

## Irish people spell out their welcome to refugees ahead of crucial EU meeting

Joint Media Release, 14 September 2015



(Credit: Steve Kingston)

Images free for

use: <https://www.dropbox.com/sh/36vpcbsgx77vnqs/AABKEiy294Yi5MTEopdM1M7Wa?dl=0>

Members of the public joined a coalition of NGOs on Dublin's Sandymount Strand (Sunday 13th) in a solidarity event to welcome refugees to Ireland. They created a human "Refugees Welcome" aerial photo ahead of an extraordinary meeting of the EU Council of Justice & Home Affairs (JHA) Ministers on Monday (September 14th).

The event highlighted a number of calls to action;

- For the Irish government to show leadership and be a strong voice for the rights of refugees and migrants at a European level.
- Urge Member States to work together to develop a comprehensive European plan that provides safe and legal channels of migration, and respond to the severity and scale of the crisis, including planning for and agreeing increased numbers of people seeking protection.
- To focus on developing and implementing a transparent and accelerated process of relocation and resettlement, with clear guidelines and timeframes in place, with an emphasis on expanding legal channels of migration across the European Union including less rigid family reunification measures.
- Address the increasing needs of people not in receipt of even the most basic assistance. While the EU has taken steps to present a plan, Member States have a responsibility to provide basic protection and services for those whose situation is worsening by the day.
- Immediately suspend the return mechanism Dublin Regulation in Ireland and call on other European Union Member States to do likewise.

- The Irish and European response to encompass the full range of issues at stake, including obligations under international law and commitments to international development.
- Call on EU member states to address the root causes of forced migration such as the situation in Syria and invest in urgent political solutions to conflict and inclusive socio-economic development across Africa and the Middle East.
- Continue the vital search and rescue operations in the Mediterranean throughout the winter, and to agree a new life-saving strategy for arrivals through Greece and the Balkans.

## **ENDS**

### **Signed**

ActionAid Ireland  
Comhlámh  
Christian Aid Ireland  
Community Workers' Co-operative  
CORI (Conference of Religious in Ireland)  
Crosscare Migrant and Refugee Project  
Dóchas  
European Network against Racism (ENAR) Ireland  
Immigrant Council of Ireland  
Irish Missionary Union  
Irish Refugee Council  
Mayo Intercultural Action  
Mercy International Association  
Migrant Rights Centre Ireland  
Oxfam Ireland  
Trócaire  
World Vision Ireland

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