



Working Group on the Protection Process

Consultation with DP Residents – JRS Ireland Proposal

1. Context

At the end of June 2014 there were 4,324 residents living in 34 Direct Provision Centres throughout Ireland. There has been some controversy publicly about the membership of the Working Group and the need to ensure stronger representation of asylum seekers. Thus, for the legitimacy of the Working Group, it is critical that the voices of Direct Provision residents are heard and inform recommendations for change in the protection process and improvements in Direct Provision conditions and supports.

As the Draft Working Method noted:

Plenary also to consider at an early date how the views of applicants can be heard. While their views will be reflected by the members of the Group, in particular the representative bodies, it is desirable that a means be found to hear from them directly.

At the first plenary of the Working Group on the Protection Process session it was proposed that there would be some combination of:

- (a) Visits to centres
- (b) Written submissions
- (c) Oral submissions.

2. Proposal for Consultation Process

In looking at the process of consultation, the key challenge would appear to be selection criteria for centres to visits and selection process for individuals to make oral submissions. Secondly there is the issue of time; the consultation process with residents needs to be concluded in a timely manner to ensure that it informs Working Group (including Sub-Group) considerations.

An inclusive consultation process might include the following stages:

1. Written Submissions:

Invitation to resident committees or representative groups in all Direct Provision centres (and to other local groups or organisations, who work with and support residents) to make a written submission to the Working Group within 3 weeks, to be received by Friday 12 December 2014.

Focus on four main questions:

- a. What are the main challenges for residents in Direct Provision?
- b. How can living conditions and quality of life in Direct Provision system be improved?
- c. Suggest improvements to supports provided to people in the protection process, both inside and outside Direct Provision system.
- d. How have applicants experienced the asylum system? How could the process be improved?

2. Direct Consultation with Residents:

An inclusive consultation process would offer the opportunity for all centres to input. Thus, rather than visits to centres I am proposing that there would be 4 Regional Meetings based on the European Electoral Areas (more or less Munster, Leinster, Connaught/Ulster and Dublin).

A proposal is to invite 1 representative from each of the 14 centres with capacity < 100, 2 representatives from the 8 centres with capacity > 100 and < 200, 3 representatives from the 10 centres with capacity >= 200 and <= 300 and 4 representatives from the centre with capacity >= 300.

In total this would lead to 64 residents representatives identified nationally. These residents should include representatives of Single Males, Single Females, Couples, Two Parent Families and Single Parent Families.

The meetings could be hosted in the most central location e.g. Dublin, Cork, Galway and Navan. Travel expenses to meetings would be covered.

Centres could be offered two weeks to nominate representatives, no later than Friday 5 December 2014. Residents could be assisted in this process by the IRC Core Group of Asylum Seekers and other asylum support organisations working on the ground.

The meetings could take place in the week 8-12 December 2014. As many Working Group members as possible would be in attendance at consultation meetings but there should be 5 members at a minimum. The sessions would be minuted and address similar questions to those that form the basis for written submission. Consulting with vulnerable groups such as children or protection applicants who were the victims of torture or sexual violence would require tailored consultation processes.

Also, it should be noted that this proposed consultation process would be separate to the visits to centres by individual Working Group members.

3. Oral Submissions:

A second outcome from these regional consultations would be to select a regional representative to make an oral submission to the Working Group. Thus 4 regional representatives could be invited to present to the plenary session meeting scheduled for 22 December 2014.

Appendix 1 – Breakdown of Direct Provision Centres by Capacity

As at 30 June 2014, 11 centres have a residential capacity of 200 or more.

Table 1: Direct Provision Centre (Capacity > 200 persons)

County	Centre	Capacity	Occupancy	Resident Type
Meath	Mosney	600	590	Families/Couples/Single F
Westmeath	Athlone	300	237	Families
Cork	Kinsale Rd	275	234	Families/ Singles
Dublin	Balseskin (R)	269	238	Families/Couples/Singles
Mayo	Ballyhaunis	267	217	Families/Couples/Single M
Sligo	Globe House	255	198	Families/ Couples/ Singles
Clare	Knockalisheen	250	169	Families/ Singles
Dublin	The Towers	225	205	Families/ Single F
Monaghan	St Patricks	200	178	Families/ Single M
Galway	Eglinton	200	171	Families/ Single F
Cork	Millstreet	200	190	Families/ Single F

8 centres have a residential capacity of more than 100 but less than 200 persons.

Table 2: Direct Provision Centre (Capacity > 100 and < 200 persons)

County	Centre	Capacity	Occupancy	Resident Type
Dublin	Hatch Hall	175	111	Families/Couples/Singles
Laois	Montague	165	159	Families/ Couples/ Singles
Galway	Great Western	132	117	Families/ Single F
Waterford	Birchwood	115	111	Families/Singles
Limerick	Hanratty's	112	104	Singles
Dublin	Georgian Court	110	76	Families/ Couples/ Single F
Cork	Clonakilty	108	84	Families/ Couples/ Singles
Cork	Glenvera	107	97	Couples/ Singles

15 centres have a residential capacity of less than 100 persons.

Table 3: Direct Provision Centre (Capacity < 100 persons)

County	Centre	Capacity	Occupancy	Resident Type
Cork	Glounthane	95	70	Families/ Single M
Tipperary	Carrick On Suir	95	87	Families/ Couples/Single M
Kildare	Newbridge	90	73	Families/ Singles
Kerry	Atlas Killarney	90	35	Families/Singles
Kerry	Atlas Tralee	90	62	Single M
Kerry	Johnston Marina	90	65	Families
Limerick	Westbourne	90	81	Single M
Waterford	Viking House	85	82	Single M
Dublin	Watergate House	68	60	Couples/ Singles
Galway	Atlantic House	65	56	Families/Singles
Waterford	Ocean View	60	56	Families/Singles
Limerick	Mt Trenchard	55	58	Single M
Dublin	Staircase	33	29	Single M
Louth	Carroll Village	24	24	Families/ Single M
Kerry	Park Lodge	0	0	Temporary Closure