

# Before we start

[Flight - Short Film](#)



# Webinar: Welcoming Refugees from Ukraine and elsewhere in our Schools



# What We will Learn Today

- Information and explanation of terminology about Refugees and international protection
- The experiences and issues facing refugee families starting schools
- How to help teachers prepare for newly arriving Ukrainian
- How we can make sure the whole school is involved in the welcome
- Examples of helpful actions and activities
- Resources, links and signposts for more help.

## Key Facts about Refugees and Asylum Seekers

**Refugee:** Someone forced to leave their country because of fear of persecution or danger from war, race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion.

**Programme Refugees** have been accepted in groups ahead of arrival into Ireland. Recent examples include groups from **Afghanistan** and **Syria**.

**Asylum Seekers** are waiting for the Government to accept them as Refugees. They often live in Direct Provision while they await a decision.

Because of the current emergency causing millions to flee Ukraine, **Ukrainians** are being given **Temporary Protection** in Ireland and other EU countries, allowing them full rights to live, study, receive medical and welfare assistance and work here.

**'Migrant'** is a general term for anyone who has moved to Ireland from another country, including all the above categories, people from EU, international students etc.

## Facts and Figures About Refugees

Numbers of Refugees and Forcibly Displaced People Worldwide:  
Over 90 million.

The nationalities of largest numbers of refugees worldwide are:  
Syria, Afghanistan, Venezuela, Ukraine, South Sudan, Myanmar,  
Eritrea.

Countries currently hosting large numbers of refugees include:  
Pakistan, Iran, Turkey, Poland, Uganda, Colombia and  
Germany.

## Ukraine emergency

# Data from UNHCR Ireland

**Over 5.5 million**

Refugees estimated to have fled to neighbouring countries since 24 February and rising

**2.9 million**

People identified as in need of assistance in Ukraine before the recent events (source: [2022 Humanitarian Response Plan](#))

**More than 7 million**

People estimated to be internally displaced in Ukraine

Last updated 1 May 2022 - Visit the [Data Portal](#) for more statistics

# New arrivals in Ireland

- 300-500+ hundred people from Ukraine are arriving per day and thousands more are expected.
- Currently there is an understandable focus on Ukraine, but the fact that Ireland has committed to resettling thousands of Syrian refugees too from Lebanon and Jordan, many of whom have arrived
- and have given permissions to about 500 Afghans to come to Ireland too recently after Afghanistan fell to Taliban.



# Learn & Prepare

- It's important for our school communities to understand the special needs of people who have had to flee war
- Ensure that the staff are all briefed and know where to go for additional help
- Ensure that the focus is on the experience and needs of those arriving, not on the politics of what caused them to flee
- Be aware of children and young people who may feel especially vulnerable:
  - Children from Ukrainian and Russian families
  - Children from asylum seeker/refugee families
  - Children who have experienced loss or trauma



# Put Our Learning into Practice

- Be ready to respond to practical needs of new arrivals from Ukraine, for example books, uniforms, language and transport needs
- Ensure that there is a renewed commitment to treat **all** new arrivals with equal compassion and care, wherever they are from
- Where possible, help children to prepare by asking them to imagine what it's like to arrive in a new school where you know no-one and don't understand the language or culture here. This exercise can be age-adapted
- Be aware of sensitive issues (for example, the presence of children from Russia as well as Ukraine in a classroom)
- Take positive steps to ensure the well-being of the whole school community
- Involve the children in preparing welcoming materials/posters etc in all languages spoken in the school community



# Emotional needs of Refugees

- Children may be experiencing **trauma**. Know where to go for help
- Children may be experiencing **grief or anxiety** about family members, friends, pets, left behind.
- Children may feel **confused, isolated and friendless**
- **Parents** will also have many emotional needs
- Maintain an atmosphere of **Calm, Safety, Belonging and Hope**



# Actions

- How would newly arriving families in our area know that our school is ready to welcome newly arriving refugees?
- Consider WELCOME signs and materials in languages (Ukrainian) of new arrivals
- Form a welcoming committee with representatives from every class
- Check the need for uniforms, books etc - what help is needed?
- Inviting children to create Art Poetry or Music to express the Welcome



# Actions

- What kind of welcome information do we have for new families?. Is it clear for people who don't know our Education System? Can it be translated into other languages?
- Is there a 'sanctuary space' in the school?
- Celebrate diversity days to highlight food, culture, languages, music of all nationalities in our school
- EAL - set up systems and complement classes with 'language buddies' (see resources)
- A welcoming event for new families (including parents)
- Language learning help for parents



# Sustainability

- Welcoming newly arrived refugees is an ongoing need, not just a one-off
- Make sure that everyone involved feels supported and part of a bigger picture
- Ensure that self-care and well-being for **all** is at the heart of our activities and plans
- Consider activities such as Mindfulness to help children and staff
- Enjoy the adventure and learning of new arrivals and all the talents and richness of culture they are bringing to the school community

There are  
many  
excellent  
resources to  
help you

- [Schools of Sanctuary Ireland](#)
- [Narrell Byrne EAL Guidance](#)
- [Education Authority \(NI\) Toolkit for Diversity in Primary School](#)
- [Education Authority \(NI\) Toolkit for Diversity in Post-Primary School](#)
- [National Educational Psychological Service \(NEPS\)](#)
- [Ukrainian Fact Cards](#)
- [ELSTA Ireland, EAL, multilingualism, Irish, primary and post primary teachers](#)
- [Psychological-Aid-for-Refugee-Care.pdf](#)



# Ideas and Resources to Help

- [Rofi Schools of Sanctuary Resource Pack](#)
- [Mount Sion CBS School of Sanctuary Portfolio](#)
- [Bunscoil Loreto School of Sanctuary Portfolio](#)
- [Video: How to help newly arrived Afghan refugees](#)
- [Forced to Flee: Child on the Move \(A Teaching Resource\)](#)
- [In Search of Safety: UNICEF UK teaching resource](#)
- [Leaving Home: The Stories of Brigit and Sami from Trocaire](#)



# Resources

- [Teaching refugee and asylum issues - Amnesty International](#)
- [Ireland Refugee Education Pack](#)
- [Jesuit Refugee Service Change Programme](#)
- [Yellow Flag Programme](#)
- [Teaching Materials from UNHCR Ireland](#)
- [UNHCR Teaching about refugees guide](#)
- [In Search of Safety - Teaching about the refugee crisis \(UNICEF\)](#)
- [UNHCR - Teaching materials ages 6-9](#)
- [UNHCR - Teaching materials ages 9-12](#)
- [UNHCR - Ukraine emergency](#)
- [Ukraine response - Irish Refugee Council](#)
- [Information for people fleeing Ukraine - Migrant Rights Centre of Ireland](#)

# Sharing

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- Many schools are in the same situation. Be ready to share your welcoming ideas and resources with other schools and to learn from them
- Get to know the services and voluntary groups in your town or area that are involved in welcoming refugees. Pass this information on to newcomers
- Get to know the FE Colleges and other providers of Adult Education, and link in with them
- Celebrate your welcome as widely as you can



# Stay in Touch

For more resources or to become a School of Sanctuary, please check our website

<https://schools-ireland.cityofsanctuary.org/> or email  
[schools@ireland.cityofsanctuary.org](mailto:schools@ireland.cityofsanctuary.org)

Northern Ireland Schools of Sanctuary: [Contact Intercultural Education Service | Education Authority Northern Ireland \(eani.org.uk\)](#)

The Schools of Sanctuary featured today are **Bunscoil Loreto Gorey; Stepside ETSS Dublin 18; Mount Sion CBS Secondary School, Waterford**. Please contact them if you need more information about what they are doing to welcome refugees.

Many thanks also to Mehwish, Lizi, Kinda and Rita who represented Sanctuary Ambassadors in today's webinar.

THANK YOU!

# At the End

- “All Are Welcome” is a lovely song that children can learn to reinforce their commitment to welcoming all refugees

[All Are Welcome - Song](#)