATORS:

The justice issue of migration is featured in a number of indicators in the Global Goals. Most relevant are:

- 10.7. Responsible and well-managed migration policies
- 10.2. Promote Universal Social, Economic and Political Inclusion (irrespective of age, origin, ethnicity or other status)

SUGGESTED CURRICULUM LINKS:

- English
- Religious Studies
- CSPE

TEACHING AND LEARNING MATERIALS:

Resources/ Modules:

The Outsiders” Children living in direct provision in Ireland

Overview: A unit to support junior cycle English, using ‘The Outsiders: Our teenage life behind barriers,’ a RTE Radio 1 documentary produced by Carl O’Brien and Ciaran Cassidy.

Aim: To encourage teachers and junior cycle students to question preconceptions about asylum seekers and refugees, and to raise their awareness about the realities for people living in direct provision in Ireland, in the context of the ongoing global refugee crisis.

Activities:

Resource: NYCI – *Global Rights, Noble Goals “Refugees, Migration, The sustainable Development Goals and Youth”*.

Activity: ‘What’s it Worth’ Page 31-32

Theme: Exploring the financial reality of young people in Ireland who are part of the direct provision system

Aim: To introduce Direct Provision as the current model in Ireland for hosting Asylum Seekers and to facilitate the group to reflect on the spending habits of the average teen in Ireland and to contrast that with a young Asylum Seeker.

Overview: Students draw an average teenage in Ireland and map out their spending in a week. They are then given information about Direct Provision and reflect on the reality of this and how it impacts them.

Link: <https://www.youth.ie/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/NYCI-Global-Rights-Resource.pdf>

NOTE: The direct provision allowance has since increased from €17.20 to €38.80 for adults and €8.20 to €28.80 for each child from March 2019. So please adapt the activity accordingly.

TIP: Do a number of the activities in this resource as it will scaffold the students understanding of seeking asylum and why people come to be in direct provision in Ireland (and the complexities around migration).

Short Video Clips:

Irish Times (2019) Lives in Limbo

Overview: Short clips with young people and adults sharing their experience of growing up the direct provision system. It also provides an overview of the system, offers infographics and map of where all of the centres are in Ireland.

Link: <https://www.irishtimes.com/news/lives-in-limbo>

Irish Refugee Council – “Round up on the End of Institutional”

Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UOoQt6ia8DQ&feature=youtu.be>

Documentaries:

Direct Provision – Ireland’s Asylum Seekers (Approx 20mins)

Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qo1es0n9MPg>

Podcasts:

Dublin’s 98FM

“They’re Like Concentration Camps” - Should Direct Provision Centres Be Scrapped?

Link: <https://www.98fm.com/podcasts/98fm-39-s-dublin-talks/theyre-like-concentration-camps-direct-provision-centres-scrapped>

RTÉ Radio 1

Brian O'Connell – visits and reports Direct Provision centres

Link: <https://www.rte.ie/radio1/today-with-sean-o-rourke/category/direct-provision/>

Articles:

Irish Times (30th Jan 2018) “Q&A: What is Direct Provision ”

An overview of the direct provision system in Ireland through a Q&A

<https://www.irishtimes.com/news/social-affairs/q-a-what-is-direct-provision-1.3373747>

Irish Times (6th July 2019) “Kids living here don't have a normal childhood”

Contains information and stories about children's experience in Direct Provision

<https://www.irishtimes.com/news/social-affairs/kids-living-here-don-t-have-a-normal-childhood-1.3945279>

INFORMATION & CAMPAIGNING ORGANISATIONS:

Who: MASI – the Movement of Asylum Seekers in Ireland

Offers: It is an “independent platform for Asylum seekers to join together in unity and purpose”. Includes news on Direct Provision, #righttowork campaign and photos of protests against it.

Link: <https://www.masi.ie>

Who: SPUNOUT.IE

Offers: Includes information on Direct Provision, and ideas for young people on how to lobby against it.

Link: <https://spunout.ie/life/article/direct-provision-ireland>

Who: Irish Refugee Council

Offers: Excellent collection of information including a video on Direct Provision in Ireland, photographic exhibition, testimonies / stories from Direct provision and an video sharing the youth experience in the section ‘what's the alternative?’.

Link: www.irishrefugeecouncil.ie/campaigns-policy/latest-campaigns/direct-provision

NOTE: *The direct provision allowance has since increased from these videos €17.20 to €38.80 for adults and €8.20 to €28.80 for each child from March 2019.*

Who: Doras Luimní

Offers: Clear and concise overview of key issues and statistics associated with Direct Provision. Has clear campaign priorities and outlines past campaigns on the issue.

Link: <http://doras.org/direct-provision/>

Who: NASC - Irish Immigrant Support Centre

Offers: Information about government policies related to Direct Provision and areas they are campaigning on.

Link: <https://www.nascireland.org/campaigns/asylum-process-direct-provision>

ACTIONS - CREATING CHANGE:

Ideas for Political Engagement:

- Getting in touch with your local politicians - Make an appointment with your TD, phone, use emails and Twitter to contact them directly to discuss direct provision.
- Reach out to civil society and NGO's outlined and research the variety of campaigns that currently exist around direct provision. See how your school can contribute to one of these campaigns.
- Facilitate discussion in your school and local community - Invite along local TD's and community members and start stimulating discussion on direct provision and Ireland
- Reach out to civil society and NGO's - Engage with civil society groups and NGO's on the issue of Migration and direct provision.
- Organise activities and demonstrations to increase the frequency and quality of media coverage on Direct Provision
- Use social media to share information
- Have you heard any debates on the radio or news? If not, contact radio and TV broadcasters to ask for the debate to be publicised.

Ideas for School/ Community Actions:

- Create a myth busting display – taking myths, images and reports from the news and showca
- Organise a welcome evening/ dinner for parents, community members and people in direct provision. Link in with people early in the planning to see what type of evening they might enjoy.
- Organise an information evening with politicians about direct provision inviting parents, community members, etc

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Considerations / Sensitivities

- Direct provision centres are people's homes, often with families and children. Visiting will not be suitable and please be sensitive to this and how you may discuss the conditions of centres in open forum. Invite people to present their own experience and speak for themselves.
- People living in direct provision are seeking asylum and may have suffered trauma prior to leaving and/ or on their journey. Student projects including interviewing people or asking very personal questions may not be appropriate.