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Patron: Michael D. Higgins, President of Ireland Life President: Ann Scully, Founder 
Ambassadors: Richard Lynch (ilovelimerick.com) and Micheál Ó Súilleabháin (Irish World Academy of Music and Dance)
Doras Luimní is an independent, non-profit, non-governmental organisation working to support and promote the human rights of all migrants living in Limerick and the wider Mid-West region.

We work to change
• the lives of migrants
• legislation and
• society.

Our Vision
For Ireland to be a society where equality and respect for the human rights of migrants are social norms.

Our Mission
To promote and uphold the human rights and well-being of migrants through personal advocacy, integration development and collaborative advocacy campaigns at the local and national level.

Further information on settling in Ireland is available at www.dorasluimni.org
Limerick is in the province of Munster. There are 32 counties in Ireland.

4.9 million
Republic of Ireland’s Population

57,106
Limerick City’s Population

18,000
People living in Limerick county are non-Irish nationals and come from all over the world.

The largest ethnic groups are people from Poland, Latvia, Lithuania, Pakistan, China, Nigeria & India.
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Know your rights

Visa Information

Persons who wish to reside in the State for longer than 90 days must:
- Register with their local Garda Registration Officer
- Apply for further permission to remain before their initial 90 days expires.

The main grounds upon which further permission to remain can be obtained are for:
✓ the purposes of employment
✓ to study
✓ to make and application for asylum
✓ as a dependent family member of an Irish or EEA (European Economic Area) national residing in the State.

Certain other categories of person are also granted permission to remain, including
✓ persons granted humanitarian leave to remain by the Minister for Justice.

Particular criteria must be satisfied in order to obtain permission to remain in any of the above mentioned categories.

✗ In the case of visa required nationals, further permission to remain will generally NOT BE EXTENDED to persons who entered on short visit category visas.
Persons entitled to take up employment or self-employment in Ireland and do not need employment permits are:

- EU Nationals
- European Economic Area (EEA)
  Nationals from the other countries of the EEA, that is,
  - Norway
  - Iceland
  - Liechtenstein
  - Switzerland

Citizens of many countries outside the EEA need an entry visa to enter the Republic of Ireland.

If you need an entry visa, when you are entering the country you must report to an immigration officer.

Non-EEA nationals must register with the local immigration officer upon arrival in Ireland.

**GNIB Card**

Following registration with immigration officers, you will be given an 'Immigration Certificate of Registration' which costs €300.

It is also called a 'GNIB' card and shows your immigration status in the country.

To renew your GNIB card, you will need to make an appointment with your local immigration officer at the Garda Station in Henry Street.

The Refugee Applications Commissioner provides asylum seekers with temporary residence certificates.
### The Garda Síochána (Police)

Enforces immigration laws in places such as ports and airports.

### The Garda National Immigration Bureau (GNIB)

Carries out
* deportations
* border control and
* investigations relating to illegal immigration and human trafficking.

### Irish Naturalisation & Immigration Service (INIS)

The INIS is responsible for administering the administrative functions of the Minister for Justice and Equality in relation to asylum, immigration (including Visas) and citizenship matters.

### Immigration Officer

Examines your documents when you arrive in Ireland.

They may ask you to show you have enough money to support yourself for the time of your stay.

You must satisfy the immigration officer that you have a genuine reason for your presence in Ireland.

You must also report any changes to the length of your stay or status to immigration officers.
You can look for private rented accommodation through local newspapers, real estate agencies or websites for example:


The quality of rental accommodation can vary so you should view the property before making any tenancy agreement.

It is common for people who have not met before to rent a house together and to share the costs of the house, including gas, telephone and electricity bills.

**Contract with property owner**

The money you pay to use a property is called rent.
The amount you pay the property owner is agreed before you move in.
You pay the money to them or their agent in the way that you have agreed.
This may be in cash or through your bank.
You may be asked to sign a lease or contract.

It will state:

- how much the rent is and when you have to pay it
- other conditions attached to renting the accommodation
- your obligations as a tenant will also be in the lease such as maintenance of the garden, clean the gutters once a year or no pets allowed
- the property owner’s obligation to you.
Make sure you understand the lease before you sign it

You should make sure to study the lease and that you are happy with the conditions of the lease before you sign it.

A lease is for a particular time period (for example 1 year).

You may have to pay the remainder of the lease if you stop living in the property before the lease time is up.

If you sign a lease with others, you become responsible for each other’s rent.

If you don’t understand the terms of the lease, contact the independent agency, Threshold, for FREE advice before signing.

Threshold is a national housing charity that provides advice on tenants rights.

References

Some property owners may ask for references from your former landlords or landladies to show you have been a good tenant in the past.

If you are new in Ireland, a reference from your employer or doctor may satisfy the property owner or manager.
Working in Ireland

Your right to work as an employee, to be self-employed or set up a business in Ireland depends on your immigration status.

Employees in Ireland have a legal right to join a trade union. Trade unions negotiate with employers on behalf of their members.

If you are an EU/EEA/Swiss national
You have the right to
✓ live, work or set up a business in Ireland
✓ You do not need an employment permit
✓ You are entitled to be treated in the same way as Irish workers.

Other countries:
If you are from outside the EU/EEA or Switzerland you may need a visa in order to come here.

You need an employment permit in order to
• work
• set up a business here.

Your entitlement to have family members come to join you in Ireland depends on the type of employment permit you have.
Under the Employment Permits Act 2003 and the Employment Permits Act 2006 there are 4 types of employment permits:

- Work permits
- Green Card permits
- Spousal/dependant work permits (work permits for spouses or dependants)
- Intra-company transfer permits

Generally, either the prospective employee or prospective employer may apply for the permit. The cost for a work permit is dependent on the duration of the permit and may cost up to €1500.

Do you want more information

Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation, Work Permits section:
www.djei.ie/labour/workpermits/
Your rights at work:

There is a wide range of legislation that guarantees minimum rights and protection for both full-time and part-time workers.

The legislation covers:
• terms and conditions
• wages and entitlements
• working and rest times
• Sunday working
• holidays for full and part-time workers
• minimum notice an employer can give you if they terminate your job
• sick pay
• leave to care for someone
• maternity leave
• protection against discrimination

Employers:

Employers are not allowed to
• deduct expenses associated with recruitment from your pay
• keep any of your personal documents.

Your Personal Public Service Number (PPS No.) is a unique reference number that helps you gain access to
• social welfare benefits
• public services and
• information in Ireland.

You can apply for a PPS number at your local Social Welfare Office.

See the complete list of documents required at www.citizensinformation.ie or www.welfare.ie
The Irish taxation system - PAYE:

Most employees in Ireland pay tax through the PAYE (Pay As You Earn) system.

This means that your employer deducts the tax you owe directly from your wages, and pays this tax directly to the Revenue Commissioners. The Revenue Commissioners collect taxes from citizens on behalf of the Irish Government.

To make sure that your tax is properly dealt with from the start and that your employer deducts the right amount of tax from your pay, you should do the following:

Give your employer your PPS No. (Personal Public Service Number) and ask your employer for their Employer's Registration Number. Then you must contact the Revenue Commissioners and inform them of your employees Registration No.

Your employer will then let the Revenue know that you have started work and that they are your employers.
Registering for Tax Credits

You will also need to complete an application form called Form 12A Application for a Certificate of Tax Credits and Standard Rate Cut-Off Point.

Form 12A is available from
- Your local Revenue Office
- online at www.revenue.ie
- the Revenue Forms and Leaflets section at LoCall 1890 306706; or
- your local Citizens Information Centre.

The Revenue Office will send you a notice of your tax credits and standard rate cut-off point to both you and your employer.

You will have to pay ‘emergency tax’ (much higher rate than normal) if your employer has not received either:
- a certificate of tax credits from the Revenue Office;
- or
- Form P45 (parts 2 and 3) from you, in respect of your previous employment.
'Tax credits'

Your tax is calculated depending on your income.

'Tax credits' are then deducted from the gross tax.

Tax credits are the portion of your income on which you do not have to pay tax.

For more information contact the Revenue Commissioners in Ennis at (065) 684 9000 or visit www.revenue.ie
Healthcare in Ireland

In Ireland, there are a wide range of services available to support your physical, mental, psychological health and wellbeing. These services include advanced medical treatment for many serious conditions.

**Health Service Executive (HSE)**

HSE provides public health and social services in Ireland including:

- hospitals
- health centres
- community services for older people
- family support
- health and welfare entitlements
- mental health services
- disability services.

The health service is divided into 4 administrative HSE regions.

Healthcare in Ireland is available through both a public and private system.

If your income is below a certain level you may qualify for a ‘medical card’.

The medical card entitles you to a full range of services.

However, some of these services may have waiting lists.
If you are entitled to a medical card you can attend your family doctor, usually called a GP (General Practitioner), for free. Usually, your dependants (husband or wife, and children) will also be entitled to free medical services that include:

- visits to your family doctor
- hospital services in public hospitals
- most medicines prescribed by your doctor (with a small charge)
- maternity and infant care
- dental, optical and aural (hearing and speech) services
- medical appliances.

Go to www.hse.ie to see who is eligible for a medical card.

If you are entitled to a GP Visit Card you can attend your family doctor, usually called a GP (General Practitioner), for free. Usually, your dependants (husband or wife, and children) will also be entitled to a free GP Card that include visits to your family doctor only.
Family Doctors - General Practitioner (GP)

Register with a General Practitioner (GP) practice as soon as you can. Don’t wait until you get ill. If you are eligible for a medical card, you will need it, for example, to receive treatment or purchase prescription drugs. If you do not have a Medical or GP Card a GP visit will cost between €40-€60 per visit.

How do I find a doctor (GP)?

General Practitioner (GP) is the official term for a family doctor in Ireland. They provide services to people in their surgery. Most people simply call GPs their 'doctor'.

The GP is responsible for all your treatment and will arrange for you to see any other health specialists when needed. Anyone coming to live in Ireland should first choose and register with a GP. Unless it is a medical emergency, your GP should be your first point of contact if you are ill and may prescribe treatment for any illness or refer you to a consultant or hospital for further investigation.

If you register your health details with a GP and later experience problems with your health, your medical history will be on record.
You can also get a list of GPs from

- Citizens Information Centres
- Main public libraries
- Golden Pages; and
- your friends and neighbours should be able to recommend a good GP practice near where you live.

Keep your GP’s phone number in the important number section of this booklet so you can find it quickly.

**Shannondoc or Limerickdoc**

If you need to contact a GP outside of normal working hours Shannondoc provides access to GP Services in the region.

Phone: 1850 212 999

www.shannondoc.ie

**A& E**

This service is for life threatening treatment. Anybody in Ireland with a medical emergency is entitled to attend the Emergency Department.

**Hospitals in Limerick**

- **Regional University Hospital**
  061 301111

- **St Johns Hospital**
  061 462222

- **Regional Maternity Hospital**
  061 327455
Education and training

The Department of Education and Skills is responsible for the education of children in Ireland – www.education.ie

The Irish education system is made up of

• primary level
• second level
  also called post-primary or secondary school
• third level
  this includes further education, institutes of technology, and universities.

State funded schooling is available at primary and secondary level unless you choose to send your child to a private school.

All newcomer children, (whether asylum seekers, convention or programme refugees or children of migrant workers) between 4 and 18 years old have a right to the same primary and post-primary education as the rest of the Irish population.

The law requires that all children MUST take part in full-time education between the ages of 6 and 16 (although most children start school at age four or five).
There are usually some costs involved like books, photocopying and school uniforms. Some support is available to people on low income or receiving social welfare benefits. For example,

- the Back-to-School Clothing & Footwear Allowance may help with uniform costs available through your local Community Welfare Officer.

Transport is available to bring pupils to school if they live a particular distance from the school. You may need to pay for this service. Information on transport is available from schools and/or the Department of Education & Skills:

www.education.ie
Marlborough Street, Dublin 1
Telephone: 01 8734700

Many schools offer additional supports to pupils who have particular needs. Check with the school to see what is available.

The school year starts in late August or early September. Primary schools close during July and August. Secondary schools are closed from June - August except for students taking part in state exams.

Other school holidays take place at Christmas, Easter and between terms (usually end of October and February).
Montessori Groups

Montessori groups focus on:
- individualised education;
- teaching social skills;
- maximising children's development.

Playschools

In playschools children are encouraged to share and take turns. They learn to understand the rules of the classroom such as listening and they have the opportunity to play with children of a similar age.

Naíonraí

These are nursery or playschools that teach through the Irish language.

Parent and Toddler Groups

A group of parents or guardians meet together with their children. This gives everyone the opportunity to socialise with others.
FEES:

Many of these childcare facilities are privately run and fees can be expensive. Some community facilities provide subsidised childcare for people in the area.

There are 3 methods of payment to parents and two levels of funding which may be available.
• The Community Childcare Subvention (CCS) Scheme
• The Childcare Education and Training Support (CETS) scheme
• Commercial Rate - If your child does not qualify for either CCS or the CETS scheme, parents will pay the full rate as set by the organisation.

The Community Childcare Subvention (CCS) Scheme, aims to support parents/guardians in receipt of Social Welfare and/or Medical Cards to reduce their childcare costs. To avail of the CCS Scheme you must be attending a community childcare service, which is approved to operate the scheme. Further information on your entitlements and eligibility for the above schemes can be found on www.welfare.ie
Third-level education

Places at third level are allocated based on exam results.

Applying for a place
Universities, institutes of technology and colleges of education give places mainly based on the grades students get in the Leaving Certificate. Mature students can also apply, from the age of 23, without a leaving cert.

Central Applications Office (CAO)
The grades you receive in your Leaving Certificate exam are converted into points and used to allocate places in third level education. Applications for third-level courses are made through the CAO (central applications office), www.cao.ie. Your child’s school will explain this in more detail to your child before they do their Leaving Certificate.

Exams in another country
If you have undertaken exams in another country, you will need to contact your college of choice to check if your qualification is enough to secure a place on the course of your choice. If you meet the requirements you should then apply through the CAO.

Types of third level college
Universities: Degree programmes at Bachelor, Masters and Doctorate level are offered in Ireland’s seven universities.
Technological sector: Institutions in the technological sector focus on business, science, engineering, linguistics and music to certificate, diploma and degree levels.

Colleges of education: There are five colleges of education which specialise in the training of primary school teachers.

Third-level grant schemes
There is a grant scheme available to EU/EEA citizens, people with refugee status and some other categories of people with permission to remain in the state. Your income must be below a certain level to qualify.
SUSI is the Single Awarding Authority for all new student grant applications. www.susi.ie

Support for adults
There are also some Social Welfare grants for those returning to education. To find out more speak to someone at the Limerick Citizens Information Centre on 0761 07 5780 during office hours or visit www.welfare.ie

Do you want more information
www.cao.ie
www.susi.ie
In a medical emergency phone 999 or 112

Hospital emergency services will treat serious, sudden and unexpected illness or injury only. You should go to your GP for all other treatment.

MEDICAL

In an emergency situation, dial 999 or 112 and ask for the ambulance service.

These numbers can also be used for:
- fire brigade
- Garda (police)
- lifeboat
- coastal and mountain rescue emergencies.

Mid-Western Regional University Hospital provides an emergency service 24-hours a day, 7 days a week.

In a medical emergency, you can go directly to the emergency department at Mid-Western Regional University Hospital (also called A&E - Accident & Emergency) without an appointment.

If you go to A&E in a hospital and hospital staff decides your condition is not an emergency, you may have to wait in the 'casualty' section of the hospital before you are treated.

You will then either be treated and sent home or admitted as an in-patient.
**GARDA:**

If you are a victim or have witnessed a crime you should contact the Garda Síochána. In an emergency phone 999 or 112

In less urgent situations you should contact your local Garda Station.

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**VICTIMS:**

If you are a victim of crime, the Garda will respond quickly to your call.

You must fill out a victim report form which you can complete and bring with you to the Garda Station.

These forms are available on [www.garda.ie](http://www.garda.ie) or [www.citizensinformation.ie](http://www.citizensinformation.ie)

Alternatively, you can complete it in the Garda Station.
Ethnic Liaison Officers

There are many Garda Ethnic Liaison Officers nationwide. Their role is to:

• liaise with ethnic representatives of ethnic minority groups;
• monitor racist attacks;
• inform ethnic minorities about Garda services;
• develop initiatives at local community level to facilitate and encourage integration.

The Garda Síochána encourages ethnic communities within within Limerick city and its environs to engage with their liaison representative through the Community Policing Co-ordinators Office in Henry Street Garda Station either by phone (061 433538) or email (limerick_community_policing@garda.ie).

The opening hours of this office are 9am-5pm Monday to Friday.

Racism is illegal.

It is an offence to incite hatred against anyone in the state or elsewhere because of their:

• race;
• colour;
• nationality;
• religion;
• ethnic group.

If someone racially abuses you, you should report it to your local Garda Station. They will ask you to make a statement about the incident. You should ask for the name of the Garda you meet so you can keep in touch with the progress of the investigation.

You can also report racist incidents by contacting Doras Luimní or using the online racist incident reporting system www.iReport.ie
Family law

Domestic Violence

Domestic violence is a crime. This includes physical harm, mental cruelty and sexual abuse. Members of the Gardaí can give you advice about getting a protection or 'barring order' (when someone is ordered to keep away from you and your home) from the district court to prevent further abuse. Information about your local district court is available at www.courts.ie and www.rapecrisis.ie or phone (01) 888 6000.

If you are concerned about violence in your home, contact your local Garda Station. They are trained to deal with these situations and can offer advice. You can also contact Adapt House. You can also get help from your local Citizens Information Centre or one of the Rape Crisis Centres.

Rape Crisis Mid West
1800 311511
The National Rape Crisis Line operates 24 hours a day at 1800 77 8888
www.rapecrisis.ie

Adapt House
Tel: 061 412354
Fax: 061 419809
Email: info@adaptservices.ie
www.adaptservices.ie
Moving to and living in a new country is not easy

People speak a different language, they behave differently, they think differently. Often you might not understand what is going on and you might also feel like an outsider. Locals might also be confused by your behaviour. This is why both groups, locals and the migrants, need to learn from each other.

This does not mean that you need to forget your old ways and learn to behave, think and act like an Irish person. It means that in certain situations you know what the appropriate way of acting is and that you understand why others behave in the way they do.

Ways which can help you to integrate include, for example,

- to watch Irish TV
- follow the news and
- read Irish newspapers.

Keep an open eye, listen and learn about what is happening around you.

Also try not to be judgmental and remember to stay open-minded and curious:

try out new food, new sports, new hobbies and discover your environment!

Some things might be unusual for you but remember that no culture is better than others, they are simply different.
Suggestions

- Learn English
- Make friends with people who speak English on a daily basis
- Learn about your environment, follow the media
- Stay open-minded for new things

Learning English

It is common to place a child with very little English in a class with students of a similar age. The Department of Education and Skills provides an English language support programme to non-Irish national students who need it. Classes may also be provided by voluntary and community based organisations.

Bilingualism/Multilingualism

Many children grow up speaking two or more languages. If your child is learning more languages and you need some help and advice on how to bring up your child bilingually, you should visit the internet page www.bilingualforumireland.com

In the forum you can also find out about language playgroups where you can bring your child to practice other languages.
On a public holiday, sometimes called a 'bank holiday', most businesses and schools are closed.

Other services, for example, public transport still operate but often with restricted schedules. The list of nine public holidays in Ireland each year is as follows:

**New Year’s Day**  
(1 January)  
Following the New Year’s celebrations on the 31st December, most people spend this day with family and friends.  
Some places, for example Dublin, have a New Year’s Day parade.

**St. Patrick’s Day**  
(17 March)  
It is Ireland’s national holiday. People hold parades and festivals to celebrate Irish culture on the day.  
Most businesses and shops are closed on this day, except for pubs, hotels and restaurants.

**Easter Monday**  
(date changes each year)  
It is associated with the Christian holiday but it is also a day when people remember the Easter Uprising of 1916, and go to sports events and local fairs.
May/Labour Day (First Monday of May)

Marks the beginning of Summer, with a long weekend to spend with family and friends.

Some people attend Labour Day parades and celebrations in large cities, such as Dublin.

June Holiday (First Monday in June)

People take time to enjoy the Summer weather and for example go for picnics or open-air concerts, barbeque and participate in sport events.

August Holiday (1st Mon of August)

It’s a public holiday and many people take a short vacation or visit cultural events in Ireland.

Last Monday in October (Halloween Holiday)

It is a long weekend during which people celebrate Halloween. There are also Halloween themed events taking place around the country.

Christmas Day (25 December)

On Christmas Day people celebrate the birth of Jesus with family members and close friends. They often do this by visiting special church services and eating a festive meal.

St. Stephen’s Day (26 December)

It is the day to remember the life of St Stephen, a Christian martyr. Generally people spend the day with family members or close friends. Some Christians attend special church services.
Irish citizenship is obtained in different ways. Most Irish citizens obtain their citizenship through birth or descent.

Foreign nationals can apply to become Irish citizens through naturalisation.

If you are a foreign national who is either married to an Irish citizen or a civil partner of an Irish citizen, you can apply for Irish citizenship through naturalisation.

The residence requirements are more favourable for the spouse or civil partner of an Irish citizen but there is no longer an absolute entitlement to Irish citizenship through marriage.

Voting

You must be 18 years of age to vote. Irish citizens may vote in every election and referendum. British citizens may vote in General, European and local elections. Other EU citizens may vote at European and local elections. Non-EU citizens may vote at local elections only. You must be registered on the Electoral Register in order to vote. You can register at your local authority, library or post office. You must have ID and proof of address.

For more information contact:

• your local Citizens Information Centre - www.citizensinformation.ie
Do you want more information?  
www.citizensinformation.ie/en/moving_country/irish_citizenship/becoming_an_irish_citizen_through_naturalisation.html
Important information

Your name

Your address

Your phone

Phone number of your family GP

GNIB registration number

You and your spouse’s passport numbers
Your children’s passport numbers

You and your spouse’s PPS numbers

Your children’s PPS numbers

Your car registration number

Your driver’s licence number

Other important phone number

Other important phone number