



**Press Release**  
Friday 26<sup>th</sup> February 2021

## **Doras welcomes Government White Paper on ending Direct Provision**

Doras welcomes the Government White Paper on ending Direct Provision, published on Friday, calling it a 'significant milestone' in the campaign to end the system. The White Paper outlines the plan by the Department of Children, Equality, Disability & Youth on how it will end Direct Provision by the end of 2024, while transitioning to new not-for-profit reception system.

"While the campaign to end Direct Provision is far from over", said John Lannon, Doras CEO, "we are relieved to see the White Paper reflect a number of recommendations from the Day report, released in October. This is a significant milestone in the long campaign to end Direct Provision, and we broadly welcome the plans to replace it, outlined by the Department of Children, Equality, Disability and Youth."

The White Paper outlines a two-phase system whereby people will spend up to four months in a reception centre moving to community-based own-door accommodation for families and own door or own-room accommodation for single people. Doras welcomes the limit on stays in reception centres, during which time health needs and vulnerability assessments are carried out to inform the next phase of community-based accommodation and supports.

"We welcome the emphasis on early integration support for all protection applicants during an initial four-month period," said Lannon, "as well as specific focus on the needs of children, young people, families and people with particular vulnerabilities. For too long international protection applicants have been excluded from society, and now at least we have a plan for how this can be addressed."

The White Paper recognises the importance of fair and fast international protection procedures, and reducing the processing times for applicants. This puts the onus on the Department of Justice to ensure adequate steps are taken to towards reduce the time spent in the asylum process. Doras also calls for people currently in the system for over two years to be granted leave to remain, to reduce backlogs in case processing.

"We are concerned to see that there is no clear plan to deal with the large backlog in International Protection cases. The current Direct Provision system is set up to accommodate 3,500 people, yet it currently accommodates over 7,000. As recommended in the Day report, we call for leave to remain to be granted to people who have been in the system for two years or more. Many people's lives have been on hold in the system for several years, and they should not be on hold for any longer."

"We recognise that implementing the White Paper is a complex body of work that requires a whole of government approach. Nonetheless we would like to see the closure of centres beginning this year, instead of 2022, as stated in the White Paper. Conditions in many direct provision centres are currently below acceptable standards, and the daily experiences of international protection applicants are far from acceptable."

“The negative impact living in Direct Provision has on people has been repeatedly highlighted by NGOs, in academia, by members of the public, public representatives, and most importantly international protection applicants for almost 21 years now. It is good to see a Government finally recognising that and responding, but the real work starts now. We look forward to working together with Government and other organisations towards realisation of this ambitious plan.”

**ENDS**

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