

PQ Digest | 16.04.18 – 20.02.18

Quick Links

17th April 2018	2
Direct Provision System	2
Direct Provision System	3
Passport Applications Data	4
Immigration Policy	12
Direct Provision System	13
Direct Provision Data	14
Direct Provision Data	14
Leave to Remain	15
Direct Provision System	16
Naturalisation Certificates	17
Naturalisation Applications	17
Work Permits Applications Data	18
Direct Provision Payments	18
19th April 2018	20
Naturalisation Applications	20
Naturalisation Certificates	21

17th April 2018

Direct Provision System

50. **Deputy Mick Wallace** asked the **Minister for Justice and Equality** his views on the current management and conditions of direct provision centres here; his plans to initiate a review into the use of direct provision; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [16536/18]

Minister of State at the Department of Justice and Equality (Deputy David Stanton): As the Deputy may be aware, the Direct Provision system encompasses the range of State services including accommodation, food, health and education directly provided to international protection applicants through all the relevant Government Departments and Agencies. It is a whole-of-government support system for those seeking international protection in Ireland, although the term is more often used to describe the Accommodation Centres provided by the Reception and Integration Agency of my Department. Notwithstanding the criticisms, particularly in terms of length of stay, the system has proven effective in ensuring that those who come to our country seeking international protection receive food and shelter and have immediate access to our state services. Over 60,000 people have been provided with shelter since its inception.

It is not possible to predict how many people may arrive in any given year seeking international protection. However, the system ensures that all applicants can be offered immediate shelter, full board accommodation and a range of services, such as health and education while their applications are being processed. Not every person who seeks international protection chooses to accept this offer, and some choose to live independently or with friends in communities across the country, as they are entirely free to do.

If the system was simply disbanded, as some have been calling for, without a viable alternative, the risks of consigning vulnerable people, who know neither our country, its systems nor our language, to poverty, exploitation and homelessness are multiplied. The Government cannot countenance that. I have not heard a viable alternative put forward as to how a person, who has unestablished needs and turns up here unexpectedly, can be immediately provided with shelter and an acceptable level of care.

In the absence of an alternative, any commitment to abolish a system that offers instant shelter and support would pose a serious risk to the wellbeing of protection applicants and undermine our international obligations.

As the Deputy will be aware, the system has already been subject to a complete review in 2014. Mr. Justice Bryan McMahon chaired a Working Group comprised of advocates and officials and made 173 recommendations for reform of the protection process including direct provision. The report was accepted by Government and three separate itemised progress reports on these recommendations were published on my Department's website, resulting in change being achieved across 98% of the recommendations.

Very significant changes and improvements have been made to our Direct Provision Centres over the last two years. For example, substantial reforms to the living conditions of applicants. Five centres now provide independent living (food hall distribution and cooking) facilities to a total of 1,430 residents and it is planned that an additional 900 residents will have access to these facilities before the end of this year. Indeed by early next year over half of residents will have access to independent living within the next year.

Of course, individual problems and issues can and do arise when any individual interacts with a service provided by the state but, in such circumstances, where complaints are made and applicants are not happy with how matters are resolved, International Protection Applicants now have full access to the services of the Ombudsman and Ombudsman for Children.

Following on from the improvements made arising from the recommendations in the McMahon Report, the Government has looked to further consolidate those improvements and build upon them. In particular, the decision to opt into the (recast) Reception Conditions Directive represents another major reform of the process. The requirements now being formally placed on our system of Direct Provision to comply formally with EU norms is another welcome advancement, which will be concluded by June of this year. The opt-in to the EU's Recast Reception Directive will further improve our processes, subject them to external oversight and place our services on a common European standard. The opt-in process is continuing and this will allow the European Commission to conduct its assessment of the management and conditions pertaining to our Direct Provision system and present their findings in the future.

I can assure the Deputy that the Government is committed to the ongoing reform in relation to Direct Provision or any other aspect of our asylum system that may be required in order that we have a system in Ireland that reaches or exceeds the standards required by the Reception Conditions Directive and that will compare favourably with the best systems of our EU partners.

Direct Provision System

83. Deputy Donnchadh Ó Laoghaire asked the **Minister for Justice and Equality** the steps being taken to ensure that residents of direct provision centres are being advised of their right to vote in local elections in 2019; the way in which contact with candidates will be facilitated in order that residents can engage fully with the democratic process. [16543/18]

Minister of State at the Department of Justice and Equality (Deputy David Stanton): My Department, through the Reception & Integration Agency (RIA), has always facilitated and encouraged the registration of and voting by protection applicants in local elections.

The general policy in relation to local elections has been to allow candidates to drop off election leaflets which could be placed in a common area in the centre where they could be picked up by residents. Candidates can provide, on the leaflets, contact details or times of political meetings outside the centre that residents can attend.

Given the particular nature of the accommodation provided in centres, there are a number of factors that would deter unrestricted access by candidates to the living quarters of residents. These include, the communal nature of the accommodation system; the desirability that they operate in a politically neutral environment; the many practical and logistical difficulties that would arise for centre managers in providing unsupervised access in circumstances where families and children live together.

This general policy ensures that there are no restrictions placed on residents' voting rights, or on their rights to access whatever information candidates wish to convey to them, or on any rights to meet with candidates, albeit outside centres. It also ensures privacy in the residential units and the on-going protection of children in the centre.

There is however an opportunity for the newly established Friends of the Centre group at each centre to disseminate information to residents on how to register to vote and on the importance of local government within the political structure of the State as well as the responsibility of exercising a franchise where it has been recognised. The Friends of the Centre groups have the added benefit of sharing information and raising awareness about voting, in a informal way. Closer to the election date, the Friends of the Centre groups will be encouraged to communicate with residents on this important issue.

Passport Applications Data

199. Deputy John Deasy asked the **Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade** the number of Irish passport applications received and approved through each application channel; and the applicants' countries of origin since 23 June 2016, the date of the UK Brexit referendum. [16508/18]

Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade (Deputy Simon Coveney): The Passport Service offers a range of convenient channels for submission of passport applications by Irish citizens at home and abroad. For citizens resident in the state, applications can be submitted through the Passport Express postal service, through the award-winning online passport application service or, in certain circumstances, in person through the counter service in Dublin and Cork.

Table 1 outlines the total number of passport applications received, approved and issued to citizens residing in the state by application channel for the period from 23 June 2016 to 12 April 2018:

Table 1: Passports issued to applicants resident in the State during the period from 23 June 2016 to 12 April 2018

APPLICATION CHANNEL	PASSPORTS ISSUED
An Post Passport Express	715,702
Online Applications	108,483
Counter Applications (Dublin and Cork)	22,446
TOTAL	846,631

Residents of Northern Ireland may submit applications through the online passport application service, through the Northern Ireland Passport Express service and, in certain circumstances, through the Dublin or Cork counter service.

Passport applications from Irish citizens residing outside the island of Ireland may be submitted either through the online passport application service or through the network of Irish Embassies and Consulates worldwide.

For the period of 23 June 2016 to 12 April 2018, the total number of passports issued to Irish citizens on foot of an application through the Northern Ireland Passport Express service or through the online passport application service where a delivery address in Northern Ireland is noted was 139,062.

For the same time period, the total number of passports issued to Irish citizens on foot of an application made by post or in person through the London Passport Office or through the online passport application service where a delivery address was in Great Britain is noted was 185,977.

Table 2 outlines the country by country breakdown of the passports issued through the online passport application service for the time period requested. The country cited is based on the applicant's postal address.

Table 3 lists the number of passports issued by each of the Irish embassies for the time period requested.

Both tables exclude applications from Northern Ireland and Great Britain.

Table 2: List of passports issued following applications via the online passport application service for the period 23 June 2016 to 12 April 2018 (Excluding Ireland, Northern Ireland and Great Britain):

COUNTRY OF RESIDENCE	PASSPORTS ISSUED
AFGHANISTAN	4
ALGERIA	2
ANDORRA	3
ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA	1
ARGENTINA	39
ARUBA	1
AUSTRALIA	3,665
AUSTRIA	82
BAHAMAS	3
BAHRAIN	19
BANGLADESH	3
BARBADOS	5
BELARUS	4
BELGIUM	242
BELIZE	1
BERMUDA	28

BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA	3
BOTSWANA	3
BRAZIL	41
BRUNEI DARUSSALAM	2
BULGARIA	20
CAMBODIA	11
CAMEROON	1
CANADA	1,572
CANARY ISLANDS	13
CAYMAN ISLANDS	35
CHILE	12
CHINA	64
COLOMBIA	15
COOK ISLANDS	2
COSTA RICA	4
CROATIA	6
CYPRUS	22
CZECH REPUBLIC	47
DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO	1
DENMARK	92
DOMINICAN REPUBLIC	2
EAST TIMOR	1
ECUADOR	2
EGYPT	27
ERITREA	1
ESTONIA	8
ETHIOPIA	1
FALKLAND ISLANDS (MALVINAS)	1
FIJI	2
FINLAND	44
FRANCE	721
GEORGIA	3
GERMANY	737
GHANA	2
GIBRALTAR	10
GREECE	37
GUERNSEY	24
HONDURAS	3
HONG KONG	81
HUNGARY	25
ICELAND	3
INDIA	40
INDONESIA	12
IRAN, ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF	1

ISLE OF MAN	62
ISRAEL	43
ITALY	221
JAMAICA	1
JAPAN	77
JORDAN	13
KENYA	27
KOSOVO	2
KUWAIT	5
LAO PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC	2
LATVIA	5
LEBANON	6
LIBYA	2
LUXEMBOURG	124
MACAU SAR	3
MALAWI	4
MALAYSIA	31
MALDIVES	1
MALTA	36
MARTINIQUE	1
MAURITIUS	17
MEXICO	48
MONACO	7
MOROCCO	1
MOZAMBIQUE	2
MYANMAR	3
NAMIBIA	1
NEPAL	1
NETHERLANDS	457
NETHERLANDS ANTILLES	1
NEW ZEALAND	949
NICARAGUA	2
NIGERIA	19
NORWAY	61
OMAN	4
PAKISTAN	7
PANAMA	9
PAPUA NEW GUINEA	2
PERU	20
PHILIPPINES	11
PITCAIRN	1
POLAND	31
PORTUGAL	71
PUERTO RICO	2

QATAR	27
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH SUDAN	1
ROMANIA	13
RUSSIA	15
RWANDA	2
SAUDI ARABIA	28
SEYCHELLES	1
SINGAPORE	128
SLOVAK REPUBLIC	11
SLOVENIA	4
SOLOMON ISLANDS	1
SOUTH AFRICA	1,189
SOUTH KOREA REPUBLIC OF KOREA	27
SPAIN	865
SRI LANKA	6
SUDAN	2
SWAZILAND	3
SWEDEN	165
SWITZERLAND	317
SYRIAN ARAB REPUBLIC	3
TAIWAN, PROVINCE OF CHINA	16
THAILAND	81
TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO	14
TUNISIA	1
TURKEY	35
TURKS AND CAICOS ISLANDS	6
U.S. OUTLYING MINOR ISLANDS	2
UGANDA	4
UKRAINE	2
UNITED ARAB EMIRATES	309
UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA	7
UNITED STATES	6,000
URUGUAY	2
VATICAN CITY STATE	2
VENEZUELA	2
VIETNAM	51
VIRGIN ISLANDS (BRITISH)	3
VIRGIN ISLANDS (U.S)	1
ZAMBIA	6
ZIMBABWE	16
TOTAL	19,617

Table 3: List of passports issued following applications made via Irish embassies and consulates during the

period 23 June 2016 to 12 April 2018 (Excluding Ireland, Northern Ireland and Great Britain):

Please Note: Many Irish Embassies are accredited to, and provide passport services for, Irish citizens in more than one country. The following table is organised by receiving Mission. Not all accreditations are listed and listing does not necessarily mean that passport applications have been received from each State of accreditation.

MISSION	ACCREDITED TO:	PASSPORTS ISSUED
ABU DHABI	- UAE, Kuwait, Qatar, Afghanistan	2,641
ABUJA	- Nigeria, Chad, Ghana, Senegal	497
ADDIS ABABA	- Ethiopia, South Sudan	32
ANKARA	- Turkey, Azerbaijan, Iran, Pakistan	191
ATHENS	- Greece, Albania, Serbia	266
BANGKOK	- Thailand, Myanmar	642
BEIJING	- China, Mongolia	1,568
BERLIN	- Germany	2,990
BERNE	- Switzerland, Algeria, Liechtenstein	1,478
BRASILIA	- Brazil	221
BRATISLAVA	- Slovakia	47
BRUSSELS	- Belgium	1,117
BUCHAREST	- Romania, Moldova, Macedonia	135
BUDAPEST	- Hungary, Republic of Kosovo, Montenegro	114
BUENOS AIRES	- Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Paraguay, Uruguay	316

CAIRO	- Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria,	281
CANBERRA	- Australia, Fiji, New Zealand, Solomon Islands, Papua New Guinea	18,691
COPENHAGEN	- Denmark, Iceland	412
DAR-ES-SALAAM	- Tanzania, Burundi, Eritrea	65
FREETOWN	- Sierra Leone	6
HANOI	- Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos	230
HELSINKI	- Finland	143
JAKARTA	- Indonesia	118
KAMPALA	- Uganda, Rwanda	56
KUALA LUMPUR	- Malaysia	279
LILONGWE	- Malawi	44
LISBON	- Portugal, Morocco	308
LJUBLJANA	- Slovenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina	71
LUSAKA	- Zambia, Namibia	175
LUXEMBOURG	- Luxembourg	456
MADRID	- Spain, Andorra, Tunisia	2,828
MAPUTO	- Mozambique, Angola, Botswana	69
MEXICO CITY	Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Peru, Venezuela	270
MOSCOW	- Russia, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan,	164

	Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan	
NEW DELHI	- India, Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Republic of Maldives	247
NICOSIA	- Cyprus	242
NAIROBI	- Kenya	108
OSLO	- Norway	135
OTTAWA	- Canada, Bahamas, Jamaica	2,869
PARIS	- France, Monaco	3,695
PRAGUE	- Czech Republic, Ukraine	210
PRETORIA	- South Africa, Democratic Republic of Congo, Mauritius, Zimbabwe	5,094
RIGA	- Latvia	24
RIYADH	- Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Oman, Yemen	759
ROME	- Italy, Libya, San Marino	765
SEOUL	- South Korea, Democratic People's Republic of Korea	148
SINGAPORE	- Singapore, Philippines, Brunei, East Timor	866
SOFIA	- Bulgaria, Armenia, Georgia	77
STOCKHOLM	- Sweden	430
TALLIN	- Estonia	23
TEL AVIV	- Israel	347
THE HAGUE	- Netherlands	1,317

TOKYO	- Japan	245	
VALETTA	- Malta	204	
VIENNA	- Austria	431	
VILNIUS	- Lithuania, Belarus	61	
WARSAW	- Poland	245	
WASHINGTON	- USA	24,256	
ZAGREB	- Croatia	7	
	TOTAL		79,726

Immigration Policy

484. Deputy Darragh O'Brien asked the **Minister for Justice and Equality** the details of the statute to prevent persons that have abused international human rights to enter Ireland or from doing business here; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [15023/18]

Minister for Justice and Equality (Deputy Charles Flanagan): It is not clear from the Deputy's question as to which statute he has in mind. In the context of entry to the State, an immigration officer, acting on behalf of the Minister for Justice and Equality may refuse entry to the State to a person where he or her entry or presence in the State could pose a threat to national security or public policy.

In addition, Section 10(2) and 10(3) of the International Protection Act, 2015 set out the grounds that exclude a person from being a refugee under the Act:

(2) A person is excluded from being a refugee where there are serious reasons for considering that he or she—

(a) has committed a crime against peace, a war crime, or a crime against humanity, as defined in the international instruments drawn up to make provision in respect of such crimes,

(b) has committed a serious non-political crime outside the State prior to his or her arrival in the State, or

(c) has been guilty of acts contrary to the purposes and principles of the United Nations as set out in the Preamble and Articles 1 and 2 of the Charter of the United Nations.

(3) A person is excluded from being a refugee where there are serious reasons for considering that he or

she has incited or otherwise participated in the commission of a crime or an act referred to in subsection (2).

These grounds are considered by the International Protection Office as part of their assessment of applications for International Protection.

In the context of other persons who are in the State, it is open to me, as Minister for Justice and Equality, to make a Deportation Order in respect of such a person. Section 3(2) of the Immigration Act 1999 (as amended) sets out the nature of person in respect of whom such an Order can be made. Section 3(2)(i) specifically provides for the making of a Deportation Order in respect of a person whose deportation would, in the opinion of the Minister, be conducive to the common good.

Direct Provision System

505. Deputy Fiona O'Loughlin asked the **Minister for Justice and Equality** the checks and oversight exercised to ensure that direct provision centres are maintaining appropriate standards of health and safety and fire safety; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [15046/18]

Minister of State at the Department of Justice and Equality (Deputy David Stanton): All persons seeking international protection are offered accommodation and ancillary services by my Department. From a contractual perspective, each accommodation centre under contract to the Department is inspected three times per annum: twice by officials from the Department of Justice & Equality, and once by an independent inspection company with expertise in food and fire safety. All aspects of the accommodation are checked, including fire safety and housekeeping. The fire safety checks include examining the fire register and checking that all equipment is properly maintained. Where the inspection reveals any adverse findings, the operator of the centre is informed immediately and a further inspection arranged if required.

In addition to this all accommodation centres must comply with statutory requirements in relation to fire safety, hygiene and safety etc. Accommodation centres are subject to inspection by the relevant statutory services including EHOs, the relevant Fire Officer and the Office of the Data Protection Commissioner. The Department of Justice & Equality actively monitors the status of the fire certification on each of its contracts for accommodation and requires each contractor to forward an annual Certificate and Opinion of Compliance with the Fire Services Acts 1981 and 2003. The Certificate and Opinion of Compliance with the Fire Services Acts document must be signed by a competent person.

Since early 2017 residents in accommodation centres under contract to the Department have access to the Ombudsman and Ombudsman for Children and complaints that are not resolved locally or through the Reception and Integration Agency may be dealt with by either office as appropriate.

Direct Provision Data

529. Deputy Clare Daly asked the **Minister for Justice and Equality** the number of persons residing in each of the country's direct provision centres by category (details supplied). [15383/18]

Minister for Justice and Equality (Deputy Charles Flanagan): The information sought by the Deputy cannot be provided in a single table or in a form that is readable in the response to the question. The information is provided in a series of tables in the attached file.

The tables are structured, as follows:

Table 1: Number of persons by centre, age and gender.

Table 2: Duration of Stay in months since entering accommodation

Table 3: Number of Persons by Centre and Nationality

Table 4: Number of Persons by centre and family composition

The information is drawn from a dynamic database that changes on a daily basis - the tables represent the position at the end of March 2018.

[Tables 1-4](#)

Direct Provision Data

530. Deputy Clare Daly asked the **Minister for Justice and Equality** the number of persons residing in each direct provision centre who have been granted leave to remain here but remain resident in the centre by category (details supplied). [15384/18]

Minister of State at the Department of Justice and Equality (Deputy David Stanton): The phrase "leave to remain" in the question is being interpreted as covering persons granted any one of Refugee Status, Subsidiary Protection or Humanitarian Leave to Remain. The information sought by the Deputy cannot be provided in a single table and instead is provided in a series of 4 tables in the attached file.

The tables are structured, as follows:

Table 1: Number of persons by with leave to remain by centre, age and gender.

Table 2: Duration of Stay in Centre in Months since leave to remain was Granted

Table 3: The Number of Persons with with leave to remain by Centre and Nationality

Table 4: Number of Persons with leave to remain by centre and family composition

The information is drawn from a dynamic database that changes on a daily basis - the tables represent the position at the end of March 2018. The information also includes data in relation to approximately 200 persons who have been relocated to Ireland under the relocation or resettlement programme and have been accommodated in Mosney. Unfortunately it is not possible to separate this data from the data in relation to the other persons in Mosney (approximately 600).

[Tables 1-4](#)

Leave to Remain

560. Deputy Eoin Ó Broin asked the **Minister for Justice and Equality** the number of adults and children with leave to remain at the end of March 2018 that are still living in direct provision. [16088/18]

Minister of State at the Department of Justice and Equality (Deputy David Stanton): The phrase "leave to remain" in the question is being interpreted as covering persons granted any one of Refugee Status, Subsidiary Protection or Humanitarian Leave to Remain. As of the end of March 2018, there were 520 persons with a form of leave to remain who continue to reside in accommodation under contract to the Department. This total figure of 520 persons comprises 357 adults and 163 children.

The figure of 520 persons is drawn from a dynamic database that changes on a daily basis. It includes data in relation to approximately 200 persons who have been relocated to Ireland under the relocation or resettlement programme and have been accommodated in Mosney. Unfortunately it is not possible to separate this data from the data in relation to the other persons in Mosney (approximately 600). Therefore the figure of 520 persons with status will include a number of persons who arrived under the relocation programme, were accommodated in Mosney and have since been granted international protection.

RIA, which administers the system of accommodation for protection applicants, has always provided such persons with continued accommodation while they source their own accommodation and while they get their affairs in order having been granted a leave to remain. RIA is particularly mindful of the reality of the housing situation in the State and the pressures on the City and County Councils in respect of Housing Assistance Payments and Housing Lists. That said, the provision of housing for persons coming out of the protection process has been incorporated in the Action Plan for Housing and Homelessness.

Following on from the McMahon report, my Department developed a guide to independent living for persons with status to provide practical assistance for them. The guide is available in all centres and has been published on the RIA website (www.ria.gov.ie) in a number of different languages. This was

published in parallel with information sessions coordinated by the Citizens Information Bureau in accommodation centres which gave an opportunity for such persons to seek assistance and clarification on the services provided. RIA, its centre managers, Citizens Information and those City and County Councils operating the Housing Assistance Payments link with such persons in accessing the appropriate supports and services, including in respect of sourcing and securing private accommodation. In addition, following a call for proposals under the Asylum Migration and Integration Fund, a number of charities and NGOs were awarded funding for projects with the specific aim of providing assistance to those transiting from state provided accommodation to permanent homes in the community. I am confident that the services provided with this funding will prove of great assistance and benefit to all concerned.

Assistance in moving into permanent homes in communities around Ireland is also directly provided to persons with status.

In the case of persons who have been relocated to Ireland under the EU relocation programme, we work directly with local authorities to source suitable and appropriate accommodation in the community. We also fund implementing partners through the local authorities who employ resettlement workers and intercultural workers to assist in the integration process.

In the case of persons who have been granted a leave to remain, we are in the process of engaging with the services of housing agencies and other such bodies to provide assistance and supports to persons to move in to local authority housing or the private rented sector as the case may be.

Direct Provision System

561. Deputy Martin Ferris asked the **Minister for Justice and Equality** if there are, as per the McMahon report, befriending subcommittees in each direct provision centre in County Kerry; and if so, the work they carry out in view of the fact volunteers that are involved in befriending through organisations (details supplied) were not aware of their existence and do not want to duplicate work that may already be done. [16094/18]

Minister of State at the Department of Justice and Equality (Deputy David Stanton): Following on from the recommendations of the McMahon report, there are Friends of the Centre groups operating in all established RIA centres and groups are being developed as a matter of priority in the newer centres. The two NGOs mentioned are key partners in the Friends of the Centre groups for the Killarney and Tralee centres. They work closely with residents and management in the centres and regularly visit the centres to meet with the residents. Indeed they assisted the Killarney centres in organising a trip around the ring of Kerry for centre residents less than two weeks ago. The last meetings of the Friends of the Centre groups in Killarney and Tralee took place in February and the next meetings are in the process of being organised and are expected to take place in May.

Naturalisation Certificates

578. Deputy John Deasy asked the **Minister for Justice and Equality** to set out the number of certificates of naturalisation that have been granted to UK citizens by the Irish Naturalisation and Immigration Service in the past 20 years. [16514/18]

Minister for Justice and Equality (Deputy Charles Flanagan): I am informed by the Irish Naturalisation and Immigration Service (INIS) of my Department that the retrieval and compilation of the information requested by the Deputy for each of the past twenty years would necessitate a disproportionate use of time and resources which could not be justified in circumstances where the priority is to deal with the cases on hand. Information can, however, be provided for the seven years 2011 to 2017 inclusive as outlined in the following table:

Year	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Applications Granted to UK citizens	70	85	55	51	54	98	529

The recent significant increase in certificates of naturalisation granted to UK citizens is attributed to the Brexit referendum which led to UK nationals, some living in the jurisdiction for lengthy periods of time, to apply for Irish citizenship. The number of applications received from UK nationals continued to increase in 2017 and this year to date, albeit from a very low base prior to the referendum.

Naturalisation Applications

587. Deputy Bernard J. Durkan asked the **Minister for Justice and Equality** to set out the number of non-Irish born applicants who have been approved for naturalisation in each of the past nine years to date; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [16695/18]

Minister for Justice and Equality (Deputy Charles Flanagan): I am informed by the Irish Naturalisation and Immigration Service (INIS) of my Department that the retrieval and compilation of the information requested by the Deputy for each of the past nine years would necessitate a disproportionate use of time and resources which could not be justified in circumstances where the priority is to deal with the cases on hand. Information can, however, be provided on the number of persons born outside the island of Ireland who were approved for naturalisation for the years 2011 to 2018 inclusive as outlined in the following table:

Year	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018 to date
Number of non-Irish born applicants approved for naturalisation	12,800	22,000	27,000	16,700	10,700	9,300	7,200	3,400

It should be noted that adult applicants approved for naturalisation must subsequently attend a citizenship ceremony where they will be granted their certificate of naturalisation, accordingly the numbers approved in any given year will not correspond with the number who are issued naturalisation certificates in the same year.

Work Permits Applications Data

606. Deputy Gerry Adams asked the **Minister for Business, Enterprise and Innovation** the number of applications for employment permits by persons at a centre (details supplied) made since the Supreme Court ruling granting asylum seekers the right to work; and the number of these applications that have been successful. [14998/18]

Minister for Business, Enterprise and Innovation (Deputy Heather Humphreys): From February 9th 2018, when section 16(3)(b) International Protection Act 2015 was struck down by the Supreme Court, until the date of entry into force of the EU (recast) Reception Conditions Directive, any eligible international protection applicants can access the employment permit system on the same basis as other non-EEA nationals. The opt-in process, involving formal discussions with the European Commission to ensure compliance with each aspect of the Directive, is expected to take four months to complete. The interim arrangements for the short period prior to the opt-in enables those seeking international protection to access the labour market through the Employment Permit Acts.

To date no applications for an employment permit have been received by my Department from International Protection applicants from the Mosney Direct Provision Centre in Co Meath.

Direct Provision Payments

1466. Deputy Willie O'Dea asked the **Minister for Employment Affairs and Social Protection** the estimated full-year cost of increasing the allowance for adults in direct provision from €21.60 per week to €22, €23, €24 and €25, respectively, in tabular form; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [16473/18]

1467. Deputy Willie O'Dea asked the **Minister for Employment Affairs and Social Protection** the estimated full-year cost of increasing the allowance for children in direct provision from €21.60 to €22, €23, €24 and €25, respectively, in tabular form; and if she will make a statement on the matter. [16474/18]

Minister for Employment Affairs and Social Protection (Deputy Regina Doherty): It is proposed to take Questions Nos. 1466 and 1467 together.

The direct provision allowance is a non-statutory payment administered by my Department on behalf of the Department of Justice and Equality to persons in the direct provision system. The Government has provided over €5.6 million for the allowance in 2018.

There are approximately 3,700 adults and 1,600 children residing in the system of direct provision in respect of whom the direct provision allowance is being paid. The full-year costs, based on the current numbers, of increasing the weekly adult rate and the weekly child rate from €21.60 to €22, €23, €24 and €25 is provided in the tabular statement.

Any increases to the rate of direct provision allowance would have to be approved by Government and considered in a budgetary context.

I hope this clarifies the matter for the Deputy.

Adult Rate Direct Provision Allowance and full-year cost of rate increase.

Adult Rate	Additional full year cost to increase adult rate from €21.60 to amount (based on 3,700 adult recipients)
Increase to €22	€76,960
Increase to €23	€269,360
Increase to €24	€461,760
Increase to €25	€654,160

Child Rate Direct Provision Allowance and full-year cost of rate increase.

Child Rate	Additional full-year cost to increase child rate from €21.60 to amount (based on 1,600 child recipients)
Increase to €22	€33,280
Increase to €23	€116,480
Increase to €24	€199,680
Increase to €25	€282,880

19th April 2018

Naturalisation Applications

178. Deputy Ruth Coppinger asked the **Minister for Justice and Equality** the number of applications for naturalisation that are between six months and 1 year, 1 year and 18 months, 18 months and 2 years and over 2 years old; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [17257/18]

Minister for Justice and Equality (Deputy Charles Flanagan): I am advised by the Irish Naturalisation and Immigration Service (INIS) of my Department that of the applications currently on hands: 4,800 are on hands for less than 6 months; 4,000 for between 6 to 12 months; 2,500 for between 1 year to 18 months; 850 between 18 months to 2 years; and 950 in excess of 2 years.

It should be noted that statistics of the cases on hands will always include a cohort of cases where a decision has been made and the applicant notified of same, but where the applicant has yet to swear their oath of fidelity to the nation and loyalty to the State, as required under the Act, and be granted their certificate of naturalisation at a citizenship ceremony arranged for the purpose. In this context in excess of 3,000 of the cases on hands have already received their decision and my Department is currently issuing invitations to these individuals to attend a citizenship ceremony on 21 May next to make their declaration before a judge and to be granted their certificate of naturalisation.

It is recognised that all applicants for citizenship would wish to have a decision on their application without delay. While most straightforward cases are processed to a decision within six months, the nature of the naturalisation process is such that, for a broad range of reasons, some cases can take longer than others to process. In some instances, completing the necessary checks may take a considerable period of time. As outlined, while a decision may be made within six months, the certificate cannot be issued until the applicant attends a citizenship ceremony arranged for the purpose of swearing the oath of allegiance before a judge.

Processing timescales can often be impacted due to further documentation being required from the applicant, or payment of the required certificate fee is awaited, or the applicant has not been engaging with the office. In some instances delays can arise at the final stage of the naturalisation process, for example, where additional information comes to light which requires to be considered. In other instances the applicant themselves may request that a hold be put on their application, for example, where they may have returned to their country of origin for a prolonged period, to facilitate them in making arrangements to return to reside in the State, or where they have difficulty in obtaining satisfactory evidence of their identity or nationality.

INIS devotes a considerable amount of its overall resources to the processing of these cases. It also operates a dedicated phone helpline and email helpdesk available for all applicants interested in the progress of their application, details of which are available on the INIS website at www.inis.gov.ie.

Naturalisation Certificates

179. Deputy Ruth Coppinger asked the **Minister for Justice and Equality** the number of certificates of naturalisation issued in 2017 to persons that were born here. [17258/18]

Minister for Justice and Equality (Deputy Charles Flanagan): I am advised by the Irish Naturalisation and Immigration Service (INIS) of my Department that the records indicate that 450 certificates of naturalisation issued in 2017 to persons that were born on the island of Ireland.