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Nasc: New Beginnings, Children & Families Project

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Nasc, the Migrant and Refugee Rights Centre

Nasc, the Irish word for “link”, is a non-governmental organisations advocating for the realisation of the rights, inclusion and integration of all migrants into Irish society.



Nasc's goals and priorities

- Deliver one-to-one advocacy and information to migrants and refugees to empower them in realising their rights and entitlements
- Provide integration supports to vulnerable cohorts, such as women, families with children and young people
- Raise public and political awareness around challenges faced by migrants
- Evidence based research and policy
- Promote and advance secure pathways for refugees to reach Ireland, especially through the Community Sponsorship model

New Beginnings: Children & Families Project

- **Problem Addressed:**
- Ensuring family unity and family reunification is crucial for successful integration of refugees in host communities. It leads to wider participation in society through education, employment and engagement with available services.
- Refugee families with children face many challenges when starting their lives in their new communities: lack of affordable housing, troubles accessing education, healthcare and the increasing cost of living
- Challenges facing many communities in Ireland, which have disproportionate impact on families struggling to navigate trauma, culture shock and entirely unfamiliar bureaucratic systems



New Beginnings: Children & Families Project

- **How Objectives are reached:**
- Nasc has a dedicated social work team supporting refugee families transitioning out of state provided accommodation and into the community and refugee children arriving to Ireland through refugee family reunification.
- Nasc's Advocacy Service supports refugees in achieving family reunification.
- Once their applications are approved and their families are on the way to Ireland, the Advocacy Service Team refers the family to the New Beginnings project to ensure the family receives post-arrival orientation and are correctly set up to start their life in Ireland
- Post-arrival orientation includes support in: obtaining Personal Public Services numbers, residence permit cards, enrolling children in schools, registering with a family doctor
- Additional integration supports include: prevention work against chronic poverty, deprivation of work & homelessness; accessing education, adequate & social housing, social welfare supports, language supports, mental health and wellbeing services.
- **Stakeholders:**



, Community Foundation Ireland, St Vincent de Paul, Community Connect

New Beginnings: Children & Families Project

- **Resources Needed:**

Cost of developing and rolling out the New Beginnings @ Nasc:

- Overall cost per annum: €81,347
- Staff costs €57,147
- Direct project costs:
 - Language supports: €5,000
 - Education & Integration Supports €6,500
 - Essential Needs €2,000
 - Direct Provision Transition Costs €6,100
 - Admin €4,600

New Beginnings: Children & Families Project

- **Evidence of Success:**

In 2023, New Beginnings:

- Supported 64 children from 19 families & 12 countries
- Prevented and alleviated poverty for 19 families
- Prevented homelessness for 13 families
- Ensured access to education for 9 families, facilitating 24 children & young people's access to education placements and learning supports
- Post-arrival orientation: securing Public Services numbers, residence permit cards, registering with GP, school enrollment
- Facilitated applications for social assistance supports for 19 families
- Facilitating access to healthcare and mental health supports
- Provided home-set up material
- Provided 22 young people from 12 families with intensive English language

- **Timeline:**

- Ongoing since 2021

New Beginnings: Children & Families Project

- **Potential for Learning or Transfer:**

- Nasc's New Beginnings project has been consistently and successfully supporting families since 2021. It could be reproduced and adapted to different contexts and countries by using social work as a means to offer integration supports. An important first step is assessing what the needs of refugee families are in the relevant context. Before setting up the New Beginnings project, Nasc commissioned research into the needs of refugee families reuniting in Ireland. The resulting report informed the structure and work of the New Beginnings project. Following this example, other organisations and institutions can design informed social work strategies to support and empower refugee families in overcoming barriers within local housing, social welfare, education, employment and immigration systems.

- **Challenges Encountered:**

- Continuous funding of programmes is a constant challenge for NASC.
- Constraints on future planning.

- **Further Information:**

- Eilís Ní Laoi, New Beginnings Social Worker, Nasc.
- Web: <https://nascireland.org/current-projects/new-beginnings-children-families-project>



NASC'S SERVICES + PROJECTS

- **Advocacy Service:** Information and advice on immigration-related matters. In 2022 we provided support to over 1,300 people via our phone line, appointments and outreach.
- **Gateway Women's Project:** For migrant and refugee women who need support to access education, integration and employment opportunities – English classes in a supportive environment. Currently hosting: Crochet & Conversation on Mondays in Shine (Washington St.), Online English classes Wellbeing group, Ukrainian interpretation available.
- **Ukraine Response team:** Ukrainian speaking officers providing information and advice on immigration-related matters (with our Advocacy Team) also information about social welfare, accommodation, health services, language classes, etc.



+ PROJECTS

- **Connect – Migrant Youth Project:** works with young people ages 14-23 years old who are asylum seekers living in Direct Provision and young people in Care and Aftercare services. It supports them with issues like accessing education, employment, improving their mental health and wellbeing and getting a secure immigration status.
- **Integration:** underpins all aspects of Nasc's work. Works at national and local level, involved in different partnerships.
- **Community Sponsorship RSO:** A programme that gives people in Ireland the opportunity to welcome resettled refugees to their local communities. Also supporting Irish people hosting people from Ukraine.
 - Sponsoring families from Afghanistan and Syria
Email: majo@nascireland.org
 - EU-Passworld project: sponsoring students from African continent
Email: tessa@nascireland.org

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Center TUTU

- **Center for Psychophysical Development TUTU**
- Launched on 23/05/2022. It is located in Rzeszow, Poland, some 80 km from the Ukrainian border. TUTU is a safe space in which variety of psychosocial and therepeutic services are provided for free. Most visitors are Ukrainian refugees, and there are also many integrative activities for mixed, Polish-Ukrainian groups.
- The staff speak Ukrainian, Russian, and Polish, and they are able to provide support to around 400 persons per month, on average.



Finance: Center TUTU was created and run for 18 months thanks to financial support and collaboration with Project HOPE, a USA-based international NGO. After Project HOPE limited their operations in Poland, in November-December 2023, TUTU was supported by UNHCR, as part of the grant program with the Foundation “We Give Children Strength” (FDDS). In 2024 TUTU is funded by the World Health Organization (WHO).

Center TUTU

- **What TUTU Do:**

- Main objective is to improve the social, professional, and personal lives of as many refugees and local residents as possible. We want to help families get the support they need in order to function independently in society and have a healthy and positive outlook on their future.
- Range of free activities and therapeutic interventions tailored to fit the needs of the people that come to Center TUTU.
- Dealing with emotions can be difficult for children, teens, and adults alike. Many have trouble understanding where their emotions stem from and how to control them better. At the Center, TUTU employ Ukrainian, Russian, and Polish speaking specialists who can provide guidance and therapy to those in need.
- A variety of techniques are offered; group and individual therapy, art and music therapy, relaxation classes, developmental workshops etc. They all help individuals deal with stress and trauma, build mental resilience, improve well-being, gain social and personal competences.
- When working with children, TUTU employ a model based on observation, identification of signals of distress and vulnerability, and internal and external referrals for more in-depth support.
- TUTU also have a systematic and holistic approach. TUTU provide several types of services to the same person, work with them for an extended period of time, and also try to engage their closed ones, e.g. parents or siblings, so as to build broader, fuller support mechanisms.
- TUTU work with persons who come individually, and they also have working relationships with schools in Rzeszow, so they can host mixed Polish-Ukrainian groups, and support their integration, on top of other services described above.