



SOMRA

Intellectual Output 1

The Holistic Study Report

Compiled by ELREC

August 2021



● Background

Building a sustainable and equal future is two of the most prominent and important goals of the 21st century. To realise this goal, two major challenges must be faced, climate change and the refugee crises which are affecting people on a global scale.

There are almost 37 million non-EU-born citizens living in the EU. Usually, individuals or families move within the EU or from non-EU countries for family, work, asylum, education, and other reasons. A part of immigrants consists of refugees and asylum seekers. Most asylum applicants come from Asia, the Middle East, and Latin America. A large percentage (almost 10%) consisted of youth that was under 18s and some were unaccompanied children that came mostly from Syria and Afghanistan.

Non-EU citizens over-represent and under-represent several working sectors when compared with the overall population. According to the European Commission, in 2020, non-EU citizens over-represented sectors of

- Accommodation and food services: including cleaning, food preparation, agriculture, fisheries, and others.
- Administration and support activities.
- Domestic work: include personal care workers and child care.
- Construction.

Many of these occupations are essential, making the migrants essential workers. In turn, however, they are under-represented in sectors of

- Public administration and defence, and compulsory social security.
- Education: includes teaching professionals and business, science, and engineering associate professors in universities.
- Human health and social work activities.
- Financial and insurance activities.

Immigration is essential in allowing the European population to be stable and grow. Without immigration, because more deaths than births occur in Europe, the population would shrink yearly to the current data (from the European Commission).

Global warming (long-term heating of the Earth's climate), another important issue, has been observed since the pre-industrial period due to human activities. Activities include fossil fuel burning in different ways such as generating electricity in a non-renewable way and powering our cars.

Global warming has led to climate change – unstable weather patterns which do not only affect natural biodiversity but also impact vulnerable people. Especially people living in more unstable environments, for example, flood-prone zones.

Issues of climate change and seek for refuge are only worsening, and simultaneously are exacerbating each other. As the effects of climate change aggravate, more and more people are displaced from their homes due to extreme weather and natural disasters. Despite various efforts made to respond to these imminent topics, there is still no guaranteed solution. The need to contribute to a more environmentally friendly future, regardless of class, socioeconomic background, career, geographical location, and educational background is imminent. Recognising the interrelatedness of these two issues, creating a solution which can tackle both is of the utmost importance if we are to successfully manage the refugee crises and restore our environment.

The SOMRA project - Supporting meaningful Occupations for Migrants, Refugees, and Asylum seekers - offers an innovative approach to tackling these two major issues, by engaging refugees, asylum seekers, and migrants (MRAs) in meaningful occupations that transform them into environment role models with a sustainable impact in their new and previous home. To achieve this, the SOMRA project will seek to enable refugees and asylum seekers to become true agents of change, who have the power to influence positive environmental action that is first established on a local and regional level, and eventually even beyond the borders of the EU. The project will aim to provide a tool or guidance in professional working, where to get support, and give views of the migrants.

The SOMRA project will pursue the following objectives:

- I. Facilitating environmental change on a local and regional levels through grassroots activities organised by green NGOs and the SOMRA participants
- II. Fostering common values and civic engagement of migrant communities in their new environment
- III. Offering low threshold learning opportunities related to environmental measures that increase employability by strengthening key competences for migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers

One of the ways we seek to achieve these goals is through the SOMRA Holistic Study Report. In this report, there is an array of useful information, including in-depth data related to the labour market access; legal obligations and restrictions; as well as supporting structures that migrants; refugees and asylum seekers face. This report is a collection of data from a myriad of partner countries (the UK, Cyprus, Austria, Finland, Ireland and Portugal), providing a systematic review of the existing situation for refugees and asylum seeker involvement in environmental grassroots activism from the specific partner countries to the SOMRA project. As well as this, it provides information on the necessary steps and frameworks for founding an NGO or applying for and receiving funding for

addressing and taking action on environmental issues. This report seeks to provide information for migrant support workers, adult educators, policymakers, and any persons interested in engaging in environmentally friendly NGO work to create a more equitable and empowering way to tackle climate change that actively engages vulnerable members of society, who are often most affected by environmental degradation and devastation.

Definitions

Third sector - a range of organisations that are not public or private, they include voluntary and community organisations, social enterprises, mutuals, and cooperatives. They are generally independent of the government - non-governmental organisations (NGOs), motivated to achieve social goals such as improving the environment, and are not-for-profit.

Refugee - a person who has been forced to leave the country to escape war, persecution, or natural disaster.

Migrant - a person who is moving within the country or abroad, usually for economic reasons.

Asylum seeker - a person who has fled the home country seeking safety and applies for protection in the destination country.

Methods

Findings were collected via desk and infield research which were conducted quasi-simultaneously. The desk research provided the background information, helped to identify potential interviewees and give an initial insight into the local NGOs. Interviews were conducted to give an insight into the world of NGOs and the interviewee's situations.

1. Desk research

The aim of the desk research was to gain information on:

- Country local environmental NGOs and NGOs working with migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers.
- Different NGO legal structures.
- Existing NGOs networks.
- Overarching regulatory or advisory bodies
- The funding landscape for NGOs, charities and voluntary groups.
- The legal requirements of setting up an NGO, charity or voluntary group.
- The requirements for joining an NGO as a director, staff or volunteer.

Information was obtained using the local network and Google.

2. *Infield research*

The aim of the infield research was to gather information about migrants, refugees and asylum seekers' situations, language skills, knowledge about environmental issues, civic participation opportunities, their motivation to participate in further activities, needs and skills to access green occupations. Another aim will be to receive feedback concerning the SOMRA approach. Questionnaire templates were used but not limited to during the interviews (Appendices 1-3).

Interviewees:

- ELREC (Scotland) – Two professionals and two persons from the MRA group.
- CARDET (Cyprus) – Two NGO representatives, two professionals and an asylum seeker.
- PlaySolutions (Portugal) – Three associations have responded to the questionnaire.
- The Rural Hub (Ireland) –
- Auxillum (Austria) – One migrant, two NGO representatives and two migrant workers.
- Innoventum (Finland) – Two professionals working with migrants and a migrant.

All interviews took place via Zoom; to assist the note taking, they were recorded. When transcripts were obtained all footage was deleted. All participants signed consent forms prior to the interviews. In some cases, questionnaires were sent out to NGOs.



The collection of partner National Reports (shortcuts):

[The UK](#)

[Cyprus](#)

[Finland](#)

[Portugal](#)

[Austria](#)

[Ireland](#)

Other parts of the report (shortcuts):

[Analysis of similarities and differences](#)

[Conclusion](#)

● **National Report – the UK**

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1. Introduction

Charities in the UK are registered by different regulators depending on the country.

- England and Wales: The Charity Commission (run by the government).
- Northern Ireland: The Charity Commission for Northern Ireland (an independent regulator).
- Scotland: The Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR) (an independent regulator).

There are about 166 000 charities registered in the UK.

Charities carry out a wide range of work in the UK, and elsewhere. There are many ‘big name’ charities, working nationally or internationally, as well as smaller charities that are active in the local community. There are also many groups and organisations that may not seem like charities but are.



Here are some examples of charities in the UK:

- Community groups
- Village halls
- Pre-school playgroups
- Churches and religious organisations
- Swimming pools, art galleries and museums
- Universities and colleges
- Independent schools
- Care providers
- Training providers
- Animal welfare groups
- Agricultural societies
- Student organisations
- Scouts, Guides, Cub Scouts, Brownies, Beavers and Rainbows
- Ex-services organisations
- Environmental groups
- Charities providing grants or services to other charities.

Charity sector in the UK have a total income of about £56 billion a year, half of this will come from the public through donations, membership fees, charges for services and others.

1.1 What is a charity?

In short, a charity is an organisation that will raise money for those in need and provide help for the vulnerable.

In the UK, an organisation can only call itself a charity if it is entered in the register, which depends in which country the said charity resides (England, Wales, Scotland or Northern Ireland). For example, only charities that are based in Scotland, or are controlled from Scotland, can say they are a 'Scottish charity' or 'registered Scottish charity'.

In the UK, organisations must meet specific criteria to become charities. For example, In Scotland, all charities must meet the '[charity test](#)' set out by the OSCR. Criteria set out to the organisations wishing to become charities includes:

- Be of benefit: the charity must do positive things and if any side effects follow, they must be outweighed by the positive.

- Provide public benefit: this does not have to include the “whole” public. For example, a charity which works with disabled people will be focusing on benefitting this specific group.
- Use their funds and property for charitable purposes.
- Allow a fair access to the benefit they provide.
- Not be, or exist to advance, a political party.

Charities must state their chartable objectives to be registered and explain how they are meeting them in annual reports which are available to the public, i.e., be transparent and accountable.

It is up to the regulators to decide whether the organisation passes the charity test (Scotland), the public benefit test (England and Wales) or the public benefit requirement guidance (Northern Ireland).

To avoid charity fraud, all charities will have a registration number, set goals and name and can be verified by appropriate registers (depending on the country).

1.2 Migration

In 2019, 14% (9.5 million people) of the UK’s population was non-UK born. For example, in Scotland alone, there were 240,000 EU born citizens and 289,000 international migrants in 2020.

Migration is the main driver of UK’s population growth. Polish is the most common non-British nationality. Often post-2004 migration from Eastern to Western Europe, was described as ‘free moving’ rather than long-term immigration and asylum seeking - constantly on the move between the UK and “home”. However, not all have short-term intentions, this has been more extensively studied in Polish migration. Polish migrants were often able to develop relationships with British society through workplaces, schools and neighbourhoods. These adaptations were described as establishing “footholds” in the UK while maintaining links with Polishness and Poland simultaneously which may explain large numbers of Polish citizens in the UK¹.

1.3 Research

Desk research has been conducted, and four people were interviewed to meet the aims of the report. The professionals interviewed were chosen for their direct experience and knowledge through working with migrants, refugees and asylum seekers. Additionally, two immigrants were also interviewed.

¹Guma T. & Dafydd Jones, R. (2019). “Where are we going to go now?” European Union migrants' experiences of hostility, anxiety, and (non-)belonging during Brexit. *Population, Space and Place*, 25(1), e2198.

1.4 Interviewees

ELREC is based in Scotland, for this reason, all the interviewees were also based in Scotland (due to the social network).

Diline works for the [Multicultural Family Base \(MCFB\)](#). She works with families, children and young people and provides them with support through difficult times of their life such as transitions and moving into a new place, schools and other life changing events. Diline's main project "Haven" mostly involves working with the Syrian refugees but also other referrals from other refugee communities. She provides one-to-one support, usually at schools and sometimes at home, as well as group work which is mainly weekly. Group work involves therapeutic support working with Syrian and other refugee children which allows mixing from different groups and backgrounds and introduces them to new places in Edinburgh. The children can not only improve their language and English but also have a safe place to talk about their issues and share their concerns with MCFB and other children.

Person X works for [Edinburgh & Lothians Regional Equality Council \(ELREC\)](#) in relation to equality and protecting characteristics. She works with ethnic minorities, migrants and refugees. ELREC has many different projects, but the main target is the ethnic minorities living in Edinburgh and Lothian. Person X is personally in charge of a project relating to loneliness and isolation of migrant and refugee women and aims to improve their physical and mental health. Different activities are run for these women free of charge to tackle these needs.

Zohreh works part-time as an admin assistant at [The Welcoming Association](#). The Welcoming welcomes new Scots to Edinburgh by helping them to learn English, cultural exchange and offers opportunities for sustainable living, friendship, health and well-being. Zohreh's role is to support all staff members with their work, welcome visitors, and answer enquiries. She is also responsible for the registration process.

Melba was a sales representative and an agency manager previously and has volunteered with the [Cancer Research](#) and [Cat Protection](#) prior to COVID-19. She had assisted customers and helped with the stocks. Melba also got involved with the community gardens and often helps her friends during a difficult time.

2. NGOs in the UK

2.1 A variety of legal structures in the UK

Charities can be incorporated or unincorporated, depending on the work they intend to do. Unincorporated groups cannot enter into contracts or own property in their own right. Incorporated groups can own property and enter into contracts in their own right.



A corporate body will:

- Employ its own staff.
- Deliver charitable services under contractual agreements.
- Enter into commercial contracts in its own name.
- Own freehold or leasehold land or other property.

A charity that is not a corporate body:

- The trustees are personally liable for what it does.
- It won't be able to enter into contracts or control some investments in its own name.
- Two or more trustees, a corporate custodian trustee or the charities' land holding service will have to 'hold' any land on your charity's behalf.

In England and Wales, a charity can also gain a wider membership which gives charity members a right to vote on important decisions. These usually are annual general meetings, which are yearly gatherings of interested shareholders.

Table 1. Incorporated and unincorporated charities and the types of governing documents of different legal structures in Scotland (similar in other countries in the UK). Adapted from:

<https://www.voluntarysectorgateway.org/organisation-support/resource-kit/>.

Legal Structure	Unincorporated/Incorporated	Type of governing document
Unincorporated Association	Unincorporated	Constitution
Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO)	Incorporated	SCIO constitution
Trust	Unincorporated	Trust deed
Company limited by guarantee	Incorporated	Memorandum and article of association
Community Interest Company (CIC)	Incorporated	Memorandum and article of association

Key characteristics of the common types of legal forms used by Scottish charities and comparisons can be found at: <https://www.oscr.org.uk/media/2506/legal-forms-factsheet.pdf>.

2.1.1 *Overreaching regulatory and advisory bodies to NGOs*

Regulatory and advisory bodies vary country-to-country. However, the advisory bodies can be used for general information by everyone.

For England:

[The Charity Commission](#) is a government run (but not ministerial) charity register for England and Wales. The Charity Commission maintain an accurate and up-to-date charity register. This includes deciding if the organisations are registered and are carrying out charitable purpose.

[The National Council for Voluntary Organisation \(NCVO\)](#) is an advisory charity for the voluntary and community sector in England. Their aims include championing the voluntary sector, strengthening voluntary organisations, connect people and organisation and be a sustainable and socially responsible organisation.

For Wales:

The Charity Commission (same as England).

[Wales Council for Voluntary Action \(WCVA\)](#) is national membership for the third and voluntary sectors in Wales. WCVA provides services and support for organisations such as charities and community groups.

In addition to WCVA, there are also 19 county-specific organisations.

For Northern Ireland:

[The Charity Commission for Northern Ireland](#) is an independent charity regulator in Northern Ireland. Charities are assessed against the legal requirements and charity criteria. This allows charities to meet expectations and obligations.

[Northern Ireland Council for Voluntary Action \(NICVA\)](#) is a national voluntary and community sector that operates in Northern Ireland. NICVA is a membership organisation which provides members with support ranging from practical services and products to finding solutions for social challenges.

For Scotland:



[Scottish Charity Regulator \(OSCR\)](#) is an independent regulator and registrar for the Scottish charities which include community groups, religious charities, religious charities schools, universities, grant-giving charities and major care providers. OSCR can provide help with becoming a charity and how to manage it, guidance on complying with the charity law and advice for the public that may have concerns about a charity.

[Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations \(SCVO\)](#) is a national membership organisation for the voluntary sector. They aim to promote the voluntary sector and the effectiveness and efficiency of charities and to advance education within establishment, operation and governance of voluntary organisations, promoting economic and social well-being and issues which are of concern to voluntary organisations.

Detailed information on finding and receiving funds for a Scottish charity can be found at: <https://scvo.scot/funding>. Potential funders and open funds: <https://funding.scot/>.

Grants available for the UK charities can be found at: <https://www.grantsonline.org.uk/> (a UK grant funding information service). Funding is available from the Lotteries, Trusts and Foundations, the government and the EU.

2.2 Environmental NGOs

Environmental non-Governmental Organisations (ENGOS) are organisations that operate both nationally and internationally; they deal with environmental issues, spread awareness on climate change and promote sustainability. ENGOS have a crucial role in helping to fill the gaps by conducting research to facilitate policy development, building institutional capacity, and raising issues to civil society to help people live more sustainable lifestyles. Directory of some of the ecological organisations, some of which are ENGOS can be found at: <http://www.rampantscotland.com/ecology.htm>.

Table 2. Main environmental NGOs, charities and voluntary groups in the UK.

Name	Mission & activities	Website and contact details
Changeworks	Changeworks is Scotland’s leading environmental charity delivering solutions for low carbon living. They: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform and enable householders, professionals 	https://www.changeworks.org.uk/ Email: ask@changeworks.org.uk

	<p>and volunteers, so people can live in affordably warm homes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with local authorities, organisations, schools and communities, to minimise business and domestic waste. • Help public, private and voluntary sector organisations to reduce their impact on the environment. 	<p>Phone (Edinburgh): 0131 555 4010</p> <p>Address (Edinburgh): 36 Newhaven Road, Edinburgh, EH6 5PY</p> <p>Phone (Inverness): 01463 259 730</p> <p>Address (Inverness): Fairways House, Fairways, Business Park, Inverness, IV2 6AA</p>
Creative Carbon Scotland	<p>The vision is of Scotland where an essential role in achieving the transformational change to a sustainable future is fully recognised, developed and utilised by both the cultural world and others interested in sustainability. Their mission is to connect arts and culture. Creative Carbon Scotland works across the arts with individuals and organisations including music venues, festivals, art agencies and others.</p>	<p>https://www.creativecarbonscotland.com/</p> <p>Email: info@creativecarbonscotland.com</p> <p>Phone: 0131 529 7909</p> <p>Address: City Chamber, Room 9/50, High Street, Edinburgh, EH1 1YJ</p>
Environmental Protection Scotland (EPS)	<p>EPS brings together individuals and organisations across the public, private and voluntary sectors to discuss and promote ideas, knowledge and solutions to achieve a cleaner, quieter, healthier and sustainable Scotland. They aim to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To promote integrated policies and practices that reduce the negative effects of air pollution and greenhouse gases on human health and the environment. • To develop best practises to manage neighbourhood noise and a policy that will ensure that the impacts of renewable energy infrastructure are minimised (e.g. domestic wind turbines and air-source heat pumps). • To encourage the use and reuse of land (farms to allotments) ensuring that human health and the environment are protected. 	<p>https://www.ep-scotland.org.uk/</p> <p>Email: Can be contacted using a form found at: https://www.ep-scotland.org.uk/contact-us/</p> <p>Phone: +441413336655</p> <p>Address: Environmental Protection Scotland, Room 3, Caledonian Suite, 70 West Regent Street, Glasgow,, G2 2QZ</p>
Extinction Rebellion (EX)	<p>Extinction Rebellion is a rebellion that uses non-violent direct action to persuade governments to act justly on the climate emergency.</p>	<p>https://extinctionrebellion.uk/</p> <p>Email: enquiries@extinctionrebellion.uk</p>
The Findhorn	<p>The Findhorn Foundation is associated with the United Nations Department of Public Information, holder of UN</p>	<p>http://www.findhorn.org/</p>

<p>Foundation</p>	<p>Habitat Best Practice designation and is co-founder of the Global Ecovillage Network and Holistic Centres Network. The role of the Foundation is to practice, teach and demonstrate the links between the environmental, economic, social and spiritual aspects of life. They share their learning and way of life in experiential workshops, conferences and events that take place within a thriving community and ecovillage.</p>	<p>Email: enquiries@findhorn.org Address: The Park, Findhorn, Forres, IV36 3TZ</p>
<p>Forestry and Land Scotland</p>	<p>Forestry and Land Scotland are the Scottish Government agency responsible for managing Scotland's national forests and land. They are not only a major timber supplier but also develop renewable energy schemes, create and maintain trails and visitor facilities and conserve habitats, wildlife and archaeological treasures.</p>	<p>https://forestryandland.gov.scot/ Email: enquiries@forestryandland.gov.scot Phone: 0300 067 6000 Address: 1 Highlander Way, Inverness Business Park, Inverness, IV2 7GB</p>
<p>Friends of the Earth Scotland</p>	<p>Friends of the Earth are campaigning for a world where everyone can enjoy a healthy environment and a fair share of the Earth's resources. They aim to transition to a 100% renewable, nuclear-free, zero-fossil-fuel UK. Their current campaigns include fossil-free UK, carbon capture and storage and others.</p>	<p>https://friendsoftheearth.uk/ Phone: 020 7490 1555 Address: Friends of the Earth, The Printworks, 139 Clapham Rd, London, SW9 0HP.</p>
<p>Greenpeace</p>	<p>Greenpeace aims to defend the natural world and promote peace by investigating, exposing, and confronting environmental abuse, championing environmentally responsible solutions, and advocating for the rights and well-being of all people. They advocate for climate change, sustainable fishing, renewable energy and others.</p>	<p>https://www.greenpeace.org.uk/ Email: Can be contacted using a form at: https://www.greenpeace.org.uk/contact/ Phone: 020 7865 8100 Address: Greenpeace, Canonbury Villas, London, N1 2PN</p>
<p>Keep Scotland Beautiful</p>	<p>Keep Scotland Beautiful is a charity for a clean, green and sustainable Scotland. They aim to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Combat climate change - provide education to help people make good decisions for our environment and help them understand the climate crisis. • Tackle litter and waste - provide annual audits and reports to local authorities on the cleanliness 	<p>https://www.keepsotlandbeautiful.org/ Email: info@keepsotlandbeautiful.org Phone: 01786 471333 Address: Keep Scotland Beautiful,</p>

	<p>of our cities, towns and villages and runs campaigns such as 'Clean Up Scotland'.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect and enhance local spaces - celebrate 'Scotland's Beach Award' and the 'Green Flag' Award to promote clean, well-managed beaches and parks. 	<p>First Floor, Glendevon House, The Castle Business Park, Stirling, FK9 4TZ</p>
National Trust for Scotland	<p>NTS is a conservation charity aiming to protect Scottish heritage to enjoy it forever. They encourage people to connect with the things that make Scotland unique such as coastlines, castles, art and architecture and nature. They aim to protect the heritage so that it remains unspoilt and accessible for the future generations.</p>	<p>https://www.nts.org.uk/</p> <p>Email: Can be contacted using a form found at: https://www.nts.org.uk/contact-us/contact-form</p> <p>Phone: +44 131 458 0200</p> <p>Address (Main office): National Trust for Scotland, Hermiston Quay, 5 Cultins Road, Edinburgh, EH11 4DF</p>
Nourish Scotland	<p>Nourish Scotland works for a fairer, healthier and more sustainable food system in Scotland. They campaign on issues such as the environment, public health and inequality. Some of their current projects are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dignity in Practice - encourages practice change that recognises the important role of community initiatives as sources of support to people experiencing food insecurity. • Peas Please - support and education on eating healthier. • Nutritious and Local Bread - to improve the access to locally baked bread in communities that need it most. 	<p>https://www.nourishscotland.org/</p> <p>Email: info@nourishscotland.org.uk</p> <p>Phone: 0131 226 1497</p> <p>Address: 1 Summerhall Place, Edinburgh, EH9 1PL</p>
Oxfam	<p>Oxfam works to improve the lives of the world's poorest people, at home and abroad. Oxfam tackles a variety of issues including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water • Women's rights • Climate change • Beating hunger • Health and education 	<p>https://oxfam.org.uk</p> <p>Email: heretohelp@oxfam.org.uk</p> <p>Phone: 0300 200 1300</p> <p>Address: Oxfam House, John Smith Drive, Oxford, OX4 2JY</p>
Stop Climate Chaos Scotland	<p>Stop Climate Chaos Scotland is a diverse coalition of over 50 civil society organisations in Scotland campaigning together on climate change. Their principal activity is the promotion, for the benefit of the public, of</p>	<p>https://www.stopclimatechaos.scot/</p> <p>Email: Can be contacted using the form found at:</p>

	<p>conservation, protection, rehabilitation and improvement of the physical and natural environment by advancing the education of the public in sustainable development and use of natural resources.</p>	<p>http://www.stopclimatechaos.scot/contact/</p> <p>Phone: +441312432701</p> <p>Address: 2nd Floor, Thorn House, 5 Rose St, Edinburgh, EH2 2PR</p>
Zero Waste Scotland	<p>Zero Waste Scotland exists to lead Scotland to use products and resources responsibly, focusing on where we can have the greatest impact on climate change. They have come out with a corporate plan (2019 - 2023) on using products and resources sustainably. They aim to a:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responsible consumption - where people and businesses demand and services respect the limits of natural resources. • Responsible production - products and services get a maximum life and value from the natural resources. • Maximising value from waste - environmental and economic value of wasted resources and energy is harnessed efficiently. 	<p>https://www.zerowastescotland.org.uk/</p> <p>Email: Can be contacted using a form at: https://www.zerowastescotland.org.uk/content/contact-form</p> <p>Phone: 01786 433 930</p> <p>Address: Ground Floor – Moray House, Forthside Way, Stirling, FK8 1QZ</p>
2050 Climate Group	<p>250 Climate Group engages, educates and empowers young people in Scotland to take action on climate change.</p> <p>They aim to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Empower young leaders to lead and take climate action to create a just and sustainable society. • Equip young leaders with knowledge, skills and confidence to take climate action. • Enable young leaders to create and access opportunities to influence and be a leading voice for young people on climate change decision-making. 	<p>https://www.2050.scot/</p> <p>Email: contact@2050.scot</p> <p>Address: Ground Floor, Gordon Lamb House, 3 Jackson's Entry, Edinburgh, EH8 8PJ</p>

2.3 NGOs working with migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers

NGOs working with migrants, refugees and asylum seekers operate both nationally and internationally and aim to support the vulnerable.



Table 3. The main NGOs, charities and voluntary groups working with migrants, refugees and asylum seekers in the UK.

Name	Mission / activities	Website and contact details
Asylum Support Appeals Project (ASAP)	<p>ASAP protects asylum seeker's legal rights to food and shelter. They:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer free, high-quality legal representation and advice to asylum seekers and refused asylum seekers. • Provide asylum support advice and training to frontline organisations, advice agencies and legal practitioners. • Policy, lobbying and litigation to improve policies and procedures on asylum support. 	<p>http://www.asaproject.org/</p> <p>Phone: 0790 36 30 392</p> <p>Address: Studio 11/12, Container City Building, 48 Trinity Buoy Wharf, London, E14 0FN</p>
Bridges Programme	<p>Bridges Programme supports the social, educational and economic integration of refugees, asylum seekers, migrants, anyone whom English is a second language, living in Glasgow.</p> <p>Through a variety of programmes and resources they help clients build their confidence by re-engaging them with their skills, provide training, support, advice and guidance and work placements.</p>	<p>http://www.bridgesprogrammes.org.uk</p> <p>Email: admin@bridgesprogrammes.org.uk</p> <p>Call: +44(141) 558 9749</p> <p>Address: Flemington House 110 Flemington Street Glasgow G21 4BF</p>
British Red Cross	<p>British Red Cross provides help to people in crisis in the UK and overseas. They are committed to helping people without discrimination, regardless of their ethnic group, nationality, political beliefs or religion. They provide a refugee service to vulnerable refugees and asylum seekers and offer support and care when people arrive in the UK after a political or humanitarian crisis.</p>	<p>http://www.redcross.org.uk/</p> <p>Email: contactus@redcross.org.uk</p> <p>Call: 0344 871 11 11</p> <p>Address: 44 Moorfields, London, EC2Y 9AL</p>
Community InfoSource	<p>InfoSource works with communities and individuals so that they can realise their potential and become integrated more quickly. Their focus is on minority ethnic, migrant and refugee communities - including people who are survivors of abuse, persecution, torture and trafficking. The aim is to a diverse and inclusive Scotland where everyone is supported to contribute and participate.</p>	<p>http://www.infosource.org.uk</p> <p>Email: info@infosource.org.uk</p> <p>Call: 0141 258 2773</p> <p>Address: Albany Centre, 44 Ashley Street, Glasgow, G3 6DS</p>
COSLA	<p>COSLA's Migration, Population and Diversity team</p>	<p>http://www.migrationscotland.org.uk</p>

<p>(Convention of Scottish Local Authorities)</p>	<p>has responsibility for policy issues relating to migration to Scotland in all its forms (including asylum seekers and refugees), human trafficking, population and demographic change, and also provides oversight of equality and human rights issues.</p> <p>COSLA Strategic Migration Partnership is a function of the Migration, Population and Diversity team. They work with partners from across the public, private and voluntary sector to ensure that Scotland is a welcoming place for new migrants.</p>	<p>Email: Can be contacted using a form found at: http://www.migrationscotland.org.uk/about/contact-us</p> <p>Call: 0131 474 9200</p> <p>Address: 3rd Floor, 49 Bath Street, Glasgow G2 2DL</p>
<p>Edinburgh and Lothians Regional Equality Council (ELREC)</p>	<p>ELREC exists to promote equality and to fight all forms of prejudice. We believe that no one can claim to live in a fair and just society whilst prejudice and inequalities exist. ELREC will work jointly with our beneficiaries and partners to challenge injustice and dismantle barriers which deny individuals and communities equal access to life opportunities in Edinburgh & Lothians.</p>	<p>http://www.elrec.org.uk/</p> <p>Email: admin@elrec.org.uk</p> <p>Call: +44 131556 0441</p> <p>Address: 14 Forth Street, EH1 3LH, Edinburgh</p>
<p>Govan Community Project</p>	<p>Govan Community Project is a community-based organisation working in south-west Glasgow. Their aim is to achieve social justice in the Greater Govan area by building a strong community based on equality, mutual respect, support, and integration. The community flat is used for hosting English classes, social groups and a homework club. They also offer an advice and advocacy service, information workshops for people in the early stages of the asylum process, distribute food and undertake participatory action research with community members.</p>	<p>http://govancommunityproject.org.uk</p> <p>Email: home@govancommunityproject.org.uk</p> <p>Call: 0800 310 0054</p> <p>Office address: Govan Community Project, The Pearce Institute, 840 Govan Road, Glasgow, G51 3UU</p> <p>Community flat address: Flat 1, Block 40, Moss Heights Avenue, G52 2TX</p>
<p>Maryhill Integration Network (MIN)</p>	<p>MIN is a registered charity with a voluntary Board of Trustees with a vision of an inclusive society where everyone is treated with dignity and respect and can live supported and connected lives. The mission is to create a unique and creative environment in which communities can come together to share experiences and demonstrate the value of cultural diversity in Scotland. They bring migrant and local communities together through art, social, cultural and educational groups and projects, offering people a chance to learn new skills, meet new people,</p>	<p>http://www.maryhillintegration.org.uk/</p> <p>Email: hello@maryhillintegration.org.uk</p> <p>Call: 0141 946 9106</p> <p>Address: Maryhill Integration Network, 35 Avenuepark Street, Glasgow, G20 8TS</p>

	share experiences and take part in worthwhile activities to improve their lives and the life of their communities.	
Multi-cultural Family Base (MCFB)	<p>MCFB is a social work agency that provides both emotional and practical support to minority ethnic children and families in Edinburgh. Their projects include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BME Mentoring project - individual and group support for ethnic minorities. • Safe Haven - emotional and practical help to ethnic minority families. • 4Corners Project - work with children who have difficulties due to experiences of loss, migration, racism and poverty to improve their emotional wellbeing, reduce social isolation and develop confidence. 	<p>http://www.mcfb.org.uk/</p> <p>Email: hello@mcfb.org.uk</p> <p>Phone: 0131 467 7052</p> <p>Address: 50 Coburg Street, Edinburgh, EH6 6HE</p>
Migrant Help	<p>Migrant help exists to protect people affected by displacement and exploitation, helping them thrive as individuals and recover from their trauma. They support those most in need and least likely to find support elsewhere, whilst aiming to bridge community gaps and bring services and support together.</p> <p>Their core services include asylum support, victims of slavery and human trafficking support, refugee resettlement, advising and supporting through EU settlement scheme and interpreting and translating services.</p>	<p>https://www.migranthelpuk.org/</p> <p>Email: info@migranthelpuk.org</p> <p>Call: 01304 203977</p> <p>Address: Migrant Help, Charlton House, Dour Street, Dover, CT16 1AT</p>
Refugee Survival Trust	<p>Refugee Survival Trust aims to create a welcoming, inclusive, safe Scotland for refugees and asylum seekers, where all live free of destitution and have the means and opportunities to realise their full potential.</p> <p>They provide refugees and people seeking asylum with practical support when it is most needed, build connections between people and use what they learn to campaign for change.</p>	<p>https://www.rst.org.uk/</p> <p>Email: info@rst.org.uk</p> <p>Call: 0141 353 5602</p> <p>Address: Refugee Survival Trust Floor 3, Robertson House, 152 Bath Street, Glasgow, G2 4TB</p>
Refuweegee	Set up to provide a warm welcome to forcibly displaced people arriving in Glasgow. They do this through welcome packs, events and volunteer opportunities.	<p>https://www.refuweegee.co.uk/</p> <p>Email: enquiries@refuweegee.co.uk</p> <p>Phone: 0141 391 3386</p>

		Address: 3rd Floor of 1 Cadogan Square, 51 Cadogan St, Glasgow, G2 7HF
Scottish Faiths Action for Refugees	Scottish Faiths Action for Refugees is a multi-faith partnership project hosted by the Church of Scotland. They seek to coordinate and promote action by faith communities in Scotland to support asylum seekers and refugees. They work with Christian, Jewish, Muslim and Interfaith groups.	https://www.sfar.org.uk/ Email: schalmers@churchofscotland.org.uk Call: 07388 376784 Address: 4th Floor, 121 George Street, Edinburgh, EH2 4YN
Scottish Refugee Council	<p>Scottish Refugee Council is an independent charity supporting people in need of refugee protection. They provide practical support and advice to help people rebuild their lives in a sustainable and meaningful way.</p> <p>They work with communities and community groups and speak out against an unjust asylum system and campaign for policy changes that make a positive difference to people's lives.</p>	https://www.scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk/ Email: Can be contacted using a form found at: https://www.scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk/contact-us/ Call (Main office Glasgow): 0141 248 9799 Address (Main office Glasgow): 6th Floor, Portland House, 17, Renfield Street, Glasgow, G2 5AH Call (Dundee): 01382 797881 Address (Dundee): 10 Constitution Road, Dundee, DD1 1LL
Shelter	<p>Shelter exists to give people struggling with bad housing or homelessness the help they need, through our advice, support and legal services. They:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support and advice to people experiencing bad housing or homelessness. • Fight for the changes we need to see in housing policy. • Produce research and policy advice and provide training to support housing sector professionals. 	https://www.shelter.org.uk/ (select your location to start) Email: info@shelter.org.uk
The Welcoming	The Welcoming Association aims to a diverse and inclusive Scotland, where everyone feels welcome	https://www.thewelcoming.org/

Association	<p>and can achieve their potential. To welcome new Scots to Edinburgh, build community and learn together. They do this by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting new Scots to learn English, find jobs and access local services. • Offer opportunities for friendship, sustainable living, health and wellbeing. • Cultural exchange. • Collaborate with others to share knowledge and influence positive change. 	<p>Email: info@thewelcoming.org</p> <p>Phone: 0131 346 8577</p> <p>Address: 20/1 Westfield Avenue, Edinburgh, EH11 2TT</p>
The Unity Centre	<p>The Unity Centre gives practical support and solidarity to all asylum seekers and other migrants in Scotland and also supports anyone detained in any UK Detention Centres.</p>	<p>https://unitycentreglasgow.org/</p> <p>Email: info@unitycentreglasgow.org</p> <p>Phone: 0141 427 7992</p> <p>Address: 22 Ibrox Street, Glasgow, G51 1AQ</p>

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2.4 NGOs networks

NGOs can establish and participate in networks within and across sectors, such as the environmental sector, and across decision-making levels, from national to international. NGO networks vary in the extent to which they have been formalised, some representing a loose alliance of organisations with similar goals, others overseen by a secretariat with members allowed to participate through a formal process of admission. NGO networks are becoming increasingly powerful and crucial agents in national and international issues.

Table 4. Main NGO networks in the UK.

Name	Mission / activities	Website and contact details
Community Resources Network Scotland	<p>Community Resources Network’s vision is for a future with no waste, only resources. They aim to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Save valuable resources from landfill. • Tackle poverty and create jobs. • Support the local economy. • Engage and empower communities. 	<p>https://www.crns.org.uk/</p> <p>Email: info@crns.org.uk</p> <p>Phone: 01786 232 060</p> <p>Address: Suite 33, Stirling Business Centre, Wellgreen Place, Stirling, FK8 2DZ</p>

<p>Eco-Congregation Scotland</p>	<p>Eco-Congregation Scotland is a movement of Scottish church congregations committed to addressing environmental issues. The programme has three strands:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spiritual living - making a link between Christian faith and environmental issues. • Practical living - taking practical action to reduce environmental impact. • Global living - influencing attitudes and taking action in the community on issues like climate change. 	<p>https://www.ecocongregationscotland.org/</p> <p>Email: https://www.ecocongregationscotland.org/contact-details/</p> <p>Phone: 0131 240 2274</p> <p>Address: 121 George Street, Edinburgh, EH2 4YN</p>
<p>Scottish Alliance of Regional Equality Councils (SAREC)</p>	<p>SACREC is a national, strategic, collegiate body that champions equality and human rights across the country and challenges all forms of racism and discrimination. They aim to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Influence policy. • Build links between minority and majority communities. • Develop standards and models on equality and human rights. 	<p>https://sareconline.wordpress.com/</p> <p>Email: info@grec.co.uk</p> <p>Address: Napiershall Street Centre, 39 Napiershall Street, Glasgow, Lanarkshire, G20 6EZ</p>
<p>Scottish Communities Climate Action Network (SCCAN)</p>	<p>To support community-led action to address the climate and nature emergency and work for a just, thriving and resilient Scotland.</p> <p>SCCAN aim to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Empower democratic communities. • Promote local food production and reduce food waste. • Work towards zero-carbon. • Promote travelling in public transport and cycling/walking to places. • Promote a happy and healthy lifestyle with nutritious diet, creative livelihood and physically active lifestyle. 	<p>https://www.scottishcommunitiescan.org.uk/</p> <p>Email: info@scottishcommunitiescan.org.uk</p> <p>Phone: 07867866375</p>
<p>Social Enterprise Network Scotland (SENScot)</p>	<p>SENScot aims to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connect, inform, facilitate and support social firms across Scotland. • Work with others to develop the sector and offer solutions to issues faced in local communities. • Shape policy and strategy with Scottish Government and help to develop policies that add value to communities across 	<p>https://senscot.net/</p> <p>Email: mail@senscot.net</p> <p>Phone (Glasgow): 0141 280 2570</p> <p>Address (Glasgow): 24 George Square, Glasgow, G2 1EG</p> <p>Phone (Edinburgh): 0131 220 4104</p>

	<p>Scotland.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Raise awareness of social enterprise. 	<p>Address: 21 Walker Street, Edinburgh, EH3 7HX</p>
Slow Food Network	<p>Slow Food Scotland is campaigning for a food system that is good, clean and fair. They support local artisan producers and arrange specific events to highlight Slow Food principles and actions.</p>	<p>http://slowfoodscotland.com/</p> <p>Email: info@slowfood.org.uk</p> <p>Phone: 020 7099 1132</p> <p>Address: 19 Mansionhouse Road, Edinburgh, EH9 1TZ</p>
The Sustainable Scotland Network (SSN)	<p>Scotland's public sector network on sustainability and climate change. The network supports the public sector to drive action on climate change, scaling up impact through leadership, policy, and research.</p>	<p>https://sustainablescotlandnetwork.org/</p> <p>Email: info@sustainablescotlandnetwork.org</p> <p>Phone: +44 131 650 5326</p> <p>Address: Edinburgh Centre for Carbon Innovation, High School Yards, Edinburgh, EH1 1LZ</p>
The Ethnic Minority Environmental Network (EMEN)	<p>The EMEN provides a platform for organisations and individuals willing to engage in mainstream environmental decision-making in Scotland. EMEN aims to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Enable ethnic minorities to come together and raise awareness on climate change issues. ● Engage with relevant decisions makers. ● Increase participation in relevant consultations, events and campaigns. ● Build leadership. 	<p>https://www.cemvoscotland.org.uk/</p> <p>Email: enquiries@cemvoscotland.org.uk</p> <p>Phone: 0141 248 4830</p> <p>95-107 Lancefield Street, Glasgow, G3 8HZ</p>
UK Community Foundations (UKCF)	<p>UKCF is a national network of community foundations that brings people and organisations together that want to improve their communities.</p>	<p>https://www.ukcommunityfoundations.org/</p> <p>Email: Can be contacted using a form found at: https://www.ukcommunityfoundations.org/contact-us</p> <p>Phone: 020 7713 9326</p> <p>Address: Unit 1.04 Piano House, 9 Brighton Terrace, London, SW9 8DJ</p>

2.5 How to set up an NGO

In this section, Scotland will be used as an example. A set up of an NGO will vary slightly in different countries. Equivalent to the SCIO (in Scotland) for other countries in the UK can be found in the previous section on “Overreaching regulatory and advisory bodies to NGOs”.

2.5.1 *How are charities set up?*

Charities can exist in a number of ‘[legal forms](#)’ – how the organisation is constituted and run. Most are unincorporated associations, or companies limited by guarantee, some are trusts and in recent years many are [Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisations \(SCIOs\)](#). However, the charity is set up, the consistent requirement is that they must all, as charities, comply with charity law and report to OSCR as regulator. An organisation seeking to become a charity must apply to OSCR who will consider whether the organisation meets the charity test.

2.5.2 *Step-by-step*

The steps will be briefly covered here on how to set up your own charity. SCVO has a detailed guide from how to get started to writing your own constitution which can be found at <https://scvo.scot/support/setting-up-a-charity>.

1. When considering setting up a new voluntary sector organisation, the objective needs to be clear on the needs the organisation will be meeting that are not fulfilled by others.
2. Sufficient demand and the right resources to support the service you are planning to deliver need to be available. Alternatively, it is also possible to raise the issues with other organisations that may have similar goals and contact them to campaign on those issues.
3. You will need to build a team to form a committee who have the time, skills, knowledge and ideas that are necessary to set up and run an organisation successfully (the organisational structure can be found at: <https://www.gdrc.org/ngo/org-chart.html>).
4. It is important to establish aims and purposes on why organisation exists and who it will benefit which will identify the focus and support needed.
5. To develop the vision, careful planning needs to be done to develop a clear focus for the organisation and how it will operate. The activities that your organisation will be undertaking such as buying premises, employing staff, raising large-scale finance, entering into large contracts; need to be considered when deciding to become unincorporated (individuals with no separate legal identity) or incorporated (organisation with legal identity of its own).

6. There are different legal structures that need to be considered when setting up an organisation, depending on what the organisation will do. These include SCIO (Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation), Voluntary Association, Company Limited by Guarantee, Trust and others (comparisons between these can be found at: <https://www.oscr.org.uk/media/2506/legal-forms-factsheet.pdf>).
7. Once the legal structure has been decided, the constitution can be drafted, adjusted and finalised for the voluntary organisation which can also be done with the help of legal advice.

Sources:

- TSI Scotland Network - support Third Sector Interfaces (TSI) including charities, community groups, development trusts, social enterprises and the volunteering sector: <https://tsi.scot/>; TSI support in the area map: <https://www.google.com/maps/d/u/0/viewer?mid=1INQykYLr58tpkI9jkgegQ46UUxo&ll=55.40158425537225%2C-4.519493252685605&z=6>.
- Consulting a professional advisor to identify a professional firm with expertise in charity law or accounting: <https://www.lawscot.org.uk/>.
- For tax enquiries: <https://www.gov.uk/charities-and-tax> or HMRC Charities Helpline: 0845 302 0203.

2.5.3 How must charities behave?

Charities must work to achieve their stated charitable purposes. Charitable purposes are set out in law – for example, the relief or prevention of poverty, the advancement of education – and each charity has a governing document that explains what it exists to achieve. Charities are run by ‘charity trustees’, those who are in control of the charity and manage its affairs. The charity trustees have clear legal duties to observe, and overall they must act in the charity’s best interests and aim to meet its stated purposes. OSCR in Scotland and equivalents in other countries of the UK, have the power to take action where this is not the case.

2.5.4 How do charities raise money?

Charities receive income and raise money in a variety of ways. For example, they may:

- Receive grants from public bodies or other charities.
- Be given a legacy in someone’s will.

- Be given donations by individual raise money at events, on the doorstep or in workplaces.
- Sell donated goods send appeals for funds through the post or through email.

An organisation does not have to be a charity in order to raise funds for good causes. Some charities may raise funds themselves or employ companies or individuals to raise money on their behalf.

3. The situation of low qualified migrants, refugees and asylum seekers



3.1 Census

According to from the Migration Observatory at the University of Oxford, there has been an approximate 4.2 million increase in non-UK born population since 2004 (until 2019) (**Figure 1**). The increase has slowed since 2016, however, it probably has slowed even more considerably in 2020 (due to the coronavirus outbreak). This, however, has not been estimated yet.

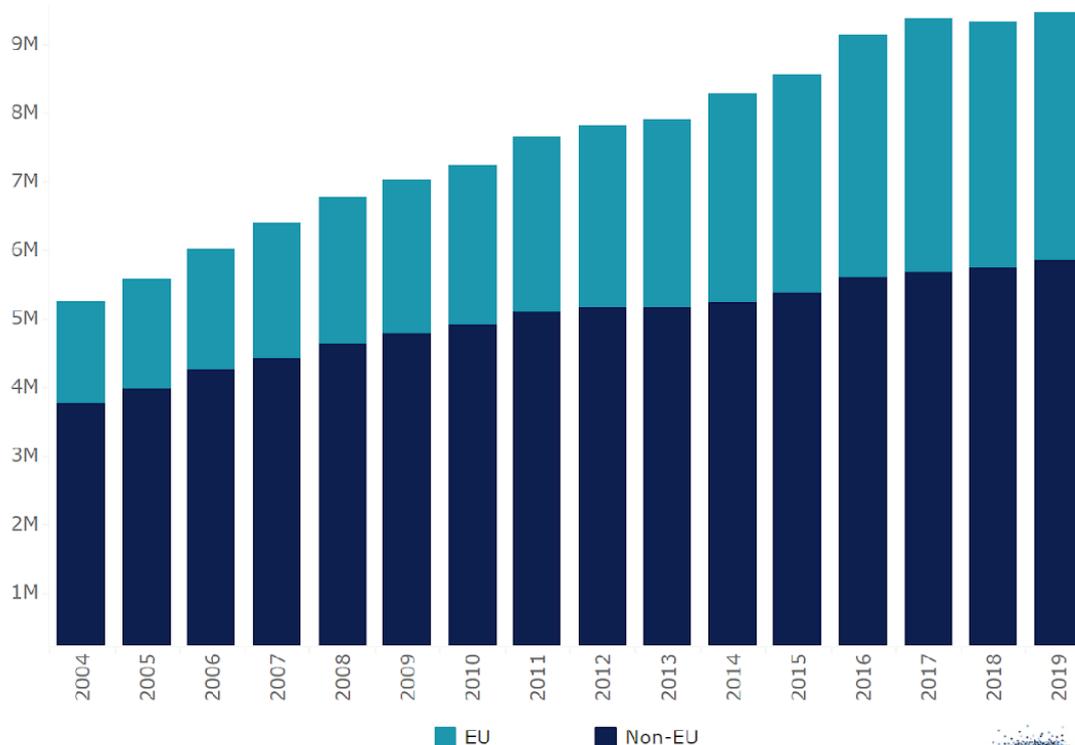


Figure 1. Foreign-born population in the UK by place of birth from 2004 to 2019. Source: The Migration Observatory.

According to the Migration Observatory, London has the largest number of migrants (35% of the population living in London) when compared to other regions of the UK (**Figure 2**). Northern Ireland, Wales and the North East region (England) have the lowest non-UK born populations, only at 1 to 2%.

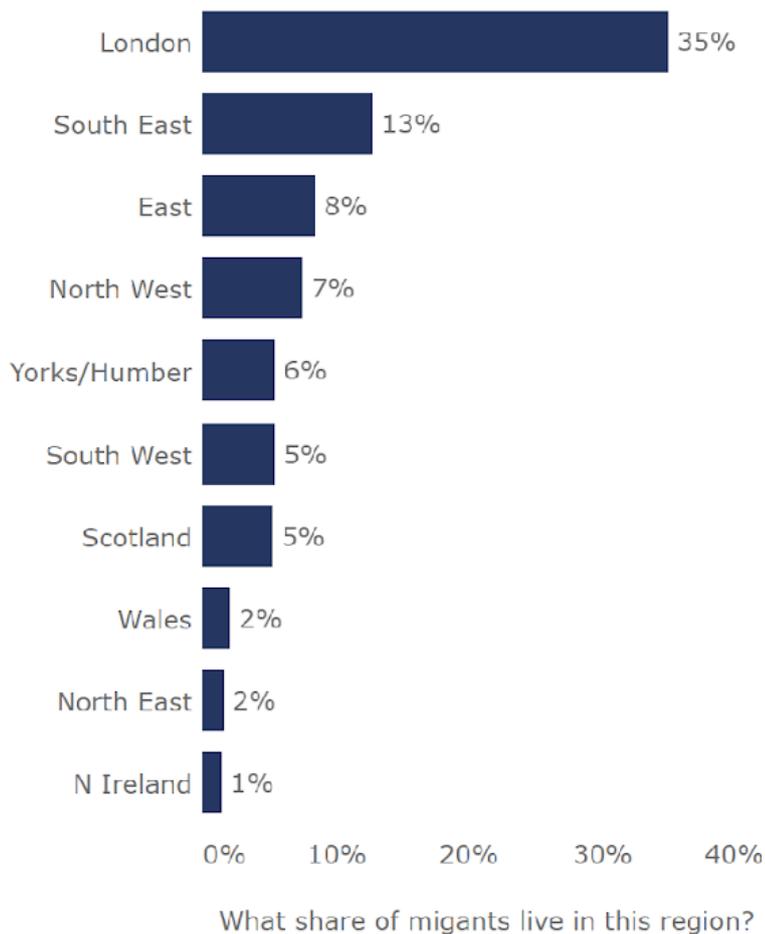


Figure 2. Percentage share of migrants living within the regions of the UK. Source: The Migration Observatory.

Focus will be shifted onto Scotland in the next section.

The latest figure on the Scottish demographic representation is displayed in **Figure 3**. There were 240,000 EU born citizens and 289,000 international migrants living in Scotland in 2020. There were 77,000 estimated Polish residents - they represent the largest non-UK born group in Scotland. Other

large groups include persons born in India (35,000), Pakistan (29,000) and Germany (27,000). Causes for migration can be economic, environmental, social and political. For example, poor wages and lack of jobs lead to migration in search of higher paying jobs and better job prospects².

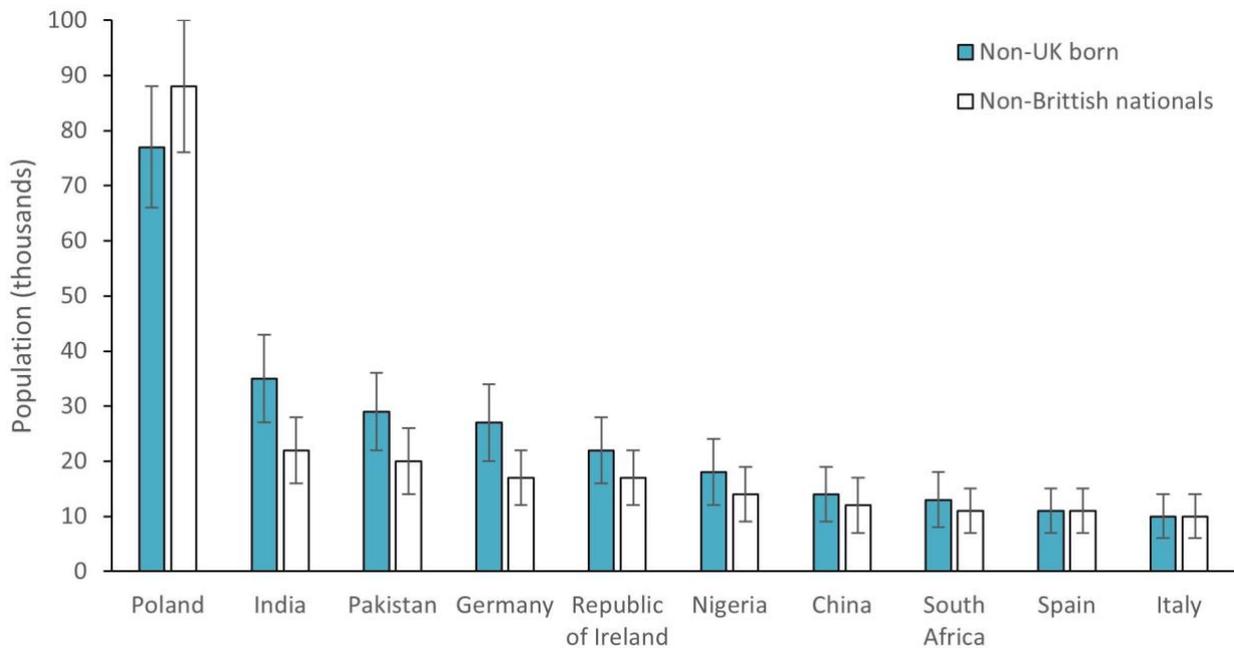


Figure 2. The biggest non-UK born and non-British national groups of Scotland in 2020³. Error bars represent 95% confidence interval +/-.

Refugee Integration in Scotland was explored by Mulvey⁴. The Survey of New Refugees found that only 34% of respondents were employed 8 months after obtaining the leave to remain. Among those working, most were in low paid and low status jobs such as care assistant, cleaner, security officer and waitress. Despite the low paid and temporary nature of the work that respondents were doing, levels of satisfaction with work were fairly high and many did not consider themselves underemployed even if they worked below their skills and qualifications. The biggest concern was the income, a part of the respondents found it difficult or very difficult to cope on their salary. Most refugees and asylum seekers were satisfied with their housing conditions, however there were

²Justice for Immigrants (2017). Root causes for migration. Available at: <https://justiceforimmigrants.org/what-we-are-working-on/immigration/root-causes-of-migration/> [accessed: 15/05/2021].

³National Records of Scotland (2020). Population by Country of Birth and Nationality, Scotland, July 2019 to June 2020. Available at: <https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/statistics-and-data/statistics/statistics-by-theme/population/population-estimates/population-by-country-of-birth-and-nationality> [accessed: 09/04/2021].

⁴Mulvey (2011). Refugee integration in Scotland. Statistical findings stage 1. Available at: <https://www.scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/Refugee-Integration-in-Scotland.pdf> [accessed: 01/06/2021].

concerns raised with overcrowding, condition of the property and the neighbourhood. Some felt that their neighbourhood was unwelcoming, some people in the area were racist and had problems with drugs and unemployment. In contrast, others were happy, had good neighbours and felt welcomed and secure. Other sections in the report touch upon health and education, family and community and citizenship and rights.

Often post-2004 migration from the UK and the rest of Europe, was described as ‘free moving’ rather than long-term immigration and asylum seeking¹. Migrants often come with a goal to earn and save as much money as possible and often become subject to overcrowding and living in undesirable areas. For example, in one household that was inspected by Govanhill Housing Association in Glasgow, eight people (migrants) were found living in a one-bedroom flat at the back of a house. “The windows were broken. There was a gas fire that had to be cut off because it had yellow flames and it was clearly poisoning everybody in the flat, and the flat was infested by cockroaches. There were children in the household as well⁴.

Integration into the society can be understood as a process where migrants become successfully incorporated into the host society¹. Cohesion within the community is what needs to happen to enable different groups of people to get on well together; new residents and existing locals need to adjust to one another to achieve community cohesion¹. Migrants in the rural Scottish areas with small communities experience more pressure to assimilate to dominant cultural norms. In addition, absence of co-ethnic groups nearby can make it difficult to maintain a sense of belonging because of differences in culture between the birth and host countries¹. Proficiency in the English language does not only improve migrant employability but also is a big factor that helps with the integration into the society. The process of learning the language itself helps to establish links and encourage engagement with migrants¹.

3.2 The needs and the gaps

There are many needs and gaps regarding mental and physical health, language, skills and qualifications and others. These differ within different groups.

Migrants and refugees are able to access all available benefits that any citizen would, however living on benefits may not be enough sometimes and they need extra income. It is not easy to access jobs for men and women because of the language and certification. Inability to continue their old jobs can often frustrate and discourage people which can add to their trauma as Diline, who works with families, children and young people to support them through the difficult time of their life and transitions, has highlighted.

“They become frustrated as they cannot access their old jobs because of the language or a particular certificate, and this can add to the trauma (...) the added frustration with the reality they are in now and that they cannot really do anything. They lost their role between practice

breadwinners that they had in Syria or in Sudan. All adds to their mental health. This can come out into their families in a negative way.”

Dilina stressed the importance in tackling their needs relating to mental health.

“Vast majority, if not all the families have gone through a significant trauma of witnessing horrible war, incidents, air strikes, have been threatened and felt very unsafe. Trauma needs a really long-term support to heal and for people to make sense of it. If they are able to heal their trauma, they will be able to overcome other barriers and needs such as social needs, language and educational barriers which is a long-term process.”

Person X believed that the biggest need for migrant groups in Scotland is language. To improve their English, individuals start with ESOL courses when they arrive in the UK. She speculated about the success rate of the course.

“As it seems, the classic approach has not worked very well because we have migrant people living in this country for decades, but they are still not functional or integrated into the society, especially women who do not speak the language very well. (...) The most important thing is to observe and to consider diversity in whatever language activity is considered for these people because so far it is quite common that migrants are put into different groups or they have put themselves into different groups with fellow country people which does not help with their integration and language learning at all. It is much better if they are mixed with people from other diverse backgrounds.”

Most working individuals in arriving families had vocational occupations in their country such as carpenter or mechanic. In addition to the language barrier, with refugees in particular, their skills and qualifications are not recognised in the UK. The majority of non-UK migrants arrive with qualifications and skills; however, the measurement of migrants' education levels is often complicated by the comparison of education qualifications across countries³. Regarding migrants from the EU, the degree they may have obtained, could be recognised if “statement of comparability” is obtained. Currently, there is a lack of services and avenues for refugees to convert their qualifications from their home country. However, there are classes provided by organisations such as the Scottish Refugee Council which help refugees with employability skills such as CV writing and job application processes, understanding the UK job market, and interview skills.

There also might be some form of practicality for employers to hire people from the UK or the EU rather than overseas as it can be much harder to track. Person X talked about her qualifications that were not recognised.

“My qualification was not recognised here, so I have to do things that I may be overqualified for. But just to make ends meet, I have to do these things. There has not been anything that would improve this as far as I know.”

Zoreh thought ESOL lessons helped her improve her English a lot, especially speaking group exercises. Making the most out of them was key. The one-to-one mentorship she has received with ELREC, although short-term, has also been extremely helpful.

Technology can also be a big barrier if not used previously. Melba, who has not engaged with the Internet and technology prior to coming to the UK, said she has found it difficult at first, but has received support to help her familiarise herself. She would also like to have a solicitor so she can get familiar with how things work in Scotland.

Many families from Syria and Sudan that Diline works with are illiterate, even in Arabic which creates additional barriers and the need for extra support to find a suitable educational course. In some cases, especially with young people that come to Edinburgh, they have never been to schools which creates additional needs. Diline has worked with Syrian families that have been in camps in Lebanon and Turkey before where children and young people were not allowed to go to schools. Diline is working to bridge this gap between schools and families. She stressed how important and helpful more one-to-one support would be to help children and young people to achieve well during their educational journey, however, often a lack of resources available do not allow this.

Asylum seekers are not generally allowed to work and often wait years until their status gets approved. If an asylum seeker has been waiting longer than a year for a decision, they can apply for a permission to work. The UK asylum system has been previously described as difficult and stressful to navigate and can have a significant effect on mental health in addition to stressful experiences that led to migration⁵. The way in which the asylum system operates in the UK can negatively impact long-term physical and mental health by drawn out legal procedures, no rights to employment and poverty. By interviewing asylum seekers with an African background, Isaacs⁶ has found that with the existing system, existence where “individuals have limited control of their personal circumstances, little idea of what may happen to them and when, severely constrained access to resources, and where they are the subject of suspicion and racial discrimination. These structural factors intersect, so that refugees and asylum seekers are unable to access the resources that would afford them the opportunity to live a healthy life and maximise their chances of preventing chronic illness.

⁵Carswell, K., Blackburn, P. & Barker, C. (2011). The relationship between trauma, post-migration problems and the psychological well-being of refugees and asylum seekers. *International Journal of Social Psychiatry*, 57(2), 107-119.

⁶Isaacs, A., Burns, N., Macdonald, S., & O'Donnell, C. A. (2020). ‘I don't think there's anything I can do which can keep me healthy’: how the UK immigration and asylum system shapes the health & wellbeing of refugees and asylum seekers in Scotland. *Critical Public Health*, 1-11.

Sources:

- Recognition of academic diploma from the EU: https://europa.eu/youreurope/citizens/education/university/recognition/index_en.htm
- Apply to get your academic diploma from the EU approved: <https://www.enic-naric.net/>

3.3 Restrictions and obligations

The right to work in the UK depends on where you travel from and what type of work you intend to do. A new “immigration points-based system” has been introduced following Brexit. Free movement with the EU has ended on 31st of December. Points-based system for EU and non-EU citizens includes the route for skilled-workers who have a job offer from a sponsor employer. Migrants are required to have a skill level of RQF3 or above (equivalent to A-levels), need to be able to speak English and be paid the relevant salary threshold by the sponsor (general threshold is £25,600). For EU, EEA or Swiss citizens, who were resident in the UK before 31st of December 2020, do not need to apply for the system and instead apply for the EU Settlement Scheme (deadline - 30th of June 2021).

3.4 How to join an NGO

To become a director or a trustee, you will often need knowledge and experience in areas such as marketing and media, social care, commissioning, IT, strategic HR, Asset Management, legal and others. A trustee will help to run the charity and direct the activities. To join an NGO as staff, you need to have the right to work in the UK and meet the skilled-worker criteria if you have arrived after 31st of December. As a volunteer, you do not need the right to work in the UK.

Sources:

- Trustee vacancy search in Scotland: <https://scvo.scot/support/trustees-network/search>
- Job vacancies in the charity sector (UK): <https://www.charityjob.co.uk/jobs>
- Charity and voluntary sector recruitment (UK): <https://goodmoves.com/>
- Volunteering opportunities in Scotland: <https://www.volunteerscotland.net/>

3.4.1 Volunteering



Requirements for volunteering:

The UK is no longer part of the EU, but EU nationals can still volunteer if they have either a settled or pre-settled status, a visa which does not prevent them from volunteering or enrolment in any EU funded programme in the UK such as Erasmus+ or European Solidarity Corps.

In some cases, migrants may be able to volunteer but not do voluntary work. Volunteers cannot be substituted for an employee and must not receive payment of any kind (other than travel reimbursement or substantial expenses). Voluntary workers have obligations to perform work, such as free training, building their CV for future employment or for free products or services from the organisation. If the individual is a volunteer, he/she will not be required to have the right to work in the UK.

Refugees are allowed to do any type of work including volunteering. Asylum seekers are not normally allowed to work until they have received a refugee status, but they can volunteer in public and voluntary sectors.

Volunteering can help gain confidence, learn new skills and improve language and will help to integrate into the community. There are many volunteering opportunities to get involved with including working with elderly, youth and children, environment and animals and sports and outdoor activities.

Volunteering opportunities search:

- Volunteer centre search (UK): https://www.google.com/maps/d/u/0/viewer?mid=1X4YLaUVh4Gc4RrAKeEtGDKbF_CLtrkz3&ll=52.78323820373977%2C-1.400126500000014&z=7
- Database for volunteering roles in the UK: <https://doit.life/volunteer>
- Volunteer positions in Edinburgh: <https://www.volunteeredinburgh.org.uk/>
- Volunteering in Glasgow: <https://www.volunteerglasgow.org/>

Opportunities can be searched using keywords to find suitable positions. After finding an activity you might want to get involved in, you can register your interest by filling out a form which sends an email to the appropriate organisation or send an email using their email address provided.

■

3.4.2 Accessing the labour market and green jobs

Green job sector refers to working to preserve or restore the environment. The International Labour Office defined green jobs as: “work in agricultural, manufacturing, research and development (R&D), administrative, and service activities that contribute substantially to preserving or restoring

environmental quality. Specifically, but not exclusively, this includes jobs that help to protect ecosystems and biodiversity, reduce energy, materials, and water consumption through high efficiency strategies, decarbonise the economy, and minimize or altogether avoid generation of all forms of waste and pollution”⁷.

To be able to start working in the environmental job sector, often a graduate or higher degree is needed, as well as experience, whether it is through volunteering, placement, internship or a graduate degree. Through these experiences, you will be able to gain practical and technical skills, knowledge on environmental issues and many others.

Sources:

- For graduate jobs (filter by environmental): <https://www.prospects.ac.uk/graduate-jobs-results?sortBy=dp&careers=182&size=20&page=0>
- Environmental jobs and volunteering (with experience and some graduate/internship/placement opportunities): <https://www.environmentjob.co.uk/jobs>
- Environmental jobs for individuals with more experience: <https://www.greenjobs.co.uk/>

3.5 Supporting structures

[The Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations \(SCVO\)](#) (and equivalents for other countries of the UK) is the umbrella body for voluntary organizations in Scotland. They lobby the government on policy issues, create jobs for young people and support organisations to embrace and promote digital skills. They also help with stuff such as discounted training courses, funding opportunities and information and support to help people set up and run their organisations.

[Citizens advice](#) (choose your location) provides information on visas, asylum and refugees, accessing benefits and services, immigration status and British citizenship information. Guide found at: <https://www.tuc.org.uk/research-analysis/reports/working-uk-guide-your-rights>, will help you understand your rights when working in the UK, which depends on what type of worker you are.

⁷Hunter, D. & Stoevska, V. (2012). Proposals for the statistical definition and measurement of green jobs. Preliminary paper prepared for discussion by the London Group on Environmental-Economic Accounts, October 2012. *Department of Statistics. International Labour Office*. Available at: https://unstats.un.org/unsd/envaccounting/londongroup/meeting18/LG18_28.pdf [accessed: 17/05/2021].



SOMRA

[The Air Centre](#) provides legal advice through the advice line and online resources. You can find information such as eligibility for the “settled status” and permanent rights to reside in the UK.



4. References

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1. Introduction

Cyprus, despite its small population size of around one million people, is receiving a large number of refugees, migrants, and asylum seekers per capita as this report will subsequently show. For instance, 87,729 people applied for asylum to the government of the Republic of Cyprus in the period

2002-2020⁸. The purpose of this report is to provide relevant and helpful information for NGO representatives, professionals and other interested stakeholders, as well as to migrants, refugees and asylum seekers. It provides information regarding legal restrictions and obligations in accessing the labour market, helpful links and information regarding NGOs in Cyprus and how to create or join an NGO, and the situation of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers in Cyprus.

To achieve the aim of this report, desk research has been conducted, and five people were interviewed. The informants were chosen for the direct experience and knowledge they have regarding the current status of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers in Cyprus. More specifically, an asylum seeker was interviewed who has been in Cyprus for a few months. The individual is currently looking for job positions or volunteering opportunities (for the purpose of this report, the individual will be referred to as Informant 2).

Two NGO representatives were also interviewed. The first NGO representative (Informant 1) is one of the founders and directors of a non-profitable organisation that promotes social cohesion. The organisation focuses on various areas, and migration is one of them. The second NGO representative that was interviewed is one of the co-founders and head of an NGO that aims to bring systemic change and promotes the inclusion of migrants and refugees. To achieve this purpose, the NGO, among its various actions, offers training and support to migrants and refugees while connecting them to their networks, and it forms partnerships with other CSOs that work in the same area.

Finally, two professionals who work with migrants, refugees and asylum seekers were interviewed. The first professional (Informant 3) is a social counsellor who is providing information and help with jobs, and informing people about their rights. The informant is also actively engaged with creating events, and more broadly, engaged in changing the perceptions that exist in Cyprus about migrants and aims to create a positive perception about migration. The second professional (Informant 4) is also a social worker who offers information and intervenes where and when needed. An example of an intervention is accompanying individuals to various Services when faced with an issue or problem.

2. NGOs Cyprus

⁸UNHCR Cyprus, (April 2021), Cyprus Fact Sheet, Available at: https://www.unhcr.org/cy/wp-content/uploads/sites/41/2021/04/Cyprus_Fact_Sheet_9-APRIL-2021.pdf

2.1 A variety of legal structures in Cyprus

2.1.1 Different Types of NGO Legal Structures

The Cyprus Law does not embrace the term NGO; however, it does recognise the following legal personalities:⁹

1. Associations: According to the new Law, Association refers to an organised union comprising at least twenty (20) persons that aims to achieve a not-for-profit objective and does not include political parties or trade unions.
2. Foundations: According to the new Law, Foundation refers to the totality of the property intended to serve the implementation of a particular not-for-profit objective; for the purposes of the foundation's establishment, the dedicated property cannot amount to less than one thousand euros (€1,000). The Law also refers to the objectives for which a foundation can be established and which must constitute its main objectives.
3. Federations and/or unions of organisations: Federation and/or union refers to the framework of cooperation of three (3) or more associations, foundations not-for-profit companies, or other similar not-for-profit legal entities with common objectives.
4. Not-for-profit companies: A non-profit company is founded to promote art, science, religion, human rights, charity or anyone else purpose useful to society. Unlike profit-making companies, a non-profit company distributes its income or profits, if any, for the promoting the purpose for which it was established.

The first three of these legal personalities (associations, foundations and federations/unions) are under the Cypriot law - Laws on associations and foundations of 1972 and 1997, and the modified Law on Associations and Foundations and other Related Matters Law of 2017 (Law 104(I)/2017).¹⁰

⁹ Civil Society Advocates, Guide: Developments for NGOs, Legislative changes regarding, associations, foundations, clubs, and federation, May, 2018, Available at: <https://ngo-sc.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/BOOKLET-Associations-Law-Apr2018-ENG.pdf>

¹⁰ Cyprus Law on organisations and foundations and other related matters of 2017 (Ο ΠΕΡΙ ΣΩΜΑΤΕΙΩΝ ΚΑΙ ΙΔΡΥΜΑΤΩΝ ΚΑΙ ΓΙΑ ΆΛΛΑ ΣΥΝΑΦΗ ΘΕΜΑΤΑ Νόμος του 2017) N. 104(I)/2017, Available at: http://www.cylaw.org/nomoi/arith/2017_1_104.pdf

The Not-for-profit companies (Private Companies by Guarantee (Law 113) are subjected to a different law - The Companies Law (Ο περί Εταιρειών Νόμος (ΚΕΦ.113)¹¹.

In the wider spectrum, NGOs also include the Charity Trusts, which are governed by the Charity laws 41 (Ο περί Αγαθοεργών Ιδρυμάτων Νόμος 41).¹² These trusts are set up for the public benefit purposes such as relief of poverty, advancement of religion, education, literature, science and any other purpose that is considered beneficial to the community. The trustee of any charitable institution submits an application to the Council of Ministers to register the institution as a legal entity. The Council of Ministers will issue a certificate of registration if it considers it to be appropriate and subject to such terms and conditions as the Council of Minister may impose (Article 2 of Chapter 41). No minimum capital requirements exist in relation to Charitable Trusts.¹³

The Ministry of Finance, in collaboration with the Office of the Commissioner for Volunteerism and Non-Governmental Organisations, proceeded with a series of measures to create a new legal framework for charitable organisations. The Bill in question is in the process of being debated in the Committee on Internal Affairs in the parliament.¹⁴

According to the 2018 annual report of the Office of the Commissioner for Volunteerism and Non-Governmental Organisations, there were about 6,300 registered unions and clubs, which undoubtedly creates a misleading impression in terms of the size of organised civil society in Cyprus, as most of these organisations were inactive. There were also reported 330 non-profit companies and 400 charities. According to the latest data from the Ministry of Interior, about 2000 associations and clubs have been deleted. Therefore, an estimation of the current number of associations today is around 4,000. Also, trustees are estimated, according to the latest data, to be around 60.¹⁵

In 2017, the Cyprus parliament adopted new legislation on the registration and functioning of associations and foundations. This new legislation brought important amendments to the registration and operation procedures. Below are cited the main amendments (among others)¹⁰:

- The Registration of Clubs Act (Chapter 112) is repealed (Article 54(1)) from the date of entry into force of the new Law (14/7/2017); existing and valid club licenses will remain valid until

¹¹Office of the Law Commissioner, the Companies Law, Available at: [http://www.olc.gov.cy/olc/olc.nsf/284F7321A315ED07C225860D002DAF91/\\$file/The%20Companies%20Law.pdf](http://www.olc.gov.cy/olc/olc.nsf/284F7321A315ED07C225860D002DAF91/$file/The%20Companies%20Law.pdf)

¹² Cyprus Law on Charity (Ο περί Αγαθοεργών Ιδρυμάτων Νόμος 41), Available at: <http://www.cylaw.org/nomoi/indexes/41.html>

¹³ European Foundation Centre (EFC), Legal and Fiscal Country Profile, Cyprus, 2014, Available at: <https://www.efc.be/uploads/2019/07/Cyprus-2014.pdf>

¹⁴ Office of the Commissioner for Volunteerism and Non-Governmental Organizations, Annual Report 2018, Available at: [http://www.volunteercommissioner.gov.cy/volunteer/volunteercommissioner.nsf/11AFD0FBD109A4D1C22584F7002D3318/\\$file/ANNUAL%20REPORT%202018.pdf](http://www.volunteercommissioner.gov.cy/volunteer/volunteercommissioner.nsf/11AFD0FBD109A4D1C22584F7002D3318/$file/ANNUAL%20REPORT%202018.pdf)

¹⁵ Ministry of Interior, Available at: http://www.moi.gov.cy/moi/moi.nsf/pagede1b_gr/pagede1b_gr?OpenDocument

their expiration date. All organisations that were registered as clubs had a period of one (1) year to carry out the administrative procedures necessary for the adoption of a new legal personality (association, foundation, not-for-profit company, or other).

- According to the new Law, it is possible to register federations of organisations.
- Applications for registration of NGOs are now filed with the district administration in each city. The district administration is under a duty to examine applications for registration within three months from receipt of all documents. If the Registrar rejects a request for registration, they must justify their decision and inform the applicants of the legal remedies available to them.
- The district administration may request applicants to submit a criminal record of the members of the governing board of the applicant organisation, issued during the last three months from the date of the application.
- The new law includes targeted provisions in financial transparency by forcing the organisations to submit audited financial accounts per year. Specifically, it includes provisions that determine that in the event that if the audited financial accounts are not submitted for two consecutive years, then the Organisations will lose their legal entity. It also provides the obligation of the Organisations - to organise at least one General Assembly per year and submit data on an annual basis communication of their Organisation¹⁴. NGOs with an income over €40.000 must submit audited accounts within seven months from the expiry of the accounting year.

2.1.2 Overarching Regulatory or Advisory Bodies to NGOs

Ministry of Interior: The Ministry of Interior of the Republic is the overarching regulatory authority for Associations, Foundations and Federations and Charity trusts. There is a particular section in the Ministry which is in charge of the procedures for the registration of associations, foundations, and federations, or for the establishment of branches or subsidiaries. The Registrar is no longer the Director General of the Ministry of Interior but is now the District Officer / Registrar. The Registrar is responsible for the registration and operation of associations, foundations, federations and/or unions of organisations, and branches that have their headquarters in the Registrar's district. Additionally, the new position of General Registrar is instituted and is occupied by the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Interior

(Website: http://www.moi.gov.cy/moi/moiup/moi.nsf/index_gr/index_gr?OpenDocument).

Commissioner for Volunteerism and Non-Governmental Organisations: The Office of the Commissioner for Volunteering and NGOs was established in 2013 (01/06/2013). The aim of the Commissioner for Volunteering is to encourage the active civic participation at local level and to promote the role of organised civil society at all levels for the purposes of drawing up governmental policies. In general, the main activities of the Office are the promotion of policies encouraging the active civic participation at all levels, the creation of instruments facilitating and organising a better

communication between government and citizens, the support and promotion of the role and work of voluntary and non-governmental organisations and the development of volunteering consciousness by promoting the values and virtues of volunteerism with ultimate goal the upgrading of voluntary movement in Cyprus (Website:

http://www.volunteercommissioner.gov.cy/volunteer/volunteercommissioner.nsf/contact_en/contact_en?opendocument).

For the non – profit companies the main regulatory body is the Department of Registrar of Companies and Official Receiver at the Ministry of Energy, Commerce and Industry (Website: <https://www.intellectualproperty.gov.cy/en/>).

2.1.3 Funding Landscape for NGOs

Beyond the legal requirements, the funding that organisations receive is another factor that differentiates organisations among them. As noted by the informants, a few organisations receive funding from the government, while other organisations solely receive funding from other sources. Being a non-governmental organisation adds complexity, whereas receiving funding from the governmental budget entails less organisational independence.

The main funds for NGOs in Cyprus come from the European Union (European Commission programmes) and also from some national schemes. Some private funds are also available.

EU Competitive Programmes

- EU Competitive Programmes are programmes that are financed directly by the European Union’s budget and are aimed at contributing to the implementation of EU policies. In Cyprus, the Foundation for the Management of European Lifelong Learning Programmes has the management of funds allocated to Cyprus by the European Commission for the participation of Cypriot beneficiaries in European Education/Training Programmes.

(Website: <https://www.erasmusplus.cy/en/IDEP-Dia-Biou-Mathisis>)

EEA Grants and Norway Grants

- EEA Grants and Norway Grants: The EEA and Norway Grants are funded by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway. The Grants have two goals – to contribute to a more equal Europe, both socially and economically – and to strengthen the relations between Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway, and the 15 beneficiary countries in Europe, with Cyprus being one of them (Website: <https://eeagrants.org/>).

National Grant Schemes

- The National Grant Schemes are designed and approved at the national level and are funded solely by national funds. The aim of these projects is the implementation of various state policies and priorities, e.g. strengthening employment, promotion of tourism, etc. The implementation and management of these projects is taking place exclusively in Cyprus, under the responsibility of the relevant Ministries/agencies of the broader public sector. The national grant schemes are available at: <https://www.fundingprogrammesportal.gov.cy/en/funding-programmes/national-grant-schemes>

2.2 Environmental NGOs

Table 1. Different environmental NGOs in Cyprus.

Name	Mission & activities	Website and contact details
Federation of Environmental Organisations of Cyprus (FEO)	<p>FEO was founded in 1988 and is a network of 20 Non-Governmental Organisations in Cyprus that are active in the areas of the environment, health and culture. The Federation coordinates and supports the actions of its members as long as these actions are in accordance with the principles. FEO is a body officially recognised by the state (representing no political affiliation) and participates in related to its activities Councils, Committees and bodies, both in Cyprus and abroad.</p> <p>FEO submits its views and positions to various Parliamentary Committees and is always present at the</p>	<p>http://www.oikologiafeeo.org/index.php?option=com_frontpage&Itemid=1</p> <p>Email: info@oikologiafeeo.org</p> <p>Phone: +357 22313750</p>

	<p>Parliamentary Committee on the Environment meetings. It can affect the decision made, in numerous National Committees and Administrative Councils. Federation participates in the Committee for the Environmental Impact Assessment.</p> <p>One of the main activities of the FEO is informing, sensitising and mobilising the citizens in matters of the environment and sustainable development. In addition, the FEO participates in environmental programmes of the European Union and the Council of Europe.</p>	
Terra Cypria–the Cyprus Conservation Foundation	<p>Terra Cypria–the Cyprus Conservation Foundation was officially established in 1992 as a charitable, non-profit organisation.</p> <p>Its overall aim is to promote environmental awareness and sustainability through pressure and environmental education, as well as through programmes that promote conservation, environmental protection and research.</p>	<p>https://terracypria.org/</p> <p>Phone:+357 25 320034</p> <p>Email: info@terracypria.org</p>
BirdLife Cyprus	<p>BirdLife Cyprus works to protect wild birds, their habitats and wider biodiversity in Cyprus, through research, monitoring, lobbying and conservation and awareness-raising actions. It is the national Partner of BirdLife International, a global Partnership of nature conservation organisations working in more than 100 countries worldwide.</p>	<p>birdlifecyprus@birdlifecyprus.org.cy</p> <p>Phone: +357 22 455072</p> <p>Email: birdlifecyprus@birdlifecyprus.org.cy</p>
Friends of Akamas	<p>The Friends of Akamas is an environmental organisation founded in Nicosia in 1986, one of the first to be established in Cyprus. Its original purpose was to promote the establishment of a National Park in the area of Akamas, at the Northwest corner of the island. The organisation is giving priority on the Akamas issue and on actions for the effective protection and sustainable development of the region and its communities.</p> <p>The organisation expanded its scope to include other environmental and cultural matters and has played an active role in matters such as water management, renewable energy, protection of archeological sites, preservation of traditional heritage, sustainable development in conjunction with prudent administration, sustainable touristic</p>	<p>Facebook page: https://www.facebook.com/FriendsOfAkamas/</p> <p>Phone: +357 99914904</p> <p>Email: friendsofakamas@gmail.com</p>

	development, nature preservation in the occupied areas of Cyprus and other activities.	
Friends of the Earth Cyprus	<p>Friends of the Earth Cyprus was established in 1980 and since then has campaigned on a number of local, national and international environmental issues.</p> <p>The goal is to raise awareness on the importance of preserving the natural environment and to campaign for solutions to environmental and social problems by promoting sustainable policies. Friends of the Earth Cyprus is a member group of Friends of the Earth Europe and Friends of the Earth International. Friends of Earth is a member of the Federation of Environmental Organisations of Cyprus (NGO's) and the European Environmental Bureau (EEB).</p>	<p>https://www.foecyprus.org/</p> <p>Phone: +357 25347042</p> <p>Email: office@foecyprus.org</p>
Enalia Physis Environmental Research Center	<p>Enalia Physis Environmental Research Center is a Cyprus-based NGO established by a group of experienced scientists in 2009. Its purpose is to conduct and promote environmental research in marine, freshwater and terrestrial ecosystems.</p>	<p>https://enaliaphysis.org.cy/</p> <p>Phone: +357 22331660</p> <p>Email: info@enaliaphysis.org.cy</p>
The Cyprus Centre of Environmental Research and Education (CYCERE)	<p>CYCERE aims to contribute in environmental conservation by adopting and promoting strategies in environmental education, environmental research and information.</p> <p>The programs and activities of CYCERE are addressed to all visitors visiting the peninsula, with particular emphasis on young people-students who are interested on learning about the ecological value of the natural ecosystems of Cyprus, highlighting the ecosystems of Cape peninsula, the dangers that threaten them and the need to preserve them for the future generations, giving the students the opportunity for a more experiential educational approach.</p>	<p>http://kykpee.org/en/</p> <p>Phone: +357 25954954, +357 25864344, +357 99302425</p> <p>Email: kykpee@cytanet.com.cy</p>
Let's Make Cyprus Green	<p>Let's Make Cyprus Green is dedicated to raising public awareness of the negative impact on our environment caused by human activities – especially excessive waste and the wider problems caused by plastic consumption. They C campaign to encourage responsible waste disposal and the adoption of a lifestyle based on “Reduce, Reuse, Recycle” (listed in order of importance).</p>	<p>https://www.letsmakecyprusgreen.com/</p> <p>Phone: +357 25 260344</p> <p>Email: letsmakecyprusgreen@gmail.com</p>
Ecological Movement Cyprus	<p>The Ecological Movement of Cyprus is an environmental NGO founded in 1989. It focuses on environment, ecology and culture.</p>	<p>Facebook page: https://www.facebook.com/EcologicalMovementCy/</p>

		<p>Phone:99336017</p> <p>Email: ecological_movement@cytanet.com.cy</p>
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2.3 NGOs working with migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers

Table 2. Different NGOs working with migrants, refugees and asylum seekers in Cyprus.

Name	Mission & activities	Website and contact details
Caritas Cyprus	<p>Caritas Cyprus was originally founded to provide support to Cypriot refugees fleeing the North during the Turkish invasion of Cyprus in 1974. In 1979, Caritas Cyprus became a member of Caritas Internationalis and was registered as an official Cypriot charitable association in 1986. Since then, it has responded to humanitarian crises on the island with the mission to provide compassionate care and support and bring hope to those living in poverty, the oppressed, and the vulnerable.</p> <p>The work of Caritas Cyprus is done through local parish initiatives as well as cross-island programs that focus on migrants, local needs, and youth engagement.</p> <p>The Migrant Sector provides critical services to hundreds of migrants and refugees through the operation of two centres, which serve as resource and information hubs for migrants</p>	<p>www.caritascyprus.org</p> <p>Phone: +357 22662606</p> <p>Email: administration@caritascyprus.org</p>

	<p>in need of support accessing their legal rights and basic needs. Caritas Cyprus also operates two shelters for vulnerable migrants and wraparound case management services. The Migrant Sector is supported, in part, through a partnership with Catholic Relief Services.</p>	
KISA	<p>Established in 1998, with vision to promote all-inclusive, multicultural society, free of racism, xenophobia and discrimination and where, through the interaction and mutual respect of diverse cultures, there will be equality and respect for the rights of all, irrespective of race, nationality or ethnicity, colour, creed or beliefs, gender, sexual preference or orientation, age, inability or any other diversity.</p> <p>KISA's action is focused on the fields of Migration, Asylum, Racism, Discrimination and Trafficking, and it includes awareness-raising of the Cypriot society as well as lobbying in order to influence the legal and structural framework, the policies and practices in these fields. KISA operates a Migrant and Refugee Centre that provides free information, support, advocacy and mediation services to migrants, refugees, victims of trafficking and racism / discrimination and ethnic minorities in general, as well as promotion of the integration, empowerment and self-organisation of migrants and refugees.</p>	<p>https://kisa.org.cy/</p> <p>Phone: +357-22-878181, +357-99-098189</p> <p>E-mail: info@kisa.org.cy</p>
Cyprus Refugee Council	<p>The Cyprus Refugee Council is an independent, non-profit organisation, established as the evolution of the Humanitarian Affairs Unit of the NGO Future Worlds Center. The Unit during its 11 years of operation had grown significantly to become the expert in Cyprus on refugee related issues, making it one of the main actors in Cyprus in the area. Besides implementing a UNHCR funded project from 2006 to 2017 the Unit had implemented a considerable number of related projects under various funds such as UNVFVT, EC funds, EPIM, ECRE, German Embassy and other.</p> <p>It focuses exclusively on issues related to refugees and asylum seekers as well as other inter-related issues. The independent entity with the name 'Cyprus Refugee Council' is the first NGO in Cyprus to focus primarily on refugees. The work carried out by the Unit as well as the existing team has been transferred on to the CyRC.</p>	<p>https://www.cyrefugeecouncil.org/</p> <p>Phone: +357 22205959. +357 99668709, +357 97767329</p> <p>Email: info@cyrefugeecouncil.org</p>

<p>Wellspring Association</p>	<p>Wellspring Association in Limassol offers individual support for survivors of human trafficking, asylum seekers, refugees and women from otherwise vulnerable backgrounds.</p>	<p>www.wellspringcyprus.com</p> <p>Phone: +357 25 105802</p> <p>Email: info@wellspringcyprus.com</p>
<p>Cyprus Stop Trafficking</p>	<p>Cyprus Stop Human Trafficking is an NGO that provides aid and assistance victims of human trafficking.</p>	<p>www.cyprusstoptrafficking.webs.com</p> <p>Phone: 22 771063, 22 750108</p> <p>E-mail: cyprus.stop.trafficking@gmail.com</p>
<p>Association of Recognized Refugees</p>	<p>Association of Recognized Refugees aims to identify refugees in Cyprus and provide a platform in which they can practice their skills and also most important to be a useful person for Cypriot society.</p> <p>Association of Recognized Refugees has been established and registered officially in 2006. With the help of refugees themselves this association began its official website this year. Members of this association have decided to expand their work and activities in different areas in order to provide better services and help to refugees in Cyprus. They believe that to have an integrated society, we have to begin with ourselves, therefore we need to help each other in this process.</p>	<p>http://www.arrcyprus.org/</p> <p>Phone: 99 438391</p> <p>Email: info@arrcyprus.org</p>
<p>Hope for Children</p>	<p>The HFC “Hope for Children”- UNCRC Policy Center (previously known as HFC “Hope for Children” Office for Children’s Rights) is a non-profit independent institution based in Nicosia, Cyprus, having its field offices in India and Hungary. Our institution is established on standards and principles of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and European Union Law.</p> <p>It works on humanitarian and development policy relevant to the defense and promotion of children’s rights. It does so through research, grassroots programme design and implementation and advisory services offered to governments and international organisations.</p>	<p>www.uncrcpc.org</p> <p>Phone: +357 22103234</p> <p>E-mail: camassa.r@uncrcpc.org</p>

<p>Nicosia Municipality Multifunctional Foundation (Polidinamo)</p>	<p>Nicosia Municipality Multifunctional Foundation is a resource centre established on 13 March 2003 by the Municipal Council in order to promote social policy issues for Nicosia.</p> <p>They:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support vulnerable population groups such as immigrants, children, elderly people etc. • Provide counselling services, psychological support and guidance to individuals and families. • Collaborate with public and other services, local committees, voluntary and charitable organisations and persons, having similar aims with those of the foundation. 	<p>https://www.nicosia.org.cy/el-GR/municipality/multipurpose-centre/elderly-people-(1)/</p> <p>Phone: 22797850</p> <p>E-mail: polidinamo@nicosiamunicipality.org.cy</p>
<p>Mi-HUB Migrant Information Centers</p>	<p>Mi-HUB are Migrant Information Center which help vulnerable migrants, including asylum-seekers and refugees, across Cyprus feel protected, safe, informed and supported so that they are able to move forward with their lives. With offices in the four major towns, Mi-HUB staff can offer advice on a wide range of issues.</p>	<p>www.mihub.eu</p> <p>Phone: 22 080350</p>
<p>Kofinou We Care - Volunteers' Support</p>	<p>Kofinou We Care - Connecting the Volunteers is a platform created to coordinate volunteers from all over the island, independent volunteers and NGOs, who want to help and support the residents of Kofinou Reception Centre for Asylum Seekers and Refugees.</p> <p>It is an independent platform (not an organisation), which connects and coordinates volunteers. independent volunteers and NGOs, who are active at Kofinou Reception Centre, collaborated and created the Distribution Centre and the Mothers and Babies Unit in the reception centre.</p>	<p>Phone: 99 383379</p> <p>Email: kofinouwecareteam@gmail.com</p>
<p>OASIS</p>	<p>OASIS is a voluntary community group in Larnaca that supports refugees and asylum-seekers in Cyprus. They offer Greek language and English language classes for free, as well as food baskets on Mondays. In addition they have a Social Café meeting every Wednesday morning.</p>	<p>https://www.oasis.org.cy/</p> <p>Phone: 99 797427</p> <p>Email: info@oasis.org.cy</p>

2.4 NGOs networks

[Pancyprian Volunteerism Coordinative Council](#) - founded in 1973, when there was a need for coordination amongst the voluntary organisations, development of policy for the voluntary sector social policy consultation with the voluntary sector and cooperation with governmental authorities.

Recognising the vital role of the Council, the State decided to provide a legal framework [the Pancyprian Welfare Council Law (152/89)] for its operation. In 2001, it was recognised that there was a need to further upgrade the legal framework of the Council in order to respond to its role and mission more effectively. In 2006, the House of Representatives passed new legislation that governs “the establishment and function of the Pancyprian Volunteerism Coordinative Council” (PVCC), which represents the continuation of the Pancyprian Welfare Council (PWC). Under the new legislation, the Council has a new operational framework, new responsibilities and a broader role for the coordination and development of the voluntary sector and volunteerism in general.

2.5 How to set up an NGO in Cyprus

This section includes information on setting up an NGO in Cyprus. The process and requirements differ based on the type of organisation that is sought to be created. The legal requirements of registering a new Association, Foundation, Federation and/or Union of Organisations, and Non-Profit Companies.

How to set up an NGO in Cyprus - Legal Requirements (Detailed description of the procedure and all the necessary documents at: <https://ngo-sc.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/BOOKLET-Associations-Law-Apr2018-ENG.pdf>).

How to register a new Association

- Obtain the application forms that are required by the current regulations, from the Ministry of Interior, the District Office you are based in, or the Ministry of Interior’s website.
- Obtain the names and signatures of at least twenty founding member.
- Appoint/vote the Board of Directors, which should consist of at least five founding members.
- Compose your Articles of Association, which should include, as a minimum, what the Law requires (Article 8) (e.g. scope, name, and headquarters, financial resources, etc.).
- Submission of documents to the District offices

How to register a new Foundation

- The main requirement for the establishment of a foundation is the Founding Act. The Founding Act may be produced either through a legal act of donation—when the property owner (the founder) is alive—or through a legal document detailing the founder’s future wish, such as a will. Through the Founding Act, the founder transfers the dedicated funds or property to the foundation, thus ensuring its operation and the implementation of its objectives.
- Obtain the application forms that are required by the current regulations from the Ministry of Interior, the District office you are based in, or the Ministry of Interior’s website.

- Prepare and sign all the relevant documents
- Prepare the Founding Act, which should include, as a minimum, the following details (Article 26(2)):
 1. Scope, name, and headquarters.
 2. Postal/contact address..
 3. The logo, if there is one.
 4. The dedicated property, which should amount to at least one thousand euros (€1,000) .
 5. The names, addresses, and contact details of at least three (3) members of the board of directors.
 6. The manner of succession of the members of the board of directors.
 7. The articles of association.

- Prepare the Articles of Association, which should include, as a minimum, the following details:
 1. The scope of the foundation as stated in the Founding Act (even though this is not required by the Law).
 2. The modus operandi of the foundation’s Board of Directors, including the minimum number, manner of appointment, and terms of reference of its members, the manner of achieving the necessary quorum for meetings— regular meetings and/or meetings for amending the Founding Act or the Articles of Association—and the minimum number of annual meetings.
 3. The names, addresses, and contact details of at least three (3) members of the Board of Directors.
 4. The manner of succession of the Board of Directors’ members..
 5. A provision specifying that no remuneration of any kind will be given to any founding member or member of the Board of Directors for their services.

- Submission of documents to the district offices.

How to register a new Federation and/or Union of Organisations

- The procedure for registering a federation and/or union of organisations is essentially the same procedure necessary for registering an association.
- Obtain the application form that are required by the new Law regulations (there is no such provision in the existing regulations) from the Ministry of Interior, the District Office you are based in or the Ministry of Interior’s website.
- Obtain the names and signatures of at least three founding members.
- Appoint/vote a Board of Directors comprising at least three members.
- Compose your Articles of Association, which should include, as a minimum, what is referred to in the Law (Article 44(3)).

How to register a new Non-Profit Companies

- All Cyprus Companies, including non-profit ones, are regulated by the Companies Law (Cap. 113). Non-profit companies are subject to the same requirements as for-profit companies (i.e. audited accounts, annual levy etc.). The Competent Authority for the registration is the Registrar of Companies (Website: <https://www.companies.gov.cy/en/contact-us/contact-persons>).

Challenges for NGOs Sector in Cyprus:¹⁶

- Beyond the efforts that are made, there is not a unified national record of NGOs and it is difficult to identify potential partners for joint projects.
- E-governance remained at deficient levels, as many procedures need to happen on paper and with a physical presence. In addition, the majority of documents are in Greek
- Not all NGOs receive funding and several of them have to operate without any funding as their activities do not fall under the priorities of existing funding schemes.

These are not the only challenges present, particularly for migrants, refugees and asylum seekers. Recognised refugees can work in any sector. However, asylum seekers are limited by the sectors they can work in. However, as Informant 4 noted, these categories are limiting the available jobs for asylum seekers. These categories include farming or agriculture, kitchen assistance, and cleaning. Since not many categories are available, the demand for jobs can sometimes be higher than the supply. In addition, a few asylum seekers might be overqualified than needed for the job they will undertake. This could be due to the lack of recognition of their degrees in Cyprus or because the categories they are allowed to work in are quite restricting. Regarding the salary, the available jobs for asylum seekers are usually low paying and may not always be enough for a comfortable living.

Although refugees might have the same access and opportunities for work as Cypriot citizens, they still face barriers. For example, Informant 5 mentioned that not being able to speak Greek and not having a network can be barriers for an individual who wants to set up an organisation in Cyprus. According to the informant, even if refugees are allowed to create an NGO, the process can include barriers that do not exist in other European countries. One of them is the fact that a refugee would be asked to engage a lawyer in the process of creating an NGO. The lawyer will require around 1,000 Euros, which is an amount that the refugee might not be able to pay.

¹⁶ Demetriou & Trimikliniotis, Legal environment and space of civil society organisations in supporting fundamental rights, Cyprus, European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, January 2021.

3. The situation of low qualified migrants, refugees and asylum seekers

3.1 Census

Asylum Seekers:

In Cyprus, there are 19,607 people with asylum seeker status. The top ten countries of origin of new asylum-seekers in Cyprus from January - July 2020 are Syria, India, Cameroon, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Iran, Democratic Rep. of Congo, Nepal, Nigeria & Egypt.¹⁷ There is an increasing trend in the number of first-time asylum applicants in Cyprus. In 2014 1,628 applications were conducted, whereas four years later in 2018, the numbers of applicants rose to four times higher, reaching 7,713. In 2019, Cyprus received 12,724 applications.¹⁸

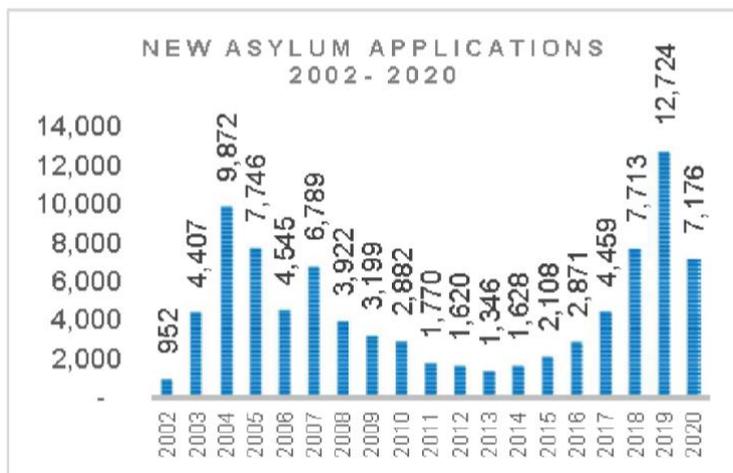


Figure 1. Persons submitting new asylum applications in Cyprus by year from 2002 to 2020 Source: https://www.unhcr.org/cy/wp-content/uploads/sites/41/2021/04/Cyprus_Fact_Sheet_9-APRIL-2021.pdf.

Refugees:

According to the UNHCR data of February 2021, there are around 12,967 recognised refugees in Cyprus. Of these, some 10,670 hold Subsidiary Protection¹⁷.

¹⁷ UNHCR Cyprus, (February 2021), Cyprus Fact Sheet, Available at: <https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/605b506d19.pdf>

¹⁸ Angeli, M. (2020). Integration into the Labour Market and Skills Training of Migrants in Cyprus, Mediterranean Institute of Gender Studies, Available at: <https://medinstgenderstudies.org/integration-into-the-labour-market-and-skills-training-of-migrants-in-cyprus/>

Migrants:

According to Eurostat, Cyprus exhibited the second largest rate for emigration relative to the size of the country population in 2019, with a number of 20 emigrants per 1,000 people.¹⁹ In 2018, the population from the 28 EU Member States (excluding Cypriots) amounted to 114,536, accounting for 13.2% of the country's population. At the same time, the citizens coming from third countries (outside the EU), reached 34,632, occupying 4% of the total population of Cyprus.²⁰

In General:

From 2002 till the end of 2020, some 87,729 persons have applied for asylum in the RoC. Of these, some 13,558 persons have been granted protection, while some 19,653 persons' applications are pending. Some 86 refugees under UNHCR's mandate reside in the northern part of the island. There are 21 refugees and asylum seekers in the British Sovereign Bases who have been there since 1998. Some 220 unaccompanied/separated children applied for asylum in the RoC in 2016; another 221 in 2017, 259 in 2018, 565 in 2019 and 454 in 2020⁸.

3.2 The needs and the gaps

The opportunities, needs and challenges of migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers can differ significantly based on their status. Migrants receive assistance through various allowances that cover food and housing, however, Informant 4 notes that the material conditions of reception could be improved so they can have a “decent life” and not constantly worry about “making ends meet”.

Informant 2 has shared that he/she and his/her community receive food but what they need the most is assistance with finding a job. The informant notes that helping them find a job will help them take care of themselves. Not only the informant has shown to be willing to work, but he/she is open to different opportunities. As the informant put it:

“Since we are new in the environment, anything available for us to do, we do. And if the NGO

¹⁹Eurostat, (March 2021), Migration and migrant population statistics – Statistics Explained, Available at: <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/pdfscache/1275.pdf>

²⁰ In Business News, (18/03/2019) , How many Foreigners live in Cyprus (In Greek: Πόσοι αλλοδαποί μένουν στην Κύπρο), Available at: <https://inbusinessnews.reporter.com.cy/financials/cyprus/article/208666/posoi-allodapoi-menoyn-stin-kypro>

is doing anything they like us to do, we are here, we are not into anything, and we are relevant for anything possible to do.” (Informant 2)

And yet, the informant notes that even when they want to apply for jobs, the process cannot go further since employers require the yellow slip which he/she does not currently have. When asked how an NGO could help them further, the informant summarised that it would be particularly helpful if an NGO helped them get a job, which would subsequently help them receive the yellow slip and the insurance number.

For asylum seekers specifically, the informants noted that the process of getting a job is long and bureaucratic, which can be a challenge for asylum seekers. Due to the long process,

“[...] it might take 2 months to hire a migrant [...]. The employer might think of ‘why hire a migrant and wait 2-3 months and not hire instead a European today?’.” (Informant 3)

Finally, the challenges are not limited only to survival, welfare, and job opportunities, but a serious challenge is the way the broader community thinks of and behaves towards migrants, refugees and asylum seekers. When Informant 1 was asked what the needs of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers are, he/she stressed that we need to see them as people who have value. As the informant put it,

“We need to change this mindset of people. Because if me, you and other five people we see them as equals and as people with rights, the majority does not see them this way. We have failed in this. Because we, on the one hand, are trying to respond to different basic needs, and we forget that we need to treat them as people with rights and as people with value, and not only as just a refugee who lost everything and came here to find some food and a warm place to sleep. We need to get out of this philanthropic mindset that we have and to try to give these people real opportunities to live as we do.” (Informant 1)

NGOs also have a role to play and could aid in changing the situation of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers. A way they could do this is by changing the perceptions of people and the narrative around migration and the refugee crisis. More specifically,

“The role of NGOs is to show the gaps that are created from governmental policies and to help these people to show that there is a different face in Cyprus that is more accepting and human, and give the opportunities they look for, for a better life in a foreign place.”(Informant 3)

3.3 Restrictions and obligations

Employment of Migrants, Refugees and Asylum Seekers

The criteria and procedure for granting work permits to third-country nationals were established in 1991. An essential precondition in employing foreign workers is that the employer must prove that he/she was unable to fill the important position with a Cypriot or a European citizen. The criteria for employing third-country nationals according to the Ministry of Labour, Welfare and Social Insurance, are:²¹

- Non-availability of suitably qualified local personnel to satisfy the specific needs of the employer.
- Saving and better use of the local labour force.
- The provision of specific expertise.
- The terms and conditions of employment of foreigners should be the same as those for Cypriots.
- Where the hiring of a third-country national who has special skills and knowledge that cannot be found in the native workforce is a better fit, the employer must nominate a Cypriot who will be trained during the period of the foreigner's employment.

Employment of Asylum Seekers:

Asylum Seekers have access to the labour market one month after the date of the submission of their application for international protection in specific sectors and occupations according to the relevant Decree of the Minister of Labour, Welfare and Social Insurance (**Table 1**).

Table 3. Asylum seeker access to the labour market¹⁸.

²¹ Ministry of Labour, Welfare and Social Insurance, Available at:
http://www.mlsi.gov.cy/mlsi/dl/dl.nsf/page5b_en/page5b_en?OpenDocument.

Sectors	Occupations
Agriculture, animal husbandry, fishery	Labourers
Manufacturing	Food processing labourers Porters Night shift labourers in poultry farms
Waste management	Drainage and waste processing labourers Garbage and trash collection and processing labourers Recycling labourers Animal waste processing labourers
Wholesale trade-repairs	Petrol stations and car wash attendants Freight handlers of wholesale trades
Other fields	Building and outdoors cleaners Distributors of advertising and informational materials Food delivery Laundry and dry cleaning assistants
Hotel and food industry (since 2019)	Kitchen assistants Cleaners Food distributors

Other than the Collective Agreement of Agriculture and Animal Farming, which regulates salaries at €455 (gross) per month, the listed occupations are not regulated. Accommodation and food may be provided by the employer. The salary may increase up to €769 per month if the employee is considered to be skilled for the position, or if there is a specific agreement with a trade union.¹⁸

Employment of Refugees²¹:

Section 21B of the Cyprus Refugee Law provides that the person who is recognised as a refugee receives equal treatment as the citizens of the Republic as regards wage-earning employment. In other words, refugees have the same rights as Cypriot citizens to employment; hence there are no restrictions to any particular sector, and there is no need for the Labor Department to approve and stamp a contract of employment between an employer and a recognised refugee.

Employment of Persons with Subsidiary Protection Status²¹:

According to the amendment to Article 19 of the Refugee Law, beneficiaries of subsidiary protection have, as in the case of recognised refugees, immediate access to employment upon the date they are granted the aforesaid status. In particular there are no restrictions regarding their employment in particular sectors or occupations of the labour market. Also, the Labor Department does not need to approve and stamp a contract of employment between an employer and a person with subsidiary protection status.

3.4 How to join an NGO

3.4.1 Requirements for Joining an NGO as a director or staff

People with a migration background (migrant, refugee, or asylum seeker) can volunteer or join an NGO following the usual procedure as the Cypriot citizens do. The interested persons should visit the website of the NGO that they wish to be a member and they can submit their application form.

The main requirement/criteria below were collected by researching the job descriptions that are usually published by the main NGOs in Cyprus (more than 15 cases were examined).

Director

- University degree, or equivalent, in Social Sciences/Humanities / Management.
- 5 or more years of non-profit management experience.
- Demonstrated skills in leadership and management, excellent people management skills and interpersonal skills.
- Representational skills including experience developing networks and relationships with government, civil society and other stakeholders.
- Demonstrated ability to respond effectively to challenges, work effectively in a cross functional, diverse and busy team environment .

Staff (Project Administrators / Cultural Mediators / Social Workers)

- University degree, or equivalent, in Social Sciences/Humanities.
- Fluent written and spoken Greek and English.
- Good communication skills, including high quality written communication, with strong attention to detail.
- Ability to manage own time effectively, in a multi-task environment.
- Knowledge and experience of working within civil society in Cyprus or abroad.
- Excellent interpersonal and communications skills, written and oral.
- Planning and organising skills: ability to establish priorities and to plan work assignments, respond to competing demands and work under pressure of frequent, multiple and tight deadlines.

The option of creating or joining an NGO as an employee is not equal across migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers, and it depends on the status of the individual.

“There is no opportunity for them to create an NGO because the legal framework does not provide the facility to people who are not citizens of the EU or Cyprus the right of freedom for association.” (Informant 1)

If the option of creating an NGO were available to asylum seekers, would they be willing to create one? When asked whether he/she would be willing to create an NGO, the informant was thinking of his/her community first and said:

“I can create an NGO, because of what is happening, especially for our people, asylum seekers. So if I can have the opportunity to create an NGO, I would create an NGO to make things easier for them, especially how to get work, because getting a work will make everybody be comfortable, they don't need to ask for any assistance every time. Because almost every time we are asking for assistance to get food from one NGO to another. [...] You can sustain yourself.” (Informant 2)

Getting involved in an NGO has also been encouraged by Informant 4, as a way of finding purpose and connecting them with people who are in a similar situation.

“I would suggest them to do it [engage in an NGO] because the suffering is ameliorated when you see that someone is experiencing the same things as you and also sometimes you understand because you get into someone else's shoes. Many people feel that what they are experiencing it's only them who experience it. I understand, they are in a difficult situation and many times they do not think that the other person might be in the same situation as me or even worse. So, their involvement in an NGO can help them, not in the sense of feeling better because someone is worse, but to come and share their feelings, to self-develop through this, to socialise and to find purpose again. Because people who stay home and are not working and they might get emotional flatulence, giving might help their psychological state.” (Informant 4)

3.4.2 Volunteering

When it comes to volunteering, less barriers are present compared to joining an NGO as a director or employee. The job descriptions of positions that are included below are based on researching job descriptions usually published by the main NGOs in Cyprus. The main requirements / criteria regarding volunteering are as follows:

- No particular criteria were identified
- A willingness to learn and work as part of a team
- A high degree of professionalism and the ability to follow instructions
- Respect and diligence

- Good time management
- A personable manner

3.5 Supporting structures in Cyprus

[The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees \(UNHCR\)](#) works to safeguard the rights and well-being of refugees all over the world. UNHCR's purpose is to ensure that everyone can exercise the right to seek asylum and find safe refuge from war and persecution. UNHCR also protects stateless people. In all of its activities, UNHCR pays particular attention to the needs of children and seeks to promote the equal rights of women and girls. UNHCR Cyprus also collaborates with NGOs to support refugees and asylum-seekers in meeting their needs, and conducts educational and public information activities on refugee issues.

[International Organization for Migration \(IOM\)](#) Cyprus Office was inaugurated in November 2015. IOM provides support to the government of Cyprus through the implementation of the Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration (AVRR) programme, which assists third country nationals wishing to return to their country of origin. Assistance consists of information and counselling services, procuring travel documents, arranging safe travel, and providing reintegration support. Tailored assistance is provided to specific vulnerable groups, including migrants with health concerns, victims of trafficking and unaccompanied minors. IOM facilitates also the resettlement and relocation of selected refugees to Cyprus. This happens in close cooperation with the IOM offices in countries of departure. IOM also provides assistance to family members entitled to reunite with their family in Cyprus by arranging the travel and serving as a contact point for the relatives or sponsors in Cyprus. IOM Cyprus contributes to the integration of newly-arrived migrants and refugees by identifying third-country nationals' health needs, with attention to vulnerable individuals, and facilitating the provision of health care, including of those who have been relocated in the Cyprus health system through the utilisation of the electronic Personal Health Record (e-PHR) as universal EU tool for health assessment.

[The Cyprus Refugee Council \(CyRC\)](#) strives to safeguard, support and advocate for the rights of vulnerable groups in Cyprus, promoting their effective integration into the host society. Focusing on refugees, asylum seekers, detainees, trafficking victims and survivors of torture, CyRC works closely with the local society in order to provide quality services at the individual, community and policy level.

[The Asylum Service of the Ministry of Interior](#) is the competent authority to receive and examine asylum applications. Decisions of the Asylum Service not to grant asylum can be subject to appeals. The Asylum Service was established in 2004 according to an amendment of the Refugee Law of 2000, replacing the Refugee Authority. The main responsibilities of the Asylum Service, are, apart from the examination of applications for international protection at first instance, the coordination and supervision of the operation of reception centres, the implementation of the Dublin Regulation for establishing the criteria and mechanisms for determining the Member State Responsible for the examination of an application for international protection, the preparation of Draft Bills, the

participation in working groups of the EU and generally the coordination of the Services involved in asylum-related matters. In general, asylum procedures in Cyprus are in a constant process of alignment with the constantly changing EU asylum acquis, aiming on the one hand, at the provision of protection to those who fear persecution in their countries of origin, and on the other hand, at the adoption of fast and efficient procedures which will prevent the abuse of the system by examining applications for international protection timely, fairly and effectively.

[Civil Registry and Migration Department \(CRMD\)](#) is the result of the consolidation of the Migration, Registration and Election Services, which were part of the Ministry of Interior. Originally the CRMD was mainly responsible for the civil registry issues, whereas migration issues were of a smaller volume and importance. During the years and especially after the accession of the Republic of Cyprus to the European Union, the competencies of the CRMD expanded significantly mainly regarding the migration related matters. Nowadays, the main mission of the CRMD is citizens' service for all matters falling into its competencies. The Department also participates actively in forming policies and acts complementary to other governmental institutions. Furthermore, the Department participates actively in works of the European Union institutions and is in close cooperation with other European, international and local governmental and non-governmental organisations.

HelpRefugeesWork Online Platform: [HelpRefugeesWork](#) is an online platform that brings motivated job-seeking refugees into contact with employers and training providers in Cyprus. HelpRefugeesWork is an initiative of the UNHCR Office in Cyprus, in collaboration with the Cyprus Refugee Council. All services provided by HelpRefugeesWork are free of charge.

[KISA](#) is a NGO, established in 1998, and its vision is the promotion of an all-inclusive, multicultural society, free of racism, xenophobia and discrimination and where, through the interaction and mutual respect of diverse cultures, there will be equality and respect for the rights of all, irrespective of race, nationality or ethnicity, colour, creed or beliefs, gender, sexual preference or orientation, age, inability or any other diversity. KISA's action is focused on the fields of Migration, Asylum, Racism, Discrimination and Trafficking, and it includes awareness-raising of the Cypriot society as well as lobbying in order to influence the legal and structural framework, the policies and practices in these fields. KISA operates a Migrant and Refugee Centre that provides free information, support, advocacy and mediation services to migrants, refugees, victims of trafficking and racism/discrimination and ethnic minorities in general, as well as promotion of the integration, empowerment and self-organisation of migrants and refugees. The combination of activities of social intervention and the operation of services and the strong ties with the migrant and refugee communities, enable KISA to have a very accurate and updated picture about the realities in the areas of its mandate.

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1. Introduction

The study focuses on the analysis of NGO (non-governmental organisation) structures supporting immigrants and Green Sector NGOs. It aims to explore current policies and practices, how private and public sectors can improve labour market opportunities for immigrants and identify and share best practices for improving labour market integration among migrants, refugees and asylum seekers (MRAs) by involving them in the Green NGO and Green Jobs sector.

The interviews were conducted between April and May 2021. Subsequently, material from each case study with desk research, and labour market data was analysed.

Persons from different organisations - including both migrants, and professionals working with migrants were interviewed:

- Nella Niemi, Instructor in Jomoni - Joensuu district multicultural association founded in 2009 in the North Karelia region to advocate for people with an immigrant background and to ensure that the immigrant's voice is heard in society
- Lalah Abdulqader, a migrant from Iraq and Jomoni organisation protegee (works in Jomoni)
- Henna Karhapää, executive director, Setlementti Joensuu

The analysis presented in this publication should be treated as the first exploratory investigation of the case due to the diverse local conditions regarding integration and practices in the labour market. The area of research is dynamic, and the situation of the MRA group depends on many factors, including geopolitical and economic factors.

2. NGOs in Finland

The number of non-profit organisations in Finland when compared to the number of citizens is high, and everyone, including foreign citizens, have the right to participate in such association activities.

Civic organisations in Finland – or ‘Registered Associations’ from the national legal term ‘rekisteröity yhdistys (r.y.)’. Currently, there are around 130,000 registered associations in Finland²² and up to 80% of the population belong to at least one of these associations²³. According to the Register of Associations, the average Finn is a member of three organisations. Registered non-profit associations play a very important role in Finnish communities including cultural fields, leisure and party-political activities, religion, trade union, and social and health affairs.²²

Significant number of Finnish NGOs are involved in supporting job search activities and aim to improve the employability of the unemployed. Various types of labour integration support such as CV writing, interview preparation, guidance and mentoring is available.²⁴

²²Finnish Patent and Registration Office Official Site. Available at:
<https://www.prh.fi/en/yhdistysrekisteri/yleista.html>

²³ Ekholm, E. (2015) Työtä yhteisön ja yhteiskunnan hyväksi – Maahanmuuttajajärjestöt palvelujen tuottajina. Ministry of Employment and the Economy. Corporate 53/2015.

²⁴ Bontenbal, I, Lillie, N. (2019). The Emerging Role of NGOs in the Labour Market Integration of Migrants in Finland. Available at: <https://www.sirius-project.eu/news/emerging-role-ngos-labour-market-integration-migrants-finland>

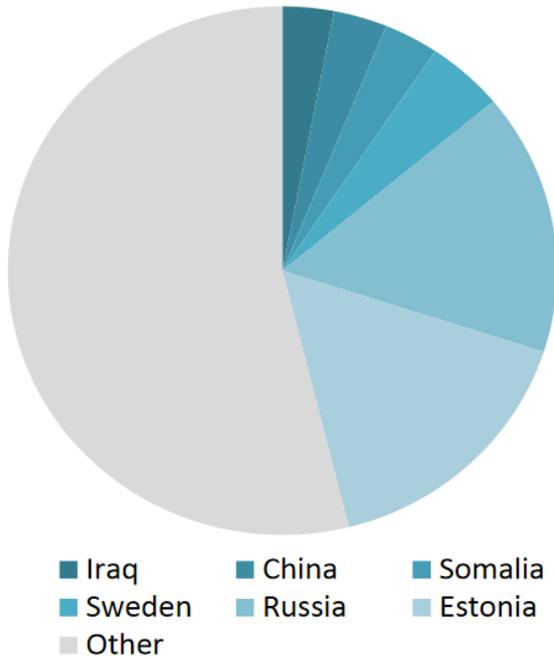


Figure 1. Composition of the Finnish foreign-born population. Permanent arrivals by nationality between 1990 and 2015²⁵.

Finland does not have a long history of hosting international migrants. Before the 1990s, most migrants in Finland were returning migrants and their families. Since then, in most cases, migrants come from Russia and Estonia. These groups still remain the largest in Finland (**Figure 1**). Others include Somalia, Yugoslavia and more recently Afghanistan and Iraq. History of migration in Finland is quite short and the number of migrants is small compared to other European countries. However, Finland still faces many challenges. In 2015, Finland received 32 000 asylum seekers. In order to face upcoming challenges, on the 20th of June 2016, the OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development) co-organised, together with the Finnish Ministry for Employment and the Economy, a workshop to improve the current integration system.²⁵

2.1 A variety of legal structures in Finland

- *Association* – A non-profit organisation. An association must not be established to conduct business, it may be, for example, be a friendship association, a sports club, cultural association, or a religious association.
- *Voluntary groups* - In Finland, volunteers help older people, migrants and others in need to

²⁵OECD (2017). Finding the way. A Discussion of the Finnish Migrant Integration System, Available at: <https://www.oecd.org/els/mig/Finding-the-Way-Finland.pdf>.

prevent loneliness and social exclusion. They promote arts and culture, organise sports club activities, take care of the environment, and contribute to Finnish society in many other ways. Volunteer work does not pay a salary, but the work experience may prove useful when applying for paid work.

- **NGOs** - ‘civic organizations’ - non-profit-making or profit-sharing companies, which have their own set of rules, regulations, and policies, depending on their cause and generate, create, and manage their funds via contributions and donations from the public.
- **Finnish civil society organisations (CSOs)** - The CSOs’ activities usually focus on the basic needs and rights of the poorest people in developing countries, such as social development, education, health and better livelihoods, and on rural development.
- **Charity** - Organisations based on the premise that none of the corporation's net profit from donations, membership fees or business activities will benefit any individual, but do benefit the general public.

Funding sources include membership fees, the sale of goods and services, private sector for-profit companies, philanthropic foundations, grants from local, state and federal agencies, and private donations. Individual private donors comprise a significant portion of NGO funding. The Finnish Ministry for Foreign Affairs acknowledges its support for a variety of Finnish organisations working with migrants. Some of the Finnish NGOs also get funding from abroad.

2.2 Environmental NGOs

Table 1. Different environmental NGOs in Finland.

Name	Mission & activities	Website and contact details
World Wide Fund Finland (WWF)	<p>In Finland, WWF conserve domestic endangered species, promote Baltic Sea conservation and ecologically sustainable forestry.</p> <p>The Foundation collects and disseminates information among the public about measures to prevent further degradation of the Earth and about the dangers of its exploitation (such as, for example, progressive climate change). WWF also deals with research and all activities aimed at saving the most endangered species. WWF takes part, for example, in actions to save tropical forests in the Amazon and African elephants.</p> <p>WWF operate to prevent climate change and promotes sustainable production and consumption habits. WWF</p>	<p>https://www.wwf.fi/</p> <p>Phone: +358 (0)9 7740 100</p> <p>Postal Address: Lintulahdenkatu 10 FIN-00500 Helsinki, Finland.</p>

	disseminates information and take environmental education into schools.	
Greenpeace	<p>Greenpeace focuses its activities on a few specific themes, such as climate change, forests and the protection of the aquatic environment. The organization directs them to reveal threats to the natural environment, raise the profile of a given topic in the public debate and influence decision-makers.</p> <p>Its mission focuses on finding solutions and promotes an open, informed debate about society's environmental choices with an emphasis on global social justice.</p> <p>Greenpeace exposes environmental crimes such as illegal logging in Paradise Forests, collaborates with scientists to conduct scientific research, and documents environmental problems such as toxic pollution and signs of climate change.</p> <p>The organisation also conducts educational activities in the field of environmental issues.</p>	<p>https://www.greenpeace.org/finland/</p> <p>Phone: +35896986317</p> <p>Varpu Sairinen</p> <p>Volunteer Coordinator: 040 662 5285</p> <p>Post Address: Käenkuja 3 aB (courtyard) 00500 Helsinki</p>
The Finnish Association for Nature Conservation (FANC)	<p>FANC is the largest Finnish NGO for environmental protection and nature conservation. Since 1938, FANC has been completing their goals by protecting the Finnish natural environment, promoting nature conservation, preserving cultural heritage and sparking up active citizenship and strong environmental awareness.</p> <p>FANC works on nature conservation and environmental policy on the regional, national, and EU levels, and follows the UN sustainable development work. It also cooperates with many environmental organizations in forest protection both in Madagascar and in Russia.</p>	<p>https://www.sll.fi/</p> <p>Email: toimisto@sll.fi</p> <p>Phone: 09 228 08210</p> <p>Address: Itälahdenkatu 22b A 00210, Helsinki.</p>
Finland Friends of the Earth Finland / Maan Ystävät Ry	<p>Friends of the Earth Finland, founded in 1996, is a membership organization and a coalition of individual members, action groups, local FoE organizations and like-minded Finnish NGOs. The objective of the organization is to promote:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The creation of a democratic and ecologically sustainable society • Locally oriented economy • Social, economic, political and intergenerational equality • Protection of Earth from further destruction • Preservation of the World's ecological, cultural and 	<p>https://www.foei.org/</p> <p>Phone: +358 45 886 3958</p> <p>Address: Vellamonkatu 30 B 3. krs. 00550, Helsinki.</p>

	<p>ethnic diversity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work against military structures • Human and animal rights and cooperation of organizations and progressive groups. 	
BirdLife Suomi ry	BirdLife Finland (part of BirdLife International) promotes bird watching, bird research, protection of birds and their habitats, biodiversity, and sustainable development. It is the parent organisation of 30 Finnish bird societies.	<p>https://www.sll.fi/</p> <p>Email: toimisto@birdlife.fi</p> <p>Phone: 010 406 6200</p> <p>Address: Annankatu 29 A 16 00100, Helsinki.</p>
Coalition for Environment and Development (Ympäristö ja kehitys)	This NGO seeks approaches that combine poverty eradication and protection of the environment. It believes that protecting the environment in a way that deprives people of their livelihoods is not sustainable and that economic activities that drastically destroy the environment cannot create sustainable jobs. Coalition for Environment and Development provides support to projects it considers important in the Third World.	<p>http://www.ymparistojakehitys.fi/</p> <p>Email: r.isomaki@gmail.com</p> <p>Phone: 044-3442414</p> <p>Address: Ympäristö ja kehitys ry, c/o Isomäki, Kotitie 20 as 5 00700, Helsinki.</p>
Dodo	Dodo is a Finnish environmental NGO that considers environmental issues from a social perspective by developing new solutions and cooperating even with surprising allies.	<p>https://dodo.org/</p> <p>Email: etunimi.sukunimi@dodo.org</p> <p>Phone: 044 320 8867</p> <p>Address: Aleksis Kiven katu 88 G, 00520, Helsinki.</p>
The Finnish Nature League - Luonto-Liitto	The Finnish Nature League is a non-governmental nature and environmental protection organization for children and the youth - most members are between 5 and 29. They focus on such issues as forest, wild animal, water system, climate and energy issues and pioneer environmental education in Finland. They also organise nature club, camp activities and courses and publish guide	<p>http://www.luontoliitto.fi/</p> <p>Phone: +358 9 68 444 20</p> <p>Address: Itälahdenkatu 22 B, Staircase B 3rd floor, 00210 Helsinki.</p>

2.3 NGOs working with migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers.

Table 2. Different NGOs working with migrants, refugees and asylum seekers in Finland.

Name	Mission / activities	Website and contact details
AFAES: Africans and African-European Association	AFAES was founded in 2003 in Helsinki, as a registered multicultural association in Finland. They are involved in the interest of both Africans and Europeans living in Europe. Their goal is to introduce African culture to Finnish people by means of workshops, events, and other activities. They focus on promoting multiculturalism and open-mindedness, combat racism through teamwork, educate African migrants and develop their self-esteem and help them with finding employment and being self-sufficient.	http://afaes.fi/ Email: afaes@afaes.fi or fatima@afaes.fi Telephone: +358 40 811 9977 Address: Mäkelänkatu 58 A (3rd floor), 00510 Helsinki
Finnish Somali League: Umbrella organisation for Somali civil society organisations in Finland	The Finnish Somali League acts as an umbrella organization of Somali associations based in Finland. It aims to influence legal changes and other social processes by actively participating in consultations, steering and working groups and advisory boards.	https://somaliliitto.fi/en/ Email: palaute@somaliliitto.fi Address: Haukilahdenkatu 2D, 00550 Helsinki
IESAF: International English Speakers' Association of Finland	IESAF is a non-profit volunteer organisation which associates English speaking people of different nations, living in Finland. It is a volunteer-driven organisation dedicated to serving the needs of foreigners in Finland. IESAF focuses on outreach, socialization, diversity, and assisting our members in acclimating to their new life in Finland. The goal of the organisation is to provide a forum for questions, discussions, networking, and the sharing of information, for all Expats. It also hosts charitable, sport or family events.	https://livinginfinland.com/ Email: iesaf@iesaf.fi , richard@iesaf.fi Telephone: +358 44 333 3729 Address: IESAF Ry Notkotie, 16 A 2, 00700, Helsinki.
JoMoni ry (Joensuu)	JoMoni was founded in 2009 in the North Karelia region to advocate for people with an immigrant	http://www.jomoni.fi/

<p>district multicultural association)</p>	<p>background and to ensure that the immigrant's voice is heard in society. The association provides individual guidance in relation to work, leisure, residence permits for asylum seekers and for 'paperless migrants'- according to the individual's needs and life situation. Currently, a lot of time is spent on submitting re-applications for asylum seekers and reviewing decisions.</p> <p>JoMoni organizes training and participates in various events where its activities are presented. "Meille saa tulla" – football event is one of the biggest events JoMoni organizes every summer.</p>	<p>Email: info@jomoni.fi</p> <p>Telephone: +358 (0) 46 964 5137</p> <p>Address: Rantakatu 23 A, 2. krs (Käynti Niskakadun puolelta), 80100, Joensuu.</p>
<p>Liikkukaa!: Sports organisation</p>	<p>The aim of Liikkukaa! is to promote social cohesion, inviting people to take care of their mental and physical health and show respect for diversity in sports and leisure activities. As a national umbrella organisation, Liikkukaa! has organised many sport and culture events and actively participated in seminars both as organizer and expert on both national and international level. The member organisations are migrant sports initiatives and traditional sports clubs focused on the inclusion of immigrants as well as socially or culturally oriented organizations.</p>	<p>https://sports4all.net/</p> <p>Email: liikkukaa@gmail.com</p> <p>Telephone: +3585636067</p> <p>Address: Liikkukaa - Sports For All, Eskoilantie 1, 00720 Helsinki.</p>
<p>Monika – Multicultural Women's Association: Aid and support to immigrant women</p>	<p>MONIKA operates in the field of social affairs. It provides specialised services for immigrant women and their children who have been subjected to violence. It acts as an expert and advocates in issues considering ethnic non-discrimination and violence and promotes integration by supporting civil society activities for immigrants.</p>	<p>https://monikanaiset.fi/</p> <p>Email: info@monikanaiset.fi</p> <p>Telephone: 09 7279 9999</p> <p>Post Address: Hermannin, Rantatie 12 A, 00580 Helsinki.</p>
<p>SVK: Finland Russian-language Organisation</p>	<p>Russian-speaking Finland represents and defends the interests of Russian-speaking people in Finland at the national level. Their aim is to help Russian speakers to build their lives, strengthen social ties and navigate all aspects of life in Finland</p>	<p>https://venajankieliset.fi/</p> <p>Email: info@venajankieliset.fi</p> <p>Telephone: 040 54 087 37</p> <p>Address: Graniittitie 9, Helsinki</p>

2.4 NGOs networks

Table 3. Main NGO networks in Finland.

Name	Mission / activities	Website and contact details
<p>Finnish Development NGOs (FINGO)</p>	<p>Fingo is an NGO platform and an expert on global development that represents 300 Finnish civil society organisations and strives to build a fairer world for all.</p> <p>Fingo brings together its Member Organisations and creates opportunities for cooperation with various actors.</p> <p>Main tasks involve advocating and influencing policy makers to reduce inequalities and promote human rights as well as communication about global development issues and the work for development of Civil Society organisations.</p> <p>Mission: Fingo acts as Finnish development CSOs' concerted driver for change to make a sustainable future and human rights a reality.</p>	<p>https://fingo.fi/</p> <p>Post Address: Elimäenkatu 25-27 (5th floor). 00510 Helsinki</p> <p>Telephone: +358 50 317 6690</p> <p>Email: info@fingo.fi</p>
<p>Faro: Finnish Association of Russian-speaking Organizations</p>	<p>The association of Russian-speaking societies FARO unites social organisations all over Finland. The association includes more than 20 organisations, giving an outreach of more than 7000 Russian-speakers.</p> <p>Their mission is to support the integration of Russian-speaking people and, with the help of social organisations, to help realise social and cultural rights. FARO acts as experts and advocates for Russian-speaking minorities, demonstrating successful improvements in integration, social welfare and health care for the Russian-speaking population.</p>	<p>https://www.faro.fi/</p> <p>Email: info@faro.fi</p> <p>Address: Hitsaajankatu 6, 00810 Helsinki.</p>
<p>Moniheli: Network of Multicultural</p>	<p>Moniheli is a network of more than 100 multicultural, immigrant and other associations supporting integration in Finland. They aim to support foreign-language actors in the field, their cooperation with</p>	<p>https://www.moniheli.fi/</p> <p>Email: viestinta@moniheli.fi</p> <p>Post Address: Hermannin</p>

Associations	society, and promote equality in Finland.	rantatie 12 B, 4 krs, 00580 Helsinki.
Union of Friendship Associations in Finland: Friendship associations	The Cooperation Organisation strives to strengthen the operating potential of its members and to maintain relations with other bodies working for understanding and cooperation between the nations of the world, and to make the authorities and general public recognise the importance of international friendship associations.	http://www.ysl.fi/ Email: ysl@saunalahti.fi Address: Itä-Pasila, Rauhanasema, Veturitori 3, 00520, Helsinki.
Startup Refugees	Startup Refugees is a network of companies, organisations, and professionals who support the employment and entrepreneurship of newcomers. Their main goal is to help motivated and skilled newcomers to find a good job in Finland instead of making them passive beneficiaries, just because they meet some obstacles on their way.	https://startuprefugees.com/ Email: info@startuprefugees.com Telephone:+358 44 236 7879 Address: Hämeentie 13 A, 00530, Helsinki.

2.5 How to set up an NGO in Finland

The general process of founding an association (including NGOs, charity or voluntary group) in Finland involves three phases:

1. Deciding on the founding of an association
2. Drafting the rules of the association (in Finnish or Swedish)
3. Registering the association

Registering is optional, and the registration fee is €100. A registered association may apply for funding and financial assistance and cooperate with other associations and authorities. In order to register an association, notice has to be submitted to the Finnish Patent and Registration Office (PRH).²⁶ When the association has been registered, the PRH will send a register extract for the association.

Moreover, in order to set up an NGO in Finland the following conditions need to be fulfilled²²:

1. An association must have at least three founders who must be at least 15 years old.
2. The person entitled to sign for the association has to be 18 years old or over.
3. Chairperson should be residing in Finland (unless a special exemption is granted).

²⁶InfoFinland website published by the City of Helsinki. Available at: <https://www.infofinland.fi/en/living-in-finland/leisure/associations>.

4. Focus should be on non-profit work.
5. Should be based in only one municipality in Finland (branches are possible).
6. Should be drafted in Finnish or Swedish (with unique and relevant name, fulfilling the requirements of Associations Act Section 8).
7. Purpose, activities and responsibilities of members must be well-defined.
8. Executive committee must consist of at least 3 members (non-bankrupt).
9. Members must have a right to participate, vote and get elected either without any restrictions or with one mentioned in rules.²⁷

3. The situation of low qualified migrants, refugees and asylum seekers

Migration in Finland started to gain its momentum in the 1990s, when Finland started to receive migrants arriving from Russia, Estonia, Somalia, Yugoslavia, Afghanistan and Iraq. The foreign-born accounted for over 6% of the Finnish population, and the native-born children of the foreign-born, for a further 1%²⁵. The numbers are lower in comparison to other countries; however, Finland is still facing migrants-related challenges.

The children of immigrants do worse in Finnish schools than children with native-born parents. Even though it is not exclusively a Finnish problem, as situations with migrant children is similar in the other countries, these differences are particularly prominent in Finland. Migrant women are struggling to integrate in Finland - many are locked into inactivity, and face incentives to stay at home and do not actively seek jobs. It especially considers women who are eligible for the Child Home Care Allowance and usually find that staying at home is as financially advantageous as paid employment. The decision of immigrant mothers to stay at home for many years may have long-term consequences for their children, who are not exposed to Finnish language in the first, most crucial for language fluency years.²⁸

One of the obvious and logical consequences of not getting enough education due the lack of language fluency is difficulty with finding their place on the labour market. The proportion of 15- to

²⁷Manoj Bhusa (2013). Available at: <https://www.slideshare.net/mbhusal/run-an-ngo-in-finland>.

²⁸OECD (2018). Working Together: Skills and Labour Market Integration of Immigrants and their Children in Finland. Available at : <https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/docserver/9789264305250-9-en.pdf?expires=1616073524&id=id&accname=guest&checksum=9D754FF52695D636E6DCCAD3349334DE>

34-year-olds with a migration background who can be described as NEETS (neither in employment nor in education and training) in Finland is among the highest.

When it comes to migrants that come to Finland with the purpose of finding a job, the situation does not look much better. Language barriers aside, many of Finland’s migrants come from failing education systems and lack needed qualifications and skills (and some even basic ones), while others, with formal qualifications, are still lacking these values in the Finnish labour market.

In Finland, a number of well-qualified migrants, that may face some difficulties as a language barrier, and a significant number of migrant children that, if given a chance, can become valuable professionals in the Finnish job market. Therefore, Finland cannot afford to waste the valuable skills embodied in migrants and their children, nor can it afford to allow recent arrivals to fall through the cracks of society.

3.1 Census

In 2018, a total of 31,106 people immigrated to Finland, slightly less than the year before (2017: 31,797). The numbers, even though not relatively high, were quite stable (**Table 4**). The numbers may have been affected from 2019 due to the COVID-19 outbreak.

Table 4. Immigration, emigration and net migration between 2014 and 2018²⁹.

	Immigration	Emigration	Net migration
2014	31,507	15,486	16,021
2015	28,746	16,305	12,441
2016	34,905	18,082	16,823
2017	31,797	16,973	14,824
2018	31,106	19,148	11,958

3.2 The needs and the gaps

Interviewees considered the migrant situation to be relatively good in Finland, however there are still barriers that migrants have to overcome when they come to Finland. Some of them are the same for all types of migrants, some concern only refugees, only migrants coming to Finland in order to find a job, work and live here, or students who come to study in Finland.

The most common issues:

²⁹Ministry of the Interior (2019). International Migration 2018–2019 – Report for Finland. Available at: https://julkaisut.valtioneuvosto.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/161871/SM_2019_32.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y

- High student fees:

“International students are very welcomed in Finland, but tuition fees are high. You need to have a lot of money (on your bank account) to get a study-based residence permit” – Nella Niemi.

- Racism
- Life in Finland is expensive
- Easier for EU citizens to migrate:

“Arriving to Finland is very different depending on the person's home country: If a person comes from the Middle East or Africa, the criteria for moving are examined much more closely than, for example, if you come from Europe or America (...) It is easier for EU citizens to migrate. All you need to do is register, but this also requires a valid reason for arrival.” – Nella Niemi.

- Lack of knowledge and skills
- Unclear rules for asylum seekers who want to set up an NGO or for migrants wanting to work in an existing one:

“It is unclear whether the asylum seeker status has the right to establish an association in Finland (...) Civic activities and the third sector are often politically coloured, immigrants can equate these as an alternative channel that is undesirable in the eyes of the state, participation in which would be perceived as a negative issue for one's own position.” – Nella Nurmi.

- Residence permits – limit the number of hours per month/week that migrants can work.
- Poverty:

“Immigrants are relatively poor. In addition, the Finnish refugee infrastructure requires development” – Henna Karpahää.

- Not enough help for women and children:

“Without papers it was hard to find a place and get help. I would like to create a place for women and children, where they could come to find help.” - Lalah Abdulqader.

Interviewed professionals shared ideas on how to overcome some of above-mentioned barriers:

- Clarification of the residence permit process is needed.

- Finland's desirability as a place to study should be increased, for example, by making it possible to stay in the country to work. Often the acquired knowledge is taken back to the home country.
- English is widely spoken in Finland – the lack of strong Finnish language skills should not be a reason to not get a job.
- International students should be able to study Finnish more widely.
- Organisations should pay attention to immigrants and actively involve them in their organisations' boards and activities. That would make the voice of immigrants heard.
- Targeted marketing for immigrants would also be important in non-immigrant organisations. In this way, the needs of the communities concerned could be better considered in various organisations when they themselves were communicating these needs.
- Particular attention should be paid to older people with refugee and asylum backgrounds. Many of them may be illiterates, so learning a new language or other new skills can be very difficult. More attention should be paid to improving the quality of their lives and providing services for this population group.
- Promoting the employment of immigrants. For example, anonymous recruitment, in which case the name (=background) does not affect employment.
- Legislation should be amended so that there are no loopholes that drive people paperless to the streets.
- The residence permit should be issued on humanitarian grounds (i.e. temporary residence should be granted if repatriation is not possible).

○

3.3 Restrictions and obligations

Finnish migration policy is based on Government objectives; therefore, it promotes immigration that Finland needs in order to offset its ageing population. All legal restrictions and obligations for migrants aim to keep immigration into Finland under control.

According to an organisation interviewed which is working with migrants in Finland, Finnish Migrants have largely the same rights as the native population if they have a residence permit - they can move where they want, live with whom they want and have any political opinions.

Refugees, after obtaining a residence permit, are entitled to the social and health services, to the subsidies of the Social Insurance Institution, etc., largely the same rights as those of the native population. People with a refugee background may not always understand their rights because of their cultural background.

Asylum seekers are limited to what they can do:

- Right to work if they have a valid travel document, starting from 3 months after arrival; 6 months if they do not have one.
- Availability of job opportunities is limited.

- If the process ends in a negative decision, the right to work ceases.
- They cannot open a debit card, library card, or sometimes even get a bus card without a valid identity card.
- General view is that asylum seekers should not have things like cell phones, fine clothing, etc. as it implies that they have been funded by the local system.

3.4 How to join an NGO

In Finland, the freedom of association also covers foreign natural persons. Consequently, foreigners may join existing Finnish-founded association, even as members of the Executive Committee. Most of the Finnish NGOs will also hire a refugee, migrant, or an asylum seeker as long as they meet their requirements. The only restriction is laid down by Section 35(3) of the Association Act, according to which the chairperson, and the vice-chairperson, the person has to be a resident of Finland. The Finnish Patent and Registration Office may grant an exemption from this restriction in some cases.³⁰

To join an NGO as a volunteer a migrant, refugee and asylum seeker has only to apply, but to be hired there they will have to meet all the requirements.

3.4.1 Volunteering

The history of Finnish volunteering, dating back more than 100 years ago, is related to the creation and operation of three main umbrella organisations for social, non-governmental and voluntary organisations.

- The Finnish Federation for Welfare and Health was founded in 1917, at the same time as Finland gained independence. The most important task of the federation in terms of social welfare is to maintain cooperation between NGOs and the authorities. At the same time, it promotes, through its activities, basic civil rights, fights against intolerance, social exclusion and poverty.
- The Finnish Centre for Health Promotion (FCHP) was founded in 1962 with the aim of improving the cooperation of associations dealing with health matters. In collaboration with 100 member organizations, it conducts international research programs, political campaigns to disseminate information and dialogue with the government.
- The Association of Voluntary Social, Welfare and Health Organizations (YTY) has been in existence since 1978. Its main goal is to provide sufficient financial support and to develop the administrative competences of 114 needy member organizations. Internationally, YTY represents the Finnish Third Sector, active in the field of social and health care, cooperating

³⁰Globe Art Point. Available at: <http://www.globeartpoint.fi/2018/05/18/do-you-want-to-found-an-association/>

with related foreign organizations. These umbrella organizations and their member organizations have been largely funded for over 60 years, atypically, by the Finnish Slot Machine Association (RAY).

Volunteer work is a great solution for those who have a little work experience in Finland and face language barriers. These will help to gain entry to working life and improve their language skills. People volunteer on their own free will and gain satisfaction from participation. They are not paid for their work, but they may get a certificate and a testimonial of service.

Sources:

- Volunteering Finland: <https://vapaaehtoistyö.fi/>
- Volunteering in the recycling centre: https://www.kierratyskeskus.fi/in_english/get_involved
- The Federation of Mother and Child Homes and Shelters: <https://ensijaturvakotienliitto.fi/en/>
- The Finnish Red Cross: <https://www.redcross.fi/get-involved>
- Save the Children Finland: <https://www.pelastakalapset.fi/en/get-involved/become-a-volunteer/>
- Familia – contribute to the advancement of the equality of intercultural families, couples and young people in Finnish society: <https://www.familia.fi/volunteering.html>
- Volunteer work in nature: <https://www.metsa.fi/en/about-us/cooperation/volunteer-work/>
- Volunteering with World Wide Fund (WWF): <https://wwf.fi/vapaaehtoistyö/>
- Volunteering in nature conservation: <https://www.sll.fi/tule-mukaan/vapaaehtoiseksi/>
- Greenpeace Finland volunteering: <https://www.greenpeace.org/finland/vapaaehtoiset/>

In Finland, anyone can join a voluntary organisation. However, MRAs may still face various barriers, especially asylum seekers:

- In the case of asylum seekers, care must be taken that the Finnish Immigration Service does not see possible activities as part of transition economy or employment, as this can be considered as work that may affect the asylum process.
- Joining is easy, but asylum seekers may not know how to join, or what the action means. Many countries do not have a culture of volunteering/free work. There is a lack of understanding of it and its benefits.
- Structural racism can have an impact.
- An asylum seeker cannot be a signee if his or her identity has not been verified. A person with an immigrant background can form an organisation. In the organisation rules of JoMoni, for example, the Vice Chairman of the Board or Chairman of the Board should have an immigrant background. Currently, the president of the organisation has an immigrant background.

3.4.2 Accessing the labour market and green jobs

According to the UNEP, definition of green work, green is all work that contributes to improving the quality of the environment. This includes the protection of ecosystems and biodiversity, energy efficiency, material efficiency and climate change mitigation, as well as the reduction of emissions and waste.³¹

Examples of learning programs for the “green-jobs” sector in Finland:

- Environmental sector:
<https://kokeile.tyomarkkinatori.fi/en/ammattialat/Ymp%C3%A4rist%C3%B6ala/Ymp%C3%A4rist%C3%B6ala>
- Bioenergy: <https://kokeile.tyomarkkinatori.fi/ammattialat/Energia-ala/Bioenergia-ala>
- Energy industry: <https://kokeile.tyomarkkinatori.fi/ammattialat/Energia-ala/Energiateollisuus>
- Natural product industry:
<https://kokeile.tyomarkkinatori.fi/ammattialat/Maa--ja-mets%C3%A4talousty%C3%B6/Luonnontuoteala>
- Agriculture sector:
<https://kokeile.tyomarkkinatori.fi/ammattialat/Maa--ja-mets%C3%A4talousty%C3%B6/Maatalousala>
- Forest sector:
<https://kokeile.tyomarkkinatori.fi/ammattialat/Maa--ja-mets%C3%A4talousty%C3%B6/Mets%C3%A4ala>

3.5 Supporting structures in Finland

All associations working with immigrants, such as Jomoni (<http://www.jomoni.fi/>) and other multicultural associations help in legalising their immigration status, accessing the labour market, and getting involved in civic life. Jomoni try to highlight, to people with an immigrant background, the importance of belonging to NGOs and the fact that social influence is really important through the third sector. There are many such organisations that help immigrants in these matters.

All migrants can ask for help with finding a job in the Startup Refugees (<https://startuprefugees.com/>),

³¹Honkasalo, A. (2012). Vihreä talous ja vihreät työt. Ekoinnovaatiot ja työperäiset riskitekijät *Suomen Ympäristö*, 22. Available at: https://helda.helsinki.fi/bitstream/handle/10138/38720/SY22_2012_VihreaTalous_web.pdf?sequence=1

which is a network of companies, organisations, and professionals who support the employment and entrepreneurship of newcomers.

In Finland, the government organises good social and health services. Therefore, NGOs do not have a similar responsibility to carry out these tasks, as in other countries, for example. NGOs carry out activities based on wishes, activities related to volunteering and hobbies.

Asylum seekers receive support services through the reception centre which include accommodation, compulsory social and health services (nothing extra) and reception allowance.

Refugees have a residence permit and receive the same services as the native population. Under the Act on the Promotion of Immigrant Integration, refugees and migrants with a residence permit also have the right to interpretation services and immigrant services, which are special integration services, supporting integration in, for example, linguistic and other skills. Its content and quality vary by region.

4. References

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1. Introduction

Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in Portugal, are part of the core of civil society organisations which include immigrant associations that aim to promote the integration of immigrants into the Portuguese society. In Portugal, there are three groups of NGOs operating in the area of immigration: immigrant rights; organisations for the defence of the rights of immigrant communities and entities promoting equality and combating racism and discrimination.

PlaySolutions does not have a broad knowledge on the reality of NGOs in Portugal, this information is based on works carried out by other entities. PlaySolutions has occasionally cooperated or participated in projects with environmental NGOs, however, the tasks of PlaySolutions are limited to the production of audio-visual content for the dissemination and support of the activities of environmental NGOs.

In this report, questionnaires were sent out to the NGOs PlaySolutions works with and others which were contacted through national listings. Only Montis, Grupo Lobo and Bioliving NGOs provided feedback on request.

2. NGOs in Portugal

Non-Governmental Organizations operate in three areas: I) - Cooperation for Development, II) - Humanitarian Aid and Emergency and III) - Education for Development. In Portugal, there is a diverse range of legal frameworks, different areas, structures, range and volume of interventions, distinctive degrees of tradition and professionalism. These organizations and associations are identified by principles and values and a common goal: the promotion of Co-operation and Development.

The universe of NGOs comprises 27,985 associations and represents 45.7% of the entities that make up the Social Economy, employing 72.1% of the workforce that works in this sector. On average, each organization has 6.3 workers, which represents a low value; given that the sector has a significant number of expansion units (e.g. mercies, foundations), this average means that there will be many units with 0-2 employees.

2.1 A variety of legal structures

In Portugal, there are several types of NGOs: associations, foundations, cooperatives, mutualities (“mutualidades”) and charities (“misericórdias”) that are directly linked to the catholic church. These can be local, regional, national or international. The National Register of Portuguese Non-Governmental Environment and Similar Organizations is maintained by the Portuguese Environment Agency and is published annually in the Diário da República.

The main types of Portuguese NGOs:

- ENGO – Environmental Non-Governmental Organisation
- NGDO – Non-Governmental Development Organizations
- NGOPD - Non-Governmental Organisations of People with Disabilities
- NGWO - Non-Governmental Women's Organizations
- PISS - Private Institutions of Social Solidarity

2.2 Environmental NGOs

Since 1987, the date of approval of the Law on Environmental Protection Associations, the Portuguese legal system provides a legal framework for intervention and support for environmental associations. With the ONGA Law, published in 1998, the introduction of the ENGO into the

Portuguese legal system, replacing the previous concept of association for the defence of the environment. Responding to developments in international law, this gave renewed effectiveness to the action of the associations.³²

Portuguese Confederation of Environmental Defence Association consists of 110 NGOs for environmental protection (national, regional and local) in Portugal. The themes include nature conservation, territorial planning, built heritage, urban environment, alternative transport, animal welfare, organic farming, specific activities such as caving, mountaineering, scouting and cycling), spread throughout the Continent and Autonomous Regions.

Table 1. The main environmental NGOs in Portugal.

Name	Mission & activities	Website and contact details
BIOLIVING	Associação BioLiving is an environmental non-profit NGO whose motto is "Nature and Education for All". Its objectives are, among others, the promotion of sustainability through engagement in environmental citizenship and public participation for the protection of nature using education, natural resources and nature conservation.	https://www.bioliving.pt/ Email: geral.bioliving@gmail.com
Grupo Lobo	<p>Grupo Lobo is a Portuguese environmental NGO, recognized as public utility, created in 1985 with the goal to contribute to the conservation of the Iberian wolf and its habitat in Portugal. Its conservation strategy integrates fundamental and applied research with communication and awareness raising actions. Research areas are broad from biology, ecology, behaviour, genetics, parasitology, as well human dimensions studies.</p> <p>Grupo Lobo is also responsible for the establishment and current management of the “Centro de Recuperação do Lobo Ibérico - CRLI” (Iberian Wolf Recovery Centre). This Centre was created in 1987 in order to provide a suitable environment and a safe and comfortable sanctuary for wolves that can no longer live in the wild, animals that have been rescued from illegal captivity, injured or disabled. Since 1987 Grupo Lobo has worked with local</p>	https://www.grupolobo.pt/ Email: globo@fc.ul.pt

³²Alto Commissariado para as Migrações (ACM) (2017). “Relatório de Avaliação da Política Portuguesa de Acolhimento de Pessoas Refugiadas Programa de Recolocação”. Available at: https://www.acm.gov.pt/documents/10181/27754/Relatorio_Acolhimento+Pessoas+Refugiadas_Dez.2017.pdf/d21546b3-7588-483d-92a3-fa8185d61b5b.

	<p>communities in order to recover and promote the use of livestock guarding dogs of national breeds as an effective measure to reduce wolf damage and the resulting conflicts.</p>	
ZERO	<p>At the end of 2015, ZERO was born out of the common interest of around a hundred people in achieving sustainable development in Portugal. ZERO's ambition lies in intervention in Portuguese society through proactive participation in defending the values of sustainability. Propelled by the ethos that only through achieving balance between environment, society and economy will it be possible to build a more cohesive, socially and economically, world, with full respect for the natural limits of the planet. ZERO's intervention is based on solid ideas and a permanent dialogue with the different key actors to achieve goals such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● ZERO fossil fuels ● ZERO pollution ● ZERO waste of resources ● ZERO destruction of ecosystems and biodiversity ● ZERO social and economic inequality 	<p>https://zero.org/quem-somos/o-nosso-adn/</p> <p>Email: zero@zero.org</p>
LPN	<p>LPN is a nationwide ENGO, founded in 1948, and is the oldest Association for the defence of the environment in the Iberian Peninsula. It is a non-profit association with Public Utility status.</p> <p>LPN's main objectives are to defend the environment and contribute to the conservation of the Natural Heritage, as well as the diversity of species and ecosystems. specific objectives of the organisation are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Contribute to Nature Conservation through activities that include research and the implementation of conservation projects. ● Support and develop projects for the sustainable management of natural resources with a view to Nature Conservation in the perspective of sustainable development. ● Promote environmental citizenship by encouraging public participation through training and environmental education. ● Disseminate and raise awareness of issues related to the environment. 	<p>https://www.lpn.pt/en/about</p> <p>Email: geral@lpn.pt</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevent the depletion and destruction of natural environments, their elements, and cultural heritage. • Contribute to the dissemination of knowledge produced by the academic and scientific communities. • Actively participate in land use planning. • Collaborate with similar bodies and official entities in the country and abroad. 	
VERDE	<p>VERDE is an association created to integrate the conservation and regeneration of nature into the daily lives of the Portuguese. VERDE intend to preserve and enhance the territory through a strategic plan of actions with short- and long-term impact.</p> <p>VERDE emerged in 2021 from the culmination of many years of work by its representatives in favour of nature preservation. It also arises from the need to create an independent body that can embody and consolidate all the work developed in this period. It is a non-profit association, headquartered in Lousada, where the Municipality has been playing a leading role in local environmental actions, adopting a strategy that has been awarded, which the founding members of the association have been privileged to help lead through a holistic view of local needs.</p>	<p>https://ppl.pt/causas/verde</p> <p>Email: https://ppl.pt/contactos</p>
Spatial Planning and Environment Study Group (GEOTA)	<p>GEOTA is an ENGO with a Public Utility status. It was legally constituted in 1986, but its existence as a reflection and education group in the environmental area dates back to 1981.</p> <p>GEOTA's mission is to defend the environment and promote sustainable development in aspects of education, information, professional training, reflection and political intervention, cooperation for development and carrying out actions to solve problems specific to the environment</p>	<p>https://www.geota.pt/o-geota</p> <p>Email: geota@geota.pt</p>
Quercus	<p>Quercus was founded on October 31, 1985. It is an independent, non-partisan, national, non-profit association made up of citizens who joined together around the same interest in the Conservation of Nature</p>	<p>https://www.quercus.pt/</p> <p>Email: quercus@quercus.pt</p>

	<p>and Natural Resources, in a perspective of sustainable development.</p> <p>Its scope of action currently covers current environmental concern, including conservation of nature and biodiversity - energy, water, waste, climate change, forests, sustainable consumption, environmental responsibility and others. This specialization is, to a large extent, supported by the work carried out by various working groups and permanent projects.</p>	
OCEAN ALIVE	<p>Ocean Alive is Portugal's first co-operative dedicated to ocean protection. They aim to a protected ocean by coastal communities and exist to accomplish this vision. They provide marine education projects and activities that foster behavioural transformation.</p> <p>Ocean Alive's current project is focused on the Sado estuary, where seagrass meadows are the nursery habitat for both the prey of the resident dolphin population, and for the fish and shellfish which the fishing community's economy depends upon. Acting through a program of marine education, awareness-raising campaigns, and through monitoring and evaluating the project's impact on the seagrass meadows.</p>	<p>https://www.ocean-alive.org/sobre-nos</p> <p>Email: info@ocean-alive.org</p>
PALOMBAR	<p>Palombar – Nature and Rural Heritage Conservation was created in 2000 with a mission to conserve biodiversity, wild, forest and agricultural ecosystems and preserve the built-up rural heritage, as well as traditional construction techniques.</p>	<p>https://www.palombar.pt/pt/</p> <p>Email: palombar@palombar.pt</p>
SPEA	<p>SPEA was founded in 1993. It started as a small organisation which mostly focused on birdwatching and research, but over the years has grown and evolved.</p> <p>In 1999 they became the Portuguese partner of BirdLife International, an international network of environmental NGOs which acts in over 100 countries. SPEA has been recognised as a public benefit entity (“entidade de utilidade pública”) since 2012.</p>	<p>https://www.spea.pt/en/about-us/contacts/</p> <p>Email: spea@spea.pt</p>
URZE	<p>URZE aims to promote and support the development of activities related to the production, exploration and conservation of the forest, in order to defend the interests</p>	<p>http://www.urze.org/</p> <p>Email: geral@urze.org</p>

	of its members, in a sustained and projected way into the future. URZE assumes itself as a Local/Regional development agent, which sees the forest as a link between ecology and economy.	
Urban Research and Intervention Centre (URBE)	URBE, established in 1988, is a non-profit youth association in the category of Non-Governmental Organization for the Environment. URBE's objective is to promote the defence of the urban and natural environment, as well as the safeguarding of the built heritage.	http://www.urbe.com.pt/urbe/index.php Email: http://www.urbe.com.pt/urbe/index.php?page=11
Terras Dentro	Terras Dentro – Association for Integrated Development - was born in Alcáçovas in 1991. It was created by the Parish Council, the Viana do Alentejo City Council and a group of citizens committed to the development of their land.	www.terrasdentro.pt Email: terrasdentro@terrasdentro.pt
TAGIS	Tagis - Butterfly Conservation Centre of Portugal - is a non-profit association especially dedicated to scientific research, dissemination of knowledge and preservation of habitats natural of butterflies.	http://www.tagis.pt/ Email: infotagis@gmail.com
SPECO	SPECO aims to reach all who use ecological science as a base to nature conservation and environmental management. Moreover, they develop scientific or technological activities in the fields of Ecology and sustainable development and act as a meeting point among several different fields.	https://www.speco.pt/en/about-us Email: info@speco.pt
Plantar Uma Arvore	<p>Plantar Uma Arvore develops and implements volunteer programs, both short- and long-term, focusing on the recovery of ecologically degraded areas through the restitution of native forests and native species, involving the community, and organizing initiatives that allow the involvement of society.</p> <p>These initiatives seek to enhance the natural heritage, reduce environmental damage, generate and restore natural spaces, promote biodiversity and restore ecological functions, through the restoration of the native forest, actively promoting ecological sustainability, ecological awareness, participatory citizenship and social and environmental responsibility.</p>	https://plantarumaarvore.org/a-associacao/sobre/ Email: geral@plantarumaarvore.org

<p>MilVoz</p>	<p>MilVoz aims to enhance, protect and expand areas of high ecological value through the creation of a network of nature reserves in areas of rich biodiversity and Portuguese autochthonous forest, as well as preserving the landscape and rural space. MilVoz proposes to acquire land for management and conservation purposes to promote volunteering, socializing, and learning initiatives involving the population, to promote educational and scientific environmental education and to carry out projects studying biodiversity with benefits for nature conservation.</p>	<p>https://www.milvoz.pt/a-associacao</p> <p>Email: geral@milvoz.pt</p>
<p>MARCA</p>	<p>MARCA – ADL is a non-profit association headquartered in Montemor-o-Novo. Its objective is the qualified development of the municipality of Montemor-o-Novo, in particular the promotion of actions in social, cultural, environmental preservation and enhancement of natural and built heritage.</p> <p>To achieve these goals, MARCA – ADL has developed projects and actions in partnership with other institutions in the fields of social, cultural heritage, environment, new information technologies, research and university education, professional training and support for the creation of micro-enterprises.</p>	<p>http://www.marca-adl.pt</p> <p>Email: marca@marca-adl.pt</p>
<p>FORESTIS</p>	<p>Forestis - Associação Florestal de Portugal is a national, nonprofit and public utility associative movement founded in 1992, with the aim of actively supporting management, defence and association between private and community forests.</p> <p>It currently has 33 associated Forest Owners Organizations (OPF) with a sub-regional scope of action, which represent and technically support more than 17,500 forest owners.</p>	<p>https://forestis.pt/</p> <p>Email: info@forestis.pt</p>
<p>MONTIS</p>	<p>MONTIS – Nature Conservation Association founded in 2014 and based in Vouzela. As of January 2020, MONTIS has 473 associates and manages 178,2 ha – which comprise 26 properties in the centre of Portugal.</p> <p>The main goal of MONTIS is to manage abandoned land in Portugal for increasing biodiversity. They aim to support the development of natural processes by working</p>	<p>http://montisacn.blogspot.com/</p> <p>Email: montisacn@gmail.com</p>

	<p>on habitat restoration. It is crucial for MONTIS to manage with fire and implement nature-based solutions to increase biodiversity with a low input of resources.</p>	
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2.3 NGOs working with migrants, refugees and asylum seekers

There are 25 pro-immigrant associations (e.g. <https://apirp.pt/portugal-acolheu-terca-feira-mais-24-refugiados/>, <https://www.mundofeliz.pt/>) spread across the country. They received around €234 000 under the Support Program for Immigrant Associations (PAAI) in 2020. PAAI aims to help projects on reception, diversity or merit in 13 municipalities in Portugal with a strong presence of immigration. More information at: <https://jornaleagora.pt/25-ong-pro-imigrantes-recebem-234-mil-euros-para-projetos-de-acolhimento-e-diversidade-em-13-concelhos/>.

2.4 How to set up an NGO in Portugal

Any group of people who come together with common interests can form an association. Often, groups of residents, people of the same profession, colleagues in recreational and cultural activities or friends with common projects, find in the creation of an association a way to make themselves publicly represented.

Creating a non-profit:

<https://www.eurofinesco.com/pt/publicacoes/documentation/miscellaneous/290-l25-associations-a5-emailer-july-2015/file>

Setting up an NGO are done though the following steps:

1. Create a team of social members (president, vice-president, etc.).
2. Write statutes.
3. Define what type of NGO you want to be.
4. Apply for the Certificate of Admissibility of Firm or Denomination.
5. Organize a Constitutive Assembly to approve the statutes.
6. Public Deed of the association.
7. Registration with RNPC (National Register of Legal Entities).
8. Publications of the statutes in the Republic Gazette.
9. Start of Activity Registration.
10. Social Security Enrolment.
11. Legal Person Card Required.

3. The situation of low qualified migrants, refugees and asylum seekers

3.1 Census

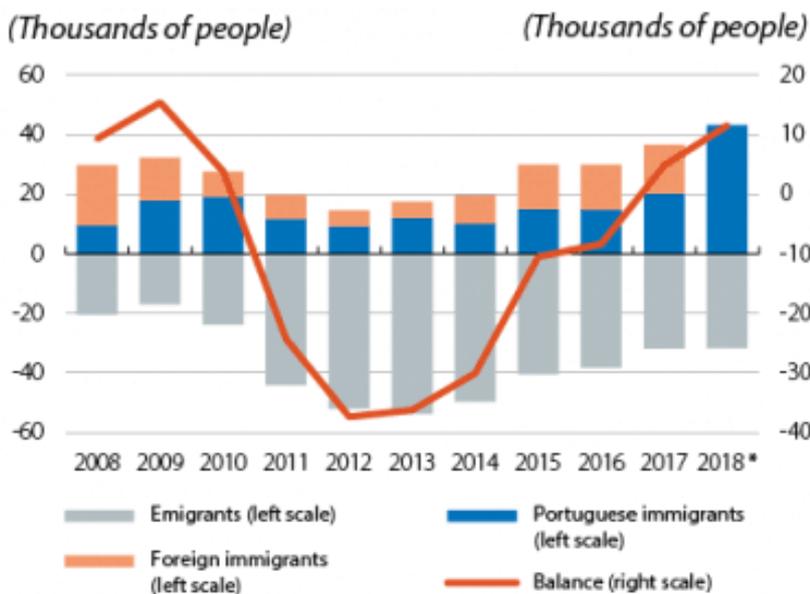
In socio-demographic terms, two characteristics of Portugal's emigrants and immigrants stand out: their age profile and their level of education. In terms of age, the migratory movements are concentrated in the working-age individuals, particularly among those aged between 20 and 49. In the case of Portuguese emigrants, this age group represented over 75% of all departures in the past six years, and in the case of immigrants, slightly over 60%. As for their level of education, the dynamics between emigrants and immigrants are slightly different and prove unfavourable for Portugal. This is because, in net terms, there have been more departures of individuals with a higher education than arrivals (51,000 departures in the past four years versus 24,000 arrivals). In addition, there has been an increase in the relative weight of emigrants with secondary studies (ISCED (International Standard Classification of Education) 8: 3-4: 26.9% in 2017) and a reduction in low-skilled emigrants (ISCED 0-2: 42.5%). The percentage of people with higher education (ISCED 5-8: 28.7%) who decide to emigrate, meanwhile, has remained practically unchanged. By occupation, the biggest groups are those with training in engineering (20% of departures) and in management and legal sciences (35%).

Among immigrants, there have been changes in the motives behind why people choose Portugal as their country of residence. In particular, there has been a reduction in people whose motivation is work-related and an increase in those whose primary reason has to do with education or retirement. In recent years, there has also been a significant increase in immigrants motivated by entrepreneurial and independent professional activities, suggesting that those who migrate to Portugal have higher qualifications (a trend that could mitigate the departures among the qualified population).³³

In short, the demographic outlook for the Portuguese population does not look favourable. The forecasts indicate that the ageing and the declining of the resident population will continue over the coming decades, and it is estimated that the population of residents in Portugal will stand at approximately 8 million in 2070, with 35.7% over the age of 65. The ageing of Portugal's population poses some challenges, including a reduction in savings and in the labour force, the detrimental

³³Oliveira, CR (2020). Entry, reception and integration of applicants and beneficiaries of International Protection in Portugal. *Statistical Report on Asylum 2020, Statistical Thematic Book #3, Observatory Collection for Migration, May 2020.*

impact on the economy’s potential growth and an increase in the number of pensions and expenditure on healthcare. In this context, migratory flows take on a particularly important role in order to mitigate these effects, especially in terms of attracting immigrants. For this reason, in recent years some steps have been taken in this area, especially in expediting the process for acquiring Portuguese nationality, granting residence visas and offering tax benefits, with a view to attracting higher-skilled professionals to Portugal.³⁴



Note: * For 2018 there is no breakdown available of immigrants by nationality.

Figure 1. Arrivals, departures, and net migration in Portugal from 2008 to 2018. Source: CaixaBank Research, based on National Statistics Institute of Portugal.³⁴

3.2 Obtaining a refugee status

The Portuguese asylum procedure is a single procedure for both refugee status and subsidiary protection. There are different procedures depending on whether the asylum application is submitted to the regular procedure and is deemed unfounded (including in the case of applications following a removal procedure) and therefore submitted to an accelerated procedure or is presented at a national border. Anyone who irregularly enters or remains on Portuguese national territory must present his or her request to the Portuguese Immigration and Borders Service (SEF) or to any other police authority as soon as possible, orally or in writing. In the latter case, the police authority has 48 hours to inform the SEF of the application. The SEF is required to immediately inform the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the Portuguese Refugee Council (CPR),

³⁴ Duarte, V. & Pinhero, T. G. (2019). What is the current state of Portugal’s demographics? *Portuguese Economy*.

as an organisation working on its behalf, of all asylum applications.³⁵ The SEF is required to register the asylum application within 3 days of presentation and to issue the applicant a certificate of the asylum application within 3 days after registration. Except for special cases e.g. applicants lacking legal capacity, all asylum applicants undergo either a Dublin interview or an interview that addresses the remaining inadmissibility grounds and the merits of the application. This is provided both on the territory and at the border. Following the interview, the SEF produces a document narrating the essential facts of the application and in the case of applications on the territory (except for subsequent applications and applications following a removal decision) the applicant has 5 days to seek revision of the narrative (more information at: https://asylumineurope.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/report-download_aida_pt.pdf).

3.3 Restrictions and obligations

Nowadays, although with a still negative net migration, immigration is gaining volume, while emigration is progressively slowing down, although it still maintains a significant volume especially when compared with other EU countries. The return of emigrants, however, is still not following the high rate of outflows. Along with migratory Estimates of Portuguese immigration, emigration and net migration, 2008-2017.^{36 37} Flows and social change emerge in a diverse set of socio-ethno-cultural groups of individuals and presents challenges on how to maintain diversity and social cohesion in the Portuguese society. The difficulty of approaching immigration without reflection on emigration is visible in most of the migratory studies on Portugal.³⁸ Whether immigration is complementary or if it replaces Portuguese emigration is an ongoing debate. There is no obvious answer without an approach to the segmentation of the labour market and the unequal distribution of wealth in the national territory. In some sectors, such as tourism, hotels and restaurants, urban transport or personal and domestic services, as was once the case in construction, immigration is the resource

³⁵ Chiswick, B. & P. Miller (2015), “International Migration and the Economics of Language”, in Handbook of the Economics of International Migration. Conselho Português para os Refugiados (CPR) (2017), “Asylum Information Database (AIDA) Country Report: Portugal”, available at: http://www.asylumineurope.org/sites/default/files/reportdownload/aida_pt.pdf.

³⁶ Liebig, T. & K. Tronstad (2018), “Triple Disadvantage?: A first overview of the integration of refugee women”, OECD Social, Employment and Migration Working Papers, No. 216, OECD Publishing, Paris, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/3f3a9612-en> OECD (2018), Settling In 2018: Indicators of Immigrant Integration, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/9789264307216-en>.

³⁷ OECD (2018b), International Migration Outlook 2018, OECD Publishing, Paris, https://doi.org/10.1787/migr_outlook-2018-6-en. OECD (2017), Making Integration Work: Assessment and Recognition of Foreign Qualifications, OECD Publishing, Paris, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264278271-en>.

³⁸ OECD (2016), Making Integration Work: Refugees and others in need of protection, OECD Publishing, Paris. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264251236-en>.

of the global labour market. It also affects wage competitiveness offered by the immigrant workforce. Workers are typically sought by employers due to their lower wage costs compared to native workers, since without other options they are usually willing to accept poor working conditions.³⁹

3.4 How to join an NGO

The NGOs operating in Portugal are led by volunteers that are committed to their management duties. They are not easy to replace but they do not perpetuate themselves in their jobs and their succession is not dynastic. The statutory Boards delegate decisions on current matters to executive directors, but the former are still not very open to external participation and scrutiny, despite evidence that internal participation is beginning to take on a certain course. NGOs have increasingly invested in implementing marketing activities and in strategic planning, although there is still a long way to go.

The MIND Project (Migration. Interconnectedness. Development) is a three-year knowledge-building, advocacy and campaigning project seeking to contribute to a European society that understands the complexities of migration; responds to the challenges with humanity and respect; and values the contribution of everyone working together to have a positive effect on our lives, community and place.

Sources:

- The MIND Project: <https://www.caritas.eu/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/CommonHomePortugalEN2.pdf>
- Refugee support platform - <https://www.refugiados.pt/>

3.4.1 Volunteering

Concerning ENGO's, there are a few programs financed by the European Union such as European Solidarity Corps or Erasmus + that offer opportunities to all residents in the EU. Migrants, as long as they have a valid visa and residency in one of the EU countries, can get involved with these volunteering activities. Most opportunities through the European Solidarity Corps are cross-border volunteering activities.

These projects are an excellent opportunity to help where needed, learn new skills, spend time abroad, maybe learn a language – and definitely come back with unforgettable memories. With the

³⁹ Góis, P., Abecasis, F., Alfaiate, J., Hancock, M. & Lozano, L. (2019). Migration and development in Portugal. Moving further with practices: towards social inclusion and social cohesion. Caritas Portuguesa. Available at: <https://www.caritas.eu/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/CommonHomePortugalEN2.pdf>

wide range of issues covered by the projects (such as environment, health, inclusion, digital technologies, culture, sport), there is a lot of opportunity to match the interests and background.

Volunteering can be individual or in teams.

Individual volunteering (Erasmus+):

- Can last from 2 months up to 12 months.
- Is full-time (between 30 and 38 hours a week) .
- Allows to contribute to the daily work of an organisation that is actively benefiting the local community.
- Is usually '*cross-border*' – i.e. In a different country to where the person lives (though it can be there too – these are called '*in-country*' projects).
- In some cases, you can take part for a shorter time (from 2 weeks to 2 months) – for example for participants with fewer opportunities, or disabilities (https://europa.eu/youth/solidarity_pt).
- Valid visa and residency certificate.

3.5 Supporting structures in Portugal

The non-profit development cooperation organisations help support refugees and migrants in Portugal. There are entities that host these people, such as municipalities, parishes, foundations and others.

In Portugal, there are associations such as Platform to Support the Refugees (PAR) or Red-Cruz (Cruz Vermelha), that can be considered the same as an NGO, that help refugees getting started in Portugal.³³

International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) seeks to ensure that all migrants receive the protection that they are entitled to under international and domestic law, including the special protection afforded to certain categories of people such as refugees, asylum seekers, and stateless persons. National Red Cross and the Red Crescent Societies have expertise within the areas such as restoring family links, visiting detained migrants and clarifying the fate of missing persons.

4. References

● National Report - Austria

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1. Introduction

1.1 NGO/Association history in Austria

Austria has a long history of NGOs and associations that involve volunteers and offer support and engagement for a large variety of causes. Over the years, the types, kinds, and causes of associations as well as legal requirements have changed, but overall, the Austrian society is known for its involvement in associations. Not all associations and NGOs involve volunteering work – there are many interest groups or communities with similar hobbies (such as a specific sport) that are counted as associations but are not connected to voluntary work.

At the end of 2018, 124.627 associations were recorded in Austria, which represented an increase of 12% from the year 2007⁴⁰. That year marks the introduction of the “ZVR” (*Zentrales Vereinsregister* – central registration databank of associations), where all associations in Austria are

⁴⁰STANDARD Verlagsgesellschaft m.b.H. (2019). Vereine von Musik bis Sport: Vielvereintes Österreich! Available at: <https://www.derstandard.at/story/2000109784689/vereine-von-musik-bis-sport-vielvereintes-oesterreich> [assessed: 7/6/2021]

registered and recorded. This databank is openly accessible for retrieving information and makes it much easier to keep an overview of the national status quo in terms of associations. Even though recent and current GDPR rules make it more difficult to access data about NGOs and associations, the ZVR offers a good overview.

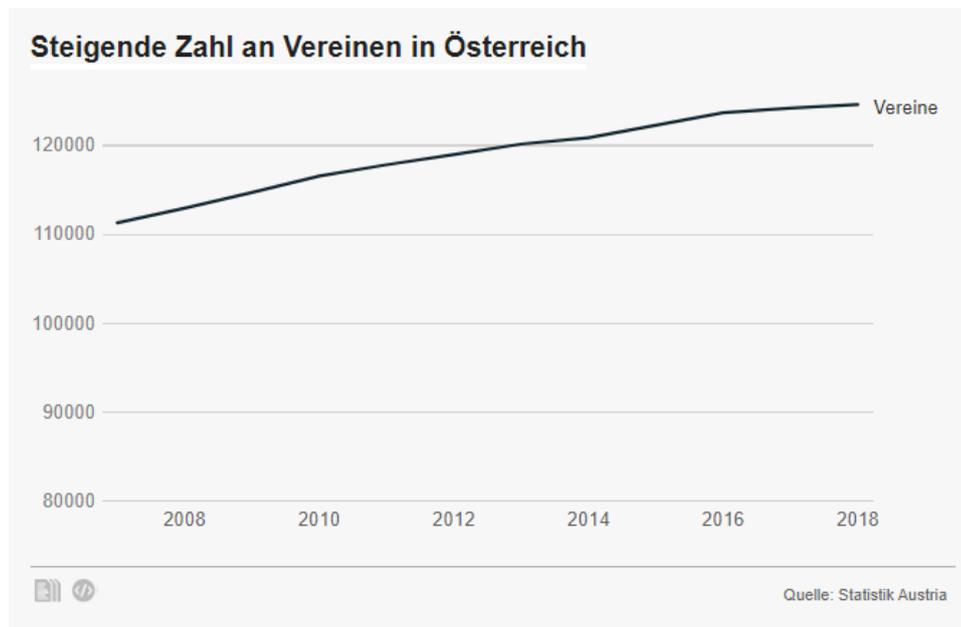


Figure 1. Number of associations in Austria over time⁴⁰

The number of new association registrations in the Austrian ZRV since its introduction in 2007 has increased over time (**Figure 1**). Positive development is partly due to rather simple process of founding an association in Austria. Most Austrian associations (about 29 000) are located in Vienna, but the other eight Austrian regions also have locally based associations and NGOs.⁴⁰ More than 3 million in Austria people are involved in some kind of volunteering work.⁴¹

1.2 Interviewees

Five persons were interviewed for the Austrian National Report - one migrant, two NGO representatives, and two migrant workers. According to their wishes, their identity will be kept anonymous, but their personalities are described in this section.

⁴¹Bundesanstalt Statistik Österreich (2008). Freiwilligenarbeit in Österreich. Available at: http://www.statistik.at/web_de/presse/029570.html#:~:text=44%25%20der%20%20C3%BCber%2015%2Dj%C3%A4hrigen,in%20der%20formellen%20Freiwilligenarbeit%2C%20t%C3%A4tig [assessed: 7/6/2021]

The interviewed migrant is currently a student. Until recently, she was working part-time in a department store but has quit to find another job in her professional field, which suits her qualifications better. She also volunteered for a charity that supports people with disabilities and their families and, while volunteering, was part of a project that offered a special kind of day care for children and teenagers with disabilities. Later, she also volunteered for AISEC, an NGO with an academic background, which is focused on creating positive intercultural experiences for international students by organising stays and jobs for students who are studying a semester or year abroad.

One of the interviewed NGO representatives works for an NGO that follows various pathways to help marginalised groups such as migrants and refugees, people with low economic status and the elderly. A variety of approaches is applied to support these groups, for example donations and guidance but also a number of projects that are specifically developed for certain groups and cater to their needs. The NGO representative is part of the team that plans and offers tutoring for school children with a migration background and also takes part in planning and executing a summer school each year where children have the opportunity to strengthen knowledge which they acquired during the previous school year. The project also helps them to prepare for the academic year ahead. As this NGO has a big spectrum of different target groups and goals, it can be seen as a network itself. There are several offices that are focused on different topics all in the realm of migrant support and education.

The other NGO representative works for Caritas Österreich, an NGO that prevents and eases the hardships of people in need. Some of Caritas work includes disaster relief, hunger awareness and hunger aid campaigns, homecare for disabled people, shelters for homeless people and single mothers, counselling and support centres for people struggling with substance abuse, refugee aid, and occupational projects for the unemployed. The representative has been working for Caritas for several years.

The first interviewed migration worker is engaged in an association that provides support, information and social advice for refugees and asylum seekers. He teaches German to a group of asylum seekers and refugees and additionally often supports them in submitting applications to authorities and public institution. He stated that his profession can be very straining due to legal impediments and, many times, also cultural difference; however, despite of this, he emphasises the positive feeling of having such a rewarding and necessary occupation.

The second migrant worker works for an organisation that mainly cares for migrants, refugees and asylum seekers who have recently arrived in Austria. A lot of her work consists of consultation, which goes well with her own background in law. She supports migrants, refugees and asylum seekers in finding a future perspective, provides advice on legal issues and questions they are facing and tries to support them concerning their job situation, qualification possibilities, validation and transfer of educational achievements and more.

2. NGOs in Austria

NGOs in Austria work in many different areas and cover a large variety of fields of interest, ranging from all types of social and educational support work, environmental topics and sports to the protection of historic buildings and gaming associations. Specific examples of NGO themes in Austria are:

- Anti-racism and civil courage
- Poverty reduction
- Education
- Flight and asylum
- Health
- Humanitarian aid
- Children and young people
- Child day care
- Women and girls
- LGBTQ+ community
- People with disabilities
- Human rights
- Homelessness
- Health care
- Emergency services,
- Sport and leisure
- Animal welfare
- Environmental protection
- Climate change

Different types of NGOs can be described by their objectives and target groups. There are different social, cultural and environmental organisations, but also those catering to students, women, migrants and other groups. All NGOs active in Austria need to follow the Austrian law and operate according to the authority requirements.

2.1 variety of legal structures in Austria

In Austria, there is no specific public institution that clearly defines NGOs and makes related decisions. Nevertheless, there are several prerequisites that entities have to fulfil in order to qualify as an NGO – they have to act publicly, be independent, voluntary, and dedicated to serve a greater cause and good.

That being said, in Austria, NGOs are typically equated with associations and have to follow specific laws regulating the rights and duties of associations in Austria (“Vereinsgesetz”⁴²). The supervising entity is the authority of associations, called “Vereinsbehörde” in German⁴³. The current version of the law regulating associations can be found online at:

<https://www.ris.bka.gv.at/GeltendeFassung.wxe?Abfrage=Bundesnormen&Gesetzesnummer=20001917>.

Other useful links with hands-on tips and information on associations in Austria, available in German:

- https://www.oesterreich.gv.at/themen/freizeit_und_strassenverkehr/vereine/Seite.220300.html
- <https://vereinsplaner.at>
- https://www.wko.at/service/wirtschaftsrecht-gewerberecht/Der_Idealverein.html

There are different types of entities which qualify as NGOs in Austria, the most important being:

- *Verein (association)* – this type of NGO has legally binding statutes, can have an infinite number of members (but needs to have at least two), can be founded by two people for a small fee, needs to pursue the realisation of an ideal, has a board, can seek funding. Upon their foundation, all associations are automatically registered with the ZVR (explained above).⁴⁴
- *Stiftung (foundation)* – pursues a goal set by the founder, does not work for profit, does not have any members, is set up by one or several founders.
- *Initiative* – union of at least three people who want to pursue a mutual goal together. This is not a legal entity but can do much of the work an association can do. Some legal advantages and duties that associations have do not apply to initiatives.

In terms of funding, there are many options available. The nine different Austrian federal governments are a good place to look for funding, as they are based locally and support local actions.

⁴² Bundesministerium für Digitalisierung und Wirtschaftsstandort (2021). Bundesrecht konsolidiert: Gesamte Rechtsvorschrift für Vereinsgesetz 2002, Fassung vom 26.07.2021. Available at: <https://www.ris.bka.gv.at/GeltendeFassung.wxe?Abfrage=Bundesnormen&Gesetzesnummer=20001917> [assessed: 7/6/2021]

⁴³ Bundesministerium für Inneres (2021). Allgemeines zum Vereinswesen. Available at: https://www.oesterreich.gv.at/themen/freizeit_und_strassenverkehr/vereine/Seite.220200.html [assessed: 7/6/2021]

⁴⁴ Vereinsplaner.at (2021). Wie gründe ich einen Verein in Österreich? Available at: <https://vereinsplaner.at/c/verein-gruenden-in-oesterreich> [assessed: 7/6/2021]

These localised governments have sections specifically dedicated for association support. Municipalities and city governments are also available for NGO support. Additionally, NGOs can apply for funding at authorities such as unions which are concerned with the NGO's specific goals and aims. Charity is always an option, and public campaigns for financial support are possible.

2.2 Environmental NGOs

In the spring of 1973, the first meeting of the Austrian environmental umbrella organisation, *Umweltdachverband*, attended by the Austrian Minister of the Environment at the time, took place and the Austrian Society for Nature and Environmental Protection (*Österreichische Gesellschaft für Natur- und Umweltschutz* (ÖGNU) was founded to give wings to the burgeoning idea of ecology in the country. Several important Austrian environmental organisations participated in the initial meeting such as *Naturfreunde* (Friends of Nature), *der Alpenverein* (Alpine Club), *der Naturschutzbund* (Nature Conservation Union), *der Verband der Höhlenforscher* (Speleologists' Association) and *die Bergwacht* (Mountain Rescue Service). Over the years, the umbrella organisation has grown to currently 36 member associations.⁴⁵

Besides these clubs and associations, there are countless others, some of which are based locally in Austria, and some are part of large international NGOs.

Table 1. Examples of active environmental associations in Austria.

Name	Mission & activities	Website and contact details
EU Umweltbüro	Competence centre for European environmental politics. It is the largest Roof organisation for environmentally active associations in Austria	https://www.eu-umweltbuero.at
Kleine Wildtiere in großer Not	This association takes care of orphaned and injured wild animals and tries to return them to the wild.	https://www.wildtiere-in-not.at/ Email: office@wildtiere-in-not.at Address: Langeggerweg 80, 8044 Graz
Naturfreunde	For 125 years, the Friends of Nature have stood for affordable, varied, healthy leisure activities for young and old, as well as for environmental protection. The large team of the Friends of Nature consists of about	https://www.naturfreunde.at/

⁴⁵Umweltdachverband (2021). Geschichte & Meilensteine. Available at: <https://www.umweltdachverband.at/ueber-uns/wer-wir-sind/geschichte/> [assessed: 7/6/2021]

	50 employees throughout Austria, but also of more than 9,500 volunteers who work for the association in their free time without payment.	
Ökobüro	<p>ÖKOBÜRO fights for the rights of the environmental movement as an alliance independent of the state, parties and companies. Together we are committed to a sustainable approach to our environment, a strong civil society and a democratic constitutional state. In the alliance of our member organisations, we combine strength and competence.</p> <p>ÖKOBÜRO develops legal and political solutions for conflicts between the use and protection of the environment in order to strengthen environmental protection in the balance of interests between civil society, the state and the economy. To this end, we prepare factual analyses, conduct political discussions and participate in strategically important environmental procedures.</p>	<p>https://oekobuero.at/de/</p> <p>Email: office@oekobuero.at</p> <p>Address: Neustiftgasse 36/3a, 1070 Wien</p>
Umweltdachverband	A non-partisan platform for 36 member organisations from the fields of environmental protection, nature conservation, Alpine protection, agriculture, forestry and renewable energies from all over Austria, and thus for around 1.3 million members.	https://www.umweltdachverband.at
Verschenke-laden	<p>People can donate things they do not need any more and the store gives them away for free.</p> <p>“On the one hand, we don't want so much to be thrown away, but on the other hand, we don't want so much to be bought new. Yes, and thirdly, we want things that are no longer needed and lying around at home to be put into circulation more quickly and thus still be useful.”</p>	<p>https://nachhaltig-in-graz.at/verschenkladen-nachhaltig-in-graz/</p> <p>Address: Leonhardstraße 38, 8010 Graz</p> <p>Email: bea@nachhaltig-in-graz.at</p>
Vier Pfoten	Vier Pfoten runs a rapid-response, highly skilled unit of experts equipped to help animals in war zones or conflict zones. Our team, consisting of veterinarians, rescuers and crisis managers, is trained to work in such circumstances and is deployed worldwide.	https://www.vier-pfoten.at
WWF Österreich	<p>The aims include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Maintain biological diversity on the planet ● Encourage and promote use of renewable 	https://www.wwf.at/

	<p>energy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevent pollution of the environment 	
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2.3 NGOs working with migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers.

Refugees and people seeking protection can encounter many organisations in Austria who will provide help and support on different levels. There are countless initiatives, organisations, NGOs and private individuals in Austria who work with migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers.⁴⁶

NGOs in Austria are allowed to offer advice and support services for migrants, refugees and asylum seekers. NGOs also provide basic care, legal advice and legal representation in the Federal Office for Immigration and Asylum and in the Federal Administrative Court as well as return advice and assistance, monitoring of human rights and translation and interpreting services. As of January 2021, the Federal Agency for Care and Support Services (BBU), which is owned by the federal government, has taken over these responsibilities.⁴⁷

Especially the last few years showed that the Austrian society displays commitment and support for migrants. The number of persons searching for protection has grown tremendously, which lead to a strong increase in NGOs working with and supporting this group of people. **Table 2** lists some examples of Austrian associations working with migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers. Their roles and objectives differ from researching and sharing information to a more hands-on approach that offers guidance or practical help in everyday life, directly to migrants, refugees and asylum seekers.

Table 2. Austrian associations working with migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers.

Name	Mission / activities	Website and contact details
Asylum in Need	Asylum in Need is an independent human rights NGO that provides unbiased legal advice and representation to refugees in the asylum process. Our political expertise and ability to analyse makes our legal work successful. We	https://www.asyl-in-not.org Email: office@asyl-in-not.org Address: Währingerstr. 59/2/1,

⁴⁶UNHCR Österreich (2021). Initiativen und Mitarbeit in Österreich. Available at: <https://www.unhcr.org/dach/at/aktiv-werden/initiativen-in-oesterreich> [assessed: 7/6/2021]

⁴⁷Bundesagentur für Betreuungs- und Unterstützungsleistungen (2021). Grundversorgung. Available at: <https://www.bbu.gv.at/was-wir-tun#versorgung> [assessed: 7/6/2021]

	do not see ourselves merely as a charitable organisation, but we use legal assistance for individuals as our tool to insist on the protection of human rights.	1090 Wien
Asylkoordination Österreich	Asylkoordination Österreich has set itself the goal of supporting organisations, initiatives and volunteers in counselling and caring for refugees. Since 1991 they have been working on networking refugee NGOs and committed individuals, exerting political pressure and creating publicity through qualified information.	https://asyl.at
Beratungszentrum für Migranten und Migrantinnen	They offer information, advice and support for migrants in Austria.	https://www.migrant.at
Caritas Österreich	Caritas has many different fields of action, also special sections for refugees and migrants in Austria.	For refugee information: https://www.caritas.at/spenden-helfen/spenden/fluechtlingshilfe For migrant and refugee support: https://www.caritas.at/hilfe-beratung/migrantinnen-fluechtlinge
Deutsch ohne Grenzen	German language courses, leisure activities, awareness raising.	https://deutshohnegrenzen.at Email: info@deutshohnegrenzen.at
Diakonie Flüchtlingsdienst	They offer support on integration, health, psychotherapy, education and more for refugees in Austria.	https://fluechtlingsdienst.diakonie.at Email: fluechtlingsdienst@diakonie.at Address: Steinergerasse 3/12, 1170 Wien
FIBEL – Fraueninitiative Bikulturelle Ehen	Help and support for bi-cultural marriages and partnerships.	https://www.verein-fibel.at Email: fibel@verein-fibel.at

und Lebensgemeinschaften		Address: Traungasse 1, 1030 Wien
Flüchtlinge Willkommen	Flüchtlinge Willkommen Österreich finds refugees a new home in private accommodation, i.e. in shared flats or with families who provide a free room. This facilitates contact between refugees and the Austrian population, reduces prejudices, builds social networks and promotes learning the German language.	https://www.fluechtlinge-willkommen.at Email: hallo@fluechtlinge-willkommen.at
Helping Hands	Helping Hands is an NGO that helps foreigners to integrate in Austria. Helping Hands organises and runs various projects that offer help where it is most needed; the focus lies on legal advice.	https://www.helpinghands.at
I am Refugee – Verein zur schrittweisen Integration von Flüchtlingen	Founded partially by immigrants, together with experts on refugee work. They try to answer those “typical questions” that most refugees have but that frequently remain unanswered.	https://net4socialimpact.eu/resource/i-am-refugee-verein-zur-schrittweisen-integration-von-fluechtlingen/
NIPE – Netzwerk für Interkulturelle Psychotherapie nach Extremtraumatisierung	A network of organisations specialised in working with extremely traumatised people from different countries of origin. The focus of our work is on people who have survived violence, war, torture, displacement and have suffered severe losses.	http://nipe.or.at Email: kremla@asyl.at Address: Burggasse 81/7, 1070 Wien
PatInnen für alle	This non-profit association arranges and accompanies sponsorships for children and young people, regardless of their origin. These sponsorships are a relationship offer and provide valuable godparents for children and young people in need in Austria, in addition to their own families, who accompany and support the children/young people on a voluntary basis.	https://www.patinnenfueralle.at
Verein Projekt Integrationshaus	Independent legal advice for refugees	https://www.integrationshaus.at Email: beratungsstelle@integrationshaus.at

		.at
Verein Ute Bock Flüchtlingsprojekt	Independent support organisation for refugees in Vienna with its own premises where support services are offered: social counselling, emergency aid services such as mail service, food and clothing distribution and a residential home for 80 residents.	https://www.fraubock.at Email: info@fraubock.at Address: Ute Bock Haus, Zohmanngasse 28, 1100 Wien

2.4 NGOs networks

There are numerous NGO networks for associations, frequently called roof or umbrella organisations, which combine associations working on similar ideas. These organisations unite various entities and support their work for the respective goals. Frequently, these networks are organized by

- Sectors of topical interest, e. G. Environment or cultural policies.
- Issue-specific e. G. Concerned with the control of financial markets.
- Regional e. G. Styrian culture.

There are also networks that have formed within initiatives, some of which are temporary and some long-term. The following website lists Austrian NGO networks with many different backgrounds: <https://www.ngo.at/ngos/engagement/netzwerke-in-oesterreich.html>

2.5 How to set up an NGO in Austria

The law divides the establishment of an association into two phases:

- The establishment and
- The formation of the association.

An association is established through the Founding Agreement or *Gründungsvereinbarung* in German. It has to contain the name and surname, date of birth, birthplace, address of the founders and the association's statutes. The founders must report the establishment of the association to the association authority in writing. The authority then checks the statutes for compliance with the law; this examination procedure can take 4-6 weeks. If the examination comes to a positive result, the association may start its activity. For the establishment of an association, the agreement of statutes (founding agreement) by at least two persons. The articles of association must be clearly formulated

and written in German. Association founders can be natural or legal persons. Natural persons do not need Austrian citizenship to create an association. It is, for example, possible for migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers to create their own NGOs since a citizenship is not required for that process.⁴⁸

An association's statutes are its most important document which regulates rules and responsibilities within the association. The statutes must be written in German and declare the legal name and address, the association's goals, board, and activities, membership rules, and regulations in case of the association's termination. Statutes form the basis of an association's work and actions.⁴⁸

The official government website (<https://www.bmi.gv.at/609/start.aspx>) provides detailed information on how to start an association. All necessary steps are explained and required documents can be downloaded.⁴⁸

Various grants and funding options for associations are available. There are many different grants to apply for, but there are no general rules to follow. Knowing the right place to apply to can be tricky, but it depends on the association's objectives and the field of activity it operates in. When seeking governmental funds, which always involves a considerable amount of paperwork, it is advisable to contact the local, regional or federal government authorities. Funding campaigns for support from the private sector are also possible.

3. The situation of low qualified migrants, refugees and asylum seekers in Austria

Unfortunately, migrants often do not have access to the same chances in Austria that local persons do. When looking at the Austrian society and life situations in Austria, it becomes evident that this issue spans across all areas of life such as education, work and leisure.

Educational success is, in most cases, inherited which means that educational paths and success are strongly influenced by a person's family and social background. Another essential factor are German language skills, which results in the fact that children of migrants frequently do not have any chance to follow a higher education career. In many cases, language tutoring is available for migrant children, but this offer is not always pursued. Many migrants are concerned that they are not able support their children at school as much as they would wish to because they are not familiar with the Austrian education system or because did not have a chance for higher education themselves.

⁴⁸Bundesministerium für Inneres (2021). Vereinswesen. Available at: <https://www.bmi.gv.at/609/start.aspx> [assessed: 7/6/2021]

Apart from educational difficulties, many migrants are concerned about their job situation. Highly qualified migrants often worry whether their education, which they completed in their home country, can be recognised in Austria. Professional settings also require good German skills. Isolation is another issue for many migrants, as it can be very hard to get out of a migrant community which shares a language and culture. At the same time, locals can hardly enter these communities, which makes cultural exchange extremely hard in many cases.

It is a sad fact that migrants are often discriminated against in the labour market, especially when they have a “foreign sounding” name. In order to combat this wide-spread issue, more open-minded HR staff would be needed. Austrian employers and politics must create better opportunities and policies for migrants in the labour market, migrants need to get equal opportunities and a more tolerant and open-minded society that welcomes and appreciates them. Diversity should be seen as a benefit for companies and the problem of discrimination based on a name that does not “sound German” clearly needs to be tackled.

Generally speaking, it can be said that it would be important to sensitise society for the needs and concerns of migrants more as this would contribute significantly towards an inclusive society.

3.1 Census

At the beginning of 2021, there were about 1.5 million migrants living in Austria, which is a population share of approximately 17%.⁴⁹ These numbers have been continuously rising over the last few years (**Figure 2**). For a comparison, in the year 2011, there were about 913.000 migrants living in Austria. The largest group of migrants comes from Germany (~209.000), followed by Romania (~132.000) and Serbia (~122.000). In terms of regional distribution within Austria, large differences can be noted - the proportion of foreign citizens and migrants is clearly the highest in Vienna and the lowest in the federal state of Burgenland.

⁴⁹Statista GmbH (2021a), Anzahl der Ausländer in Österreich von 2011 bis 2021. Available at: <https://de.statista.com/statistik/daten/studie/293051/umfrage/auslaender-in-oesterreich/> [assessed: 07/06/2021]

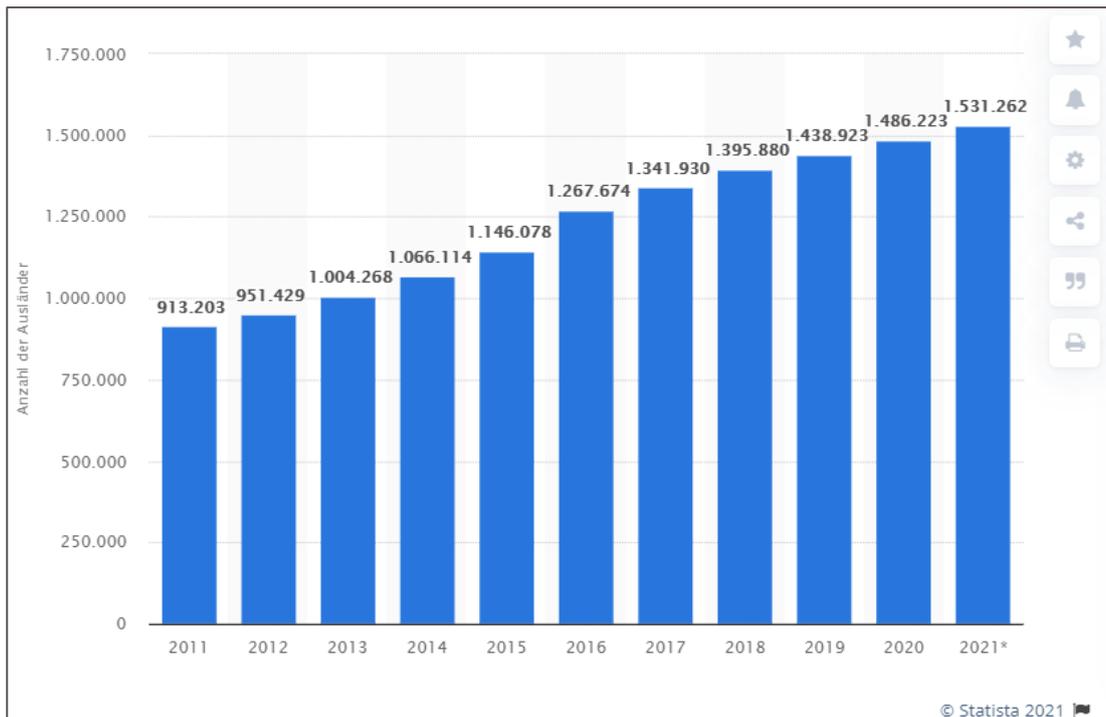


Figure 2. Number of migrants living in Austria between 2011 and 2021.⁵⁰

Foreigners are defined as persons whose main residence is in Austria and who do not have Austrian citizenship. This definition is different from the term “person with a migration background”, which is frequently used in Austria, and which describes persons who were born abroad or whose parents were both born abroad – this can include citizens and non-citizens of Austria.

Something that has to be mentioned in connection to foreigners and migrants is racism. In the year 2020, more than 3.000 racism and discrimination incidents were officially reported, and has been rising in the past seven years. Racist discrimination occurs when individuals and/or a group are disadvantaged in any way because of skin colour, language, appearance, religious affiliation, citizenship or origin. Frequently, the reported cases are initially self-perceptions and not necessarily offences that can be prosecuted under criminal law; however, they have to be investigated whenever possible.⁵¹

Another important issue are the regulations in connection to asylum. In 2021, about 6.500 asylum applications were filed in Austria by the end of April. The projection for the whole year amounts to about 19.600 applications for asylum. Previously, the number of applicants peaked in 2015, due to

⁵⁰Statista GmbH (2021b), Statistiken zu Ausländern und Migration in Österreich. Available at: <https://de.statista.com/themen/4706/auslaender-und-migration-in-oesterreich> [assessed: 07/06/2021]

⁵¹Statista GmbH (2021c), Anzahl der dokumentierten rassistischen Vorfälle in Österreich von 2010 bis 2020. Available at: <https://de.statista.com/statistik/daten/studie/823992/umfrage/rassistische-vorfaelle-in-oesterreich/> [assessed 7/6/2021]

the international refugee crisis (**Figure 2**). Asylum is granted to persons who are persecuted for various reasons such as their race, nationality, religion, ethnic origin, social group or political convictions. The approval rate for asylum status differs according to the asylum seekers' countries of origin. 'Subsidiary protection' is granted to persons whose asylum application has been rejected for lack of persecution, but whose life or health is threatened in their country of origin. They are not entitled to asylum but receive temporary protection from deportation. In addition to this, humanitarian residence titles can be granted if a situation is particularly dangerous. Many asylum seekers in Austria come from Muslim countries such as Syria and Afghanistan.⁴⁹

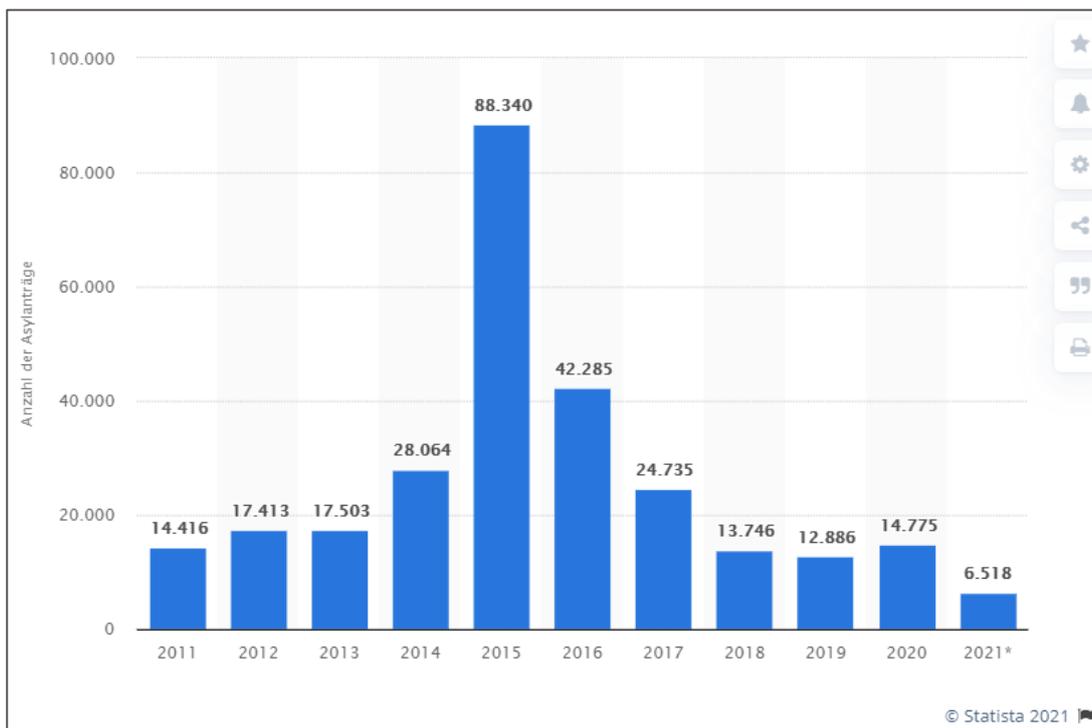


Figure 2. The number of applications for asylum in Austria from 2011 until 2021.⁴⁹

3.2 The needs and the gaps

The situation of refugees is not very good in Austria. They often face uncertainty and even though, refugees whose asylum process was positive have much more rights than asylum seekers, their situation is difficult. They need to learn German rather quickly in order to be able to be integrated and take part in Austrian society. It is often difficult for them to find a job, and if they are lucky enough to find a job, it is frequently badly paid and hardly ever matches the qualifications they acquired in their home countries. As one of the interviewees put it:

“It is hard for refugees to really find a suitable future perspective because very often, their qualifications are not recognised in Austria, and they end up working in low-qualified and low-paid job areas. It is also difficult to find a job with low German language skills, and also in other areas of daily life, German skills are most often required. On a more personal note, refugees are in many cases concerned about family members who still live in their home country, about the political situation in their home country and sadly they also face racism. We definitely need a more understanding and inclusive society and politics must create better conditions for refugees. Other languages should be valued more, but refugees should also have more opportunities to learn German.”

Asylum seekers in particular, frequently face hardship in Austria. They are often traumatised from war, from fleeing their home country or from other traumatic experiences and they often do not get the help they would need in order to overcome their trauma. Asylum processes often take a very long time and it is this uncertainty that can be very hard for them. Apart from that, underemployment is one of the greatest problems of asylum seekers in Austria - they are not allowed to work, apart from doing community work for a few Euros per hour. They only get basic subsidies by the state, which is just enough to survive.

“Often, they have no perspective or no hopes for the future because as long as their asylum process does not have a positive outcome, they cannot really do much.”

Many NGOs and volunteers do their best to support asylum seekers and provide them with useful pastime activities in order to improve their situation as much as possible.

Asylum procedures have to be concluded faster in order to keep the phase of uncertainty to a minimum and, as the interviewed migrant worker explains:

“Politics should create opportunities for asylum seekers to work. Although allowing them to work for community service is great because not only is it a useful pastime, but also helps them to integrate faster, they should definitely be paid fairly for their work and they should also be offered better chances to learn German, maybe even at a workplace.”

In addition to this, many asylum seekers who live in refugee accommodations find integration hard because they often only have contact to other asylum seekers, refugees and volunteers or workers from organisations who care for refugees.

“We need more points of contact for Austrians and refugees because not only would that help refugees to integrate better, but it would also take away some people’s fear. There should also be more therapy places available for people who suffer from traumatic experiences.”

3.3 Restrictions and obligations

A major issue is the lack of information about how migrants can get involved in voluntary work for NGOs. Another potential barrier for migrants to get involved in work for an NGO might be that many of them already volunteer in informal settings, for example in supporting neighbours or family members. One interview stated that:

“Many migrants have low-paid jobs due to a lack of opportunities, which means they often do not have time to work voluntarily because they need to ensure their own financial stability.”

Additionally, there are language barriers, cultural differences, alienation from the labour market, no local friends and acquaintances, and legal restrictions. Some refugees and asylum seekers were assigned a state accommodation in the countryside, where public transportation is usually not very good, so for them it is frequently very difficult to physically reach an NGO.

Migrants and refugees are allowed to work in Austria, asylum seekers, however, are not, apart from community service. Children up to the age of 15 are required to go to school and up to the age of 25 are allowed to do an apprenticeship in shortage occupations. EU citizens can work in Austria, while Third Country Nationals need to acquire a “Red-White” card in order to be allowed to work. The card is given to qualified workers who fulfil certain requirements⁵².

3.4 How to join an NGO

If work in an NGO is paid, the same legal restrictions apply that are relevant for jobs in other areas. However, many NGOs offer opportunities for unpaid internships, supporting tasks etc. It can be hard to find out about these offers, but it is always a good idea to look online, ask case workers for help, and get in touch with local NGOs, for example.

3.4.1 Volunteering

For the bigger Austrian cities, in particular Vienna and Graz, there are websites listing volunteering opportunities in those municipalities. Interested people can go there to find a suitable placement in a field that they would like to participate in or get to know better. As volunteering work is not paid, these offers are also available for migrants without a certain legal status. Of course, the specific situation of individuals has to be considered and probably not every asylum seeker and refugee will be able to find work through these websites; however, they are a very good starting point.

One of the interviewees states that:

⁵²Migration.gv.at (2021). Dauerhafte Zuwanderung. Available at: <https://www.migration.gv.at/de/formen-der-zuwanderung/dauerhafte-zuwanderung/> [assessed: 7/6/2021]

“To start a career in volunteering, the best advice is to be open to new experiences, talk to people, be excited about what you do and to simply take away as much as you can.”

Volunteering opportunities:

- Volunteering opportunities in Austria: <https://www.freiwilligenweb.at/>
- Volunteering options in Vienna: <https://ehrenamtsboerse.at/freiwillig/>
- Volunteering options in Graz: <https://www.graz.at/cms/ziel/7762258/> and <https://www.nachhaltigkeit.steiermark.at/cms/beitrag/12586916/99560887/>

The migrant interviewed shared her experience in volunteering:

“Volunteered for a charity that supports people with disabilities and their families and offered day care for children and teenagers with disabilities. I also volunteered for an intercultural student organisation (AISEC) for a short while”.

There are many ways and opportunities for migrants to take part in volunteering. For example, in partaking in different organisations and associations. There are many associations that put their focus on helping other migrants, give social support in their integration process, teaching them about the new culture and language. Cultural and political associations are also popular.

One issue that keeps migrants, especially low-skilled and newly arrived, from volunteering is the lack of knowledge about places to contact and where to find out more. Language barriers can also become a problem. Migrants, refugees or asylum seekers who want to get involved in NGOs should actively ask NGOs how they could get involved, because NGOs sometimes do not specifically search for migrant volunteers but are very happy when they want to get involved because they are a great asset to NGOs.

3.4.2 Accessing the labour market

Children can attend school in Austria until they are 15 years old - regardless of whether they are still in the asylum procedure or have a protected status (asylum or subsidiary protection). In Austria, all children and young people up to the age of 15 are required to attend school. It is more difficult for young people over the age of 15 to continue their education, especially if they do not yet speak German well. Upper-level secondary schools are not obliged to accept young people who are still in the asylum procedure or who already have a protected status. Asylum seekers can, if they are younger than 25 years of age, complete an apprenticeship in shortage occupations.

There are strict rules, concerning work permissions for adult refugees and asylum seekers. Recognised refugees and those entitled to subsidiary protection have unrestricted access to the labour market. However, it is hardly possible for asylum seekers to get a work permit. During the asylum procedure, asylum seekers are allowed to engage in charitable activities that have positive community benefits. These can be activities related to the accommodation facility or tasks that are performed for the state or the municipality such as light gardening or selling special magazines produced by migrants. Asylum seekers receive a 'recognition contribution' of a few Euros per hour for these activities. They can also take on typical household services in private households (e. g. childcare) with remuneration; however, limits of any earnings made in these occupations must be strictly observed.

For migrants, the rights are determined by the country they are from. If they are from a country that is a part of the European Union, the process is simple and hardly different than the process for locals. This process is much more difficult for migrants from countries outside of the European Union - they have to file for a working permit which has to be approved by the government. The difficulty of this process can differ depending on the job description.

With refugees and asylum seekers, the situation is more complicated and differs from case to case. One of the biggest problems of the labour market for these groups is the lack of information and guidance as well as complicated administrative processes, combined with possible language barriers and the inability to transfer the diplomas from the countries they are from. Asylum seekers and Refugees need residence and work permits to be able to work in Austria.

3.5 Supporting structures in Austria.

Asylum seekers in Austria get a "Grundversorgung" (basic care). The amounts depend on a variety of factors such as the region. The state pays for their accommodation and food, and they receive pocket money (40€/month). Additionally, asylum seekers get health insurance, clothing (up to 150€/year), school supplies (up to 200€/year) and travel expenses for school attendance.⁵³

One interviewed migrant worker summarises the situation as follows:

"NGOs have a very important role to play, but they can only operate within the legal framework. In order to really improve the situation of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers, politicians must take responsibility and change laws and regulations."

The interviewed migrant explains her point of view:

"I feel like, as a migrant, coming to another country, it can be difficult to know all the things you need to do, like administrative procedures or just advice in general. Most of the

⁵³Land Steiermark (2021). Grundversorgung von AsylwererInnen. Available at: <https://www.soziales.steiermark.at/cms/ziel/112908349/DE/> [assessed: 7/6/2021]

organisations that do similar things don't cater to students or to people from Balkan countries where the rules can be very different. I think this makes it difficult to offer high quality advice."

For university students (migrants and locals) in Graz, the Austrian student organisation in ÖH Graz is very well organised and offers a lot of different resources for the students. From sports programmes, that are often free or inexpensive, events with topics like ecology and sustainability or the entry in the workforce. They also offer consultation and guidance for the students.

Larger NGOs, active in Austria, that offer support for migrants are Caritas and the Red Cross for example. In addition to large associations like these, humanitarian and social work frequently happens on a local and regional level. There are many small initiatives and associations that care for people in need in their region. Even large NGOs are most often split into smaller local branches under one Austrian or international umbrella association. Even though some NGOs collaborate on certain topics and issues, there is not one great NGO network that connects all NGOs in Austria.

4. References

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1. Introduction

This analysis was conducted through substantial desk research on the current status of NGOs in Ireland, the legal framework supporting Irish NGOs and an in-depth examination of NGOs operating in Ireland at present.

Five interviews were conducted with frontline workers who engage directly with migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers. Through these contacts, a small group of migrants and refugees that had recently (within the last 5 years) re-located to Co. Cavan have been interviewed.

Organisations that were consulted for the research purposes where the following:

1. Migrants Right Centre – NGO working in Counties Cavan, Meath and Louth advocating on behalf of migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers providing advice, training, and mentoring supports (1 person).

2. Citizens Information Service, Cavan – State agency for information provision working with local people on their rights, entitlements, and access to services. They would work with a significant number of migrants in relation to work permits and access to services (1 person).
3. Meath Tús Programme – supported employment scheme operating in Co. Meath that offers community-based work experience and training to jobseekers. 40% of their participants are migrants and UN programme refugees (2 people).
4. EXTERN – Private company that holds the contract with the Department of Justice to manage the UN resettlement programme for refugees in our region – (1 person).

2. NGOs in Ireland

There are approximately 32,000 organisations in Ireland operating within the remit of ‘not-for-profit’ in areas including adult and continuing education, animal welfare, family support services, health services and health promoting and religious associations⁵⁴. These organisations operate autonomously and independent from the Irish government and are regulated by the Companies Act 2014.

There is limited data currently available on companies operating as ‘Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs)’, however, of the 32,000 not-for-profit organisations, over 3,900 currently operate in the form of primary and secondary educational providers, over 9,800 operate as a CLG - a company limited by a guarantee. The remaining 18,000 organisations operate as ‘not-for-profit, unincorporated associations’ as either sports organisations, political parties or religious organisations.

NGOs are located across Ireland. 7466 organisations in the Dublin region, 2969 in Cork and 667 in Cavan. The main charities in Ireland are within Local Development & Housing (1547), Education and Research (3829), Religion (986), Arts, Culture Media (565)⁵⁵.

2.1 A variety of legal structures in Ireland

In Ireland, those wishing to establish an NGO can choose from one of the three legal forms - an

⁵⁴ Benefacts (2021a). Ireland’s nonprofit sector 2020. Available at: <https://www.benefacts.ie/insights/reports/2020/>

⁵⁵ Benefacts (2021b). Ireland’s nonprofit sector. Available at: <https://www.benefacts.ie/insights/reports/2020/irelands-third-sector/>

unincorporated association, a company limited by guarantee (not having share capital) and a charitable trust. Based on the goals, objectives and the ultimate scope, most appropriate structure should be chosen. **Unincorporated associations** work well for small community groups looking to come together to practice a skill, such as a sport, or improve a public area, such as through a ‘Tidy Towns’ initiative. This structure does not provide members with a legal identity; therefore, it can be risky as capital invested can be lost. An NGO operating as an unincorporated association is unable to enter into contracts in their name, and for this reason, often are unsuitable for NGOs wishing to take out loans or rent a premise.

To protect the members and their financial interests, NGOs wishing to establish in Ireland usually take the form of a **CLG** – a company limited by guarantee but not having share capital. Once incorporated through the [Companies Registration Office \(CRO\)](#), NGOs operating as a CLG gain a legal identity and can enter into contracts in their own name. Establishing a CLG is a relatively straight-forward process that requires two non-related directors to apply to the CRO, either via an online or paper application.

Alternatively, for NGO’s operating as a CLG who wish to achieve a ‘charitable status’, they can make an application to the Charities Regulator at: <https://www.charitiesregulator.ie/en/information-for-charities/myaccount> to become a ‘Charitable Trust’. If granted Charitable Status in Ireland, NGO’s can apply for additional funding sources and can demonstrate to their stakeholders that they operate to high standards in terms of legal compliance and governance.

2.1.1 Overarching regulatory or advisory bodies to NGOs

To ensure that the NGO conducts itself in line with legal requirements, the Irish Government has enacted a wide range of legislation to protect the interests of all stakeholders. [The Companies Act 2014](#) was established to simplify the operation of a company in Ireland and to ensure that legal documents, such as the Constitution, are in place and fit-for-purpose.

[The Charities Governance Code](#) ensures that NGOs operate in line with the legal and charitable requirements and actively take steps to mitigate against failures by governance boards to run the NGO in line with legal requirements and act with integrity, responsibility and honesty at all times. To support NGO’s and their trustees, [The Wheel](#) is an advisory body available to NGOs in Ireland. The Wheel provides a range of educational support to members through a wide range of training events on topics including Data Protection, Financial Management, HR and Employment, Management and Webinars.

2.1.2 Funding opportunities for Irish NGOs

The funding landscape for NGOs across Ireland is diverse with lots of different opportunities

available. Some of the main funding sources include crowdfunding, LEADER funding, SICAP funding and grants. [The LEADER Programme](#) is a European Union initiative that aims to engage local communities with funded projects that improve key topic areas including local biodiversity, renewable energy, rural tourism and rural youth. Local Action Groups, such as Breffni Integrated LTD in Cavan, Meath Partnership and Monaghan Integrated Development Ltd act as Local Action Groups within the Virginia area. Projects that have received funding include a sustainable music festival, a train the trainer educational programme, a farm diversification project as well as a project in Virginia to assess the feasibility on restoring an old mill within the town.

[The Social Inclusion and Community Integration Programme](#) (SICAP) provides NGOs with opportunities to apply for funding to Local Community Development Committees (LCDCs) to combat poverty and social inclusion in their area. A full list of LCDC's can be found at: <https://www.pobal.ie/app/uploads/2018/06/SICAP-LCDC-Contact-List-2020.pdf>. Organisations in Cavan that have received funding from the SICAP initiative include the Cavan Food Provision Scheme, the Cavan Food Hub and the Cavan and Virginia Disability Project.

[The National Lottery Funding for Good Causes programme](#) enhances lives of those in the society. Through the purchase of lottery tickets and scratch cards, €0.30 is transferred to the Exchequer, which allocates funding to a wide range of projects across Arts, Community, Heritage, Sports and Youth. Applicants must apply to organisations including the Health Service Executive (HSE), the Arts Council of Ireland and the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport should they wish to receive some of this funding. Since the establishment of the programme in 1987, players of the National Lottery have raised over €5 billion⁵⁶. Beneficiaries of this funding have included the Wildlife Rehabilitation Ireland, Meath, Ratoath Athletics Club, Meath, The Immigrant Council of Ireland, Dublin and BeLonG To Youth Services Dublin. Further information on how to apply for this funding at: <https://www.lottery.ie/useful-info/apply-for-good-causes-funding>.

[The Community Foundation of Ireland](#) (CFI) offers a wide range of funding opportunities for community and voluntary group projects. NGOs with a charitable purpose can apply through the CFI website for a wide range of funding opportunities including the All-Island Fund, COVID-19 Response Fund, Environment and Nature Fund, The Older Persons' Fund, and the Women's Fund.

2.2 Environmental NGO's

Between 2011 – 2015, there was a decline in funding available for Environmental NGOs in Ireland⁵⁷. However, to counter this and ensure that Ireland reaches their Sustainable Development Goals 2030

⁵⁶ The National Lottery (2021). Thank you for supporting good causes. Available at: <https://www.lottery.ie/news/good-causes>

⁵⁷ Irish Environmental Network (2015). Environmental Non-Governmental Organisations in Ireland. Available at: <https://ien.ie/wp/wp-content/uploads/Funding-Environmental-NGOs-in-Ireland.pdf>

targets, in 2021, the Minister for the Environment, Climate and Communications announced funding for over €1.7 million for the Irish Environmental Network.

Table 1. Most important and influential environmental NGOs in Ireland.

Name	Mission & activities	Website and contact details
The Centre for Environmental Living & Training (CELT)	<p>CELT promotes sustainable living and conservation of Irish natural resources, including forestry and waterways.</p> <p>They act as an educational provider teaching and encouraging individuals to live in a more sustainable way, through traditional crafts workshops and weekend courses.</p>	<p>https://www.celtnet.org/</p> <p>Email: coordinatorcelt@gmail.com</p> <p>Phone: 0876324644</p> <p>Address: CELT, c/o R.Wilson, Scalp, Flagmount, Co.Clare, V94CD7A.</p>
Hedge Laying Association of Ireland (HLAI)	<p>HLAI was established in 2004. They encourage all individuals to correctly manage their hedges and train people to recognise the importance of conservation and protection of ecosystems within the hedgerows.</p>	<p>https://hedgelaying.ie/</p> <p>Email: hedgelayingireland@gmail.com</p> <p>Phone: 086 3028790</p> <p>Address: 70 Bushes Lane, Rathgar, Dublin 6.</p>
Leave No Trace	<p>The Leave No Trace programme encourages individuals to learn to be responsible when interacting with outdoor recreation activities. They promote the principals of respecting wildlife, disposing of waste in the correct manner, and minimising the effects of fire on the landscape.</p> <p>Leave No Trace offers a wide range of training courses across Ireland including awareness workshops, 2-day field courses and 5-day field courses.</p>	<p>https://www.leavenotraceireland.org/</p> <p>Email: info@leavenotraceireland.org</p> <p>Phone: (01) 9059009</p> <p>Address: Castlebar Street, Westport, Co. Mayo, F28 KD63.</p>
Sonairte	<p>Sonairte, the National Ecological Centre, promotes sustainable living and eco-</p>	<p>https://sonairte.ie/</p>

	awareness to individuals wishing to live more sustainably. Sonairte has a walled garden and nature trail and offers educational classes in how to grow your own vegetables. They also sell their produce for profit through their eco-shop.	Email: hello@sonairte.ie Phone: 041 982 7572 Address: Sonairte, The Ninch, Laytown, Co. Meath.
The Rediscovery Centre - Dublin	The Rediscovery Centre is the National Centre for Circular Economy in Ireland. The Centre aims to encourage people to live sustainably in line with the approaches of a circular economy. Additionally, within the centre, individuals can improve their skills such as upcycling and recycling to negate against negative impacts on the environment.	http://www.rediscoverycentre.ie/ Phone: (01) 893 3801 Address: The Boiler House, Ballymun Rd., Ballymun, Dublin, D09 HK58.

2.3 NGOs working with migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers.

With pleas for Ireland to accept more migrants, refugees and asylum seekers, a growing number of NGOs have been set up in Ireland to support these individuals with legal and social concerns.

Since the 1980s, the Irish Refugee Council has been established to work as an umbrella group, supporting refugees and asylum seekers both nationally and internationally. Until 1996, there was no legal framework to support those seeking international protection orders under Irish law. [The Refugee Act 1996](#) has led to the establishment of the [International Protection Appeal Tribunal](#) which supports appeals made on application decisions.

Table 2. the main NGO's in Ireland working with migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers:

Name	Mission / activities	Website and contact details
Ballyjamesduff Unity Group (BUG)	BUG was established to address the needs of migrants living in Ballyjamesduff, Co. Cavan. The group promotes activities to combat social isolation and loneliness, as well as improve access to employment opportunities for migrants and transport	https://www.facebook.com/bugcommunitygroup/ Email: memohopkins@hotmail.com

	<p>for those living within the community. They also promote inter-cultural understanding through events organised in the local community, including an Easter Fun Day.</p>	
Cavan Cross Cultural Community	<p>Cavan Cross Cultural Community, also known as 4C, represent over 75 nationalities living in the Cavan area. Established in 2018, the group works with over 75 nationalities to represent the diverse background seen in Cavan.</p> <p>They are active in the local community, having participated in Christmas Markets, St. Patrick's Day parades as well as having a weekly show on local radio station: Cavan Online Radio.</p>	<p>http://cavan4c.ie/</p> <p>Phone: 087 143 1992</p> <p>Address: Cavan Cross Cultural Community, Unit 3, The Arches, Main Street, Cavan,</p>
Cultúr Migrants Centre	<p>The Cultúr Migrants Centre works with migrants, asylum seekers and refugees based in County Meath. Cultúr supports those who face barriers in their lives, such as limited English abilities, racism and social exclusion, as well as those at risk of poverty, and helps them to integrate successfully into the community.</p>	<p>http://cultur.ie/</p> <p>Email: info@cultur.ie</p> <p>Phone: 046 9093120</p> <p>Address: Unit UH3, Balmoral Business Park, Navan, Co. Meath.</p>
Immigrant Council of Ireland	<p>The Immigrant Council of Ireland is a National NGO which supports and promotes the rights of migrants living in Ireland, whether documented or undocumented.</p> <p>Since their establishment in 2001, the Immigrant Council of Ireland drive change through active campaigns across Ireland, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Anti-racism ● Gender-based violence ● Immigration reform ● Refugee crisis 	<p>www.immigrantcouncil.ie</p> <p>Email: admin@immigrantcouncil.ie</p> <p>Phone: (01) 674 0200</p> <p>Address: 2 St Andrew Street, Dublin 2.</p>
Migrant Rights Centre Ireland (MRCI)	<p>The MRCI work to empower the lives of migrants, asylum seekers and refugees living in Ireland.</p>	<p>www.mrci.ie</p> <p>Email: info@mrci.ie</p>

	<p>The MRCI provides free and confidential advice to documented and undocumented migrants in Ireland and support them with concerns or queries relating to immigration, employment, exploitation and trafficking, and family and children supports.</p>	<p>Phone: 01 889 75 70</p> <p>Address: 55 Parnell Square West, Dublin 1.</p>
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2.4 NGOs networks

To become influential in their field, NGOs often become members of NGO network groups which work collectively to push forward their charitable purposes. Some of the most important and influential NGO networks in Ireland include Activelink, Sustainable Water Network Ireland (SWAN) and The Irish Environmental Network.

Leading NGO, Business in the Community (BITC), works to advise NGOs on sustainability and corporate social responsibility to ensure that businesses are successful and sustainable. Acting as advisers to business BITC advise businesses on best-practice policies that they can incorporate into their own business.

Table 3. NGO networks in Ireland.

Name	Mission / activities	Website and contact details
Activelink	<p>Activelink provides a wide range of communication services and channels to NGOs who are interested in community development.</p> <p>The Activelink Community Exchange Noticeboard has been established to spread awareness of events that are happening across Ireland. Additionally, job vacancies are published through their website.</p>	<p>https://www.activelink.ie/</p> <p>Email: info@activelink.ie, Phone: 01 667 7326</p> <p>Address: Activelink, 2-4 Merville Road, Stillorgan, Co. Dublin, A94 E3F8, Ireland.</p>
Dochas	<p>Dochas was established to help individuals to thrive in the society, reducing the levels of marginalisation and poverty across the nation. Dochas acts as a network to connect organisations and individuals that are working</p>	<p>https://www.dochas.ie/</p> <p>Phone: 01 405 3801</p> <p>Address: Suite 8, Olympic House, Pleasants Street, Dublin 8.</p>

	to promote global justice and equality. Currently, Dochas has over 55 member organisations working in more than 100 countries.	
Irish Global Health Network (IGHN)	Th IGHN work to reduce the disparities for those with lower income levels when accessing health care. The aim of IGHN is to ensure that people of all ages are able to access good healthcare and well-being. To do this, IGHN offer a wide range of training and development events and conferences, including seminars on 'Maintaining Healthy School Communities in the Face of the Coronavirus'.	https://globalhealth.ie/ Email: info@globalhealth.ie Phone: 01 402 8668 Address: c/o Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland, Beaux Lane House, Dublin.
The Irish Environmental Network (IEN)	The IEN supports Environmental NGOs based in Ireland. They act on behalf of the interests of group members to promote sustainability, eco-living, social well-being in Ireland. The members including 'Bat Conservation Ireland', 'Good Energies Alliance Group', 'Irish Wildlife Trust' and 'Zero Waste Alliance Ireland'. IEN act as advocates to lobby policy makers at all levels to change environmental policies. Additionally, they raise public awareness on a wide range of issues and initiatives, including the Green Schools programme.	https://ien.ie/ Email: office@ien.ie Phone: 01 878 0116 Address: Irish Environmental Network, MACRO Centre, 1 Green Street, Dublin 7, Ireland.
The National Women's Council of Ireland	The National Women's Council of Ireland aim to achieve equality and equal representation for Women and those who identify as women across Ireland. The NWCI represent over 190 organisations to ensure that each woman in Ireland can achieve their maximum potential through a range of initiatives including Women in Leadership, Women's Right to Health, Women's Economic Independence and Valuing Care & Care Work.	https://www.nwci.ie/join/list_members Email: info@nwci.ie Phone: (01) 6790 100 Address: National Women's Council of Ireland, 100 North King Street, Dublin 7.

2.5 How to set up an NGO in Ireland

Setting up an NGO in Ireland is a straight-forward and easy process. The first step is to define the charitable purpose that the NGO seeks to achieve. Under the [Charities Act 2009](#), organisations can be established to achieve one of four main goals:

1. The prevention or relief of poverty or economic hardship.
2. The advancement of education.
3. The advancement of religion.
4. Other purposes of benefit to a community.

Once the organisation has chosen their charitable purpose, they should choose their legal structure. Under the Companies Act 2014, NGOs can choose to operate under one of three legal structures - an unincorporated association, a company limited by guarantee (not having share capital) (CLG) and a charitable trust. NGOs typically chose the format of a CLG as this offers the NGO legal status from which they can enter into contracts, should they choose.

Having identified their charitable purpose and choosing the legal structure, NGOs must look at registering the name of their organisation with the Companies Registration Office (CRO). This can either be done online through the CRO website (<https://core.cro.ie/registration/sign-up>), or can be submitted manually through to the CRO offices. As of 2021, the fee for establishing an NGO in Ireland is approximately €20 for online submissions and €40 for manual submissions.

NGOs must ensure that they draw up a constitution which will act as their governing document. The constitution contains important documents including the Memorandum of Association and Articles of Association which are legally required by the CRO when establishing an NGO. These documents contain key information including, the name of the NGO, details relating to the frequency of AGMs and EGMs, as well as a list of the trustees of the NGO.

For additional information on this process, the Wheel has provided an informative guide on how to establish your organisation: [https://www.wheel.ie/sites/default/files/media/file-uploads/2018-08/Factsheet Forming A Charity.pdf](https://www.wheel.ie/sites/default/files/media/file-uploads/2018-08/Factsheet_Forming_A_Charity.pdf).

3. The situation of low qualified migrants, refugees and asylum seekers

Migrants, refugees and asylum seekers are welcomed into Ireland through the Direct Provision system. A short-term measure introduced in 2000 to host migrants has now become flawed and controversial⁵⁸. Direct Provision provided accommodation to over 7,000 individuals across Ireland in

⁵⁸ Doras (2021). Direct provision and key issues. Available at: <http://doras.org/direct-provision/>.

2020⁵⁹. As of 2018, 5,980 individuals were seeking international protection, 2,176 individuals were single males, followed by 1,369 children (723 males, 646 females)⁶⁰. Low qualified migrants, refugees and asylum seekers are accommodated in Direct Provision centres located in 32 centres across Ireland, including one reception centre in Dublin, two self-catering centres in Dublin and Louth and 29 other locations across Ireland⁶¹. Often these centres are poorly run, understaffed and cramped, which has resulted in the Irish government vowing to revive the system from 2021.

Those who are seeking international protection are provided with accommodation and boarding, a weekly stipend of approximately €40 per week and free healthcare⁶². Since February 2018, asylum seekers have had the right to work after having stayed in Direct Provision for a period of six months. The Irish Government issues them with a 'First Instance Recommendation' which can only be received after living in Ireland for six months.

In 2004, the Irish electorate voted on the 27th Amendment to the Irish Constitution which resulted in children born in Ireland, after January 2005, to migrants, asylum seekers or third country nationals not being entitled to Irish citizenship from birth. In 2021, the Minister for Justice announced that there would be amendments made to the current law reducing the amount of time an individual must remain in the state prior to applying for citizenship⁶³. At present, parents of children born in Ireland since 2005 who do not have citizenship are entitled to remain in the state until the child reaches their 18th birthday. However, upon this date, if the parent has not received nationality through naturalisation, they face deportation to their home state.

3.1 Census

During the 1980's, Ireland faced high levels of unemployment with many of the population emigrating to countries including America, Australia and the United Kingdom. Due to economic reforms that were a result of Ireland joining the European Economic Community during the 1970's, Ireland transformed from a country popularised by emigration to one of immigration.

⁵⁹ Irish Refugee Council (2021). Direct Provision. Available at: <https://www.irishrefugeecouncil.ie/listing/category/direct-provision>.

⁶⁰ Reception and Integration Agency (2018). Monthly Report November 2018. Available at: <http://www.ria.gov.ie/en/RIA/November%202018%20-%20Final.pdf/Files/November%202018%20-%20Final.pdf>.

⁶¹ Department of Justice and Equality (2021). Reception, Dispersal & Accommodation. Available at: http://www.ria.gov.ie/en/RIA/Pages/Reception_Dispersal_Accommodation.

⁶² The Citizens Information Office (2021). Direct provision system. Available at: https://www.citizensinformation.ie/en/moving_country/asylum_seekers_and_refugees/services_for_asylum_seekers_in_ireland/direct_provision.html.

⁶³ Department of Justice (2021). Minister McEntee to make it easier for children to secure Irish citizenship. Available at: <http://www.justice.ie/en/JELR/Pages/PR21000057>.

Immigrants arriving into Ireland in 2019 totalled to 88,600 persons, however this figure dropped by 3.6% to 85,400 in 2020⁶⁴. Further research in April 2020 highlighted that 12.9% of the population in Ireland were non-Irish nationals (644,400 persons). The ‘most multi-cultural’ city in Ireland during the 2016 census was Galway, 18.6% of residents, with Polish being the most represented nationality⁶⁵. The six highest represented countries in Ireland are Poland (122,515 persons), the United Kingdom (103,113 persons), Lithuania (36,552 persons), Romania (29,186), Latvia (19,933 persons) and Brazil (13,640 persons)⁶⁶ Other popular countries include America, France, Germany, India, and Spain.

In 2019, there were 4,781 applications for international protection status in 2019 with a 47.99% rejection rate⁶⁷.

3.2 The needs and the gaps

From our desk research and interviews, it was apparent that the needs and gaps highlighted depend the country of origin of the migrant, refugee or asylum seeker and the varying experience of integration.

“For me arriving here was very difficult. I had no friends and no support. It was only when my child went to school that I met other parents and made some friends. Now I am a member of the school committee and I know others and they know me. But it was not an easy place to fit in and it took a long time.” – One of the MRAs interviewed.

Tús Supervisor talked about their work to help with integration:

“Through our work we are directly placing participants with local community groups and settings and this I think gives them a first-hand insight into NGOs in Ireland and how they work. It also demonstrates the importance of the community sector in Ireland as it often bridges the gap in state services at local level”

⁶⁴ The Central Statistics Office (2020). Population & Migration Estimates. Available at: <https://www.cso.ie/en/statistics/population/populationandmigrationestimates/>.

⁶⁵ The Central Statistics Office (2016). Diversity in Ireland. Available at: <https://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/ep/p-cp7md/p7md/p7anij/>.

⁶⁶ Central Statistics Office (2017). Census of Population 2016 – Profile 7 Migration and Diversity. Available at: <https://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/ep/p-cp7md/p7md/>.

⁶⁷ Asylum Information Database (2020). Statistics: Republic of Ireland. Available at: <https://asylumineurope.org/reports/country/republic-ireland/statistics/>.

Often, MRAs arrive without their family and friends and to help integration socialisation with the community is essential. This also helps with improving their language and also learning more about the culture.

“To cope with separation from my family and friends, I became active in my new community trying to get and build new supports. I also made new friends with Irish people and with other migrants through community activities. It was a way for me be less lonely but also get involved and practice my English” – One of the migrants.

Migrants who are citizens of another European Union country or the European Economic Area have the right to live and work, transfer money between states, buy and sell goods and receive and provide services. However, those seeking international protection often face challenges, including those living in crowded accommodation facilities, challenges accessing employment opportunities as well as limited education and access to English language skills. Access to English language classes was seen as a major barrier by those interviewed.

A frontline worker from Cavan opened up about a lack of outreach community support:

“The supports in Cavan are very limited in terms of outreach community supports particularly in relation to migrant integration. We do not have a county-wide strategy and as a result the funding supports are lacking. It is a challenging environment to work in and the demands for supports are high”.

Another major gap identified was the need for greater recognition of foreign qualification. [NARIC Ireland](#), the National Academic Recognition Information Centre has compiled a database of over one thousand international qualifications and matched them to the Irish National Framework of Qualifications. Through this system, migrants, refugees and asylum seekers can identify their academic qualifications from their home country and examine where they are situated on the Irish Framework. However, as this framework is not commonly known across Ireland, migrants, refugees and asylum seekers can find it hard to get their skills recognised by employers and mentioned this as a major disadvantage to them in searching for employment and entering the labour market. Two interviewees commented that they have had to take low-skilled and low-paid work in order to survive, even though they have qualifications from their home countries.

Refugees and asylum seekers face challenges associated with ethnic discrimination, especially when trying to access the labour market and access community services. Nearly all interviewees mentioned that at some point in the past year, they have felt unwelcomed and excluded because of their ethnicity. Even though the [Equal Status Acts 2000 – 2018](#) act as a legal framework to protect against discrimination when accessing goods or services in Ireland, the actual experience of those interviewed is very different and this discrimination is often further exacerbated by the fact that they have limited English language skills also.

3.3 Restrictions and obligations

Migrants from outside of the EU and EEA who are trying to access the labour market must have an employment permit in order to gain employment in Ireland. Often, prior to obtaining a work permit, an individual has to have received a job offer from an Irish company who sponsor the individual during their stay. Work permits in Ireland are granted by the [Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment](#) on a case-by-case basis.

Migrants, asylum seekers and refugees with limited English language levels are entitled to access public services through their native language. Interpreters can be provided for migrants through [The Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection \(DEASP's\) Customer Charter and Action Plan, 2016-2018](#). However, many migrants are unaware of this right and therefore are not accessing these services.

There are certain obligations which migrants must abide by when participating in civic life in Ireland. Migrants living in Ireland must comply with the laws that govern the Irish state and must ensure that they remain in the state at all times. Additionally, they must ensure that they provide truthful information when communicating with State bodies, such as current address and duration in Ireland. Those who provide untruthful information could see their application for international protection being refused.

For asylum seekers in the Direct Provision centres, there are rules which govern their stay, including informing the manager of the centre if they are due to spend the night elsewhere. For periods of up to three nights away, residents risk losing their accommodation should they not provide the centre manager with an adequate explanation for their whereabouts⁶⁸. Should an individual decide to leave their accommodation, or be housed elsewhere, they must ensure that the Minister for Justice and Equality is informed of their current address. This rule can make it challenging for migrants to access work and participate in community activities.

Asylum seekers who are seeking international protection are entitled to be supported by a solicitor, whose details must be provided to the International Protection Office.

3.4 How to join an NGO

For migrants wishing to join an NGO, the process is straightforward, however, awareness of how to practically go about this was non-existent amongst the interviewees. Boardmatch is an Irish charity that has been established specifically to help with the recruitment process for those interested in working on the boards of NGO's and not-for-profit organisations. Boardmatch host a Board Vacancies platform and advertise trustee roles that are available across Ireland in areas including

⁶⁸ Citizens Information (2021) . Direct provision system. Available at: https://www.citizensinformation.ie/en/moving_country/asylum_seekers_and_refugees/services_for_asylum_seekers_in_ireland/direct_provision.html.

advocacy, civil and human rights, environment sustainability, disability, and mental health. Those interested in applying for trustee roles can submit their personal information, including name and address, a brief cover letter and a CV to the Boardmatch website. Current board vacancies can be found through the Boardmatch website (<https://www.boardmatch.ie/board-vacancies>).

Should an NGO be connected with a member of The Charities Institute of Ireland, all members of staff are entitled to join as an Associate Member. This membership can be applied for through their website (<https://www.charitiesinstituteireland.ie/associate-membership>) and grants members with professional development and networking events. Alternatively, for NGOs not connected with the Charities Institute of Ireland, membership is available for NGO and charity trustees at: <https://www.charitiesinstituteireland.ie/trustee-membership>. Trustee Membership provides trustees with access to training and events which opens up future volunteering opportunities.

According to the Information Officer from CIS, it is possible for anyone to set up an NGO:

“With the right work permits or legal papers, it is possible for anyone to set up an NGO in Ireland and once this is your objective it is possible and there are many supports available. The failure in the process is knowing where to go for these supports and how to access them. We are available to provide this information and our website has many useful links – once people know where to look”.

Certainly, there is a lack of knowledge of an existing option to set up an NGO; some may have never heard of this as one interviewee confirmed:

“I never thought this was possible [setting up an NGO] as I am new to Ireland, and I would not be able to get help or manage all the legal side of it” Where could you start? I think for many people in my community this is not the number one thing.”

Some have already set-up their own small communities:

“I set-up a small group in my community to help others as it can be very difficult at the start to know where to go and how to ask for help. I have been in Ireland for 7 years now and I like to share my knowledges with people so that I can help them.” We have a Facebook group and arrange meet-ups as often as we can. We support each other online too”

3.4.1 Volunteering

Those wishing to volunteer can sign up for opportunities within their local communities through the <https://www.volunteer.ie> website. This website allows individuals seeking volunteering options to filter from the many options available based on their individual availability throughout the week, as well as opportunities that are available within a radius of 1, 5, 10, 20, 50 and 100 km from their home.

Additionally, potential volunteers can select a wide range of personal interest areas, including animal fostering, events and stewarding, and mentoring and counselling others.

Alternatively, those interested in volunteering can research the charity they wish to volunteer in and contact them directly. St. Vincent de Paul is the largest and oldest charitable organisation in Ireland and seeks volunteers through their company website for opportunities in their shops and visiting those in adult day centres and prisons. For a full range of volunteer opportunities available with St. Vincent de Paul can be found at: <https://www.svp.ie/get-involved/volunteer.aspx>.

Individuals can also engage in micro volunteering opportunities, which are often short term and one-off events. Dairygold, a food produce supplier across Ireland, have teamed up with organisations to promote their 'Make a Minute for the Good Stuff' initiative. Those eager to volunteer can sign up to the <https://www.yourdairygold.ie/microvolunteering/> website and offer their time and services across a range of NGOs located in Ireland and abroad, in areas including disability support, history, and wildlife.

It is important to note that for those who wish to volunteer with youth organisations or with vulnerable adults, must apply for Garda Clearance through the National Vetting Bureau which can be accessed via <https://vetting.garda.ie/>. The National Vetting Bureau assesses each applicant on a case-by-case basis and provides organisations with an overview of any criminal convictions they may have. Those interested in volunteering must request, through an organisation such as a school or youth club, for the vetting to occur. Each NGO will decide whether to welcome a volunteer into the organisation.

3.5 Supporting structures in Ireland

Due to the voluntary nature of NGOs in Ireland, it can be challenging to compile a complete list of all of the supporting structures for migrants in Ireland. A list of some of the important migrant organisations and support groups in Dublin and its surrounding areas can be found at: <https://www.newcommunities.ie/assets/files/pdf/20130812153718.pdf>. Some of the most influential and well-known supporting structures include Failte Isteach, the Islamic Cultural Centre of Ireland, the Migrants Rights Centre Ireland, Pavee Point Traveller and Roma Centre.

[Failte Isteach](#) is an Irish wide organisation that offers conversational English classes for migrants living in Ireland. Failte Isteach help to integrate migrants into civic life in Ireland with thanks to volunteers who interact with migrants and develop their English language skills so that they can interact successfully with the community.

[The Migrant Rights Centre Ireland](#) supports migrants living in Ireland and helps to advocate against their exploitation and discrimination when interacting with services. The MRCI have helped over 40,000 individuals from 125 nationalities since their establishment in 2001. During the COVID-19

pandemic, the MRCI have been strongly lobbying for the equal protection of migrant workers, especially in meat plants, due to unsafe working conditions⁶⁹. Additionally, the MRCI provide information for migrants on common Frequently Asked Questions with regards to their immigration status.

[The Islamic Cultural Centre of Ireland](#) preserves the Islamic faith in Ireland. The centre promotes the religion within the local community in Dublin to support the integration of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers in the areas. [The Pavee Point Traveller and Roma Centre](#) supports those who identify as members of the travelling community or Roma to express their cultural identity.

[The Irish Refugee Council](#) have assisted over 1,400 people from over 70 countries to access legal support in Ireland. They provide services specifically for individuals seeking international protection and for refugees to ensure that their rights can be recognised. The Irish Refugee Council advocate for the rights of refugees and asylum seekers to improve their lives. Similarly, [The Immigrant Council of Ireland](#) advocate and promote the rights of migrants in Ireland.

⁶⁹ Clarke, V. (2020). Meat plant workers 'frightened and angry' - Migrant Rights Centre Ireland. Available at: <https://www.irishexaminer.com/news/arid-30999740.html>.

4. References

Analysis of similarities and differences

This section will be divided into a series of sub-sections covering key similarities and differences between the UK, Cyprus, Ireland, Austria, Finland and Portugal.

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- **NGO regulations and legal structures**

The UK and EU countries have a set of NGO regulations and legal structures that dictate how different NGOs can be set-up and the steps in order to register an NGO.

The UK

In the UK, organisations must meet specific criteria to become charities. Criteria set out to the organisations wishing to become charities includes (criteria may vary slightly from country to country (England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland)):

- Be of benefit: the charity must do positive things and if any side effects follow, they must be outweighed by the positive.
- Provide public benefit: this does not have to include the “whole” public. For example, a charity which works with disabled people will be focusing on benefitting this specific group.
- Use their funds and property for charitable purposes.
- Allow a fair access to the benefit they provide.
- Not be, or exist to advance, a political party.

Different bodies are responsible for charity registration and regulation depending on the country:

- England and Wales: The Charity Commission (government run).
- Scotland: Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR) (independent charity regulator).
- Northern Ireland: The Charity Commission for Northern Ireland (independent charity regulator).

There are also different legal forms where NGOs can be incorporated and unincorporate. Choosing the legal structure depends on the activities that NGOs will carry out. Legal structures include trusts, charitable incorporated organisation, unincorporated associations and others.

Cyprus

Unlike the UK, the term “NGO” is not embraced in Cyprus, however, the law does follow legal personalities (like in the UK) which include associations, foundations, federations and non-profit organisations, depending on what organisation does.

NGOs in Cyprus include charity Trusts are governed by the Charity laws. These trusts are set up for the public benefit purposes such as relief of poverty, advancement of religion, education, literature, science and any other purpose that is considered beneficial to the community. The trustee of any charitable institution submits an application to the Council of Ministers to register the institution as a legal entity. The Council of Ministers will issue a certificate of registration if it considers it to be appropriate and subject to such terms and conditions as the Council of Minister may impose. No minimum capital requirements exist in relation to Charitable Trusts.

Although a high number of NGOs are recorded, a lot of these have been deleted and are inactive (leaves only about 4 000, whereas, for example, in Austria there are over 124 000).

Finland

Similarly, to the UK and Cyprus, Finland has a variety of legal structures for different organisations, including associations, voluntary groups, NGOs and others. The Finnish Ministry for Foreign Affairs supports a variety of Finnish organisations working with migrants.

Portugal

In Portugal, NGOs operate in different area – cooperation for development, humanitarian aid and emergency and education for development. Portugal, as other countries, have legal frameworks and structures for different organisations. Legal structures include associations, foundations, cooperatives and others.

Austria

All associations in Austria are recorded in ZVR which is a central registration databank of associations.

In Austria, there is no specific public institution that clearly defines NGOs and makes related decisions; however, NGOs have to meet specific criteria to qualify as an NGO:

- Act publicly.
- Be independent.
- Voluntary.
- Dedicated to serve a greater cause and good.

NGOs are typically equated with associations and have to follow specific laws regulating the rights and duties of associations in Austria. There are different types of entities which qualify as NGOs including associations and foundations.

Ireland

Similarly, to the UK, NGOs can choose between legal forms, such as incorporated or unincorporated depending on the goals and objectives of the organisation. The registration office registers incorporated companies.

Variety of NGOs working with migrants, refugees and asylum seekers.

Many organisations working with migrant, refugee and asylum seeker groups are international, including bigger names; as well as more local.

Examples of international NGOs include:

- Oxfam
- Red Cross

For example, in Scotland, smaller organisations such as Bridges programme only operates in Glasgow. The Scottish Refugee Council, which is one of the biggest independent charities that works with refugees, is also based in Glasgow. Most of the refugees and asylum seekers reside in Glasgow (when compared to other areas of Scotland) and therefore, it has a lot of organisations based there.

Variety of environmental NGOs

Environmental NGOs are NGOs that operate to deal with environmental issues and spread awareness to tackle them.

In the UK, there are a variety of NGOs that operate in areas including promoting sustainable living, defending the natural world and tackling litter and waste. Examples of internationally operating and organisation:

- Greenpeace operates in the UK, Finland and Austria among other countries in Europe and beyond Europe. Greenpeace focuses its activities on a few specific themes, such as climate change, forests and the protection of the aquatic environment.
- Friends of the Earth, excluding Portugal, operates in all partner countries (the UK, Austria, Finland, Cyprus and Ireland), as well as other EU and non-EU countries. Its goal is to raise

awareness on the importance of preserving the natural environment and to campaign for solutions to environmental and social problems by promoting sustainable policies.

- World Wide Fund (WWF) operates in almost 100 countries including the UK, Finland and Portugal. WWF follows several causes including conservation of domestic endangered species and promoting ecologically sustainable forestry among many others.

There are also many national NGOs and often more local organisations that work with specific communities in the area. For example, ELREC operating in Edinburgh (UK) which promotes sustainability, will most often work with groups in Edinburgh.

Variety of NGO networks

Networks form with NGOs that work towards common goals, such as the environment and helping refugees and asylum seekers.

Funding available for NGOs

Funding available for the EU countries often come from the European Union, there are also national grants and sponsors from different organisations.

Ireland

The funding landscape for NGOs across Ireland is diverse with lots of different opportunities available. Some of the main funding sources include crowdfunding, LEADER funding, SICAP funding and grants.

- The LEADER Programme is a European Union initiative that aims to engage local communities with funded projects that improve key topic areas including local biodiversity, renewable energy, rural tourism and rural youth.
- The Social Inclusion and Community Integration Programme (SICAP) provides NGOs with opportunities to apply for funding to Local Community Development Committees (LCDCs) to combat poverty and social inclusion in their area.
- The Community Foundation of Ireland (CFI) offers a wide range of funding opportunities for community and voluntary group projects.

The UK

UK grant information service is a service that provides information on grants and funding available for the UK charities. Funding is available from the Lotteries (the National Lottery), Trusts and Foundations, the government and the EU.

Cyprus

The main funds for NGOs in Cyprus come from the European Union (European Commission programmes) and also from some national schemes. Some private funds are also available.

The programmes include:

- EU Competitive Programmes – For the contribution to the implementation of EU policies. Includes European education and training programmes.
- EEA Grants and Norway grants – These are funded by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway to contribute to equality, social and economical wellbeing; as well as strengthening the relations between the beneficiary countries (Portugal also included) and the funding countries.
- National Grant Schemes – Grants are available for implementing policies and priorities including strengthening employment, promoting tourism and other.

Austria

In terms of funding, there are many options available in Austria. The nine different Austrian federal governments are a good place to look for funding, as they are based locally and support local actions. These localised governments have sections specifically dedicated for association support. Municipalities and city governments are also available for NGO support. Additionally, NGOs can apply for funding at authorities such as unions which are concerned with the NGO's specific goals and aims. Charity is always an option, and public campaigns for financial support are possible.

Migration

In Ireland and the UK, Polish migrants are the most represented, especially in bigger cities, such as Galway in Ireland and London in the UK. This is different in Austria – the biggest migrant group comes from Germany (this is probably due to close proximity and sharing a common language – German).

In Finland, migrants make up a relatively low percentage (when compared to other EU countries and the UK) of immigrants. Similarly, in Portugal, there are also relatively low rates of immigration which it tries to battle by offering different perks such as tax benefits to attract higher-skilled professionals.

As in many EU countries Portuguese and Finnish populations are rapidly aging and declining and is forecasted to continue in upcoming years. This is partially due to lack of immigration. Thus, migratory flows are extremely important in keeping the population more stable and bringing in professionals and others with skills and experience.

Working as a migrant or a refugee

Migrants and refugees often have the same rights to work as any citizen would, however, this can be difficult due to their needs and lack of language and other skills (these will be further highlighted in the section on “Needs and Gaps”).

Cyprus

To join jobs that require higher skill, including NGOs, as director or staff, require many skills. For example, this may include:

- A relevant degree, experience (especially as a director, you will require five or more years in the sector).
- Skills demonstrated in a previous job, especially leadership, interpersonal skills and management skills.
- Experience in networking and building relationships with the government, civil society and other stakeholders.

This is often similar in other countries too. To be a director, many skills (as in the example among others not mentioned) and a lot of experience is needed.

The UK

For newly arriving migrant, a new “immigration points-based system” has been introduced following Brexit. Free movement with the EU has ended on 31st of December. Points-based system for EU and non-EU citizens includes the route for skilled-workers who have a job offer from a sponsor employer. Migrants are required to have a skill level of RQF3 or above (equivalent to A-levels), need

to be able to speak English and be paid the relevant salary threshold by the sponsor (general threshold is £25,600).

In addition, to access the green job sector (or any other high-skills and higher-paid sector), often a graduate or higher degree is needed, as well as experience, whether it is through volunteering, placement, internship or a graduate degree.

Ireland

Migrants from outside of the EU and EEA who are trying to access the labour market must have an employment permit in order to gain employment in Ireland. Often, prior to obtaining a work permit, an individual has to have received a job offer from an Irish company who sponsor the individual during their stay. Work permits in Ireland are granted by the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment on a case-by-case basis.

Austria

If migrants from a country part of the EU, the process is simple and hardly different than the process for locals. This process is much more difficult for migrants from countries outside of the European Union - they have to file for a working permit which has to be approved by the government. The difficulty of this process can differ depending on the job description.

There are stricter rules, concerning work permissions for adult refugees. Recognised refugees and those entitled to subsidiary protection have unrestricted access to the labour market.

Finland

Many of Finland's migrants come from failing education systems and lack needed qualifications and skills (and some even basic ones), while others, with formal qualifications, are still lacking these values in the Finnish labour market.

Portugal

In some sectors, such as tourism, hotels and restaurants, urban transport or personal and domestic services, as was once the case in construction, immigration is the resource of the global labour market. It also affects wage competitiveness offered by the immigrant workforce. Workers are

typically sought by employers due to their lower wage costs compared to native workers, since without other options they are usually willing to accept poor working conditions.

Working as an asylum seeker

Working as an asylum seeker differs slightly between countries. Generally, in the UK, asylum seekers are not allowed to work unless special circumstances and for countries in the EU, there is a period (slightly differs country-to-country) when asylum seekers cannot work from the arrival date.

Cyprus

Asylum seekers can basically work immediately in Cyprus. – they have access to the labour market only one month after the date of the submission of their application for international protection. This may not always mean that they can start then. They can apply for jobs, however, until they receive a “yellow slip” which allows them to stay, work or remain as a visitor in Cyprus, they cannot start. Because of this, it could take a company between two and three months to hire a migrant from a non-EU country (including asylum seekers). It is much easier for a company to hire someone from the EU or Cypriots that can start immediately.

The access to the labour market only includes certain sectors and occupations. These include:

- Agriculture, animal husbandry and fishery sector: labourers.
- Manufacturing: food processing, porters and night shift labourers in poultry farms.
- Waste management: drainage and waste processing, garbage and trash collection, recycling and animal waste processing labour.
- Wholesale trade and repairs: Petrol stations and car ash attendants and foreign handlers of wholesale trades.
- Hotel and food industry (only since 2019): kitchen assistants, cleaners and food distributors.
- Other fields: Building and outdoor cleaners, distributors of advertising and informational materials, food delivery and laundry and dry-cleaning assistants.

The UK

Asylum seekers are generally not legally allowed to work in the UK; however, they can apply for a permission to work if they have been waiting for a decision for more than a year. The UK system has been previously described as stressful and difficult to navigate, some seekers may wait for years until their status is approved.

Ireland

Asylum seekers can apply for a work permit when they have waited for an asylum decision for more than six months. International Protection Office (IPO) must issue its first decision called “first instance recommendation” on the asylum application.

Austria

The asylum process can take a very long time. An employer can obtain working permit for an asylum seeker, three months after their asylum application has been admitted in Austria. During the asylum procedure, asylum seekers are allowed to engage in charitable activities that have positive community benefits. These can be activities related to the accommodation facility or tasks that are performed for the state or the municipality such as light gardening or selling special magazines produced by migrants. Asylum seekers receive a ‘recognition contribution’ of a few Euros per hour for these activities. They can also take on typical household services in private households (e. g. childcare) with remuneration; however, limits of any earnings made in these occupations must be strictly observed.

One of the biggest problems of the labour market is the lack of information and guidance as well as complicated administrative processes, in addition to language barriers.

Finland

Similar to Austria – three months after arrival, and they also must have a valid document. However, the job opportunities are very limited. If the asylum is not granted i.e., a negative decision, the right to work ceases. Asylum seekers will not be able to open a debit or bus card (in addition to others).

Portugal

During stage 2 of the asylum procedure, asylum seekers receive a Temporary Residence Permit which is valid for four months and can be renewed for another four. The permit allows them to work, as well as access education, national health service and legal aid.

Volunteering for an NGO as a migrant, a refugee or an asylum seeker

Migrants, refugees and asylum seekers are allowed to volunteer. Volunteering can help gain confidence, learn new skills and improve language and will help to integrate into the community. There are many volunteering opportunities as a lot of NGOs will usually need volunteers, including working with elderly, youth and children, environment and animals and sports and outdoor activities.

Asylum seekers in the UK, are allowed to volunteer (as mentioned above) but not do voluntary work. This means that they must not receive payment of any kind (other than travel reimbursement or substantial expenses). Similarly in Finland., care must be taken that the Finnish Immigration Service does not see possible activities as part of transition economy or employment, as this can be considered as work that may affect the asylum process. Voluntary workers have obligations to perform work, such as free training, building their CV for future employment or for free products or services from the organisation. If the individual is a volunteer, they will not be required to have the right to work in the UK. In addition, the persons may also be able to obtain a certificate and a testimonial of service (which could be used as a proof when job hunting) which can boost their CV further.

To volunteer, unless a position requires certain skills, no particular criteria is usually required. NGOs will mostly want an individual who has a willingness to learn, a degree of professionalism and ability to follow instructions, respect and diligence, good time management and a personable manner.

Sometimes there are some restrictions involved. For example, in Ireland, those who want to volunteer with youth or vulnerable adults, must apply for Garda Clearance through the National Vetting Bureau. The National Vetting Bureau assesses each applicant on a case-by-case basis and provides organisations with an overview of any criminal convictions they may have. Those interested in volunteering must request, through an organisation such as a school or youth club, for the vetting to occur. An NGO will make a decision whether to welcome a volunteer (i.e., if they are suitable) into their organisation.

There are a few programs financed by the European Union such as European Solidarity Corps or Erasmus + that offer opportunities to all residents in the EU. Migrants, as long as they have a valid visa and residency in one of the EU countries, can get involved with these volunteering activities. Most opportunities through the European Solidarity Corps are cross-border. However, these cannot be accessed by asylum seekers.

A major issue is the lack of information about how migrants can get involved in voluntary work for NGOs. Language barriers is one of the main factors. Migrants, refugees or asylum seekers who want to get involved with an NGOs need to actively ask NGOs how they could get involved. This is because NGOs often do not specifically search for migrant volunteers but are very happy when they want to get involved as they are a great asset to NGOs.

Many migrants may be already volunteering in informal settings, for example in supporting neighbours or family members which often lacks in recognition.

Needs and gaps

In this section, main needs and gaps will be highlighted. Although, most needs and gaps may be similar between countries, there are also some differences. In addition, different individuals or groups of individuals will have different needs depending on their situation.

Monetary aid (benefits)

In the UK, migrants and refugees are able to access all available benefits that any citizen would. Often living on benefits often is not enough. Migrants and refugees are able to access the labour market (as any citizen would) if they have a national insurance number; however, it is often hard to access high-paid jobs because of language and certification.

Migrants in Cyprus receive assistance through various allowances that cover food and housing, however, the material conditions of reception could be improved so they are able to have a “decent life” and not constantly worry about “making ends meet”. Helping migrants find a job will help them take care of themselves. Most people are not only willing to work but are also open to different opportunities.

Certification approval

In the UK, citizens from the EU are able to apply to get their higher education certification approved and recognised. However, ones from the EU will usually not have their certification recognised. Most working individuals in arriving families from non-EU countries had vocational occupations in their country such as carpenter or mechanic. Even ones that may be highly skilled in a field, will have to do jobs that are much lower than their skills. As one of the interviewees from the UK highlighted, their qualification was not recognised in the UK and this led them doing jobs that they are overqualified for. However, this could not be avoided because of trying to “meet the needs”.

Currently, there is a lack of services and avenues in the UK for refugees to convert their qualifications from their home country. However, there are classes provided by organisations such as the Scottish Refugee Council which help refugees with employability skills such as CV writing and job application processes, understanding the UK job market, and interview skills.

Similarly, to the UK, in the EU, qualifications are also often not recognised of the people from non-EU countries, and migrants and refugees end up working in low-qualified and low-paid jobs.

NARIC Ireland, the National Academic Recognition Information Centre has compiled a database of over one thousand international qualifications and matched them to the Irish National Framework of Qualifications. Through this system, migrants, refugees and asylum seekers can identify their academic qualifications from their home country and examine where they are situated on the Irish

Framework. This framework is not commonly known across Ireland and therefore, migrants, refugees and asylum seekers can find it hard to get their skills recognised by employers and mentioned this as a major disadvantage to them in searching for employment and entering the labour market.

Language

Language is one of the main issues. Especially when trying to integrate into the community and access the labour market. To improve language skills, in the UK, ESOL (English for foreigners) courses are provided to the immigrants. While speaking to the interviewees, it became evident that to gain the benefits of the course, lots of effort needs to come from the immigrants. The rate of success of the course can be speculated as some of the migrants have been in the UK for decades and have still not become fully functional or integrated into the society. Especially women, as many may have to stay at home and take care of the children. It is very common that migrants are put or put themselves in groups with people from the same country. This does not particularly help with integration and language learning, there must be mixing with people from other countries and also effort from the migrants to want to do this. One to one mentorship can be extremely helpful. One of the interviewees from the UK, said that ones provided by ELREC allowed her to improve significantly. This often cannot be possible due to funding.

In Austria, refugees and asylum seekers will often have low German language skills, this may be essential in most jobs and generally daily life. English is widely taught and spoken in most of Europe, such as in Austria and Finland, there is no reason why higher jobs could not be accessed by foreigners with English skills. A number of well-qualified migrants, that may face some difficulties as a language barrier, and a significant number of migrant children that, if given a chance, can become valuable professionals in the job market. This often also ties in with issues of racism, in instances where these groups may not be given a chance.

In addition, asylum seekers and refugees are often put in special accommodations that are for asylum seekers and refugees only. This makes integration even harder as reaching the local community can be even more difficult. In Austria, refugees and asylum seekers are often put in accommodation in the countryside where the public transport is rare and difficult to reach. This will also restrict them from reaching the wider community and jobs.

Many families from Syria and Sudan are illiterate, even in Arabic, which creates additional barriers and the need for extra support to find a suitable educational course. Particular attention should be paid to older people. Learning a new language or other new skills can be very difficult. More attention should be paid to improving the quality of their lives and providing services for this population group. In some cases, especially with young people that come to the UK (and to other countries), have never been to schools. Children from Syrian families Lebanon and Turkey for example, were not allowed to go to schools. This creates additional needs for one-to-one support would be to help

children and young people to achieve well during their educational journey, however, often a lack of resources available often do not allow this.

Racism

Migrants, refugees and asylum seekers will often experience racism, even if they have lived in a country for a while. As an interviewee from Cyprus has highlighted, the main challenge is the way the broader community thinks of and behaves towards migrants, refugees and asylum seekers. The mindset of a lot of people needs to change because everyone should have an opportunity and rights to food, warm place to sleep and respect among others.

Ethnic discrimination becomes even more prominent, especially when trying to access the labour market and community services. Nearly all interviewees from Ireland mentioned that at some point in the past year, they have felt unwelcomed and excluded because of their ethnicity. Even though the Equal Status Acts 2000 – 2018 in Ireland act as a legal framework to protect against discrimination when accessing goods or services in Ireland, the actual experience is way different than it should be. Discrimination is often further exacerbated by the fact that immigrants have limited English language skills also.

In Finland (probably in many other countries), general view is that asylum seekers should not have things like cell phones, fine clothing, etc. as it implies that they have been funded by the local system.

Promoting the employment of immigrants. For example, anonymous recruitment could be incorporated, in which case the name (which for employers = background) does not affect employment.

Cultural differences

When migrants, refugees or asylum seekers arrive in the country (especially from non-EU countries), they often experience a “culture shock”. The culture in the new country can be really different than what they are used to and therefore, can sometimes lead to people being afraid to try and integrate with communities from other countries.

Mental and physical needs

It is not easy to access jobs for men and women because of the language and certification. Inability to continue their old jobs can often frustrate and discourage people which can add to their trauma. People, in particular, the “breadwinners” have lost their roles that they had in previous countries, such as in Sudan and Syria. This can also impact their family in a negative way.

A lot of families would have gone through significant trauma of witnessing wars, air strikes, were threatened and felt unsafe. Trauma needs a really long time to heal. In their previous countries, mental health issues are not often acknowledged, and individuals and families may find it difficult to understand themselves what they are growing through and may be difficult to put their mental health first.

Asylum seekers are often not legally allowed to work (at least for some time, depending on the country) and often wait years until their status gets approved. The UK asylum system and similarly the system in European Union has been previously described as difficult and stressful to navigate and can have a significant effect on mental health in addition to stressful experiences that led to migration. The way in which the asylum system operates it can negatively impact long-term physical and mental health by drawn out legal procedures, no rights to employment and poverty. Existence where individuals have very limited control of their personal circumstances, little idea of what may happen to them and when, severely constrained access to resources, and where they are the subject of suspicion and racial discrimination. Refugees and asylum seekers are often unable to access the resources that would afford them the opportunity to live a healthy life and maximise their chances of preventing chronic illness.

As Austrian interviewee put, there should also be more therapy places available for people who suffer from traumatic experiences.

Considering other needs, ability for people to integrate into the community and learn skills, including language, can help overcome their mental trauma.

Learning how to use technology

This was mostly highlighted by the interviewees in the UK but will most probably apply to other countries too.

Technology can be a big barrier if not used previously. Someone who has not engaged with the Internet and technology prior to coming to the destination country, can find it difficult. This can be especially prominent in older people as they are less able to take up new skills.

An interviewee from the UK, has received support from the professional working with her.

Additional needs for the asylum seekers

For asylum seekers in the Direct Provision centres in Ireland, there are rules which govern their stay in the provided accommodation, including informing the manager of the centre if they are due to spend the night elsewhere. For periods of up to three nights away, residents risk losing their accommodation should they not provide the centre manager with an adequate explanation for their whereabouts. Should an individual decide to leave their accommodation, or be housed elsewhere,

they must ensure that the Minister for Justice and Equality is informed of their current address. This rule can make it challenging for migrants to access work and participate in community activities.

As mentioned previously, volunteering opportunities, such as ones through Erasmus+ are not accessible.

Other issues

In terms of being as foreign student, international students are very welcomed in Finland (and other countries) but tuition fees are high. Especially in the UK, including students from the EU which are termed as “international” since Brexit. As a Finnish interviewee highlighted, Finland's desirability as a place to study should be increased, for example, by making it possible to stay in the country to work. Often the acquired knowledge is taken back to the home country and does not end up benefitting Finland.

Conclusion

In this section, the report will be concluded with key points covered.

The SOMRA project (Supporting meaningful Occupations for Migrants, Refugees, and Asylum seekers) offers an innovative approach to tackling two major issues – climate change and refugee crisis. By introducing and engaging MRA groups to environmental issues and have them take up meaningful occupations will transform them into environment role models with a sustainable impact in their new and previous home. The SOMRA project seeks to enable refugees and asylum seekers to become true agents of change, who have the power to influence positive environmental action that is first established on a local and regional level, and eventually even beyond the borders of the EU.

In this report, a collection of useful information, including in-depth data related to the labour market access; legal obligations and restrictions; as well as supporting structures that migrants; refugees and asylum seekers face has been provided. These differ between different partner countries (the UK, Cyprus, Austria, Finland, Ireland and Portugal), although some similarities have also been discovered.

Although, most needs and gaps may be similar between countries, there are also some differences. In addition, different individuals or groups of individuals will have different needs depending on their situation. Some of the main gaps and needs include successful integration into the society, racism from the community, language, lack in monetary aid and others.

- **Racism** - Many migrants, refugees and asylum seekers will often experience racism, even if they have lived in a country for a while. The main challenge is the way the broader community thinks of and behaves towards migrants, refugees and asylum seekers. The mindset of a lot of people needs to change because everyone should have an opportunity and rights to food, warm place to sleep and respect among others.
- **Ethnic discrimination** when trying to access the labour market and community services can often be evident. This leads to people feeling unwelcomed and excluded because of their ethnicity. Even though frameworks and legislations exist to protect from this type of discrimination, the actual experience is way different than it should be. It can often also be worsened because MRAs can lack language skills when they first arrive.
- **Integration into the society** – In addition to racism and discrimination which hinders ability of migrants to integrate into the society, there is also a lack of trying from migrant end at times. Often, MRAs from the same country/speaking the same native language, will tend to

put themselves in groups which does not help with integration into the community and language learning. Women, who often stay at home with children are mostly affected by this.

Furthermore, asylum seekers and refugees can often be put in special accommodations that are in the area where the local community is hard to reach, as well as jobs.

- **Language** plays an important role when integrating into the community and accessing the labour market. Language courses are often available for MRAs, however, to gain the full benefits they must be fully engaged and put effort. Often, MRAs from the same country/speaking the same native language, will tend to put themselves in groups which does not help with integration into the community and language learning. Some migrants will arrive to a country that will have a different native language but with English widely spoken (such as in Austria, where native language is German but English widely spoken). Even if migrants have English skills, relating back to discrimination, companies will still tend to higher nationals and give less chances to non-natives.

In some cases, additional language barriers are introduced when the arriving individuals/families arrive without literacy skills. In particular for older people, this can be a skill which can take lots of time to learn.

- **Certification recognition** – For people from the EU, certification can be often converted to an equal from the country of residence. Getting certification recognised can be especially difficult for people from non-EU countries. This does not allow them to incorporate professional skills that these people may possess into the economy of the country of residence. A skilled professional can then often end up in low-paid and low-skilled jobs to try and meet their needs.

Asylum seekers group needs to be paid much more attention than it currently has. This is the group that is the most restricted; not being able to work, being strictly monitored, low monetary aids can affect their mental, physical and social well-being greatly. Often the asylum process can take years which means that they cannot fully feel like they are part of the society; as well as the uncertainty of their application being rejected. In addition, they cannot access other things - for example, there are a few programs financed by the European Union such as European Solidarity Corps or Erasmus + that offer opportunities to all residents in the EU. Migrants, as long as they have a valid visa and residency in one of the EU countries, can get involved with these volunteering activities. Most opportunities through the European Solidarity Corps are cross-border. However, these cannot be accessed by asylum seekers.

One thing that everyone can do is volunteer in their local NGOs - unless a position requires certain skills, no particular criteria is usually required. NGOs will mostly want an individual who has a willingness to learn, a degree of professionalism and ability to follow instructions, respect and diligence, good time management and a personable manner. Either by being part of local community activities or a bigger organisation. As well as aiding integration into the community, volunteering allows people to gain new skills and increase their confidence. In many cases, confidence is what people need to get started. There are many organisations that take up volunteers in the environmental, animal and working with elderly and youth sectors.

Many migrants may be already volunteering in informal settings, for example in supporting neighbours or family members which often lacks in recognition.

From the partner countries participating, it becomes apparent that there are some that have a higher involvement with NGOs. For example, Finland, has 130,000 registered associations in Finland and up to 80% of the population belong to at least one of these associations. According to the Register of Associations, the average Finn is a member of three organisations. Registered non-profit associations play a very important role in Finnish communities including cultural fields, leisure and party-political activities, religion, trade union, and social and health affairs. In the instance of Cyprus, according to the 2018 annual report of the Office of the Commissioner for Volunteerism and Non-Governmental Organisations, there were about 6,300 registered unions and clubs, however, many of these were inactive – about 2,000 were deleted. Of course, Finnish population is around five times higher than that of Cyprus, however, difference in numbers is evident nonetheless.

A major issue is the lack of information about how migrants can get involved in voluntary work for NGOs. Language barriers is one of the main factors. Migrants, refugees or asylum seekers who want to get involved with an NGOs need to actively ask NGOs how they could get involved. This is because NGOs often do not specifically search for migrant volunteers but are very happy when they want to get involved as they are a great asset to NGOs.

To join jobs that require higher skill, including NGOs, as director or staff, require many skills. For example, this may include a relevant degree, experience, skills demonstrated in a previous job, especially leadership, interpersonal skills and management skills and often experience in networking and building relationships with the government, civil society and other stakeholders among others.

As highlighted previously, needs and gaps differ between different groups of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers. There are many NGOs that are there to help the integration and to generally get involved (in some countries more than others as discussed previously), however, MRAs need to also make effort to make the most out of it. As well as the NGOs making themselves more known on how people can get involved and what help they can receive.



Appendices

Appendix 1. Pre-determined questionnaire for the NGO representatives.

1. What does your NGO do? What do you do?
2. What are different types of NGOs in Scotland?
3. Are there many other NGOs like yours and is there a network of NGOs in Scotland or in the region?
4. Which are the NGOs supporting migrants, refugees and asylum seekers in Scotland? And how do they support migrants, refugees and asylum seekers?
5. As immigrants, different rights apply in different countries. In Scotland, what are migrants, refugees and asylum seekers allowed and not allowed to do?
6. Apart from NGOs, what kind of support does Scotland offer to migrants, refugees, asylum seekers?
7. Are you aware of cases in which migrants were involved in volunteering activities offered by NGOs in Scotland?
8. Stepping back, what could be the potential barriers for a migrant, refugee or asylum seeker to volunteer, work or create an NGO in Scotland?
 - How could these barriers be tackled?
9. More generally, how do you think NGOs in Scotland could better support migrants, asylum seekers and refugees?
10. What are some needs from the migrant, refugee and asylum seeker communities that are not well addressed by NGOs in Scotland?
11. Do you know of any organisation that supports, advises or guides migrants, refugees or asylum seekers to get involved in NGOs or in civic life in general?
12. What are the steps for creating an NGO?
 - How long would it take?
 - What paperwork is required (If they have not already mentioned)
 - Could migrants, asylum seekers or refugees create their own NGOs?
13. Are there any specific bodies that regulate NGOs?
 - What do they do?
 - How do they operate?

14. Thank you for taking the time. Would you recommend anybody that could give me complementary information on these questions?

Appendix 2. Pre-determined questionnaire for the professionals working with migrants, refugees and asylum seekers.

1. What does your organisation do?
2. What does your work with migrants, refugees and asylum seekers consist of?
3. From your perspective, what is the situation of migrants in Scotland? What are their concerns and needs?
 - In your opinion, how could these concerns and needs be best addressed?
4. From your perspective, what is the situation of refugees in Scotland? What are their concerns and needs?
 - In your opinion, how could these concerns and needs be best addressed?
5. From your perspective, what is the situation of asylum seekers in Scotland? What are their concerns and needs?
 - In your opinion, how could these concerns and needs be best addressed?
6. As immigrants, different rights apply in different countries. In Scotland, what are migrants, refugees and asylum seekers allowed and not allowed to do?
7. How could the situation of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers be improved? Do NGOs have a role to play?
8. How easy is it for a migrant, asylum seeker or refugee to join an NGO in Scotland as staff volunteer or director? Are there any legal considerations?
9. Stepping back, what could be the potential barriers for a migrant, refugee or asylum seeker to volunteer for an NGO in Scotland?
10. Stepping back, what could be the potential barriers for a migrant to work for an NGO in Scotland?
11. Stepping back, what could be the potential barriers for a migrant, refugee or asylum seeker to get involved with or create an NGO, charity or voluntary group in Scotland?
12. What are the steps for creating an NGO?
 - How long would this take?
 - What is the paperwork required? (if they haven't already mentioned that)

- Could migrants, asylum seekers or refugees create their own NGOs?
13. Is there any support you are aware of for migrants, refugees and asylum seekers for setting up their own NGO?
 14. What advice would you have for migrants, refugees or asylum seekers who want to get involved in NGOs or in the civic life in general?
 15. Thank you for taking the time. Would you recommend anybody that could give me complementary information on these questions?

Appendix 3. Pre-determined questionnaire for migrants, refugees and asylum seekers.

1. What do you do?
2. Have you ever worked for, volunteered for or created an NGO charity or a voluntary group in Scotland?
 - If yes – please tell us about it? If not, why not?
3. Have you ever received support from an NGO or charity in Scotland?
 - If yes, what support did you get?
 - Were you happy with the support received? Why? Why not?
4. Is there any support you would like to receive that you haven't been able to find?
 - What would help you the most in your current situation?
5. If you had the time and/or resources, what type of NGO would you like to be involved with and what would you do?
6. Are you concerned about the environment?
7. Have you considered getting involved in environmental activities (e.g. community gardens, food growing, cycling, campaigning, waste reduction, repairing items, upcycling, etc)?
 - If so, which ones? If not, generally curious, maybe they did not appeal to you?
8. Have you ever considered working for, volunteering for, or setting up an NGO?
 - If yes, which type? If not, why not?
9. Are there any barriers that you feel prevent you from getting involved with an NGO?
10. If you could create your own NGO, what would it be, what would it do?

11. Is there anything that would help you to join an NGO as staff or volunteer, or even create your own?
12. Thank you for taking the time. Would you be able to introduce me to anybody that could give me complementary information or helpful insights on these questions?