

Support Package for Hosts/Pledgers

Pledges of accommodation and the support offered by local communities are an integral part of Ireland's response to the Russian invasion of Ukraine. It is important that hosts are well-supported and have access to a range of resources to ensure the welcomes offered are sustainable, effective and rewarding. The Open Community¹ has in place a full range of easily accessible and free resources designed to support hosts. These resources have been developed by, and reflect the collective expertise of a range of organisations, each with extensive experience of supporting community welcomes for refugees.

All resources can be accessed on the Host Supports page of [The Open Community website](#), and include:

- **Training for People Hosting and Supporting Refugees**
The Open Community [training](#) was developed specifically for people who are hosting or supporting refugees. It covers a range of topics including an overview of the host support role, recognising and responding to trauma, cultural considerations, and host wellbeing. It comprises eight short pre-recorded videos and includes useful templates such as a Home Sharing Agreement.
- **Support and Information Sessions for Hosts**
Hosted in collaboration with Doras, the Irish Red Cross, the Irish Refugee Council, Nasc, Helping Irish Hosts, as well as invited experts and experienced hosts, regular [online support sessions](#) and in-person events provide an opportunity for hosts to share information and have key questions answered.
- **Integration Mobile App**
Available in multiple languages, including English and Ukrainian, the [SWIFT Integration](#) app provides clear and concise information on a range of areas of life in Ireland such as social welfare, healthcare, education, and employment. Dedicated sections for Ukrainian Citizens and hosts have been added and are updated regularly. It can be downloaded for free by searching 'Swift Integration' in any App Store.
- **Free Legal Advice Panel**
The Legal Advice Panel is available to offer free legal advice to hosts and resettled families or individuals. The panel is coordinated in partnership with the Public Interest Law Alliance (PILA), and is comprised of four expert legal firms including A&L Goodbody, Mason, Hayes and Curran, Arthur Cox, and Matheson. A referral can be made by completing a simple online Referral Form available on The Open Community website.

Regional Support Organisations

Hosts can contact their local Regional Support Organisation (RSO) for ongoing advice, support and guidance. RSOs have a wealth of knowledge, experience and are experts in supporting community welcomes for refugees. There are four RSOs and each provides support in different areas of the country.

- **Doras**
(Clare / Limerick / Tipperary)
www.doras.org
- **Irish Red Cross**
(Galway / Kildare / Longford / Mayo / Meath / Offaly / Roscommon / Westmeath / Wicklow)
www.redcross.ie
- **Irish Refugee Council**
(Cavan / Donegal / Dublin / Leitrim / Louth / Monaghan / Sligo)
www.irishrefugeecouncil.ie
- **Nasc, the Migrant and Refugee Rights Centre**
(Carlow / Cork / Kerry / Kilkenny / Laois Waterford / Wexford)
www.nascireland.org

¹ The Open Community is the National Support Organisation for Ireland's Community Sponsorship Programme for Refugees. The Open Community represents a collaborative partnership of Doras, the Irish Red Cross, the Irish Refugee Council, Nasc, UNHCR and Amnesty International Ireland, who work collectively to develop supports and resources that help people all over Ireland to welcome refugees into their local communities. All of the resources offered reflect this collective experience and expertise, as well as best practice in community welcomes for refugees.

More information: www.theopencommunity.ie

Contact: info@theopencommunity.ie