



Tánaiste & Minister Varadkar increase payments for children & adults in Direct Provision

Minister for Social Protection Leo Varadkar and Tánaiste & Minister for Justice & Equality Frances Fitzgerald have agreed to increase the Allowance paid to adults and children who live in Ireland under Direct Provision, including the Irish Refugee Protection Programme.

“I am pleased that we can increase Direct Provision payments for adults and children. The Tánaiste and I believe this is an important measure. The increases will benefit everyone living within the Direct Provision system by providing more disposable income. The cost of the increase will be in the region of €320,000 and will be met from the Department of Social Protection’s budget for 2017. The full year cost will be €770,000,” Minister Varadkar said.

“This decision will bring the rate for children up to the level suggested by the Children’s Rights Alliance at the recent Social Inclusion Forum. I hope this measure will be seen as a small gesture to migrants that the Government will be more compassionate to their needs and sensitive to their aspirations in the future. Separately, we are also reviewing options that will allow asylum seekers to work in certain circumstances and I expect we will make decision on that later this year.”

The Tánaiste and Minister for Justice and Equality, Frances Fitzgerald, said: **“The International Protection Act 2015 was commenced on 31 December 2016 and a new single procedure was introduced under which all aspects of a person’s claim (asylum, subsidiary protection and permission to remain) are considered together by the International Protection Office (IPO) rather than individually, as happened in the past. The single procedure will speed up the processing of claims and will end the sometimes-lengthy multi-sequential determination process. This new process was a key recommendation of the McMahon Report. Overall, 92% of the Report’s 173 recommendations are now implemented, partially implemented or are in progress.”**

The rate of the Direct Provision Allowance paid to children and adults residing in Ireland under the system of Direct Provision, including the Irish Refugee Protection Programme, will increase from the beginning of August. The decision, once ratified by Cabinet, will increase the rate of the Direct Provision Allowance for children from €15.60 to €21.60 per week and for adults from €19.10 to €21.60 per week from August.

Ends

Further information on Direct Provision payments

The Direct Provision Allowance is a non-statutory payment administered by the Department of Social Protection on behalf of the Department of Justice and Equality to

people living in the Direct Provision system. It is funded by the Department of Social Protection. The Government has provided €3.7 million for the allowance in 2017.

The Direct Provision Allowance was introduced in 2000 at the weekly rate of IR£15 (€19.10) per adult and IR£7.50 (€9.60) per child. The adult rate has remained unchanged since its introduction. The child rate was increased in January 2016 by €6 per week to its current rate of €15.60.

The Department of Social Protection is currently paying a Direct Provision Allowance to approx. 3,060 adults and 1,190 dependent children.

A Working Group established by the Minister for Justice and Equality and whose report was published in 2015, identified children as a group of particular focus within the Direct Provision system.