What is the experience of navigating a new life in Ireland for international protection applicants and refugees and what role does education play?

Margaret Murphy

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Supervisors:

Professor Aislinn O'Donnell,

Maynooth University,

National University of Ireland, Maynooth

And

Dr. Patricia Kieran,

Mary Immaculate College,

University of Limerick.

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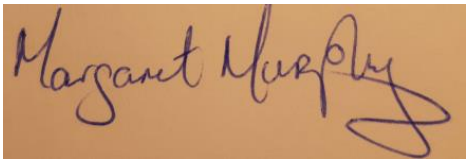
Abstract

This research is political in nature. It analyses the system of reception for international protection applicants and refugees in Ireland, investigates the nature of life within Direct Provision and explores the ways in which people attempt to create new lives for themselves. It also examines the opportunities and spaces which enable people to make an entry into a host society often through engagement with education. The study attempts to theorise the role of the State in the marginalisation of international protection applicants Lynch reminds us that research is a political tool, 'be it by default, by design, or by recognition' (Lynch 2000:73) and this thesis attempts to uncover the intersection of people's daily lives with international protection policy and practice. State responses to this group can be located within successive responses to immigration aimed at defending State sovereignty, controlling borders and preventing participation in Irish society by some migrants. In order to understand this phenomenon, this study draws upon the ideas of Giorgio Agamben and Hannah Arendt and their theories of power, governance and biopolitics to examine and interpret the Direct Provision system. This study also considers experiences of accessing and engaging with further and higher education which are contextualised by experiences of flight from a home country and arrival elsewhere. Education is an important factor in resettlement, adaptation ad acculturation for newly-arrived families and individuals.

This is a qualitative research project which employs an emancipatory approach, prioritising the voice of the person who is seeking refuge and engaging in a phenomenological analysis of their stories. These stories communicate an experience of social exclusion and inequality. However, the purpose of the study is to also contest narratives of helpless and passive victims, and in their place, to explore resilience and resistance as participants cope with their experiences of seeking international protection and try to regain control over their futures. The findings reveal Direct Provision is a profoundly punitive system but also demonstrate the resolute nature of its residents and their determination to bring about change. Their personal narratives show that societal norms, as well as dominant political and media discourses are regularly challenged.

Declaration

I hereby declare that this thesis represents my own work and has not been submitted in whole or in part, by me or another for the purpose of obtaining any other qualification.

Name: 

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I could not have predicted the ways in which completing this doctoral thesis would challenge me. My sincere thanks to Professor Aislinn O'Donnell and Dr. Patricia Kieran, my supervisors, for their consistent support, endless intellect, professional guidance and kindness. Their supervision of the work has been encouraging and inspiring and undertaken with generosity of spirit of great scholars.

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I dedicate this work in loving memory of my parents, Winifred and Patrick Murphy. They have given me love and support of every kind throughout my life.

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List of Abbreviations

CAO- Central Applications Office
CEAS- Common European Asylum System
CICA- Commission to Inquire into Child Abuse
CORI- Conference of Religious in Ireland
DES- Department of Education and Skills
DJELR- Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform
DP- Direct Provision
EAL- English as an Additional Language
EASO- European Asylum Support Office
EMN- European Migration Network
ENAR- European Network against Racism
EROC- Emergency Reception and orientation Centre
ESRI- Economic and Social Research Institute
ETB- Education and Training Board
EU- European Union
FRA- Fundamental Rights Agency
GNIB- Garda National Immigration Bureau
HEA –Higher Education Authority
HSE – Health Service Executive
IOM- International Migration Organisation
IPA- Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis
IPAS- International Protection Accommodation Service
IPO- International Protection Office
IRC –Irish Refugee Council
IRPP- Irish Refugee Protection Programme
JRS- Jesuit Refugee Service
MASI- Movement of Asylum Seekers in Ireland
MIREC- Mary Immaculate College Research Ethics Committee
NASC- Nasc is the Irish word for 'link'.
NATO- North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NCCRI- National Consultative Committee on Racism and Interculturalism
NFQ - National Framework of Qualifications
NGO –Non-Governmental Organisation
PTSD- Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder
QQI - Quality and Qualifications Ireland
RIA- Reception and Integration Agency
ROI- Republic of Ireland
SHAP- Syrian Humanitarian Admission
TD- Teachta Dála
UAM- Unaccompanied Minor
UN- United Nations
UNCERD- United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination
UNHCR- United Nations high Commissioner for Refugees
UNHC- United Nations Humanitarian Coordinator
UNGA- United Nations General Assembly
US- United States
UK- United Kingdom
VTOS- Vocational Training Opportunities Scheme

Figures

Glossary of Terms

Asylum-Seeker - An asylum seeker is a person who seeks to be recognised as a refugee under the terms of Article 3 of the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and as defined in Section 2 of the International Protection Act 2015.

Convention Refugee – A convention refugee is defined in section 24 of the Refugee Act, 1996 (as amended) as 'a person to whom leave to enter and remain in the State for temporary protection or resettlement as part of a group of persons has been given by the Government and whose name is entered in a register established and maintained by the Minister for Foreign Affairs, whether or not such a person is a refugee within the meaning of the definition of 'refugee' in section 2.' These are persons who are invited to Ireland by the Government usually in response to a humanitarian crisis and at the request of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. In general, they have the same rights as convention refugees.

Programme Refugee- A programme refugee is a person who has been invited to Ireland as a result of a government decision and in response to a humanitarian request, usually from the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), either for the purposes of temporary protection or resettlement.

Direct Provision – This is a system of accommodation for people who are seeking asylum in the Republic of Ireland. People who are International Protection Applicants (formerly more commonly known as asylum-seekers) are given food and shelter and a small cash payment while they wait for their asylum application to be processed. On 10th April 2000, the system of Direct Provision commenced in Ireland. Details of the development of the system of dispersal of people to centres around the country can be found in circular 1910-99-JUST. The Reception and Integration Agency which comes under the remit of the Department of Justice and Equality has responsibility for overseeing the centres.

Leave to remain – This is permission given to a non-EU citizen to remain in Ireland under certain conditions. It is granted on behalf of the Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform in the form of a stamp (endorsement) in a person's passport. If the International Protection Office recommends that an individual is not entitled to either refugee status or subsidiary protection, the Minister will then consider whether or not to give the individual permission to remain in the State (Ireland) for another reason (for example, because of family or personal circumstances). The permission to remain function is also carried out by the International Protection Office. Section 13 of the Information Booklet for

Applicants for International Protection (IPO1) and Section 49 of the International Protection Act 2015 provide further details of leave to remain status.

Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) is an independent State agency responsible for promoting quality and accountability in education and training services in Ireland. QQI has developed the Irish National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) a 10-level, single national entity through which all learning achievements may be measured and related to each other. Level 5 forms part of the 10-level framework.

Subsidiary Protection –If it is decided that a person is not a refugee, then she/he may qualify for subsidiary protection if there are substantial grounds for believing that she/he would face a real risk of harm if returned to her/his country of origin/country of former habitual residence. It is granted where the person does not qualify as a refugee. The precise definition is that a person eligible for subsidiary protection is 1) not a national of a Member State of the European Union, and, 2) does not qualify as a refugee.

Unaccompanied Minor (UAM) – Irish law does not provide a definition for an unaccompanied minor. However, the International Protection Act 2015 refers to persons intending to make an application for international protection who have 'not attained the age of 18 years' and are not accompanied by an adult. They require intervention from the Child and Family Agency (Tusla), the state agency with responsibility for child welfare and protection services. On their website Tusla use the terms 'separated children seeking asylum' rather than UAM. They define this group as children who apply for asylum, who are outside their country of origin, unaccompanied by an adult and under eighteen years of age (Tusla in Arnold and Ní Raghallaigh, 2017).

Aged-Out Unaccompanied Minor- This is a young person or child who is over the age of eighteen and came to Ireland as an unaccompanied minor. Most separated young people are moved to Direct Provision at the age of ninteen but the state can use discretionary powers to allow them to remain in foster care (Ní Raghallaigh and Thorton, 2017).

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Chapter 1: Beginning the Story

Introduction

This chapter presents context, significance and rationale for the thesis that explores the experiences of people who are international protection applicants and refugees in Ireland. The purpose of the study and its aims are explained. When I began the field work for this thesis in 2016, I could not have imagined that I would be completing it in the midst of a worldwide health pandemic, associated with Covid-19, which has killed thousands of people and brought to the fore the lack of care and protection for those who seek sanctuary in Ireland and elsewhere across the world. The arrival of this health pandemic highlights that while all groups of people are susceptible to infection by the virus, those who live in communal and overcrowded spaces face increased risks. In *The Plague* Albert Camus suggests that the arrival of infectious diseases provides meaning, enables moral and ethical insights, and creates opportunity for people to reflect on the ways in which they relate to and treat others. His main concern is our moral duty towards others. 'What's true of all the evils in the world is true of plague as well. It helps men to rise above themselves' (Camus, 2004:113). This may, therefore, be an opportune moment to call for an inclusive approach to welcoming and reconsidering the safety and well-being of all people, not just the citizen but the migrant or non-citizen.

1.1 Welcoming the 'stranger'

It might seem obvious that those in more comparatively privileged situations should welcome and support individuals and groups who suffer violence, hatred, and political and economic insecurity. Yet, providing a genuine welcome along with practical supports appears difficult and complex. The reception of international protection applicants and refugees in Ireland involves challenges, multiple perspectives, contested values and global politics. The ways in which host societies frame and welcome the 'stranger' is an ongoing social and political issue, and refugee stories are ones of adjustment, nostalgia, new beginnings, determination, loss and a fractured sense of belonging. At an Amnesty International Council meeting in

Dublin, in 2015, the President of Ireland, Michael D. Higgins referred to human migration as a defining feature of the early twenty-first century and pointed out that all citizens must urgently consider the most effective ways to ensure that the rights of every individual are upheld and guarded. He noted that it is the role of citizens to make those in power accountable for their sentiments which underpin policies and practices (Higgins, 2015). He also emphasised that we live in an era characterised by fragility and insecurity. In September 2015, pictures of the drowned body of three-year-old, Alain Kurdi, exemplified the plight of millions of Syrians displaced by civil war. The movement of refugees and their reception in European countries has generated significant debate in the last decade. It is important to underline that the refugee and the international protection applicant are a particular type of migrant as they leave their home countries, not because they want to, but because they are forced to. This forced migration has generated moral questions regarding our human obligation to one another, the nature of welcome and what it means to be received in a host country. Zygmunt Bauman points out that 'there is no exit from that crisis other than the solidarity of humans' (Bauman, 2016). People migrate for economic, political and environmental reasons. Some feel forced to leave while others choose to leave often seeking safety and a better life and in a country which has clear and liberal approaches to humanitarian migrants. This is explored in greater detail in the following section.

1.2 Push and Pull Factors

Push and Pull factors could be described as conditions which attract people to a particular country or region and those which drive people out of their country of residence (EASO, 2016). People flee their home countries for all sorts of reasons including economic instability, conflict and insecurity. Massey (1990) also suggests cumulative causation where changes in the social and economic systems in a home country, caused by migration, bring about further migration. Zelinsky (1971) notes that increasing physical and social mobility, greater access to technology and a decline in rural employment opportunities are key drivers of migration. Climate change, natural disasters and environmental degradation are also identified by Petersen (1958) as factors which aggravate economic insecurity, eventually forcing people to move. Research suggests that migration policies of destination countries may impact the number of people seeking to enter a country. Visa restrictions affect not only migration into certain jurisdictions (Czaika and de Haas, 2014), but the existence of carrier sanctions on

asylum-related movement has restricted immigration into some countries in Western Europe (Neumayer, 2004). Those who come to Ireland to seek State protection often endure difficult circumstances as contemporary State responses to people who are international protection applicants are shaped by discriminatory policies and practices. This legacy includes responses to Jewish, Hungarian and Vietnamese refugees. More recently, the arrival of increasing numbers of international protection applicants 'has been met by expressions of racism and intolerance' (Fanning, 2012:84). However, people who come to Ireland as programme refugees and not as international protection applicants have different experiences as they are invited to Ireland by the Government usually in response to a humanitarian crisis and at the request of the UNHCR. In general, they have more rights and receive greater supports in their resettlement.

International protection applicants generally live in a Direct Provision system, overseen by the Reception and Integration Agency (RIA), a body of the Department of Justice and Equality. Direct Provision is a system which has provoked considerable controversy and criticism due to its restrictive nature. Residents are provided with essential services, including medical care, accommodation and board, along with a small weekly allowance, but they have few rights and are subject to control and restrictions, sometimes for several years. The newly elected coalition Government of 2020 has pledged that it will dismantle the Direct Provision system within its lifetime. This may mean a significant reimagining of rights, reception, provision and overall treatment of people who seek refuge in Ireland.

1.3 Origins of the Thesis

The story of this thesis began in a Youthreach setting which provided second-chance education. Many of my ideas and philosophy have been formed in this context where inequalities and the exclusion of particular groups from full participation in Irish life were clearly evident. During the twelve years I spent teaching there, I met young people, generally aged between fifteen and twenty years old, who for different reasons had left mainstream education. In 2010, I completed a Master's thesis on the topic of second-chance education and its role in facilitating personal and professional progression for young people. In the years following that, there was a notable increase in the numbers of young people of migrant backgrounds seeking access to second-chance education. In December 2009, I met an

eighteen-year-old boy, Adam, of African heritage, who had limited English and was seeking a place on a two-year QQI Level 5 business and computer course. He spent most of the meeting in silence and seemed unable to fully understand or answer the questions I posed. When we came to the end of the conversation, I was unsure what to suggest. I advised that I could look for English language classes on his behalf and keep his place on the Level 5 course until the following year. Adam looked blankly at me as I thought about the best way to guide and support him. He had presented his Leaving Certificate results to me during the interview. In my own mind, I questioned why he had done so poorly in mainstream education, what kinds of English language support he had received and what was his legal status. I was bothered by what seemed like a somewhat hopeless situation. I wondered if he had come to Ireland through the international protection process. I questioned what educational opportunities were available to this group of students and other adults of migrant background, particularly those who were in the asylum process. I also found myself asking what were the motivations and desired outcomes to participating in education.

At that point, I became interested in the experience of children and adults of migrant backgrounds in the Irish education system. I also spoke to colleagues about the ways in which our workplace engaged with people who had EAL needs. Through my conversations with them, I learned that there was a small team of youth workers, also based in my workplace, who ran targeted programmes for young people living in a Direct Provision centre located nearby. Around that time, I attended a conference on the future of further education and heard Donna Vuma speak about her experiences of being an international protection applicant, of living in Direct Provision and the ways in which she attempted to integrate into Irish society. I was struck by how little was known about the experiences of people who seek refuge in Ireland. Having graduated from the Master's Degree in Education in 2011, I was keen to continue studying and considered researching the experiences of young people of migrant background in the Irish education system.

1.4 My Research Question

My research question and interests changed and evolved over time. Initially, I thought about focusing on the educational experiences of people of migrant background, but I later narrowed my ideas to explore the educational experiences of people who were seeking international protection or who had refugee status or leave to remain. When the project originally started, I was trying to understand and explore the educational experiences of both children and adults and the pathways into further and third level education. However, the context in which people lived unintentionally became the focus of the project. I was led by the participants and the ways in which they wished to respond to my questions. During the interview and focus group stage, people spoke to me about their experiences in education and it became apparent that these could not be separated from the experience of seeking international protection. It was also evident that educational experiences varied considerably, were influenced by pre-settlement participation in education and also by limited rights to access Irish third level education. Therefore, the trajectory of this research journey changed as stories about precarious legal situations, life in Direct Provision and the impact of prior traumas took precedence over any discussion about education. Participants really wanted me to understand the context in which they were living and the challenges of everyday life before we moved to any discussion about school, college or opportunities to engage and participate in learning. They wanted me to understand the difficulties they endured before they discussed education, often the only beacon of hope in some people's lives. Through my conversations with people, I was able to understand the diverse educational moments and experiences and the various forms of engagement with educational settings and institutions. Perhaps they felt that I could understand the nature of their engagement with education if I knew more about the context in which they lived. Therefore, I spent more time discussing and understanding life experiences than I had originally intended. As I spoke with people and I read more about the topic of migration and the experience of seeking international protection, I began to understand more about its impact on peoples' lives. Therefore, it became obvious that the research question had changed and became more focused on lived experience of seeking international protection and creating a new life in Ireland. A new research question was developed as a result, and I attempt to answer the following question: What is the experience of navigating a new life in Ireland for international protection applicants and refugees? The project also developed into an exploration of the origins of the current system of international

protection, the history of reception of immigrants in Ireland, the experiences of flight and arrival and the ways in which people seek out opportunities to engage with society as they navigate life in a host country. I wanted to learn about individual and singular experiences of seeking refuge in Ireland and, therefore, I sought opportunities to meet people who came to Ireland as refugees or who sought international protection in Ireland. I did this through attendance at conferences, direct contact with Direct Provision centres and with the help of MASI (Movement of Asylum Seekers in Ireland). My supervisors also put me in touch with organisations which assisted me in getting to know people who were interested in participating in the research. As I engaged with people through telephone calls and email, I explained the research and attempted to build trust and positive relationships with people who might be interested in participating the study.

1.5 My First Research Steps

I made my first visit to an Irish Direct Provision centre in October 2016. The long and narrow driveway from the main road to the gated entrance of the centre was deserted. As I approached, I wondered what to expect. I was visiting Diane who I had met at a conference some months previously. She was generous in helping me find other research participants and I remain in contact with her. The centre was made up of several prefabricated buildings which were well-maintained and situated in green and lush countryside, some miles from the nearest town. Diane spoke with the security guard and I was permitted to enter. The area was peaceful and deserted on that beautiful morning, and one might assume, at first glance, that it was not a bad place to live. Lots of questions and ideas came to mind regarding day-to-day life, and I thought about the assumptions I developed prior to my arrival. I had read about poor and cramped living conditions and about child protection concerns. At the time, media reporting and political discussion conflated asylum-seekers (as they were then called) and refugees with terrorist groups (Abbas, 2019; Stewart and Mason, 2016). On that first visit to the Direct Provision centre, I wondered how families protect children in communal living spaces and thought about personal safety, the relationships between residents and how one makes a home in an atmosphere of constant surveillance and uncertainty. I reflected on the experience of children and how a parent might help them to make sense of living in such a space. Seeking international protection is a demand and involves a longing to find a new

home and a place to belong. It can involve a sense of disconnection, discomfort and human suffering which I felt was rarely addressed or spoken about in the Irish context. There was a scarcity of discussion and qualitative research addressing the existential aspects of seeking state protection.

I left the Direct Provision centre with a feeling that there was so much to learn about the nature of lives and experiences of people who were displaced and sought the help of the Irish state. In 2016, there was little media reporting on the nature of Direct Provision and how it was experienced, and its absence led me to become curious and interested in exploring the human story of seeking state protection. Through similar encounters at different centres, I had the privilege of meeting and gaining insights into the lives of other individuals who came to Ireland in similar circumstances. Not all of those who contributed to the study had experienced Direct Provision, but they did experience displacement and resettlement. I have travelled this research journey with the voices of those courageous and generous individuals constantly in my mind. In this thesis, I endeavour to create a text, based on the multiplicity of narratives of struggle and agency, which respects and faithfully describes and recounts the lives, ideas, reflections and hopes of the people who participated in this study and shared their stories and experiences. This research is also intended as a platform for people who are or were international protection applicants and refugees to reflect on which story they wish to tell about themselves. However, I think this was and continues to be a challenge as they are rarely asked for their opinion about issues which affect them. I, therefore, asked people to consider their multiple stories, and in what ways they might like to be represented within this research. I do not suggest that people's stories are representative or that there is one truth about the refugee and asylum-seeking experience, but I argue that these stories offer insights into the experience of seeking refuge. I try not to add my own voice to their stories too quickly, but allow the subjective experiences to speak for themselves first.

1.6 Seeking State Protection

Some participants, Diane, Lawrence, Alexander, Tia, Robert and Romeo did not discuss their reasons for leaving their home countries. Others, Paulina, Lewis, Zahir, Khalid, Samir and Ahmed provided details of the context of their lives prior to seeking international protection

in Ireland. However, all suggest that it was a necessary response to some form of adversity, violence or suffering. In the following section, I provide brief details of some of the people who participated in the study.

Diane, originally from Zimbabwe, was almost forty years old at the time of interview. She was politically active and determined to complete a degree in an Irish third level institution. She had been living in Direct Provision for two and a half years with her three children. She received a University of Sanctuary scholarship and had just completed an access year when we met for the focus group discussion.

Lawrence came from Zimbabwe and was in his thirties when I met him. He had been in Ireland for two and half years and lived in several different Direct Provision centres in the south, east and west of the country. He was politically active and was involved in various campaigns to end Direct Provision and in the work of MASI. He was a father to two girls who also lived in Direct Provision.

Alexander, in his mid-forties and originally from Serbia, spent three years in Direct Provision in the west of Ireland. At the time of interview, he was an Irish citizen, had a partner and child and lived in Dublin. He was interested in the arts and was completing post-graduate studies at the time of interview.

Tia was originally from South Africa. She was forty-two years old and a mother to two daughters, aged twenty-one years and fifteen years. She had been living in Direct Provision in the east of the country since she arrived five years prior to the interview. She campaigned for young people living in Direct Provision to be able to take up places in third level education.

Robert, aged nineteen, was much younger than the majority of participants. From Democratic Republic of Congo, he was almost twenty years old when I met him. He had been living in Direct Provision in the east of the country since he arrived three-and- a-half years earlier. He completed his Leaving Certificate and was hoping to go study art in a third level college the following year.

Romeo was a twenty-year-old South African and a friend to Robert. He spoke very little throughout the interview. Along with Paulina, they lived in a Direct Provision centre in the north east of Ireland. Romeo had finished his Leaving Certificate examinations and wanted to be able to work.

Paulina was forty-seven at the time of interview. She came from Zimbabwe and along with her son and daughter sought international protection in Ireland. She spent four years in Direct Provision and received permission to remain in 2015. In her interview, she described bouts of ill-health and hospitalisation, but felt that through education and keeping busy, she had managed to overcome fears, trauma and challenges.

Lewis, aged fifty-five came from South Africa to Ireland in 2013. He lived in Direct Provision in the south of the country for about three years. He was politically engaged and active in attempting to raise-awareness and seek justice for people who sought international protection in Ireland. Lewis

introduced me to many others who also participated in this research, and he became one of my key advisers in conducting this study.

Zahir who was twenty-eight years old at the time of interview, came to Ireland in 2000 using a false passport. He eventually claimed asylum. Not long before I met him, he had received a deportation order and was concerned for his future. He had suffered bouts of depression and anxiety during the sixteen years he had spent in Ireland. A few months after the research interview, he received permission to remain in the country and pursued third level studies since then.

Khalid was about thirty years-old and a prominent voice for the Rohingya community in Ireland. He lived in a social housing estate on the edges of a town in the east of the country with his wife, children and brother-in-law Zahir. He spent much of his life in a refugee camp in Bangladesh before coming to Ireland as a programme refugee.

Samir, in his forties and a member of the Baha'i community, was born in Iran and, in 1985, fled to Ireland along with his sister following ongoing persecution of people of the Baha'i faith. He arrived in Ireland as a programme refugee and, therefore, was entitled to housing, healthcare and education at the time. He had completed a university degree in Ireland, was married and had two children.

Ahmed, aged twenty-eight fled Syria for a camp in Lebanon with his family. Following that, they came to Ireland. They spent a few months in a reception centre before receiving refugee status. At the time of interview, Samir was completing his degree in an Irish Institute of Technology.

1.7 Aims of the Study

In this study, I attempted to tell the story of the complexity of experiences of seeking State protection in Ireland. However, most importantly, I also wanted to move away from the kinds of portrayals of people and experiences which are often found in the media and in reports produced by state agencies and humanitarian organisations. It was important that the voice of the international protection applicant and the refugee were prominent and that their story open up, insofar as possible, a dialogue between my own ideas and presuppositions, and those of others. Prior to the data gathering process, I was concerned about participants' ability to understand information sheets and their willingness and capacity to give consent. I thought about ways I could intercede, and if this was appropriate. A few people required assistance or asked me to read the documentation with them. However, the majority of people spontaneously provided consent without asking for help highlighting my misconceptions. This was, in fact, a rich discovery about people's desire to advocate on their own behalf. My

own assumptions and ideas were challenged through my engagement with people in this study. Before I began this research, I was aware of the negative attitudes and images often associated with seeking State protection. Media reports suggested that those who seek international protection should be treated with suspicion and sometimes associated with terrorism. Through my research, I realised that many of these attitudes originate from the system of placing people in Direct Provision and segregating them from Irish society. They are criminalised by being confined to a particular type of space which was described by participants as a quasi-prison system. Also, I initially believed people in Direct Provision were vulnerable, isolated and had little contact with the Irish society, when, in fact, this was not the case for all. People resisted imposed idleness and exclusion, some became involved in small food enterprises and other initiative and some managed to build positive relationships with people in Irish society while still living in Direct Provision. I realised that the women I met, shared the same concerns as other mothers and which I myself had. They worried about their children and their own attempts to provide the best life for them. It was often through discussions with participants, sometimes when the voice recorder was turned off that I felt I really got to understand the heterogeneity of people's circumstances and experiences and, therefore, to recognise how much my own ideas had changed and evolved. I suggest that participants were pleased to speak about their lives and spontaneously shared stories about all aspects of their experiences of coming to live in Ireland. I believe that getting to know and working directly with people who were international protection applicants and refugees helped me to dispel preconceptions which I had. I have also attempted to weave the story of my own research journey into the structure of the thesis as opening into dialogue with the stories told by those involved in the study. Participant stories enabled me to fulfil the aims of the research. A further aim of the research was to explore the ways in which people enter into Irish society and what role, if any, education has in the life of an international protection applicant and a refugee.

1.8 Research Questions

As the research developed and it became evident that people wanted to speak about the context in which they lived, original questions about educational experiences were replaced with five central questions: 1) What are the origins of the current system of reception for

those seeking protection? ; 2) What are contemporary understandings of the international protection applicant and the refugee? ; 3) What is the experience of living in Direct Provision? ; 4) How do international protection applicants and refugees overcome and avoid challenges in their lives? ; 5) What are the spaces and moments which create opportunities for people to feel acknowledged and recognised? I wanted to learn how the Direct Provision system functioned and what it was like to live within the confines of such a system. The disciplinary and regimental nature of the system was thus explored alongside the consequences of being understood within particular discourses and narrow constructions of identity and belonging. In undertaking this research, I wanted to understand the ways in which people think about their lives and how they seek to create new opportunities whether or not they live in the Direct Provision system. At the early stages of the research, I also thought about methods and approaches which were sensitive and appropriate to researching with people of migrant background. I considered ways of exploring and later documenting events, ideas and interactions which shaped individual lived experiences and relationships.

1.9 A Phenomenological Research Methodology

A qualitative paradigm was chosen as the most appropriate way to explore the lived experience of people who are or who had been international protection applicants or refugees. Qualitative research 'lends itself to words, thoughts and images' (Thomas, 2009:83). Using a research method which combines a storied and phenomenological approach, I gathered and interpreted stories of daily life which demonstrate what it means to live with uncertainty yet remain hopeful for the future. Using a phenomenological approach meant that both theoretical and methodological perspectives combined to provide a philosophical basis for interpreting stories. The method of analysis was mobilised to capture how daily life, the international protection process and aspirations for the future were experienced by people. This constituted the essence of the phenomenon under investigation (Husserl, 1970). The phenomenological framework linked relevant scholarly literature from various fields of study to the many structures and particular contexts which were presented in individual stories. Telling stories is considered a deeply human activity. In this thesis, stories are a means to deepen understandings of a particular way of living in Ireland, including, for many, living in the Direct Provision system. However, telling stories does not and cannot seek to arrive at

definitive solutions. Conversations and stories supported the emancipatory intent of the research as they enabled me, the researcher, to address power imbalances in a way that other approaches would not allow. Semi-structured interviews enabled collaborative and reciprocal ways of gathering multiple perspectives of lived experience and stories which I hope exemplified social and responsible research. Two focus groups helped me to uncover some of the broader questions of the role of education in the lives of people and in society. These storied methods are a means for people to 'have the freedom to choose their own story and to convey the details in whatever way they feel most pertinent' (Mueller, 2019: 7). The insights, gained from my conversations with people, were extensive and were explored in dialogue with theory. They are examined throughout a number of chapters (five to nine) and not merely confined to one chapter. An alternative format that of thematic chapters, was chosen for this study.

1.10 An Alternative Thesis Format: Thematic Chapters

Described as 'a singular, extended, medieval, hazing ritual' (Squire, 2014:1), dissertations generally follow a traditional roadmap. As far back as 1999, some educational researchers suggest that 'the field of education appears to be lagging behind other academic fields in exploring alternative formats for the dissertations' (Duke and Beck, 1999:33). More recently, the traditional thesis format is described as a 'bulky tome' and 'a concept under increasing challenge' (Davies, 2007:181). While the majority of dissertations conform to conventional formats, Davies calls for the 'creation of new forms of practice about how research theses and dissertations are represented in the academy' (Davies, 2007: 181). Therefore, this alternative thesis format responds to calls to 'reimagine the dissertation' (Modern Language Association, 2014:14). Practical reasons for suggesting a different format are based on greater possibilities for dissemination of findings to a wider audience and in more flexible ways (Watson and Nehls, 2016:44). Added to that, is criticism suggesting that, for researchers working in a practical field, the traditional thesis has little relevance (Boeckmann and Porter, 1982). While not a radical shift in terms of format, my reasons for choosing a different configuration stem from the multi-disciplinary nature of my study. When I listened to the interviews and reread the transcriptions, I realised that the complex nature of lives could not be easily understood and explained by theory contained in a single literature review chapter. Instead, I choose a

different format. I refer to theorists in each chapter which I feel would help me to better understand aspects of the lived experience of seeking state protection. It would also facilitate an encounter with the individuality and subjectivity of the refugee and experiences of seeking State protection. Therefore, I feel that a thesis format, of thematic chapters, was more appropriate to this study. While I deviate from convention in terms of design, I feel this is, in fact, the most appropriate way in which to present the rich data gathered from interviews and focus groups. Each chapter contains a theoretical framing, a presentation of stories (the data), discussion and analysis. While I transgress convention, I have selected a configuration which enables the surfacing of 'personal and social understandings and phenomena that are difficult to read properly through traditional approaches' (Leitch, 2018:161). In the following section, I present a brief summary of the thesis.

1.11 Overview of the Thesis

Following the introduction, Chapter two examines ethical dilemmas and challenges encountered throughout the research journey and outlines the steps which were taken to minimise risk to those involved in the study. Chapter three details the methodological journey and lays out the epistemological and ontological basis for the research. In addition to the theory underpinning and guiding the qualitative design, philosophical and emancipatory approaches are outlined. Chapter four explores the origin and development of the nation-state and conceptualises its connection to the refugee and international protection applicants. It details Agamben's theory of sovereign power which is produced through the current political system and excludes the refugee from the protection of the State, thus, reducing him or her to 'bare life'. It considers the formidable challenge of offering unconditional hospitality to the 'foreign other', and finally, it highlights different forms of political community and, therefore, a more ethical and moral treatment of the stranger. Chapter five explores how the history of immigration and reception in Ireland, in the context of media-reporting, events and discourse, has led to current structures and policies. It shows how the construction of immigration is a challenge for State policy as national unity has shaped spaces as well as beliefs about how we might treat 'the stranger'. Chapter six employs the writings of Arendt in order to understand the plight of the stateless. Stories of everyday experiences and encounters provide a picture of the journey through the asylum process. This chapter describes how the

space occupied by people who are international protection applicants and refugees is intensely regulated, where techniques of power and discipline are employed in order to ensure compliance and obedience with State and institutional rules. Chapter seven explores how time and waiting feature in the lives of international protection applicants. A salient and defining feature of the Irish asylum process is its uncertainty and unpredictability as there is no legal time limit on how long individuals are required to wait before they receive a decision on their application. Chapter eight considers the agency and active survival strategies employed by people. Accounts provided by three people, Ahmed, Alain and Paulina, demonstrate the complexity of responses to adversity. I introduce Alain in the following paragraph. Paulina and Ahmed were previously introduced in section 1.6.

Alain, nineteen years old, came from Democratic Republic of Congo. He was seventeen years old when he arrived in Ireland. A native French-speaker, he came into the country as an independent child migrant and lived with a foster family for a number of months following his arrival. When he was eighteen years old, he moved to Direct Provision and, at the time of interview, he was legally categorised as an 'aged-out unaccompanied minor'.

Chapter 9 considers recognition and acknowledgement of international protection applicants and refugees by the host society. Spaces and opportunities which enable them to engage with mainstream society are explored. Stories presented in this thesis provide evidence that human agency through engagement with education and with others can help to transform lives. Crosbie notes the importance of recognising and enabling human agency. 'The individual is not rendered completely powerless, but has his or her own sense of agency, or acting in the world, which can help transform the individual and his or her lifeworld' (Crosbie, 2006:236). Finally, in Chapter 10, conclusions are drawn and implications for research with people who experience asylum are discussed. It is hoped that this study will contribute to the body of knowledge regarding the experience of seeking international protection and the ways in which people rebuild their lives.

Chapter Summary

This chapter outlines the aims of the study thesis. The study seeks to understand experiences of people who migrate because they feel in danger and need safe places and ways in which to start new lives in Ireland. It explores the ways in which people were enabled to engage with institutions, with education and with others. A number of secondary objectives are concerned

with the ways in which people cope and persist while they wait. I was also interested in learning about life in Direct Provision and the ways in which people regained control over their lives after migration. In keeping with the emancipatory intent of the study, the next chapter focuses on the ethical concerns which arise when engaging in research with those people seeking State protection.

Chapter 2: Ethical Concerns

Introduction

Scholars and researchers have written extensively about the ethical concerns and challenges of carrying out research with displaced persons and vulnerable populations. Smith describes the word research as 'one of the dirtiest words in the indigenous world's vocabulary' and notes that 'it is inextricably linked to European imperialism and colonialism' (Smith, 1999:1). However, deciding not to research also 'creates ethical dilemmas in their own right and can lead to exclusion of vulnerable populations' (Birman, 2005: 164) from giving their perspective. On setting out to do the study, I thought about the most ethical approaches in conducting research. I continuously reflected, in my own notes, on how my intentions should match my actions as I moved from the initial to the final stages of the research process, but most importantly, I kept in mind the people with whom I was working. In this chapter, I provide details of my approach to ethics in the research process, the critical emancipatory framework, the people who participated in the research and the steps I took to safeguard them and to care for myself.

2.1 The Ethics of Intention

In the context of this study, I did not want to make any assumptions about the kinds of difficulties which people may have encountered in their home countries and, as a consequence, have any presuppositions about people's lack of self-determination and agency. Having never experienced the social, legal and familial fallout which forced migration can bring, I was an outsider, looking in on a life and a world which I have never experienced. As a result, I kept field notes and constantly reflected critically on my position within this research, documenting my biases, interest, my learning and my theoretical position. I wanted people who were research participants to have a clear understanding of the intent of the research, therefore, consent forms (see Appendix D) and information sheets (see Appendix C) were designed with a multilingual research participant in mind. I encouraged people to retain these so that they could re-read them if questions came to mind regarding the purpose of the

research. Initially concerned about literacy and English-language ability, I spoke to the majority of people by email or by telephone, and from those conversations, I made the assumption that they would not have difficulties with the language used in the information sheet and consent form. I did not intend to dissuade anyone from participation based on their lack of ability to communicate in English and had considered using an interpreter for those who wished to be interviewed in their own language.

2.2 The People involved in the Research

When thinking about conducting research with people, one is regularly cautioned about the risks of interacting with vulnerable populations. Scholars have asked who gets to name vulnerability and what is vulnerability? (Clandinin et al., 2016; Lessard et al., 2018). Defined as 'those who are at particular risk in society, and from the research process in particular' (Seale, 2004:123), those who seek state protection are vulnerable because they hold such little power over their own future, and the reasons for their vulnerabilities are manifold and diverse (Ní Chiosáin, 2016:93). Refugees, and, in particular, international protection applicants are rendered vulnerable by their circumstances, yet, this research kept in tension the tendency to over-emphasise vulnerability which can hide the strengths and resilience of people and present them as fragile beings, who are *defined* by their trauma.

2.2.1 Interested Participants

In early 2016, I began thinking about who might be interested in getting involved in this research. With the help of various organisations, my supervisors, also through attendance at conferences and by slowly getting to know people who had come to Ireland to seek international protection, I spoke with twenty-six people through one-to-one interviews and two focus groups (see Appendix H for a profile of the people involved in the study). People shared their storied lives and recounted critical events, moments of active resistance, stories of success and personal struggles. The majority were living, or had lived, in a Direct Provision centre in Ireland. Some had received permission to remain in the country and one was an aged-out unaccompanied minor. Three people were programme refugees and one

arrived in Ireland as early as 1986. Their experiences were somewhat different to those of the international protection applicants as their legal status meant they gained rights to work, education, health and housing soon after their arrival in Ireland. Over an eighteen month period, each individual mentioned above openly and generously shared their stories of escape and arrival, their impressions of Ireland and their experiences of navigating a new way of being.

2.2.2 Absent Voices

I was concerned about absent voices. I thought about those who were classified as 'hard-to-reach', those who were unwell, socially isolated, depressed, fearful, who were facing deportation, who did not speak English and who feared others. I was not able to capture their stories, and from that perspective, I feel my work is somehow incomplete or limited. Furthermore, the majority of those I interviewed were of African background, and while the study was not designed to be representative, ideally, I would have included people from a greater range of nationalities and backgrounds. I am not quite sure why those who came forward for interview were mainly of African background. I hypothesised that perhaps it was because they are more established in Ireland and within the Direct Provision system. Perhaps language played a role as English is spoken in many African countries. In 2016, when I began the fieldwork for this study, large numbers of people from the Middle East were coming to Ireland, yet few came forward for interview. I began to wonder if their newly arrived status and linguistic proficiency in English contributed to this reluctance. At the time, I did not realise that possibilities existed for enlisting the help of a linguist or translator who had been through Direct Provision. With regard to the involvement of an interpreter, I thought about interpreter sensitivity to the people involved, knowledge of the Direct Provision system and the kinds of challenges which people face. Pym et al. describe the interpreting and translation professions as some of the most unregulated in the world, with little oversight in terms of qualifications, training and experience (Pym et al., 2012, 3). In using the services of an interpreter, I was concerned about the risk of upset, mistreatment or misunderstanding of participants and I was fearful that participants may be uncomfortable with having a second person involved in the interviewing process. Furthermore, some of the details provided by people attending for interview could have been lost during the translation. Fearful, yet willing

to provide such a service, if requested, the need did not arise. People self-selected to become involved in the research and those who volunteered to participate were possibly the most able and vocal among the English-speaking asylum-seeking and refugee populations. This meant the multilingual voices of other non-anglophone potential participants were missing. Before beginning the interviews process, I considered interactions and the research methodology which may, in fact, be damaging and anti-democratic. Therefore, in wanting to be inclusive and sensitive to participants an emancipatory research approach was chosen which reflected social justice ideals (Nkoane, 2012:98, Lynch, 1999).

2.3 Safeguarding People involved in this Study

Throughout the data gathering process and with the emancipatory intent in mind, it was important to be alert to any aspects which could potentially result in negative consequences for those who engaged in the study. I was conscious that for some people, answering questions and reflecting on their past and current situations may bring back unpleasant memories. For some people, the interview process might be 'an immersion in intense and difficult experiences- and thus unforeseen emotional experiences' (Hays and Singh, 2012:92). Potential risks were emotional upset or mistrust of researcher and institutions.

2.3.1 Safeguards – Procedures and Methodologies

Throughout the research process, I considered and acted to uphold the autonomy, voluntariness and well-being of people. Safeguards were put in place by using accepted research procedures and methodologies, and I remained accountable in undertaking work that did not harm people. Initially, these methodologies included regular phone calls and email exchanges principally with Diane (see section 1.6) and Faith (see details in the following paragraph). Diane had put me in touch with Faith before I commenced the data gathering process. I got to know Lewis through my contact with MASI and all three became trusted links to other participants. They provided opinions and advice on what the research might achieve and approaches which were most appropriate and sensitive. Diane and Faith, spoke openly about their own struggles since they arrived in Ireland and I relied on them, to some

degree, for their advice on how best to ensure that nobody felt damaged and harmed by my questions or my approach. Faith and Diane also suggested that they would help with any issues which might emerge.

Faith was twenty-eight years old and from Zimbabwe. She is a sister to Belinda and mother to a nine year-old girl. She was proactive and involved in this research. She assisted in organising the first focus group and has kept in touch with me since we first met a number of years ago. She was living in Direct Provision for nine months at the time of interview. Faith participated in both an interview and the first focus group.

Belinda is a sister to Faith and is married to Greg. At the time of interview, she was living in in Direct Provision in the Midlands with her husband Greg and two daughters for a period of three years. She described how she really wanted a 'normal life' for herself and her children. Belinda participated in both an interview and the first focus group.

Greg, in his early forties, is from Zimbabwe, is married to Belinda and they have two children. He lived in Direct Provision since 2010 and his family arrived at a later stage. At the time of interview, he was concerned that his oldest daughter would not be able to take up her place on a third level course in an Irish institute of technology due to the cost of fees. He really wanted to have the right to work. Greg participated in the first focus group.

I continue to maintain contact with Diane and Faith and, to a lesser extent, Lewis who had helped me throughout the entire research process, in organising focus groups and in providing advice and ideas for the layout of the thesis. Lewis invests a lot of his time to voluntary work with MASI, and this has meant that he was not always available to add his voice to this inquiry. I heeded advice regarding various safeguards. Thus, I contacted participants after interviews and focus groups, where possible, to thank them but also to find out if they were satisfied with the interview process and ensure that it had not caused any upset and to answer any questions. I organised the interviews in neutral spaces and arranged transport when necessary. I returned transcripts for member-checking and regularly sought the advice of Diane, Faith and Lewis, and, at times, Ahmed, Zahir, Khalid, Claude and Paulina on various topics and chapters within the thesis. I provide details about Claude in the short paragraph below.

Claude, in his forties and originally from Burundi, was a native French-speaker and had received leave to remain shortly before we met for interview. He had lived in Direct Provision in the Mid-West region for a period 12 years. During that time, he had worked as volunteer in his local community and had made lots of contacts and friends.

I checked with participants, on an ongoing basis and where possible, their wish to include their own story in the research. I made it clear that people had the right to change their mind at any stage about their involvement. I thought about how I might respond to participant upset and distress and consulted with my supervisors. If the need arose, I was ready to pause or call off the interview altogether. I also thought about finding or funding counselling support for participants but this need did not arise. Participants had the opportunity to check accuracy the actual words attributed to them. I email relevant transcripts and chapters to participants. I listened carefully to the voices of participants and watched carefully for any signs of upset or distress. My supervisors, although they were not present for the interviews and focus groups, provided independent support and advice. I attempted to minimise risk by ensuring that everyone fully understood the purpose of the research and my intentions as a researcher. This was done through the use of information sheets and consent forms.

2.3.2 Informed Consent

Seale defines informed consent as 'the procedure that aims to support the principle of individual autonomy and is widely agreed to be a safeguard for the rights of human subjects participating knowingly and voluntarily in research' (Seale, 2004:120). Information sheets which were short and simplified provided written details of the research and what it hoped to achieve. It outlined the risks and benefits of taking part and information was presented in an accessible manner through a series of questions and answers. I tried to ensure that the written information respected the assent and dissent of those involved in the research. Consent forms and information sheets were emailed a few days ahead of interviews and focus groups, where possible. Unfortunately, at the time, not all participants had access to email and had limited access to broadband. In these cases, consent forms and information sheets were discussed and signed on the day of interview. With regard to the focus groups, consent forms and information sheets were emailed to both Diane and Faith who had kindly organised these on my behalf. Re-consent was sought from those who participated in focus groups at a later stage. Any ambiguous or confusing phrases or terms in the documentation or emails were explained, and I encouraged discussion and questions about the study. I spent time with people discussing the hopes I had for what the research might achieve, reading through the information sheet, asking for their opinions and completing the consent form. I advised people that they could withdraw from the process at any stage with no consequences. I

referred to anonymity and the fact that people's identities would be protected. I assured participants that their names would never be used in the research and that the name of the places where they lived would not be revealed at any point. The consent form was signed by both the individuals participating in the study and myself, the researcher.

On the day of interview or during the focus groups, some people asked me to read the consent form with them while others were happy to read it alone. In some cases, the people I interviewed had little interest in the information sheet or the consent form, they just wanted to talk. The nature of the research, whether it was PhD research or some other type of research, seemed to be of little significance for them. However, it is the right of people involved in research 'to be informed that they are being researched and also about the nature of the research' (Punch, 1994:90). I wanted, at all costs, for the people involved in the study to have trust in my desire to help and bring about change.

While I had ethical clearance from MIREC to research educational experiences, those involved in the research wanted to discuss their lived experience of flight from a home country and the subsequent process of seeking international protection in Ireland. I appreciated early on in the research journey that it was impossible for participants to disconnect the topic of education, learning and participation in Irish society when they wanted to explain the context of their lives and the ways in which their legal status impacted every aspects of their lives. I could not hurry people on to the topic of education when they felt there was so much more to tell me about their ideas, feeling, fears, past experiences and future aspirations. Through the interview process, it became obvious that a methodological shift had taken place and it also meant that education was no longer the central focus of the thesis. I felt that people wanted to talk about their lives and I went into the interviews with the intention of listening and paying attention. I felt that any other approach would have been unethical. It was as if people spilled out their stories and I did not want to intervene and to stop them. This would not have been appropriate given the emancipatory framework within which I wanted to work. Before interviewing people and when reading through the information sheet and consent form, participants knew and understood that the focus of the research was education. In each interview and focus group, questions were asked about educational interests, experiences and future plans, however, in order to talk about education, participants explicitly expressed the view that their wider participation and engagement with structures and society also needed to be discussed. Throughout the data gathering process, I

discussed each of the interviews, focus groups and the stories which emerged with my supervisors. I was often saddened and impacted by the stories which did not end once they were documented in this thesis. I sent emails and text messages thanking them for their time and interest in the study and was humbled by their willingness to participate in my research and to share their stories so openly and honestly.

2.3.3 Researcher Self-Care

I thought about self-care and considered my motivation, particularly on the days when interviews and focus groups were due to take place. I thought about early signs of upset or burnout and about my own reactions to various situations described by participants. I allowed myself time to reflect and write before and after meeting people in interviews and focus groups. I planned breaks of a few days and sometimes weeks between interviews and I wrote, in particular, about the experiences which impacted me most and which I found upsetting. I thought about and noted my positive and negative emotions, assumptions and fears. I listened to my own voice and considered how I was feeling particularly after hearing the details of difficult and ongoing experiences such as those related by Alain, Paulina, and Ahmed. I discussed the interviews and focus groups with my supervisors while protecting the identity of the participants. Throughout the data-gathering process and in writing up the research, I took regular breaks from the process. I allowed myself time to reflect and, thus, monitored and managed my feelings, emotions, and responses to various difficult life situation which were evident in participants' stories.

2.4 Building Relationships with participants

Throughout the research, I thought about how I could mitigate the issue of a power imbalance between me, the researcher, and the people involved in the research. Critical emancipatory theory, with its roots in critical theory is based on 'a quest for social transformation' (Crosbie, 2014:97), calling for those involved in the research and the researcher to be equal partners in the study. When I began my field work, I considered 'risks, distrust, and hierarchical distances' (Pittaway et al., 2010; 235-239). In an effort to be open, I disclosed

details about my own life. I spoke about the setting in which I grew up and where I now live. I mentioned my parents, the kind of work I did and I related some details about my own children. The fact that I was a teacher, and in particular, a mother, was of interest to the women. They spoke about parenting and schooling and we conversed on related topics. I hoped that the opportunity to speak about their own personal experiences would be liberating and that they realised they had a valuable story to tell. Reissman tells us that 'speaking out invites political mobilisation and change' (Riessman, 2008:8). The therapeutic aspects of storytelling have been documented in research, and through my own study, I learned that people often turn to story 'to excavate and reassess memories that may have been fragmented, chaotic, unbearable, and/or scarcely visible' before sharing them (Riessman, 2007:8).

Many participants enjoyed the opportunity to break with an established routine and to meet with someone who was interested and attentive to them. When interviews and focus groups were complete, I felt a mix of guilt and discomfort as I was able to leave the interview and return to a 'normal life', while some of the people I spoke with had to return to the confines of the Direct Provision centre. Furthermore, I had removed myself from their company, left the relationship and was about to use the information they had shared 'in the service of something else, for my own purposes, to show something to others' (Josselson, 1996:70). I was a witness, had been part of a story and now I was about to share that story.

2.5 Navigating the Power Imbalance

The issue of informed consent cannot be discussed without, first of all, considering the power imbalance between; the researcher, and the people who participated in the study. I recognised that I came to this study from a place of privilege. My legal status as an Irish citizen denotes the right to vote, to be politically active and to travel freely. The people who participated in this research enjoyed few of these privileges and rights, and consequently, had less power over their own lives. As a result, I was conscious that perhaps they might lack the self-esteem and confidence to challenge a researcher, to ask probing questions about the purpose of the research or to withdraw entirely from the research process. I tried to converse and answer questions which were asked about my life and the research, while being sensitive to

difficulties associated with displacement and seeking sanctuary in a haost country. I attempted to focus on their stories and on their lives rather than providing a very scholarly account of what the research may achieve and of what it meant to be a PhD student. I did not want my approach to compound any suffering or to contribute to the further silencing of people. I tried to regularly gauge their level of comfort when speaking with me. I was also acutely aware that the interests of the research could not be prioritised over the well-being of those who participated in it. I tried to emphasise that I would like the research to be led by those who were involved, that I preferred it to be collaborative. In retrospect, perhaps the type of collaboration that I had originally envisaged was not fully achieved. I got the impression that they were seeking an advocate in me: someone who was willing to object to their treatment and advocate on their behalf.

Throughout the research process and beyond the co-creation of stories, I continued to weigh up the benefits of the study against any potential risks or distress. Lynch notes the importance of language and discourse in research and the ways in which it can add to people's positioning within society (Lynch, 1999:53-58). With this in mind, I considered language and non-verbal forms of expression which I used when thinking and writing about people. I believe non-verbal communication enabled me to capture underlying messages. For example, Paulina told a story about her dangerous and frightening journey from Zimbabwe to Ireland amid bursts of laughter. I wondered if this was a way for her to remember that particular episode in ways which were less traumatic. In this case, I felt a contradiction existed between verbal and non-verbal information. When other participants hung their heads or shook their heads, they often corroborated a verbal account of fear or despair. I understood that pauses in conversation and the low tone of voice which Beth used were indications of difficult and sad memories. She confirmed this by saying that she had blocked out painful memories and simply could not remember much about living in Direct Provision. Also, I thought about cultural mannerisms such as hand gestures and facial expressions and I wondered if I had interpreted these correctly. A small minority of stories were well-considered and related with little expression, I wondered if this indicated a suspicion of researchers and unwillingness to reveal some of the more intimate details of lives. While the spoken word was privileged in this research, and non-verbal forms of expression were not formally gathered in each interview and focus group, these were noted in a research journal and enabled a broader understanding of the ways in which people make meaning of their experiences.

2.6 Discourse and Language in Emancipatory Research

Lynch also notes that 'one cannot escape the reality of power relations even within the language of emancipation' (Lynch, 1999:53). It is often noted that the language used in research can replicate forms of oppression common in society, and the ways in which people think cannot be separated from the language they use (Susen, 2010). Therefore, I paid close attention to the wording used in consent forms (see Appendix, D), information sheets (see Appendix C) and interview questions (See Appendix A). I considered the language which I used in conversation with people, before, after and during the interview process, and finally, in writing about people. Nkoane notes that 'discourse takes into account the holistic nature of human expression and encompasses the material world and individual lives' (Nkoane: 2012:100). With this in mind, I was conscious, not only of the ways in which I wrote about experiences and about people but also my physical behaviours and facial expressions. I had a heightened awareness of the ways in which I greeted people, of smiling and nodding in agreement, of my posture, of making eye contact and expressing solidarity through body language. I attempted to create a positive and supportive relationships by asking questions, talking about myself and the research before seeking informed consent for the study.

2.7 Representation or Misrepresentation

A researcher needs to ensure that the people in a study are represented in a fair and unbiased manner. Josseleson asks 'how does it feel to be written about' (Josselson, 1996:62). She describes her ethical dilemmas of misrepresenting others: 'I worried intensely about how people feel about what I write about them. I worry about the intrusiveness of being 'writ down', fixed in print, formulated, summed up, encapsulated in language, reduced in some way to what the words contain' (Josselson, 1996:62). What I wrote and what I chose to leave out may have consequences for people and for representations of international protection applicants and refugees in a wider context. People may be able to recognise themselves in the research, and they may experience discomfort at how I have represented them. For me, accuracy, fairness and sensitivity were of the utmost importance in constructing and relating other people's experiences. I tried to avoid cherry-picking particular details which I felt might fit a particular research frame or agenda, instead presenting the reader with the totality of

experiences. In this research, I wanted to avoid common polemic understandings of refugees and international protection applicants which is so often evident in media representation (Haynes et al., 2005; Musarò and Parmiggiani, 2017; D'Haenens et al., 2019). I spoke with Faith and Diane over email and by phone to clarify if the depiction of lives and experiences was accurate. Their responses led me to believe that any research or writing which drew attention to the ills associated with the asylum process and Direct Provision, in particular, would be met with approval.

2.8 Confidentiality and Anonymity

The importance of ensuring that the details surrounding the stories remained confidential and anonymous were among the key ethical considerations for me. Confidentiality 'is the right to privacy in the research relationship' (Hays and Singh, 2012:84), and it is noted that 'research is only truly anonymous when participants identity is concealed from the researcher' (Hays and Singh, 2012:84), however, this is rarely possible. I reassured people both verbally and in writing that the stories they shared with me, would not be linked to their name or the place in which they were gathered. Pseudonyms were used instead of real names. Since some of the people participating in the research process were awaiting a decision on their application from the Department of Justice, they were a vulnerable group, and fundamental worries about confidentiality and anonymity could easily be compounded.

2.9 The Ethics of Dissemination

The ethics of research dissemination can be understood as a responsibility for researchers to share benefits coming from having completed a study with those who participated in the research. One of the key goals in embarking on this research was awareness-raising around the legal and social positioning of people who are international protection applicants and refugees. As a consequence of its multi-disciplinary nature, this study may be of interest to a broad range of people and organisations, from the asylum-seeking and refugee communities themselves to government agencies, policy-makers, local authorities, voluntary organisations, NGO's, the public, academics, educators and students. However, the key question here

centres on the ethics of disseminating the findings and to whom they should be made available. For those who may have felt they have 'taken the risk' of getting involved in the study, it is important that their voices and stories will be heard, (while they remain anonymous). I hope to present my study at targeted national and international forums and conferences, and perhaps disseminate the findings through publications. This research may serve as a reason to bring together refugee communities with Irish communities, to highlight the injustices of the current system of reception and yet to remain open to counter-narratives and other perspectives. I hope to re-engage with members of MASI and those who participated in the research and to ask them for their opinions about the ways in which they would like the findings to be used.

Chapter Summary

This chapter documented the ethical dilemmas of researching with people who are international protection applicants and refugees. These included a range of converging issues such as access, power relations, consent, ethical procedures and approaches to the research the benefit for the 'researched' (Mackenzie et al., 2007:300). In highlighting the issues which concerned me, I outlined the steps which I took to eliminate or minimise any risk to the people who engaged with the research. In the next chapter, I discuss the ways in which the research was carried out and provide a rational for choosing a qualitative and a phenomenological method. I outline a hybridisation of approaches: putting philosophical and empirical approaches into conversation with each other. Finally, I provide an assessment of the rigour and integrity of the methods.

Chapter 3: Methodology

Introduction

In the last chapter, the ethical concerns and dilemmas which arose when researching with international protection applicants and refugees were detailed, some of which I had to accept as continuous and ongoing tensions. In this chapter, I present the research design, the methods and approach which underpin this study and which, as Lather suggests, naturally mirror 'our beliefs about the world we live in, and want to live in' (Lather 1991:51). This chapter details the logic and beliefs which underpin the selection of the conceptual framework. In the first section, I provide an overview of the philosophical and empirical traditions which underpin this study and then move to explain why a phenomenological approach was used. I explain the ways in which I met with and invited people to participate in the study, the sample size, the interviews and a description of the procedures of data analysis.

3.1 Philosophical and Empirical Research in Dialogue

Recent work in philosophy of education opens up a way of bringing philosophical and empirical research into dialogue. Shuffelton notes that this happens when 'scholarship in both domains explores alternative possibilities to familiar constructions of meaning' (2014:137). This research was initially precipitated by a number of questions that demanded both philosophical and empirical exploration. Initially, my questions focused principally on educational experiences and the role of education in lives. However, as the people spoke and spilled out their stories, the focus of the research changed. Therefore, it became apparent that original questions, which I had in mind, regarding educational experiences of people of migrant background needed to be considered in the broader context of seeking international protection and reception. Therefore, I attempted to use philosophy to help explore the context of people's lives. I considered 'what is it like to leave one's home country and seek to create a life elsewhere? If people are poorly treated in their host country, what does that mean for individual lives? What are the experiences of people living in Ireland who have sought asylum here? Those stories and accounts contributed to a philosophical mode of inquiry. The hermeneutic process meant reading and interpreting in order to gain an understanding of the

human consequences of seeking asylum in Ireland, and also exploring how those stories re-framed or illustrated concepts in new ways. The manner in which the empirical aspects of the study were carried out is outlined in this chapter. This was put into conversation with the philosophical approach. Both the philosophical and empirical aspects of the study illuminated experiences of seeking State protection as well as the struggles and opportunities which ensue, but they also provide insights into other themes like space and time. Philosophy is a 'sensitising instrument' (Brinkman, 2012), which facilitates 'open discursive spaces where common understandings limit interpretive possibilities' (Wilson and Santoro, 2015). This approach honours ideas about this research as reforming and emancipatory, enabling dialogue, reflection and reciprocity (Lynch, 1999:55-59).

3.1.1 Pursuing Philosophy through Empirical Research

In a number of studies, Santoro tries to understand teacher attrition and in listening to a series of interviews with teachers, she considers the moral reasons behind teacher dissatisfaction. For her, philosophical thinking is based on the kinds of questions she asks, the methods she uses to approach a topic and the outcomes of the study (Wilson and Santoro, 2015:173). Her work is helpful in understanding the ways in which stories can be interpreted through a philosophical lens, showing how one can gather 'expressions of value' (Walker 1998), without specifically asking questions about values, moral or ethical issues. Santoro suggests that 'pursuing philosophy through empirical research—poses unique methodological challenges' (Santoro, 2015:116). It is her interpretation, or rather, the way in which she analyses what teachers say which itself is philosophical. Informed by Santoro, when I asked people about their everyday experiences, their experiences of education and their aspirations, I did not explicitly ask about values and ethical issues which surround the experience of seeking asylum, instead I invited them to reflect on their own experiences. I tried to be sensitive and to show compassion in my questions and responses. People wanted to talk about what mattered to them most and I needed to listen and be faithful to what emerged.

Santoro refers to the work of Lightfoot and Hoffman Davis (1997) in describing her approach as portraiture, 'a methodology which starts out with a search for goodness and that represents subjects in a manner in which they may not see themselves, but reveals something new to them and others through that representation' (Santoro, 2015). In this respect, portraiture, in

this study, sought to reveal how people made sense of their experiences in Ireland and also sought to create new representations, in a way that might not otherwise be made visible. This approach seemed appropriate to this research as it raised questions of values, of the ethical and moral aspects of experiences in the context of seeking asylum, living in Direct Provision, and in making an entry into a host society. It was as if the participants were given an opportunity to think about their own lives and enabled and given time to consider the importance of their own story and how they wished to present this to others. The themes and meanings which emerged would not have been possible to capture without participants who were willing to be open and relate an intimate picture of their experience of coming to Ireland, seeking international protection and subsequently, attempting to create a new life here.

3.1.2 A Multi-Disciplinary Approach

Although I set out to study experiences of education, the approach to this study became multidisciplinary, which Santoro describes as the meeting of her 'palette' and 'the canvas, through philosophical techniques and aesthetics' (Santoro, 2015). This PhD research considers the meaning of legal, historical, educational and existential aspects of lives. Rereading the transcripts revealed aspirations, values, imagination, feelings, thoughts, language and actions, and, so, I looked to wider philosophical literature to explore and clarify questions and concepts which arose. For example, in my interview with people, many spoke about their lives as fragmented, with a past in a home country, a present in Ireland and an uncertain feeling about what the future might bring. They noted the ways in which they were positioned through political and societal discourse. In order to uncover the meaning of some of these existential questions, I looked to the work of Arendt and Agamben to understand 'statelessness', life in the 'in-between space' and the ways in which power operates in society. I examined the literature on resilience and resistance, on time and waiting and on liminality and space. The work of Freire offers insights into the role of education in changing the lives of people and the kinds of spaces which allow for participation in society. Since the research was committed to foregrounding lived experience and the voices of people involved in the research, while being concerned with bringing about change in collaboration with them, the hermeneutic approach fulfilled the emancipatory intent enabling continual reflection and consultation with participants. In so far as possible with a PhD thesis, I wanted

the participants to feel that they were the owners of these stories with distinctive and invaluable insights into the experiences of seeking asylum.

3.1.3 Presenting Alternative Views of Phenomena

The process of reading and re-reading the transcripts led me to see new and enlightening phrases which were significant in the research and could be interpreted through philosophy. Santoro notes that 'phenomena do not respect disciplinary boundaries' and that both empirical research and philosophical inquiry can achieve comparable objectives (Santoro, 2015:177). Both kinds of inquiry involve 'taking one's starting point in human experience, providing comments, and thus, trying to open the eyes of others to particular human realities' (Smeyers and Verhesschen 2001:71).

By working with these texts, I aimed to also present alternative views of phenomena that are not always recorded by using qualitative research methods. Shuffelton notes that blending the empirical and the philosophical reminds readers that there are alternatives to the world as people might see it. She suggests 'the actual world is not the only possible world, and one of the most important projects of political and ethical philosophy has always been to remind readers that our social and political landscape could be otherwise' (Shuffelton, 2014: 146). In the case of this research, an empirical approach was a means of gathering stories but philosophy was required to conceptualise them (Golding, 2015:206), to imagine otherwise and to offer a critique of the status quo. The ongoing exchange between empirical research and philosophy in interpreting and meaning-making transformed the nature of the research.

This approach is not without its challenges and finding the words, the language and the concepts to provide a philosophical interpretation of very ordinary and practical experiences was sometimes difficult. It was also difficult for participants to sometimes see the significance or meaning of particular life events. Some participants provided a chronological account of their lives and did not reflect as deeply as others on the meaning of those experiences for them. Others used objective and concrete terms rather than abstract or reflective language to describe critical life events, their psychological consequences and impact on decisions-making. I often returned to points which were made earlier in interviews and encouraged discussion and analysis of experiences but this did not always lead to deeper

insights. I did not want to make assumptions about why this was the case and did not want to cause any distress. Some people's responses to my questions were more emotional than others and it was obvious that people had different ways of describing and disengaging from prior or ongoing difficult experiences such as negative responses to their application for international protection, dispersal, the threat of deportation and a sense of being 'stuck'. For some people, it appeared as if difficult live events had disrupted their understanding of the world and their relationships with other people. It was apparent in the research that people became more suspicious and less trusting of others and of systems. Taking into account the belief that the way one thinks might be reflected in the language one uses, I was struck by the ways in which people used language that focused on their expectations and aspirations. Sometimes they used the conditional tense to describe their future in Ireland. In this thesis, I sometimes wondered if people would describe their experiences differently to another researcher. I thought about my own position and impact on the research. I describe this in more detail in sections 2.4, 2.5 and 3.7.1. I also wondered if using abstract language to recount personal experiences helped some participants to work through their own responses to difficult events and, therefore, helped to reduce stress. Through my conversations with people, I believe the use of philosophy gave me a language to move into the realms of reflection and imagination. The blending of approaches produced rich and striking insights and provided, I suggest, more thoughtful responses to the research questions than I might have otherwise managed. Presenting empirical findings on their own might have missed the wider significance of the wisdom, knowledge, insight and perception of the people who were involved in the study.

In conclusion, Golding, Santoro and Shuffelton note that philosophy need not be so sharply differentiated from empirical research. 'Hybridising' (Shuffelton, 2014:137) is a methodological approach that can go beyond the story and attempt to open the eyes of others to particular human realities (Smeyers and Verhesschen, 2001:71). The following section explains the theories informing the selection of methods, which underpin the emancipatory and social justice goals of the research.

3.2 Reflections on an Approach to Understanding Life Experiences

It is impossible to consider the issues of researching and addressing the inequalities which exist for people who are refugees and international protection applicants without reflecting on the means of gathering information and constructing knowledge. When reading and researching different approaches to research, I thought about the ways in which people who are not citizens can have their voices heard and participate in Irish society. I had a sense that research and statistics about marginalised groups does not always include their voices, experiences and opinions (Lynch, 1999). I thought about collaborative and participatory research methods which might make it easier for people to express themselves and to take more control of the research process. I considered methods and approaches which might enable active engagement among participants throughout the process and one which was congruent with my own qualitative approach, understanding and beliefs. I reflected on the challenges and opportunities in researching the unique and complex experiences of seeking international protection, and some of these were set out in Chapter 2. Before beginning the field work, I wondered how interested people would be in the research, what risks might exist for them and if they would trust me with their stories. I also thought about opportunities to create research which could have a meaningful practical outcome, and if my research could influence the ideas and practices of teachers, academics, politicians and the public. On this basis, I chose a critical emancipatory research framework which brought together the approach and the values of the research. This meant the voice and the agency of those who were interviewed for the study were prioritised through the use of a critical emancipatory method used to gather, analyse and present individual stories.

Kemmis suggests that critical emancipatory research is predicated on working collaboratively with the people who are the 'subject' of the research (Kemmis, 1995), and, therefore, issues of power imbalance needed to be constantly addressed throughout the research. In keeping with the emancipatory goals of the research and for the purposes of generating new knowledge on the topic of seeking asylum in Ireland, this meant that a qualitative approach to learning about the reality of people's experiences was most appropriate. Emancipatory research methods can integrate an approach which facilitates an understanding of the subjectivity of human experiences and reflexivity, as it 'is only through the constant analysis of one's own theoretical and methodological presuppositions that one can retain an awareness

of the importance of other people's definitions and understandings of theirs' (Lynch, 1999:58). With this in mind, this perspective offered by the qualitative research traditions was considered most appropriate in understanding experiences, in co-constructing knowledge with other people and in valuing the voice of participants. I hoped that a greater understanding of individuals' lived experiences could influence the ideas, discussion and policy which currently inform the ways in which government, educators, health and voluntary organisations engage with people. Additionally, I hope that this study will contribute to an alternative discourse on how society and policy-makers conceptualise those who seek international protection, moving from a legal/citizenship approach to a more phenomenological understanding of the lived experience of people at the centre of asylum applications.

3.3 A Critical Emancipatory Approach: Listening and Giving Voice

In this section, I explain the emancipatory goal of creating opportunities for the voices of people to be heard, while also problematising this concept for individuals who are rarely asked about their opinions or afforded chances to comment on their experiences. Critical emancipatory approaches can be located within an epistemological tradition which suggests that the ambition of academic research and discourse is not only to present a holistic picture and explain the world, but to attempt to change it. Lynch is critical of positivist approaches in terms of giving voice to those who are impacted by inequality and the ways in which they are framed in research. She notes that research 'which regards people as "units of analysis", treats them as "variables" whose attributes can be neatly reified into dependent and independent types' (Lynch, 1999:46) is inappropriate and oppressive. Suggesting that this approach fails to define people 'in a holistic way', she argues that it does not demonstrate an 'understanding of their subjectivity', and their 'relational conditions of structured inequality often become invisible'. (Lynch, 1999:48). She also suggests that this leads to 'experts' gaining and owning greater knowledge about people's lives than the people themselves, arguing that the very owning and controlling of stories of suffering and adversity adds further oppression and is, in fact, 'a type of colonisation' (Lynch, 1999:48). In light of this, and in keeping with the emancipatory goals of this research, I attempted to create an opportunity for voices to be heard and for stories to be presented and owned by individuals.

This approach is not without its critics. Researchers suggest that employing emancipatory research methods is in itself 'an exercise of power, which can result in silencing some voices' (Danieli and Woodhams, 2007:282). Thomas states that emancipatory research 'is campaigning' (Thomas, 2009), maintaining that researchers have a 'duty of balance, fairness and thoroughness' (Thomas, 2009). Robson states that feminists have been critical of emancipatory research approaches 'as merely replicating male norms of scientific research' (Robson, 2002:29). However, despite these criticisms, this approach was chosen because it was sensitive and democratic in nature and resonated most strongly with this research. Many of the ethical concerns of doing research are connected to its emancipatory goals and were explored in the previous chapter (Chapter 2, section 2.4). I endeavoured to present a philosophical and ethical understanding of lives, 'recognising the moral right of research subjects to exercise ownership and control over the generation of knowledge produced about them and their world' (Lynch, 1999: 55). Hearing the voices of the people involved in the research was the best way for me to get close to the workings of the asylum process and its impact on lives; 'to understand the 'powerless' but also the 'powerful'' (Lynch, 1999: 47).

3.3.1 Surrendering Neutrality

Becker suggests that within social science research, the researcher is always obliged to take sides, and notes the impossibility of research which is uncontaminated by personal and political sympathies. 'To have values or not to have values', the researcher finds themselves 'caught in a crossfire' between creating neutral and value-free research, which is 'shallow and useless', (Becker, 1967:239) and one which reflects the researcher's position. It is questionable whether or not any individual is free to describe the world with total impartiality. In this study, there is a clearly articulated position which suggests that there is need to listen to the voices of people who are refugees and international protection applicants in order to understand the nature of their experiences, and to listen to their own analysis of their situations. In this way, the research methodology was connected to my own beliefs that the thinking, the treatment and the policies which affect both groups need urgent attention and reimagining. Throughout the research process, I thought about the degree to which my research was emancipatory and the things I could do to make people feel comfortable and not in any way exploited. I tried to frame my actions and communication in social justice, hope, and respect for the individuality and the story shared by each participant. I hoped that our

dialogues would help people to think more deeply about their own story, the way they wished to represent themselves and critically, to believe that their story was important.

3.4 Phenomenology

3.4.1 A Phenomenological Research Approach

Van Manen describes phenomenology as 'a project of sober reflection on the lived experience of human existence–sober, in the sense that reflecting on experience must be thoughtful, and as much as possible, free from theoretical, prejudicial and suppositional intoxications. But, phenomenology is also a project that is driven by fascination: being swept up in a spell of wonder, a fascination with meaning' (Van Manen, 2007:12). Phenomenology is the study of things as they appear to us through experience and a means to explore, clarify and elaborate on ways of seeing and understanding the world. It is a theoretical lens which suggests that the exploration of individuals' experiences as human behaviour is conditional on the phenomena of experience. Patton (2002) states that phenomenology is about interpreting 'how participants perceive a phenomenon, describe it, feel about it, judge it, remember it, make sense of it, and talk about it with others' (Patton, 2002:104) as it 'aims to open up possibilities for creating formative relations between being and acting, between who we are and how we act' (Van Manen, 2007:1). The setting is no longer treated as something irrelevant and is considered inseparable from lives and experience. Phenomenologists argue that it is not logical to think of objects in the world without considering our subjectivity and our understanding of them. An object only becomes real when we become conscious of it. Our perception is dependent on context and our relationship with the object. The phenomenologist studies the arrangement of various types of experience ranging from feelings, thought, memory, perception, imagination, emotion, desire, and intention, embodied action as well as social and linguistic activity (Neubauer et al., 2019:93). In the section below, I will present some key ideas from the work of Husserl and Heidegger which explain how phenomenology has guided and supported this research.

3.4.2 A Historical Perspective on Phenomenology

Towards the end of the nineteenth century, positivists who called for logic and reason in academic scholarship began to realise that all aspects of actuality could not be explained by the laws of deterministic causality (Borzaga, 1966). While phenomenology, as a concept, was introduced by Kant in the mid-1700s, it was further developed by Husserl among others (Hays and Singh, 2012:50). Phenomenology is seen by Husserl as a way of gaining a deeper meaning by understanding reality (Laverty, 2003) and developing a science of consciousness or experience. Husserl is, in fact, attempting to transform philosophy into a strict science (Guignon, 1993). His philosophical ideas are based on exploring the 'essences', and the transcendental nature of consciousness by understanding the meaning which is attributed to experiences (Guignon, 1993). Phenomenology is both a philosophy and an approach to study or research which focuses on people's perceptions of the world and their experiences in that world. It is the perception of 'things in their appearing' (Langdridge 2007:11). There are different types of phenomenology 'each rooted in different ways of conceiving of the *'what'* and the '*how*' of human experience' (Neubauer et al., 2019:91). Phenomenology is broadly divided into two schools, that of Husserl's transcendental or descriptive phenomenology and Heidegger's hermeneutic (interpretative) phenomenology. During the second half of the twentieth century, other philosophers added to, refined and developed ideas and methodologies based on these. They included Merleau-Ponty, Sartre, Gadamer and Van Manen (Langdridge 2007; Smith et al., 2009). Further contemporary approaches include lifeworld research, post-intentional phenomenology and interpretative phenomenological analysis. The following two sections consider the origins of phenomenology and its division into two styles of thought.

3.4.3 Consciousness: Philosophy of Edmund Husserl

Phenomenological philosophy has its origins in the work of Husserl (1859-1938). In the early 1900's, this was further developed by Heidegger (1889-1976). Husserl argues that the focus of phenomenology suggests the need to focus attention on an individual's perception of the world in which they live and what it means to them: their singular and individual lived experience. Husserl notes that in order to reach and understand the essence or the core of consciousness, the suspension of presuppositions or 'transcendental reduction' is necessary

(Finlay, 2012:177). The term 'bracketing', developed by Husserl, is a methodological device of phenomenological inquiry that requires deliberate suspension of the natural attitude that is of one's own knowledge, values and beliefs about the phenomenon under investigation (Carpenter, 2007). It is believed that 'bracketing' (*epoche*) of assumptions, in this way, is a means to increase the rigor of a research inquiry. 'This must lead us back to a neutral stance, whereby we neither confirm nor deny the existential status or empirical facts about entities' (Kearney and Rainwater, 1996:5), including oneself, in the world. In terms of approach to research, transcendental subjectivity is thus understood, according to Lopez and Willis, as a state wherein 'the impact of the researcher on the inquiry is constantly accessed and biases and preconceptions neutralised, so that they do not influence the object of the study' (Lopez and Willis, 2004:727-728). It is only at this point that consciousness could be probed and analysed without bias.

The objective researcher moves from the participants' descriptions of facts about the lived experience to universal essences of the phenomena at which point consciousness itself could be grasped (Davidsen, 2013:728). Crotty points out that it is almost impossible for qualitative researchers to be totally objective (Crotty, 1998) in their attempts to bracket in this way. This has to be understood as being different from subjective bias which needs to be addressed as part of the rigor and substance of the study. The idea of reduction is further developed through *imaginative variation*, 'wherein all the participants' descriptions of conscious experience are distilled to a unified synthesis of essences through the process of free variation' (Neubauer et al., 2019:93). This involves intuition and reflection on multiple variations of the phenomena in order to fully grasp its essence. Husserl also uses the concept of intentionality and notes that human consciousness is intentional in the sense that thinking is always directed towards something (Zahavi, 2012). This suggests that it is impossible to think or feel without thinking about something or feeling something. Furthermore, consciousness is never free or empty but aware of something in the world outside one's being.

Employing a phenomenological approach allows for a recognition of individual, subjective and personal consciousness, that is, 'consciousness in its full, living, concrete, dynamic richness, in what is called the 'Heraclitean flux' or 'stream of conscious life' (Moran, 2013:39). Perceptions, knowledge of the world and experience take place through consciousness. When we are immersed in conscious actions, our attention is focused on a

specific object, thought, feeling or aim, but not on the mental process which identified these. It is upon reflection that we come to realise the individual and subjective involvement we have with these, and how these phenomena present themselves to us. For Husserl, all knowledge which we obtain about the world around us is gained through experience. Experiences are refined by the conscious mind in an active and ongoing process. Perception, thought, feeling, memory, beliefs, imagination and emotion concern what Husserl understands as 'intentionality', identified as deliberate attention or consciousness of an object or event.

If we think of these ideas in light of this research, then we would consider the process rather than merely the content. We would concern ourselves with how people remember and tell their story, how they respond to questions and understand how phenomena are experienced differently. Phenomenology, therefore, as a research methodology operationalises a set of methods through which researchers gather rich descriptions of experiences. These methods are useful in creating a clear picture of the people who were involved in the research, the personal beliefs of the researcher, along with other peoples, who may have had, or who may in the future have similar experiences. Dowling notes that 'there are as many styles and understandings of phenomenology as there are phenomenologists' (Dowling, 2005:131). In the case of this research, the phenomenological focus on experience, the discussion on intentionality and the way the world appears and is experienced was my key focus. This was best understood through interpretative or hermeneutic phenomenology as proposed by Heidegger.

3.4.4 Heidegger and Phenomenology

While Husserl was interested in the nature of knowledge, an epistemological focus, Heidegger built on these ideas concentrating on the nature of being and temporality, an ontological focus (Neubauer et al., 2019:94). Concerned with the science of being in the world, ontology rather than epistemology, he expands the tradition of hermeneutics or interpretation through his ideas of 'being-in–the-world' (Spiegelberg, 1982: 271-358). He moves beyond the descriptive, from mere knowledge, as a concept, to the meanings that are embedded in ordinary everyday events. He maintains that life must be considered in its historical and cultural context and understood with regard to language. Experiences must not

just be described but interpreted. This is interesting in terms of this research which had an ontological focus. It considers 'being and temporality' through the experiences and stories told by those who participated in the research. While transcendental phenomenology seeks to get to the essence of an experience in order to discover the elements of that experience, requiring the researchers to 'refrain from making judgements,' (Hays and Singh, 2012:50), existential phenomenology, as developed by Heidegger, is the investigation of life in itself. In it, 'no theories are in dispute, but only genuine insights versus ungenuine. The genuine ones can be obtained only by an honest and unreserved immersion in life itself' (Malpas, 2006). Heidegger's work centres on the notion that the life of others could not be understood independent of the experience of it. Van Manen notes that 'from Heidegger's perspective, one cannot really account for the context since we already live in it, before we make sense of it in an interpretative manner'(Van Manen, 2007:17). It suggests that 'we understand our world without noticing the background practices in terms of which our understandings are experienced as being in the world in a certain way' (Van Manen, 2007:17). Context and subjectivity, therefore, are inevitably implicated in research. Finlay notes that 'it is precisely the realisation of the intersubjective interconnectedness between researcher and researched that characterises phenomenology' (Finlay, 2009:111).

This study, based on Heidegger's hermeneutic interpretative phenomenology, does not attempt to bracket off the experiences, knowledge and presuppositions which, I, the researcher, bring to the research process but instead 'recognise that the researcher, like the research subject, cannot be rid of his/her *lifeworld'* (Naubauer at al., 2019:95). Hermeneutics is the art of interpretation, and thus, creates meaning. 'Meaning in this context is not a thing that is final and stable, but something that is continuously open to new insight and interpretation' (Friesen et al., 2012:1). In applying this approach and in an attempt to understand how people of asylum-seeking and refugee background make sense of their lives in a host country, the structure of lived experience is understood in relation to a particular context or place where place can be more than just a geographical setting but has existential implications. This approach opens a space for us to ask questions regarding feelings and perceptions. With regard to this study, the questions centre on: What is it like to experience migration? What is it like to participate in education? But also questions of how time and space are experienced, what it means to be excluded from the life that is lived by citizens and what it means to make an entry into that life and space.

3.4.5 Dasein

Heidegger notes the importance of temporality in experiences, as understanding in the present is influenced by our past and a reckoning of the future. Heidegger's (1962) concept of 'Dasein' (being there) describes the positioned and contextualised nature of life for human beings and suggests that individuals are not free of their experiences in the world (Malpas, 2006). People, and, in particular, researchers, bring with them knowledge, experiences and a particular background. Dasein, which is used to unravel the nature of 'being there' and 'of existence', has a number of key characteristics: the experience of time or temporality and how everyday experiences are shaped by those in the past (Langdridge, 2007). Dasein is understood as the conscious being who has the ability to engage with the world and to reflect upon it, while also being aware of that engagement and its evolving nature. The characteristics of Dasein are not fixed and immovable but suggest imaginable paths and inclinations which we choose to assign to our existence.

Dasein is constantly projecting toward future possibilities since existence obliges individuals to create it. Heidegger refers to the term 'authenticity' as a matter of exploring and expressing our unique and individual being. It is concerned with 'thematising properly that which has remained unthematised in ordinary life, with making explicit what was only implicit' (Buckley, 1992: 201). 'Inauthenticity', on the other hand refers to the lack of awareness, lack of freedom and an acceptance of life and the human being as a fixed reality. Furthermore, Heidegger suggests that the lifeworld is expressed through language. This implies a narrative approach where language, experiences and the world around us are intertwined. The world and our experiences in the world can only become intelligible through language and our ability to interpret it. Interpretative analysis which follows then positions the original description in connection to a wider social and cultural context. Gadamer focuses on the ways in which language is related to and reveals being, and notes that understanding can only happen through language. For him, language, understanding and interpretation are inextricably linked (Langdridge 2007).

3.4.6 Language and Understanding: In Conversation with Gadamer

Gadamer, influenced by the work of Husserl and Heidegger, was a student and colleague of Heidegger's. Gadamer developed interpretive phenomenological thought and considered the difficulties which people often experience in understanding. He attributes these to 'our very uneasy social and world-political situation' (Gadamer, 2006:13). He notes that reaching an understanding can only happen through language. 'All the phenomena involved in reaching an understanding, the phenomena of understanding and misunderstanding which constitute the central focus of what we call "hermeneutics", clearly involve language' (Gadamer, 2006:14). Schleiermacher (1998) and Gadamer disagree over the nature of the hermeneutic process. Schleiermacher (1998) defines hermeneutics as the 'art of understanding'. He argues that reading words involves a dual action, an equal concern with language and with the writer and with what he describes as 'grammatical interpretation' and 'psychological interpretation'.

> As every utterance has a dual relationship to the totality of language and to the whole thought of its originator, then all understanding also consists of the two moments, of understanding the utterance as derived from language and as a fact in the thinker.
>
> (Schleiermacher, 1998:8-9)

He suggests that interpretation is more than just being able to read, it is an action which calls on multiple skills including innate knowledge. Gadamer disagrees with this perspective and suggests that the reader is not interested in the intention of the writer but with the meaning which one takes from the text. This is explained in the following quotation.

> Understanding means primarily to understand the content of what is being said and only secondarily to isolate and understand another's meaning as such.
>
> (Gadamer, 1990: 294)

Dowling suggests that Gadamer considered "prejudgement", 'one's preconceptions or prejudices or horizons of meaning, is part of our linguistic experience that makes understanding possible' (Dowling, 2007:34). Gadamer also considers 'universality' and notes

that both the speaker and the listener are connected by a common human consciousness. 'The process of understanding *per se* are both language-events that resemble the inner conversation of the soul with itself, a conversation which Plato asserted was the very essence of thinking' (Gadamer, 2006:13). In keeping with the critical emancipatory framework which promotes the voice of people and their spoken words, and in employing a hermeneutic phenomenological approach based in an ontological tradition, this study listened to experiences of those seeking asylum, as gathered through conversation in interviews. This phenomenological approach suggests that gathering 'data' from people through stories was the best way of learning about and describing the nature of their lived experiences, and understanding the phenomena which surround the lives of those who seek State protection.

3.5 A Storied Approach

The emancipatory goal of this research is to create a space for the voices and essence of experiences to be heard and understood, and this was enabled through stories. Kearney reminds us that 'every life is in search of a narrative' and he regards the opportunity to tell one's story 'as a stay against confusion' (Kearney, 2002:4). Stories can be looked at in their cultural context, as something told by a dominant group, within that culture (Miller and Glassner, 1997), creating clichéd and false representation of a particular group. Research such as this, therefore, which is working within a particular context, can contradict stereotypical and hackneyed perspectives and attempt to locate stories which are not considered the norm. The process of gathering stories necessitated the development of constructive, trusting and comforting relationships offering insights into people's everyday worlds. Chase reminds us that stories are an interpretation or version of reality, and researchers need to remind themselves of the fuzzy territory between reality, a person's interpretation of reality and a researcher's interpretation of that story (Chase, 2005).

In the context of this study, inviting individuals to reflect and recount experiences in order to make sense of their lives in the context of seeking international protection meant the use of words and their written format, texts. The multiple, yet singular, nature of the diverse stories provided different ways to understand the aspirations, suffering, thoughts, decision-making and chronology of experiences. Listening to the voices of people who are seeking, or who

have sought international protection, one can learn so much about the existential consequences of struggling to belong, or even keep going and the ways in which people exert agency as a result. Finlay notes the 'need to study human beings in human terms' and, therefore, suggests modes of engagement found more commonly in the arts; ones which 'retain their concrete, mooded, sensed, imaginative, and embodied nature' (Finlay, 2009:14). Similarly, Van Manen warns that seeking instrumental or practical outcomes from the use of phenomenological approaches is futile. 'The practicality of a phenomenology of practice should not be sought in instrumental action, efficiency or technical efficacy' (Van Manen, 2007:11). He compares the phenomenologist to a poet stating that 'the poet directs the gaze toward the regions where meaning originates, wells up, percolates through the porous membranes of past sedimentations—and then infuses us, permeates us, infects us, touches us, stirs us, exercises a formative affect' (Van Manen, 2007:11). Thus, gathering memories and reflections was done by means of semi-structured interviews.

Through interview, there were attempts at a co-construction of understanding, followed by interpretation (Gadamer, 1990). This was challenging at times as people were often not used to standing back from their own lives, exploring and speaking about them in the way the research required. Many had difficulty finding the words to describe emotions and feeling but instead described daily challenges which indicated to me the kinds of things which preoccupied them and what their lives were like. This was particularly true for those living in Direct Provision. There were other challenges when participants sometimes did not return calls or respond to emails. I often waited and wondered if the wording of my communication was clear and explicit, and there were many times when I had to follow up gently with reminders. I got the sense that it was difficult for people to see themselves as contributors of this research as they had few opportunities to feel ownership and control over different aspects of their lives. Furthermore, in many cases people were preoccupied with other matters, such as their legal situations, family reunification, progression of their own application and the education of their children. I hoped that creating research in collaboration with participants would enable a shared understanding of multiple and varied phenomena which arose in our conversations. As I re-read and reflected on the words and perspectives of the people I spoke with, I learned about their world through the constructs which provided a glimpse into the respondent's identity (Smith, 2003). Understanding the complexity and the content of the stories meant that I engaged in 'an interpretative relationship with the transcript' (Smith, 2007:66).

3.6 Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis

The analysis of the stories was a critical stage of the research process as it meant selecting a method which adhered to the emancipatory goals of the research, and, at the same time, facilitated an exploration of the ways in which people made sense of their personal and social worlds. An Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) approach was selected for this study to not only capture the experiences of people who seek State protection in Ireland, but to understand the ways in which people made meaning of these experiences in their own lives. Jonathan Smith, Professor of Psychology is credited with having developed IPA, a critical realist approach, which has its origins in hermeneutic phenomenology. Based on Heidegger's ideas about phenomenological inquiry, this approach to analysis is from the beginning an interpretative process, in that telling stories and detailing experiences is often complex and it requires a process of engagement, followed by interpretation on the part of the researcher.

3.6.1 An Idiographic and Hermeneutic Approach

Frequently used in psychological research and characterised as phenomenological, hermeneutic and idiographic, Smith and Osborn (2007) refer to the work of Conrad (1987) when they acknowledge the complexity of attempting to get an 'insider' perspective. This study is idiographic in the sense that it is concerned with exploring experiences and carrying out a detailed examination of individual and singular perspectives, before making any general claims. In attempting to provide a holistic account of the experiences of seeking State protection, we come to learn something about an individual's understanding and reaction to their experiences. The use of a two-stage interpretation process or double hermeneutic in this analysis, made it a phenomenological study. My analysis of those stories that were analysed by people in the research, offers another perspective in making sense of their world. For me, the researcher, it meant asking critical questions of the stories provided by people, referring back to the literature in order to understand the meaning they took from their experiences, and, in turn, the meaning which I made of their stories. Smith and Osborn note that when we speak about understanding, we are also doing more than that. They suggest 'the ordinary word "understanding" usefully captures these two aspects of interpretation-understanding in

the sense of identifying or empathising with and understanding as trying to make sense of '(Smith and Osborn, 2007:54). Furthermore, and in keeping with emancipatory goals of the research, IPA has a theoretical commitment to the person as a 'cognitive, linguistic, affective and physical being; as it assumes a chain of connection between people's talk and their thinking and emotion state' (Smith and Osborn, 2007:54). A phenomenological approach suggests a hermeneutic circle (part and whole) with a dynamic relationship between the part and the whole, at various levels. This implies that 'to understand the part, you look at the whole; to understand the whole, you look at the part' (Smith et al., 2009:28). Described as 'a non-linear style of analysis' (Smith and Osborn, 2007:60), it offers the possibility of 'constantly digging deeper with one's interpretation' (Smith et al., 2009:181). Smith et al. also contend that a further hermeneutic circle is the dynamic between the researcher and participant, the interpreter and that object of interpretation. This meant that the researcher listens to the stories which 'requires an intense attentiveness to and engagement with a participant as he/she speaks' (Smith et al., 2009:9) suggesting that the researcher is changed by the encounter with the person and their story. Bearing in mind this suggestion that a further part of the cycle takes place through interpretation when the researcher reflects in the encounter, I reread and listened to the recorded accounts given by people, asked questions and tried to make sense of them in consultation with the literature in the fields of migration and citizenship, statelessness, temporality, imprisonment, resilience, resistance and education.

The use of IPA meant that there is less description than in other approaches, and therefore, I relied on literature to illuminate the meaning attached to individual experiences, perspectives and beliefs. While I approached the research with particular questions in mind, I did not have pre-determined ideas about what the stories might reveal to the reader. The emancipatory ideals of the research were also realised in this approach to the research as it was fluid as opposed to fixed. It suggests that people could answer interview questions in different ways. This meant that some people focused on the legal aspects of their experiences in Ireland and others spoke about existential challenges. It was the exploration of experiences and their meaning which characterises this study as IPA, and therefore, phenomenological.

3.6.2 The Participants: Approaching the questions of sampling

Abrams notes 'that 'thoughtfulness' about sampling procedures is critical for the success of any qualitative research project' (Abrams, 2010: 539). I suggest that there are layers of sampling in this thesis. In keeping with the emancipatory framework and the logic of IPA, my approach to sampling was initially purposive and then snowball sampling. I felt that those who held the title of asylum-seeker (now commonly referred to as International Protection Applicant) or refugee, or had done so in the past, were best positioned to offer recent and pertinent insights into questions of seeking refuge. The research, in turn, offered them a platform for expression and for communicating their own singular experience. As noted above, in order to respond adequately to the research question, and as an IPA researcher, I began by using purposive rather than random sampling, with the aim being to gather stories about education and through the focus on lived experiences. Smith and Osborn advocate this approach to sampling as it enables the researcher to engage 'a more closely defined group for whom the research question would be significant' (Smith and Osborn, 2007:56). Initially, I had minimal success in attempting to find people willing to participate when I contacted particular organisations and NGOs which engage in advocacy work with migrant groups. Also, purposive sampling did not entirely fit with the emancipatory objective of the research as it did not permit others to make decisions about who should be involved in the study. Those decisions, by the logic of purposive sampling, rested with me, the researcher, and thus failed to involve others who had already engaged with the process. It meant that using my 'judgment about who will provide the best perspective on the phenomenon of interest, and intentionally inviting those specific perspectives into the study' (Abrams, 2010:538), others could unintentionally be excluded.

Theoretical sampling was also dismissed as it is associated with grounded theory approaches and is based on properties, characteristics and divisions that emerge in the process of data collection and analysis (Charmaz, 2006). A snowball sampling approach was the preferred way of identifying potential participants. Having gained the trust and interest of Diane, Lewis and Faith who were living in Direct Provision at the time, my study was endorsed by their positive attitude, thus, encouraging others who were familiar to them or resident in the same centres to get involved. This was, in fact, the most effective way of engaging a wider cohort of people in the study. The emancipatory framework also meant that no one who was interested in participating was excluded. Smith and Osborn note that it is difficult to know the

correct sample size. They point out that 'Iit partly depends on several factors: the degree of commitment to the case study level of analysis and reporting, the richness of the individual cases, and the constraints one is operating under' (Smith and Osborn, 2007:56). The many perspectives and richness of the descriptions provided in the stories of twenty-six people was adequate in creating a picture of the experiences of seeking asylum and what that meant for lives. The constraints which I was navigating in accessing people for interview are detailed in the next section. As noted in Chapter 2, twenty-six people generously agreed to engage with the study, all of whom arrived in Ireland between 1980 and 2015 and were resident in various parts of the country. The inclusion of people who had been in Ireland for a number of years provided a longer-term perspective, but it also meant that the more recently-arrived could also contribute their ideas. All were aged over eighteen years, and by coincidence, the majority were parents and were female. People were not selected on the basis that they were representative of the wider asylum seeking and refugee community, but instead provided unique and singular perspectives.

3.6.3 Interviews

In keeping with the emancipatory objectives of the research, I wanted to show sensitivity to those who agreed to participate and in the means of gathering data for the study. This was achieved through conversations and stories enabling intimate and caring exchanges (Brinkman and Kvale, 2005). A qualitative data collection technique which captured the 'who, what and where of events and experiences' was called for (Sandelowski, 2000). Interviews were considered appropriate as the study focused on the meaning of particular phenomena. These experiences and ideas could not be captured through survey, questionnaire, observation or other methods commonly used in qualitative research. Smith notes that gathering information requires a flexible approach and that the most appropriate way to collect data for an IPA study is through the semi-structured interview (Smith and Osborn, 2007:57). Based on this reasoning and in order to get as close as possible to people's realities and the essence of their reality, interviews were chosen as the means to gather data. Conversations were 'responsive to both the phenomenon and the subjective interconnection between the research and the researched' (Finlay, 2009:7). These supported the gathering of ideas, experiences and understandings which also formed part of the emancipatory approach, prioritising words and voices of the people involved in the research. Fontana and Frey state

that ‘asking questions and getting answers is a much harder task than it may seem at first’ (1994:361). However, as a method of gathering data, Seale states that ‘interviews allow for flexibility, greater depth and more sensitivity to contextual variations in meaning’ (Seale, 2004:165).

Before beginning the data gathering, I understood that three different types of interview existed. The structured interview was not suitable as it ‘relies on a pre-established sequence and pace of questions that a researcher follows rigidly’ (Hays and Singh, 2012:239). This did not fit with the emancipatory goals of the research as participant voices might be constrained by the structure and defined by the goals of the research (Bogden and Biklen, 2003). The unstructured interview was also rejected as, often associated with ethnographic research, it is more suitable for use in making screening decisions (Dana et al., 2013:513) or for use in observations (Esterberg, 2002). Smith and Osborn note that within the IPA method, semi-structured interviews ‘allow the researcher and participant to engage in a dialogue whereby initial questions are modified in the light of the participants’ responses, and the investigator is able to probe interesting and important areas which arise’ (2007:57). The approach to interviews also adhered to the emancipatory goals of the research as it included flexibility in terms of changing, reframing, adding and removing questions based on ideas put forward by people in the research. It enabled people to tell different kinds of stories, and to introduce a theme which I had not included or initially thought relevant. Ideas found in IPA and emancipatory approaches intersected at this point as ‘in the relationship, the respondents can be perceived as the experiential expert on the subject and should therefore be allowed maximum opportunity to tell their own story’ (Smith and Osborn, 2007:59).

The narrative text produced from interviews was explicitly about the person’s experience although I set out to explore experiences of education. Interviews provided in-depth knowledge of individual experiences of seeking international protection, but also of experiences of learning and engagement in both adult and further education settings and institutes of technology in Ireland. Following these, I conducted two focus groups, the first provided idiographic details of children’s experiences of school, the second provided accounts of adult experiences of attending a University of Sanctuary along with experiences of participation in learning in other education contexts which provide adult learning programmes. Focus groups allowed people to compare their ideas and experiences with those of others which provoked rich and spontaneous responses to questions. It meant that

participants took greater control of the interaction and there was less need for me to ask questions and probe responses. Ideas and responses shared in the focus group allowed me to fill in gaps in understanding experiences of engagement with education.

3.6.4 Focus Groups

Frey and Fontana note that there are different types of focus groups and they can serve a variety of purposes from exploratory to phenomenological (Frey and Fontana, 1991:184). A focus group can be defined as a small gathering of people, who share a common interest or characteristic, brought together by a facilitator, who converses with the group in order to gather information (Gibbs, 1997). Krueger and Casey suggest that participants influence and are influenced, while researchers, manage multiple roles such as, that of host, facilitator, listener, observer and analyst (Krueger and Casey, 2000). Glitz maintains that the use of focus groups is based on two principal beliefs. The first is that individuals can provide a detailed and distinctive source of information about a subject. The second is that the individual and group responses provide data that cannot be gathered using other methods (Glitz, 1998). A focus group was chosen over interviews as a means to discuss specific topics, namely, the ways in which education was experienced by people who are asylum seekers.

In focus groups, 'participants are selected for their similarities with regard to at least one particular characteristic related to a study topic' (Hays and Singh, 2012:252). It was the interactive nature of this approach which was important, facilitating discussion of the experiences of attending school and university. Focus groups are more complex than interviews as they call on the researcher to commit to the group, and also to the individual. I considered the group dynamic which existed and tried to ensure that all participants were facilitated in providing an account of their own singular experience. Tomkins and Eatough (2010) note that there is debate as to whether focus groups can work with an IPA approach. They note that 'phenomenology is concerned with part-whole relations' and attempts to explore 'the essential structure of a phenomenon or experience and the constituent parts that go to make up that phenomenon or experience, often expressed in terms of meaning units or themes' (2010:245). In focus or research groups, 'there is clearly an additional form that this concept of the part-whole dynamic can take, namely, the interrelationship between the group

and the individual participant(s)' (Tomkins and Eatough, 2010:245). In short, focus groups impact the 'interrelational nature of experience' (Finlay and Evans, 2009). It has also been noted that the group dynamics might overcome the research topic itself and, that answers may be influenced by the presence of a group, meaning that people would provide a different account if they were in a one-to-one interview setting (Dunne and Quayle, 2001). Despite this, I felt the focus group was a useful means to learn about specific aspects of experiences, particularly those in education.

3.6.5 Designing Questions for Interviews and Focus Groups

Smith notes the importance of constructing 'an interview schedule which forces us to think explicitly about what we think/hope the interview might cover' (Smith and Osborn, 2007:59). In keeping with the goals and approach of this research and the sensitivity required in working with people who are seeking international protection, preparing questions in advance meant that I had time to consider emotional difficulties that arise in responding to questions. I also thought about the questions I would not ask. As I did not want to replicate the kinds of experiences which people might have endured during questioning by the International Protection Appeals Tribunal or an immigration officer, I decided not to ask about the reasons why people left their home countries or about details of their lives prior to their arrival in Ireland. I felt these questions might cause upset and were not in keeping with the emancipatory intent of the research. The wording and delivery of the questions needed to be carefully considered and significant thought given to explaining questions. I designed a list of eight open-ended questions for interviews and five for focus groups, hoping that people would need little prompting. The questions were designed to get as close as possible to people's stories, without using too many questions, thus, inviting them to exercise ownership and control over their unique and singular stories. This was a way for participants to include individual accounts of experiences, events and other issues which were important to them. Interview and focus group questions were not intended to be overly prescriptive and invited participants to discuss topics which were of interest to them. In the following section, I outline the specific detail of the research process: the steps and stages of the field work which took place over time.

3.7 Steps and Stages of the Fieldwork

I received ethical approval from the Mary Immaculate College Research Ethics Committee (MIREC) in February 2016 which meant I could begin the data gathering process. During the following months, between February and June 2016, I moved to the next stage of the research and sought interested participants. Throughout the data gathering process, I was guided by those who became involved in the study and I wrote about interesting ideas and discussions which emerged from the interviews and focus groups.

3.7.1 Access

Researching with people who experience marginalization and inequality is not easy for many reasons. They are often hard-to-reach, socially stigmatised and framed by media and immigration structures as a homogenous group (Veale et al., 2001). At the start of this data gathering process, in Spring 2016, I contacted various voluntary and statutory organisations which work with people of migrant background and explained the purposes of my research. I initially hoped these organisations would assist me in locating people for the study, but the majority seemed reluctant to get involved for ethical reasons. I thought about how I might appear to these organisations and to the participants themselves. I was white, middle class, a qualified teacher now working in a third level institution. I reflected on what this might mean to those I was trying to reach and if they had already experienced research fatigue. I thought about my own privilege and what it means to research with people who have much less access to services, income and opportunities. I asked of myself if it was even appropriate that I conduct this research at all. I kept in mind that not doing the research also had implications. I had little success in generating interest in the project initially and, therefore, turned to my supervisors for advice. I explain this in the following section.

3.7.2 My Contact with Direct Provision Centres

In September 2016, one of my supervisors suggested getting in touch with Direct Provision centre managers and provided me with some contact details. Through email, I asked if it would be possible to organise meetings about the research and to display a poster. I emailed

and telephoned the managers. At the time, some of the phone numbers of the Direct Provision centres displayed on the RIA website no longer seemed to work. Only two out of approximately twenty-five centre managers replied to emails. One centre manager agreed to display a poster which provided information about the research, but a few days later advised that there was no interest and that there would be little point in organising an information session or visiting the centre. I was frequently disappointed and even disheartened in my failure to generate interest in the research. At one point, one of my supervisors suggest that I might need to reconsider the title, topic and how I might go about this study. I abandoned the idea of contacting Direct Provision centres as means of finding interested participants. At the end of October 2016, and during the school mid-term break, one manager invited me to visit and meet with residents in a centre located in the east of the country. On arrival, I met Anne who worked in an advocacy role and was employed by an external organisation. She had responsibility for organising education courses and helping people with applications for school and further education. She introduced me to people from a variety of countries, including Syria, Albania, Kuwait, Iraq, Brazil, Eritrea and Somalia. She advised that I was welcome to speak and engage with people but not to interview people as she felt that might be distressing for them. I spent the day with her, meeting residents and gaining new insights into the world of Direct Provision. I felt heartened by the empathy and kindness in her approach to the residents but overwhelmed by the stories which she and they recounted. That evening, I wrote extensively about what I had seen, the stories I was told, my own impressions of the centre and my brief conversations with people.

With the help of both my supervisors and through attendance at conferences and other events related to migration, I met with twenty-six people who became involved with the research. An interview schedule is provided in Table 1 showing that gathering data for this study began in October 2016. The interviews and the first focus group were completed by the end of April 2017. A second focus group was completed on 28th May 2018. Gaining access to settings and meeting potential participants is explained in great details the following section (section 3.7.1).

Stage 1 -Autumn Semester 2016	
Interview with Samir	7th October 2016
Interview with Diane	11th October 2016
Interview with Vera	20th October 2016
Interview with Beth	20th October 2016
Interview with John	20th October 2016
Interview with Claude	30rd October 2016
Interview with Lawrence	27th November 2016
Stage 2 –Spring Semester 2017	
Interview with Alexander	18th January 2017
Interview with Lewis	1st February 2017
Interview with Paulina	3rd February 2017
Interview with Romeo	21st February 2017
Interview with Robert	21st February 2017
Interview with Tia	21st February 2017
Interview with Belinda	6th March 2017
Interview with Faith	6th March 2017
Interview with Ahmed	7th March 2017
Interview with Zahir	21st March 2017
Interview with Khalid	21st March 2017
First Focus Group (Greg, Marlyn, Flora, Grace, Faith and Belinda)	28th March 2017
Interview with Alain	19th April 2017
Stage 3-Spring Semester 2018	
Second Focus Group (Diane, Aneche and Bandile)	28th May 2018

Table 1

Stage 1 - Autumn Semester 2016

A friend in the College where I was studying asked Samir (see section 1.6 for Samir's profile), originally from Iran, if he would be interested in getting involved in the research. Samir was the first person I met for interview and we agreed to meet in a café which was known to both of us on the evening of 7th October. A few days later, on 11th October, I met Diane for interview at the Direct Provision centre where she lived (see section 1.6 for more details). As I had spoken with my supervisors regarding the difficulties in meeting potential participants, they put me in touch with a voluntary organisation, based in Dublin's north inner city. This enabled me to subsequently interview three people, Vera, John and Beth in October

2016. I travelled to Dublin and we met in the offices of the organisation where I was invited to use a meeting room. I introduce Vera, John and Beth in the following paragraphs.

Vera was in her forties at the time of interview and had spent eight years in Direct Provision. She has one daughter who was two years old when they arrived in Ireland. She was living in the country for eleven years at the time of Interview. When she arrived from Zimbabwe, she claimed asylum and lived in a number of different accommodation centres in Dublin, and was moved to the west of Ireland for a short time.

John, who was in his late fifties, had been in Ireland for twelve years. He was born in Kinshasa in Democratic Republic of Congo. He spent four years in the Direct Provision system and had living in various different centres around the country. He received permission to remain in Ireland in 2005 and became an Irish citizen in 2013.

Beth was twenty-nine years old when she left South Africa for Ireland. She was living in Ireland for thirteen years at the time of interview. She initially came alone, but her daughter joined her after two or three years. She lived in Direct Provision for five years and was required to move to different centres around the country. She was living in Dublin at the time of interview.

Claude (see section 2.3.1 for Claude's profile) also participated in separate interviews in October. We met following phone calls and email exchanges with Deirdre who worked in an immigrant support centre which was located in a small town in the west of Ireland. I travelled to the centre on two occasion and Deirdre introduced me to Claude who participated in an interview on 30th October 2016. We met on a cold and rainy Sunday afternoon in a noisy hotel foyer close to Claude's home. Shortly after the interview, in November 2016, I had the opportunity to attend a seminar on the topic of seeking international protection, in NCAD, where I met with members of MASI, some of whom were living in Direct Provision. This was how I met Alexander and Lewis (see section 1.6 for profiles of both Alexander and Lewis) who became interested in the topic of the research. Lewis provided me with contact details for Lawrence (see section 1.6 for Lawrence's profile) who was living in Dublin at the time. Based on a positive experiences and endorsement from Lewis, he agreed to come for interview in Spring 2017. Thus, my supervisors, as well as Diane, Faith and Lewis acted as a trusted link between me and the community I was trying to reach.

Stage 2 - Spring Semester 2017

Interviews with Alexander and Lewis were held on separate occasions, on 18th January and 1st February 2017 in the café at NCAD in Dublin. Lewis put me in touch with Tia, Robert and Romeo (see section 1.6 for profile of all three participants) who were living in the same Direct Provision centre in the north east of the country and were very keen to speak about their personal experiences of attempting to access higher education. We met for the interview in a meeting room in Dublin city centre which was kindly organised on my behalf by one of my supervisors. Diane put me in touch with Paulina (see Section 1.6 for Paulina's profile) and following email exchanges, I travelled to the midlands to meet her for interview. We met in the classroom of an adult education centre on Friday evening, 3rd February 2017. I met Khalid and his brother-in-law, Zahir at a seminar in University of Limerick. Following a number of email exchanges explaining the research, they invited me to conduct the interview at their home, close to Dublin, which they shared with Khalid's wife and children. I travelled there to meet them on 21st March 2017. I was humbled by their openness and generosity. I read an interview with Ahmed in a newspaper and also in a college publication and emailed him about my research. He agreed to participate in the study, and, on 7th March 2017, I met him for interview at the college campus where he was studying at the time. Belinda and Faith came for interview and also participated in the first focus group along Greg (see section 2.3.1 for profile), Marlyn, Flora, Grace, all of whom lived in the same Direct Provision centre in the Midlands on 28th March 2017 (see Section 3.7.4 for more details on this organisation of the first focus group).

Grace, originally from Zimbabwe, was forty-four years old and a mother to two teenage boys. She was outspoken about lack of educational opportunities at third level for young people who are in the asylum process. She had been living in the midlands in Direct Provision since her arrival two years and a half years before the interview. (Grace participated in the first focus group).

Marlyn was in her forties and had been living with her husband and three children in a Direct Provision centre in the midlands for a year and a half. She was from South Africa, was a trained chef and appeared to be a leader within the group. She was frustrated with the asylum process and really wanted to be able to work. (Marlyn participated in the first focus group)

Flora was a soft-spoken, forty-four-year-old South African childcare worker. She had been living in Direct Provision in the midlands for one year. She had two children who remained in Africa. She worked as a volunteer in the homework club in the centre where she lived. (Flora participated in the first focus group).

I also interviewed Alain (see Section 1.11 for Alain's profile) on 19th April 2017. He had come to Ireland as an unaccompanied child and was living in Dublin at the time. With the help of my supervisor, I made contact with an organisation which supports those who are legally classified as 'aged-out unaccompanied minors', and I was invited to come to a youth group gathering where I met Alain. In the days, week and months between interviews and focus groups, I continued to engage with literature and readings which would help me to understand and explore individual stories and experiences. I completed first drafts of chapters two, three and four at this point.

Stage 3- Spring Semester 2018

I met Diane a number of times during the academic year 2017/2018 to exchange ideas and thoughts for the research, to explain my progress and listen to her experiences of her first year at university. She chatted about her changing identity, the social aspects of being in different space and her new learning. She was keen to share her experiences with me and she felt her insights and those of others who were also recipients of sanctuary scholarships could make an interesting contribution to the thesis. In the following months, Diane invited Aneche and Bandile to become involved in the study and in a focus group. I introduce them in the following short paragraphs.

Aneche was twenty-six years old when I met him. Outspoken about the harm which Direct Provision caused to peoples' lives, he had lived in various centres in different parts of the country. When I met him, he just had received permission to remain in Ireland. He took part in the University of Sanctuary focus group but was critical of how the asylum process had inhibited him from participating in third level education.

Bandile was a quiet and soft-spoken twenty year-old from South Africa. He had completed his first year of the University of Sanctuary programme and had been living in Direct Provision for two and a half years.

All three participants were busy with assignments and exams throughout the year. From my discussion with Diane, I thought it best to wait until the end of the academic year 2017/2018 to organise a focus group. Diane advised that a meeting in May or June would suit best, and I understood that seeking their participation in a focus group during term time was a lot to ask. Therefore, I completed the second focus group in May 2018. Interviews was recorded on an

Excel spreadsheet between the months of May and September 2018, and the analysis was conducted between September and December 2018, using Smith's IPA model. This process was completed in six stages and is outlined in section 3.8.1.

3.7.3 Engaging in Interviews

This stage of the research involved setting up and running interviews and two focus groups, sometimes with the help of Faith, Lewis and Diane who were involved with the study from the beginning. I had ethical clearance to conduct both interview and focus groups and Interviews and focus groups took place over a twenty-one-month period, starting in October 2016 and ending in May 2018. While foregrounding educational issues (see Appendix A for a schedule of questions). I also knew that with semi-structure interviews a kind of flexible openness and unpredictability was part of the research journey. As explained in earlier chapters, I was responsive to the direction in which participants wanted to take our conversations and what they wished to articulate. I was often nervous before interviews and focus groups. Fearful that people may describe their sense of loss, become upset at recalling frightening and difficult circumstances, I wanted to be responsible and empathetic and to ensure that I would be able to comfort them sufficiently if the need arose. I wrote short memos recording my thoughts, feelings and expectations before and after interviews and focus groups, noting fragments of conversations and ideas which I found interesting, important, upsetting, frightening and surprising. In an effort to create a convivial atmosphere for participants, tea, coffee and cake were offered before and during the interviews, where possible.

I carried out eighteen interviews and two focus groups during that time. As I endeavoured to find participants, I spoke to colleagues and friends about the challenges of generating interest among the international protection community, and with a sense of excitement about the project, one colleague brought a small group of male international protection applicants to see me. However, I was uncomfortable with the way in which they had been asked for their participation, I felt they had been coerced, had not been given sufficient time to read about the project and were too unsure about their level of interest. As I had ethical concerns about the way in which they had been consulted about their voluntary involvement in the project, and following a discussion with them and with my supervisors, it was decided not to include

them in the study. While my colleague wished to help, I felt that they had been given an inaccurate representation of the study, and that undue pressure had been applied in seeking their participation.

Prior to all interviews, I discussed a suitable location for meeting and I did not want to inconvenience anyone by having to travel a long distance. I was conscious that people who live in Direct Provision centres, often located in remote and hard-to-reach parts of the country, may find it difficult to access reliable public transport. Focus groups and interviews were held in cafés, hotel foyers, community centres, in the meeting rooms of buildings occupied by voluntary organisations and one focus group was held in a meeting room on a university campus. Conversations were honest and open, even if the settings were sometimes very noisy. These were neutral, safe, convivial and non-threatening spaces. Only one interview was held in a Direct Provision centre. In general, those who were interested in participating in the study did not feel that a researcher would be permitted to enter into the Direct Provision centre. At each interview and before written consent was obtained, I went through the information sheet with each person to ensure that they understood what they were consenting to and were, therefore, interested in continuing. None of the people who originally agreed to be part of the research withdrew or decided against it.

The interview and focus group questions were developed with the guidance of my supervisors, but, principally, by engaging with Faith, Diane and Lewis. A lot of interesting points and discussion emerged during the development of the interview guide which I reflected upon, amending questions, as suggested. The interviews were recorded, and this was outlined in the information sheet and consent form. Initially, I feared people might want to withdraw once they learned that the interview would be recorded but this was not the case. Diane, Lewis and Faith were deeply involved in the research and thanks to their endorsement and positivity about my work, individual concerns were perhaps allayed. I conversed with people prior to the interviews and focus groups. The use of the voice recorder, did not appear to impact people's fluency or their desire to speak openly. While those who were in the asylum process might have felt vulnerable and could have been measured in their response, they did not show a sense of reluctance in conversing about their lives and in being recorded. I thought about why particular participants had selected to become involved in the research. Following the interviews, I wondered if the fact that I was a female had meant that more women than men participated in the study or was it perhaps that women were more open to

speaking about the kinds of topics which affected their lives and those of their children. I thought about what difference the use of an interpreter might have had on peoples' willingness to get involved. Perhaps this might have meant that more participants from the Middle East may have come forward for interview and a greater diversity of experiences might have emerged. I came to the interviews and focus groups with a university background, a place of great privilege. I spoke about education and what it might mean for people. While doing this, I had to consider the lives people lived and if they were just trying to survive. At points in various interview, I wondered about the importance of education to people as they spoke about their desire for freedom and a legal status which guaranteed that they could remain in the country. I needed people to trust me although my life was very different to theirs and I thought about ethics in my interactions. I was guided by the principles of ethical research. In the days after interviews and focus groups, I thanked people for sharing their stories and asked if they had any questions or concerns about what had been discussed. Few questions arose, though one participant wanted reassurance that I would not use his name in the research. The transcripts were returned to people for member-checking and these were sent by email or by post. I was unable to contact three people to return their transcripts. It seemed as though they had closed their email accounts and I was unsure what their circumstances were at that point.

3.7.4 Meeting People through Focus Groups

Both focus groups lasted a little more than one hour. The first focus group was kindly organised for me by Faith, originally from Zimbabwe and a mother to one daughter, whom I met at a conference in 2016. Six people, Greg, Belinda, Faith, Marlyn, Flora and Grace agreed to attend the first focus group. They lived in a Direct Provision centre on the edges of a provincial town in the midlands. On Faith's advice, I booked a meeting room in a local community centre. The purpose of the focus groups was loosely to learn more about the experiences of education, and, in particular, about the ways in which children experienced education within the context of living in Direct Provision. The second and final focus group, organised with the help of Diane and held in a meeting room on a university campus, was attended by three people who had spent a year in university and were funded by Sanctuary scholarships and which I referred to previously in section 3.7.1. They had just completed a one-year access programme and hoped to continue to degree level. The purpose of this focus

group was to gain insights into experiences of attending a third-level institution while living in Direct Provision and holding the legal status of asylum seeker. In both focus groups, I started with a general question and hoped that it would be sufficient to start a group conversation. Again, I thanked people for their interest in the study and for sharing their stories so honestly and openly. I felt humbled by their generosity. I returned transcripts via email for member-checking. Digitally recording interviews and focus groups meant that I could listen to the voices and get close to the stories told by each individual. I felt privileged to be welcomed into the world of those who generously participated in the research.

3.8 Analysis

Qualitative data analysis involves the organisation of a large body of information so that conclusions can be drawn (Miles and Huberman, 1994), and it is the process and products of analysis which provides the basis for interpretation (Robson, 2002:387). Defined as a means to put order on and transform information, data analysis is complex. Patton notes that 'no formula exists for that transformation. Guidance, yes. But no recipe. Direction can and will be offered, but the final destination remains unique for each inquirer, known only when—and if—arrived at' (Patton, 2002:432). Analysis is an important part of any study and should be considered from the outset. Robson suggests that analysis 'is not an empty ritual' but one which must be considered as 'an integral part of the design process for any investigation' (Robson, 2002:387). Different traditions label and approach the analysis of information differently (Hays and Singh, 2012:295). Life experiences are often best interpreted using a phenomenological approach, and in particular, IPA, as it involves the detailed examination of human understanding of a particular phenomenon, namely, how people make sense of experiences and the meanings they attach to them (Smith and Osborn, 2007). IPA has been used widely in studies carried out in the fields of education (Van Manen, 2007), health, nursing (Crotty, 1996) and psychology (Langdridge, 2008, Giorgi, 1994), which 'look beyond the direct experience of the individual with the health condition to focus instead on the specific experiences' (Cassidy et al., 2010:264).

I selected an approach with a particular idiographic, narrative aspect in order to explore the ways in which seeking asylum is experienced by people. For example, I was interested in

shining a light on how people make sense of their experiences of living in Direct Provision and the ways in which they move from that space to one which could enable greater opportunity for learning and interaction with others. The aim was, therefore, to avoid a descriptive approach similar to that produced by thematic analysis (Finlay, 2009), and instead, to become immersed in interpretation, going back and forth between ideas expressed in part of the text and relating those to ideas expressed by the majority of individuals, while also using the literature to clarify many of the events and experiences described by individuals. In order to learn more about the process of IPA, I attended narrative inquiry conferences where research drawing on IPA was presented. I also attended a Summer School in Dublin City University, in April 2017 and over a three-day period, learned about the kinds of data analysis methods most suited to qualitative studies.

3.8.1 Data Analysis Process

In an IPA study, a detailed analysis of personal accounts is followed by a presentation and discussion of generic experiential themes which is also typically 'paired with the researcher's own interpretation, which is an expression of double hermeneutics in practice' (Pietkiewicz and Smith, 2014:7). The table below outlines the various phases of the analysis.

Phase 1	• I transcribed the audio recordings and read through the transcriptions.
Phase 2	• Using highlighter pens, I selected pieces of text and added comments, potential subordinate themes and line numbers (see Appendix I). • I created a spreadsheet containing individual worksheets for each participant (see Appendix J).
Phase 3	• I listed potential subordinate themes in a separate spreadsheet (see Appendix K), and individual spreadsheets were later created for each subordinate theme (Appendix N).
Phase 4	• Following further abstraction, subsumption, polarisation, contextualisation and numeration, subordinate themes were established.
Phase 5	• Using mind maps and colour pens, I listed and made connections between subordinate themes in interviews and focus groups (see Appendix L) • By considering links and connections between subordinate themes from mind maps and adding these to an excel spreadsheet, I showed how I arrived at superordinate themes (see Appendix M).
Phase 6	• Superordinate themes referred to in phase 5 were triangulated with those found in individual interviews. This was done using coloured cards enabling me to identify a framework of five superordinate themes.
Phase 7	• In this phase I explored and wrote up the findings in conversation with the literature.

Phase 1:

In the first phase of the data analysis, I read the transcripts a number of times. Transcribing and reading the stories was an excellent way of familiarising myself with the content of the interviews and focus groups. This process is described as 'an interpretative act' (Lapadat and Lindsay, 1999:81), and far from being a cursory administrative task, it was an enlightening experiences. Hubbard et al., point out that 'emotionally-sensed knowledge is an indispensable part of the research process' (Hubbard et al., 2001). I found myself reliving the conversations, imagining the lives of those involved in the study, empathising with those who had experienced adversity and admiring their tenacity.

Phase 2:

The second phase of the analysis involved detailed and systematic examination of the transcripts. By rereading and engaging with the storied lives, I became more familiar with the individual, singular stories and I began to notice differences between the stories and the ways in which they were told. As I read, I wrote descriptive comments and noted conceptual ideas in the margins of each transcript (see Appendix I). I used highlighter and colour pens to identify interesting and important pieces of data in each of the transcripts. Beside each piece of coloured text, I noted why the words or phrases were relevant, adding comments and themes in the margins of the pages. I numbered the lines in order to be able to identify location and frequency of ideas and themes at a later stage of the analysis. At this point, I considered the empirical aspects of stories and the everyday events. I focused on objects and transitions from one place to another which were significant for people. These included discussions of everyday challenges, achievements, letters of rejection and acceptance, movement from one centre to another or an exit from Direct Provision altogether. Comments regarding interesting, significant and sometimes surprising issues and events, my own understanding and emerging themes were added to the small white spaces available on the page. The comments which I made on the transcripts were concerned with language and initial interpretations, and I focused on ways in which meaning was presented. I paid attention to sighs, pauses, repetition and particular words which people used to describe their lives. The use of metaphors by people, for example, the description of themselves as 'prisoners' and as people who are being 'killed' by the system was interesting and I connected descriptions to

concepts as I moved to 'a slightly higher level of abstraction' (Smith and Osborn, 2007:68). In my analysis, I was conscious of recording the phenomenological aspects of the stories which is 'a different way of knowing the world' (Van Manen, 2007:20) wanting to find the language to describe those experiences which were 'relational, situational, corporeal, temporal and actional' (Van Manen, 2007:20). When considering potential themes, I tried to capture the essence of ideas which were presented in the transcripts. Within these transcriptions, I needed to locate the expressions which were 'high enough to allow theoretical connections within and across other cases' (Smith and Osborn, 2007:68), thus, I thought about the richness of the stories and the ways in which I could draw concepts or ideas from events and descriptions. Within an excel spreadsheet (Spreadsheet 1), I created a worksheet for each interview participant and two further worksheets for each focus group (see Appendix J). I copied relevant quotations and my own comments from the transcript to the worksheets. This stage involved ongoing thinking and reflecting on the richness of the stories and the descriptions which people had shared with me. I was aware of myself in the research and reflected on my own ideas about the stories which had been shared with me and my own interpretation of them. I tried to remain focused on voice and the experiences of the people in the study.

Phase 3:

The third phase of the analysis involved examining comments and fragments of stories to develop preliminary or subordinate themes. The spreadsheet was useful at that point as it allowed for the recursive process of moving over and back between comments I had made on the transcripts (see Appendix I) and the various fragments of story from the interviews which I had copied to the spreadsheet (see Appendix J). I thought about the meaning which people attributed to their experiences, about their perspectives and my own interpretations of these experiences.

Phase 4:

Using Smith's guidance, some themes seemed to belong naturally together. I thought about the process of abstraction and subsumption at this stage when looking at subordinate themes. I tried to identify the most essential or core elements of individual experiences. Following an

initial analysis of interviews, I found 127 potential subordinate themes but some of these were later subsumed within others reducing the number to ninety-one. I listed the ninety-one potential subordinate themes in a separate spreadsheet (See Spreadsheet 2- Appendix K) and considered how I might connect these to each other. Following a process of subsumption, I listed thirty-four subordinate themes from the first focus group and forty-one from the second focus group (see Appendix K). Polarisation was another part of the process which denotes themes which were oppositional. I considered the ways in which people described Ireland as home and felt a sense of belonging to the country, yet many noted their sense of physical and social exclusion. 'Contextualisation' meant that some themes were grouped according to particular events or spaces, particularly in the case of descriptions and references to Direct Provision, and 'numeration' assessed the frequency with which similar themes emerged (Smith et al., 2009), highlighting their importance. This process was applied to each of the interview and focus group transcripts. I tried to see each transcript as singular and individual. However, as Smith et al. highlight, 'you will inevitably be influenced by what you have already found…your fore-structures have changed' (Smith et al., 2009:100). Throughout the analysis, I moved within the hermeneutic circle, reading the transcripts and altering my understanding of what was being said and of the individual whose interview I was examining.

Phase 5:

Using flip-chart paper, I developed three mind maps. One of these related to the themes arising from the interviews. Two separate maps were created for each of the focus groups (see Appendix M). At this point, I looked for similarities or connections between the subordinate themes. I used colours to show these connections, for example, words and phrases connected with 'direct provision' were marked with an orange coloured marker and those concerned with 'time' and 'waiting' were marked with a purple one. Following Smith's guidance, I grouped subordinate themes together. Many of these seemed to naturally belong together. For example, throughout the analysis, I saw that participants referred to the lost years in Direct Provision in a variety of ways. They spoke about the ways in which they used their time and the fact that they did not know when they would receive news about their application. For example, participants made reference to loss of skills, uncertainty, boredom, lack of opportunity often associated with temporality and, therefore, I considered time and waiting to be a superordinate theme. Using a spreadsheet (Spreadsheet 3), I grouped

subordinate themes from interviews and focus groups together to form preliminary superordinate themes (see Appendix N). Some of these were later subsumed within other superordinate themes. I checked the mind maps and transcripts to ensure that these subordinate and superordinate themes worked well together.

Phase 6:

The sixth stage involved checking patterns across themes and using abstraction. I created a further spreadsheet (Spreadsheet 4) containing a worksheet for each individual participant (see Appendix M). I considered if the superordinate themes which I found through the mind mapping exercise matched those in the individual transcripts. As a triangulation exercise and in order to enhance the validity of my findings, I printed all of the superordinate themes for each of the participants using various coloured paper to identify each of the people involved in the study (see Appendix N). This meant moving themes around and regrouping them differently. I treated the focus groups in the same way. I continued to interpret and group themes, identifying some of these as main or superordinate themes and others as subthemes. Although Smith et al. (2009) caution the reader by stating that 'you will inevitably be influenced by what you have already found...your fore-structures have changed' (Smith et al, 2009:100), I was committed to being rigorous in my approach and following Smiths guidance on analysis and interpretation. Following the mind-mapping exercise and this triangulation exercise, I was left with a framework of five master themes 1) structures, processes and policies associated with international protection; 2) experiences and perceptions of Direct Provision; 3) education as a means of means of engaging with society; 4) vulnerability and resilience; 5) temporal aspects of seeking international protection. Each of these superordinate themes had subthemes clustered under each which formed a significant part the narrative of each of the chapters.

Phase 7

The seventh and final stage of the process involved documenting the findings from stories and exploring these through the literature. Within this, key themes were presented, analysed further, interpreted and supported with quotations from those who participated in the study (Smith et al., 2009). Participant's lives are complex and multifaceted. It was never easy to

predict how they would position themselves and what they would like to speak about in their interviews. The aim of this thesis was not merely to transmit data and narratives. I, along with participants was involved in the many layers of interpretation and construction and the final structure of the thesis was influenced by the diversity of experiences and stories. While I reflected upon and analysed these, I also thought about the nature of my interaction with people, the temporal ordering of events and experiences and different types of stories which were related. There were small stories, ones which appeared more important and stories within stories. The scope of accounts varied from descriptions of journeys of flight and arrival to stories of one specific event. While I hoped that throughout the research process, I would gather sufficient information and stories to answer the research question, squeezing the diversity of accounts and findings into one or two chapters would have meant ignoring the complexity of experiences. The findings were influenced by individual experiences and stories and enabled me to draw conclusions which are documented in Chapter 10. It meant that people and their stories were central to making sense of the system of reception, its impact on their lives and their engagement with education. My own role and subjectivity were emphasised throughout which meant that I may have focused on particular elements within stories which were most interesting and which were recounted with own vocabulary and from own viewpoint.

3.9 The Emancipatory Approach offered in this Research

An emancipatory approach to research should be concerned with a number of factors including the power imbalance between the researcher and participants, the positioning of people as marginalised and unable to speak on their own behalf and, finally, the idea that emancipatory methods can be used selectively (Lynch, 1999, Danieli and Woodhams, 2007). When considering the emancipatory approach and research participants as co-creators, I tried to consult with participants at each stage of the research process inviting them to share their ideas, to read various chapters and to add their voices and ideas. I asked people what way they would like their stories to be represented and if they had ideas about what I could include or exclude, about my interview questions and my approach to recruitment of participants. Many hesitated as they were, perhaps, preoccupied with their own legal situation and matters concerning their families. I was often unsure what should be asked of individuals in conducting emancipatory research. Their interest in the study sometimes worried me as I

felt that my practice and work with reluctant participants was anti-emancipatory but I had to respect their concerns and wishes. Daneili and Woodham (2007) asked ‘what if the views of the “marginalize”’ are also marginalizing?’ While I listened to the stories and sought to empower reluctant participants to engage with the choice of theory, design, ideas and presentation, I often felt that people had endured a lot in their lives and they had little energy and time to give to research. However, I remain positive that contributing to this research did empower participants to different degrees and was dependent upon their level of engagement. As the research progressed this was evident in the confidence and authority with which Faith, Diane, Lewis, Paulina and Claude added their voices and made suggestions. When returning transcripts for member-checking, I often took the opportunity once again to invite people to add their voice to the process and to engage a little more. My awareness of my own privilege came sharply into focus in discussing possibilities for the research with participants and I had to make a conscious effort to mitigate this and to create a greater sense of equality in the creation of knowledge (Danieli and Woodham, 2007). This meant that I was in regular contact by phone and email with participants, particularly Faith, Diane and Lewis who often disagreed among themselves on what was most important when discussing a particular topic. I tried not to add my own opinion or ideas too quickly. They had previously contributed to research studies and reports and understood that I was trying to move away from a model of research where outsiders conduct and report about life in Direct Provision or matters related to the lives of refugees and international protection applicants. They knew that that I wanted this study to be different and that I wanted to move away from the type of research which was carried out by elite researchers. When I listened to the stories, I wanted the participants to tell the reader their own stories through this research. These were not accounts of flight and arrival but stories of persistence, talents and achievements, new ideas, moment’s agency and resilience, stories which are rarely heard in refugee research. I thought about my decisions throughout the research process and was aware that my ideas or opinions could at any moment exploit, repress or marginalise participants (Schostak and Schostak, 2010). For this reason, I was very grateful for a close working relationship with Faith and Diane whom I consulted at each stage and I will invite them along with other participants to engage in the dissemination in the future. I believe my efforts to bring the voices and perspectives of the participants to the fore in this research is what makes it emancipatory. Throughout this process, I have kept in mind that participants need to benefit most from this research and, therefore, I wish to return to the communities where stories were gathered to determine what are the expectations and measures for success from participation in the study.

3.10 Alternative Approaches to IPA

Moran notes that phenomenological philosophers have been 'extraordinarily diverse in their interests, in their interpretation of the central issues of phenomenology, in their application of what they understood to be the phenomenological method' (Moran, 2000:3). This would suggest that scholars have developed different forms of research methodology which share the basic elements of phenomenology. Finlay notes that the paradigm which researchers embrace depend upon the degree to which interpretation is part of the process, whether 'normative or ideographic understandings' (Finlay, 2009:17) are sought and how the researcher manages subjectivity (Finlay, 2009). Before choosing Smith's approach to IPA, I considered the work of Giorgi (1997) and Van Manen (2007). Giorgi's approach was not suitable for this research as it attempts 'as close a translation as possible of Husserl's phenomenological method' (Smith, 2009:200) and draws on key ideas of 'epoch' and 'essences' to a lesser degree than Heidegger's approach. I wanted to use methods which were interpretative and Giorgi's method is largely descriptive. This was not compatible with my research approach as I wanted to acknowledge my own ideas and role in the sense-making aspect of the process and I did not feel that I could bracket my presuppositions sufficiently to achieve this. Giorgi's ideas are also concerned with exposing 'commonality in experience' (Smith, 2009:200) and, in this research, I wanted to be able to show divergence and convergence in experiences while capturing the richness of individual stories. Further, I wanted to include iterative cycles of engaging participants' accounts, writing reflections and using theories to help understand the themes which became apparent. By using Smith's approach to IPA, I could consider how parts of the data contributed to an evolving understanding of the phenomena as a whole which may not have been possible in other approaches focused on clustering units of meaning into themes to form descriptions. Van Manen, in a similar way to Smith, draws on and connects phenomenology and hermeneutics. He describes how a hermeneutic approach based on understanding human beings within their lifeworld is useful to those who work and research in the fields of education, health and nursing (Smith, 2009). However, Van Manen does not outline a structure or clear steps in conducting analysis and therefore, his approach was less attractive. I was drawn to Smith's model of analysis (Smith, 2009) as it has a defined structure providing the novice researcher with a step-by-step procedure for data analysis. A set of guidelines, an emphasis on flexibility and the absence of strict rules or prescription were attractive as this meant there was no

single, defined way of doing the analysis, yet there were key principles underpinning the process. Finally, Smith (2004) notes that selecting IPA comes from an epistemological position. I suggest that my aim of creating insights and descriptions of lived experiences is complementary to the aims and philosophical underpinnings of IPA. This is due to the focus on context specific knowledge and an acknowledgement of my own role in the interpretation.

3.11 Critique of IPA

IPA aims to gather a personal, detailed, insider perspective and 'all phenomenologists agree on the need to study human beings in favour of a qualitative human science' (Finlay, 2009:14). However, some scholars suggest that difficulties or inaccuracies in IPA can arise, when 'science blends with the stylistic realism of the humanities' (Finlay, 2009:14) leading to questions regarding 'how tightly or loosely should we define what counts as phenomenology' (Finlay, 2009:7). In order to consider the limitations and critique of IPA, I looked, in particular, to the work of Giorgi (2010, 2011) and Willig (2013).

While Giorgi notes the need to demonstrate an openness and flexibility when it comes to using phenomenological analysis, he insists that rigor in scientific methods and approaches should be understood and respected. Giorgi suggests that phenomenology is a recent philosophy noting its scientific practices and procedures 'are not yet systematised or securely established' (Giorgi, 2010:4). Therefore, as a method, it is open to different interpretations, variations and discrepancies which often deviate from recognised and rigorous scientific practices (Giorgi, 2010). From an analysis of IPA studies, Giorgi suggests there are inconsistencies in the ways in which analysis is conducted and 'many examples of phenomenological research become ambiguous, and perhaps even faulty' (Giorgi, 2010:4). It is also claimed that the links between Smith's theory of IPA and continental philosophical phenomenology are vague, and IPA's connections to hermeneutics and theories of interpretation such as those found in the work of James (1890), Allport (1953) and Palmer (1969) are ambiguous. Giorgi suggests that Smith's model could instead be considered 'Interpretive Experiential Analysis' as it lacks a philosophical phenomenological method (Giorgi, 2010:6). He explains that 'the originators of IPA have given no indication as to how their method is related the method of philosophical phenomenology' (Giorgi, 2010:6). In an

attempt to defend his ideas, Smith (2010) states that Giorgi's 'sweeping critique' (Smith, 2010:186), based on two book chapters, is questionable and limited, and that the explanation of methods is misunderstood and poorly interpreted. Therefore, Smith believes that this critique is poorly informed and fails to acknowledge his engagement with the work of 'Husserl, Heidegger, Schleiermacher, Gadamer et al. as well as outlining explicitly the relationship IPA has to them' (Smith, 2010:187). In his rebuttal, Smith also argues that the theoretical underpinnings in phenomenology and hermeneutics are sufficiently explored in his writing and that his claims about methods are justified and consistent.

Finlay suggests that Giorgi (2010) promotes a 'Husserl-inspired mode' of phenomenological inquiry 'against which other versions are measured' (Finlay, 2009:8). Giorgi offers an additional critique of Smith and Osborn's IPA model (2008) suggesting that it fails to provide prescriptive methods. Smith adds that he is 'wary of methodolatory' and, thus, 'cannot prescribe exactly how to conduct a good interview and then analyse it' (Smith, 2010:188). Furthermore, Giorgi points to contradictions in Smith's work stating that 'although IPA wants to retain its flexible, non-prescriptive stance with respect to methodological issues', the detailed steps which are provided 'appear to be a prescription' (Giorgi, 2010:7). Giorgi describes this as 'an oxymoron', as one needs to be able to 'evaluate the adequacy of the method employed' (Giorgi, 2010:7), and all methods are presumed to be intersubjective. Furthermore, and, in reference to science, Giorgi considers the ways in which findings are closely linked with methods, and he emphasises that it should be possible for other researchers to evaluate and replicate methods. However, if the approach, such as that advocated by Smith and Osborn (2007) is vague and not prescriptive and if methods can be altered and adapted by individual researchers, then how can the findings and methods be replicated? Giorgi suggests that failure to adhere to prescriptive methodological steps is not entirely good scientific practice and, as a 'human science', phenomenology should be 'systematic, methodological, general and critical' (Finlay, 2009:14). Smith (2010) and Giorgi (2010) both agree that qualitative research and, in particular, phenomenological approaches should endeavour to be scientific. Smith contends that IPA is scientific but has a different understanding of science to that held by Giorgi (2010). Smith suggests that the process within qualitative research may not need to be as rigid and prescriptive as that demanded by quantitative research methods.

Giorgi also accuses Smith of making 'the argument for the scientific status of qualitative research in terms of the skills and adeptness of the researcher rather than the methodical nature of the procedures involved' (Giorgi, 2011:209). Smith suggests that conducting robust and trustworthy IPA research requires the continued development of some complex research skills such as interviewing, analysis, interpretation, writing, and researchers at different stages will have different levels of fluency and adeptness at these skills. The quality of the research will depend to a large degree on knowledge, experience and competency in using these skills rather than robotic adherence to guidelines and procedures. Therefore, Smith (2010) makes an argument for a set of guidelines and steps which inform the researcher how to conduct and analyse research on rich descriptions of lived experience and meanings. In short, the ability of the researcher to follow and implement the guidelines will have a significant bearing on the quality of the study.

When considering the importance of repeating or replicating research, Smith contends that, researchers rarely consider the replicability of their methods and findings as the idea comes from paradigmatic assumptions which could be considered incompatible with human science research. He argues that evaluating qualitative research using scientific quantitative criteria such as replicability is inappropriate to qualitative inquiry and to studying lived experience often described as 'a process of reading between the lines' (Finlay, 2009:10). Smith questions what it is that one might replicate, and if two researcher would be likely to arrive at the same conclusions even if they were using the same interview guide. He responds by distinguishing between replication and checking, pointing out that the reader should be able to check the methods and findings and, therefore, should be able to understand how the researcher arrived at particular results and findings (Smith, 2003; Smith 2009). This can be conducted in different ways, by the research supervisor who checks the research student's engagement and rigor in conducting analysis, interpreting and documenting results and by checking that each theme has been sufficiently supported with evidence or quotation from participant interviews. Smith argues that Giorgi has failed to interrogate an IPA study in its entirety and, therefore, suggests his critique is questionable.

3.11.1 Limitations of IPA

Willig (2013) also discusses some of the drawbacks or limitations in using IPA but notes its importance in bringing together phenomenology and hermeneutics and in creating a 'phenomenological methodology accessible to those who do not have a philosophical background' (Willig, 2013:281). However, she notes that its success depends in many ways on a participant's ability to express complex experiences, ideas and feelings. Willig (2013) notes the difficulty which people often experience in communicating the details of personal and intimate experiences, especially when they have little experiences of reflecting and sharing a personal story in this way. Willig (2013) argues that it is, in fact, a great challenge to communicate personal, intimate and, sometimes, cherished details of experiences, especially when people are not accustomed to recounting these or doing so through the medium of a research interview. Smith et al. (2009:194) argue that understanding experience 'is enmeshed with language and culture' and that "our interpretations of experience are always shaped, limited and enabled by, language" (p. 194). This suggests that reliance on language creates a further challenge as it may limit the sharing and communication of feelings, understandings and experiences. 'There are times when we encounter an experience for which words seem inadequate to express and communicate the experience' (Risser, 2019:1). Willig, suggests that participants use language to construct a particular reality and that researchers can only access stories or descriptions of experiences rather than the actual experience itself. However, Smith et al. (2009) argue that there is a direct relationship between how people talk about their experiences and their thoughts and feelings surrounding these. Thus, in any IPA study, the researcher is attempting to gain insights into how participants understand and make sense of their experiences (Smith, 2009).

An additional challenge with IPA suggests that it directs the reader to explore and describe experiences but does not interrogate differences in the lived experience of a phenomena. Willig notes 'it does not make sense to conceive of 'the world' and 'the person' as separate entities. Instead, there is only 'experience of the world' (Willig, 2013:284). This is a significant limitation as it prevents a broader understanding of phenomena. In conclusion, it has been suggested that 'authors do not always explicitly recognise either the theoretical preconceptions they bring to the data or their own role in interpretation' (Brocki and Wearden, 2006:101). Therefore, the researcher's close involvement with the research and analysis means that interpretations may be impacted by previous research experience and her

ability to reflect, interpret the details contained within the data. Brocki and Wearden, 2006:101) note that it 'seems probable that different levels of interpretation (e.g. social comparison, temporal, metaphorical) may be of differing importance to researchers with different areas of interest investigating varying topics. These critiques should be taken into consideration researchers using IPA and in the case of this research, I attempted to follow Smith's guidance on the various steps involved in conducting analysis. I have kept in mind these limitations and challenges while I moved from one stage of analysis to the next but feel confident by my investment in 'the personal analytic work done at each stage of the procedure' (Smith, 2004:40).

3.12 An Assessment of the Trustworthiness of the Research

Robson notes that the foundations on which research is based needs to be trustworthy in order 'to persuade an audience that the findings of your enquiry are of good quality.' (Robson, 2002:92). Rolfe (2006) takes an outcomes perspective on trustworthiness paying particular attention to what the research tells the reader, while Porter (2007) added to this, stating that the process cannot be separated from the outcome and that the choice and use of methods frames the way in which the finding are reported. Morse et al. (2002:14) suggest that 'without rigor, research is worthless, becomes fiction, and loses its utility.' The issue of judging the rigour of qualitative research has been the subject of much disagreement in terms of the criteria for judging quality and trustworthiness (Patton, 2002). Smith (2010) suggests that qualitative research is unique and cannot be copied or recreated, noting that the ways of understanding and interpreting texts and conversations are unique to each researcher, and as human beings, we view and make sense of experiences based on a number of elements including personal experiences, cultural background and upbringing (Smith et al., 2009). Yardley (2000) notes that 'there are many questions to be resolved regarding the conduct and interpretation of new investigative approaches' (Yardley, 2000:216). Therefore, the story of the research and the way in which it is told, demonstrate the multifarious and complex nature of human experiences. This does not mean that rigour is not important, and in phenomenological research, as in other approaches, rigour should be addressed in terms of reflexivity and in an integrative way, balancing methodological and experiential concerns (Pollio et al., 1997). I needed to demonstrate the ways in which themes were drawn from

different descriptions. I achieved this by continued reference to the transcriptions to ensure that all conclusions were based in the stories and explicated through an interpretative process (de Witt and Ploeg, 2006). Yardley (2000:219) notes that good qualitative research shows: 1) sensitivity to context; 2) commitment to rigour; 3) transparency and coherence; 4) impact and importance. These will be discussed in the sections below.

According to Yardley, 'sensitivity to context' is evident in research through a connection with the relevant literature, theory and empirical data. From the outset, through planning, conceptualisation, fieldwork, analysis and write up, I have chosen a critical emancipatory approach for the research, considered power imbalances and thought about the kinds of language and discourse which were used in research. I have endeavoured at all times to bring forth the voice of the person who was an international protection applicant or a refugee. I have tried my best to be sensitive to the subject matter of seeking asylum and to the people who were involved in the research. Their ideas and words have shaped and framed the structure and content of this thesis. In Chapters 5 to 10, the stories of the people who participated in the research were reflected upon in relation to philosophy and other literature. This enabled me to gain greater insights and understanding into individual experiences, to situate this research within a particular social and legal context and to illuminate the theories, ideas and concepts in these different fields. The sociocultural context in which this research occurs is one where people who seek asylum are offered few supports by the State and generally live in a Direct Provision system with limited opportunities to engage in work and education. Many felt imprisoned and criminalised. Those who held the status of refugee or were granted permission to remain in the country had more rights and opportunities but faced challenges nonetheless. Despite this, some people thrust themselves into a sociocultural context which looks to a future in Ireland. As it was the personal experiences of seeking asylum which were at the heart of this research, I was sensitive and responsive to participants' viewpoints. I sought to show solidarity and empathy while they told their stories. As participants were collaborators in the study, their opinions and perspectives were sought as to how particular issues and people should be represented. Each individual who participated in this study was thanked, treated with respect and their unique and singular story valued and recounted in this thesis.

3.12.1 Commitment to Rigour

In this section, Yardley considers a 'commitment to rigour' as the in-depth engagement with the topic; from methodological competence, through data collection, to the depth and breadth of analysis' (Yardley, 2000:219). Some of the techniques which I have used included; reflection, field notes, promoting the voice of the person involved in the study and engagement with the transcripts and the literature which helps clarify ideas and concepts. The interviews were conducted with care, and the stories were analysed in a systematic and orderly manner using Smith's framework for using IPA (Smith and Osborn, 2007). A clear and coherent rationale for doing the study was presented. Guidance from my supervisors meant that this study was carried out methodologically and included reference to the most relevant and contemporary literature.

3.12.2 Transparency and Coherence

Yardley (2000) describes 'transparency and coherence' in terms of chosen methods and theories. This is understood in four parts 1) 'clarity and power of description or argument; 2) transparent methods and data presentation; 3) fit, between theory and method, and 4) reflexivity' (Yardley, 2000:219). This refers to the ability to show the reader the details of what has been done in the study. I have disclosed details of the various stages of the research, the ways in which it was carried out and the reasons for using particular approaches. I offered descriptions of the ways in which I met people who became interested in the thesis, the ways in which stories were gathered and how member-checking and consultation was an ongoing process. I have given clear descriptions of the research processes, a coherent discussion of the methods used, the emancipatory approach and reasons for using interpretative phenomenological analysis. In the five thematised chapters (Chapters 5 to 10), I present the stories and lives of those who participated in the study and describe the ways in which I reflected and wrote about these in discussion with the relevant literature. All drafts, transcripts, mind maps and spreadsheets have been saved and can be used to substantiate any claims. Recorded interviews were deleted following transcription as advised by MIREC (Mary Immaculate College Research Ethics Committee).

3.12.3 Impact and Importance

The final aspect of rigor is 'impact and importance'. This considers what it can reveal to the reader is the ways in which the research can enrich our understanding of both 'sociocultural and practical' (Yardley, 2000:219) aspects of experiences. In pursuit of social justice for people who are asylum seekers and refugees, and in keeping with the emancipatory intent of the research, I wanted to create good quality and useful research which will be read by academics, students and professionals, journalists, politicians, the wider public and the asylum seeker and refugee communities. I believe the findings shed light on the singular and heterogeneous experience of seeking state protection and the responses to the current system. I am committed to disseminating the findings as I want to facilitate the voice and stories of those who wholeheartedly participated in the study.

Chapter Summary

The emancipatory goals of this research and the methods used to achieve these were set out at the start of this chapter. Plummer states that by writing and publishing details of people's personal experience of a phenomenon, marginalised groups get the opportunity to advance public awareness, have their voices heard and challenge existing legislation and political beliefs (Plummer, 1995). While Denzin cautions that 'an emancipatory intent is no guarantee of an emancipatory outcome' (Denzin, 2000: xiii), this study is 'visionary and utopian' (Lynch, 1999:43) in its outlook. A qualitative phenomenological methodology (IPA) was used in this study, as the aim of the research was to uncover the experiences of seeking refuge in Ireland. Once ethical approval was sought and granted from Mary Immaculate College, I began thinking about the ways in which I could invite people to participate in these interviews and focus groups. There were two layers of sampling, purposive and snowball sampling. Interviews and focus groups were organised with people who were interested in getting involved. With the help of Diane, Lewis and Faith, twenty-six people participated in interviews and focus groups. The data was analysed using IPA, a six stage process. Finally, a number of strategies were used to demonstrate trustworthiness which overlapped with the emancipatory ideals of the study. These included taking field notes, ongoing consultation with people, ensuring member-checking and teasing out researcher subjectivity and reflexivity.

Chapter 4: The Politics of Reception

Introduction

The previous chapter outlined the design and implementation of data collection and analytical strategies and I referred to the ways in which I attempted to explore empirical research through the use of philosophy. This chapter considers ideas which underpinned the development of the nation-state and have led to current conceptions of the citizen and non-citizen. There is considerable divergence and controversy about what are a nation-state and a republic. Machiavelli, and more recently, Skinner and Petitt have noted the value of 'political liberty, understood as non-domination or independence from arbitrary power' (Stanford Encyclopaedia of Philosophy, 2018b) which a republic enables. A nation-state suggests a community based on common language, ethnicity and territory. Similar, though different, a republic is characterised as 'a state where supreme power is held by the people or their elected representatives' (Concise Oxford Dictionary, 1998), and where all members of society are equal. In this chapter, I argue that the modern nation-state is ambiguous in its approach to the principles set out in human rights law and international protection law. I claim that states frequently interpret both international and human rights law in such ways as to protect their own interests which, in turn, has consequences for the type of reception and hospitality offered to the non-citizen. Finally, I argue that the time is fast approaching, or, perhaps, has already come to consider a new model of political self-definition and for an alternative means of addressing the debate on immigration and displacement.

4.1 Rights and Migration

Theorists such as Miller, Walzer, Benhabib, Carens, and Gibney have examined theories of justice and the dilemmas brought about by migration. Their work has focused mainly on the obligations of states to admit people who are refugees and asylum seekers. Milller, in his book, *Strangers in Our Midst: The Political Philosophy of Immigration* (2016) and Michael Walzer in *Spheres of Justice*: *A Defence of Pluralism and Equality* (1983) advocate for the right to control borders and for citizens to exercise their rights to exclude immigrants. In

contrast, Carens, in *The Ethics of Immigration* (2015) and, in an article, entitled, *Aliens and Citizens: The Case for Open Borders* (1987), notes that immigration restrictions are incompatible with liberal egalitarian values including freedom and equality. This implies that states have 'a *prima facie* duty to maintain open borders, welcoming all prospective immigrants' (Wilcox, 2009:4). Benhabib in *The Rights of Others* (2004) is principally concerned with models of political membership and advocates, not for open, but for porous borders. *Citizenship in Question: Evidentiary Birthright and Statelessnes*s, edited by Lawrence and Stevens, is also a remarkable contribution to the topic of citizenship and reimagines a world in which citizenship is not based on birthright. Gibney in *'The Ethics and Politics of Asylum'* (2004) considers how states could move towards designing and implementing morally defensible responses in the reception and treatment of refugees and asylum seekers. Each of these publications offers persuasive arguments and interesting insights into the role of the nation-state in deciding who should be allowed to enter, understandings of citizenship and what constitutes an ethical State response to asylum seeking.

4.2 'The Curse of the Nation-State'

The title of this section, taken from the writing of Goldenziel (2016), is useful in considering the merits and shortcomings of the nation-state. Much of the scholarly literature on the topic of migration has considered the role of the nation-state model in the treatment and protection of migrants. With regard to the nation-state, Fain noted that 'no political arrangement has been so extravagantly worshipped. No arrangement has served as the scape-goat for so many sins' (Fain, 1972:15). An understanding of the nation-state and republicanism is useful in this chapter in exploring how ideas which underpin the development of current immigration have been shaped. Since Renan asked *Qu'est-ce qu'une nation*? What is a nation? (Renan, 1882), a rich body of literature has developed in response to that question, which provides definitions as well as reasons for the development and growth of the nation-state (Brubaker 2009; Gellner 1964; Anderson, 2006; Hechter, 2000; Tilly and Ardent, 1975). According to Hegel, the nineteenth century philosopher, the nation-state 'is the Divine idea as it exists on earth' (Hegel, 1956:39). The nation-state and nationalism, perhaps both necessary evils, should not,

according to Kearney (1997:57) be discarded, as these have also been key instruments in achieving freedom and self-identification for people.

> To critique the nation-state is not to repudiate all forms of nationalism. It is unwise, in particular to ignore how certain forms of nationalism have served, historically, as legitimate forms of resistance and emancipation.
>
> (Kearney, 1997:57)

Nation-states have been important in establishing and maintaining peace as well as stability and global order. The struggles of European nations against the Nazi occupation during the Second World War or the push for freedom by African nations against a colonial oppressor (Kearney, 1997:57) are important examples of what nationalist opposition can achieve. However, political communities have also had to face the existence of persecuted groups in search of refuge, and it was only in the twentieth century that the notion of shared responsibility for refugees became relevant (Betts and Collier, 2018:36). In describing the nation-state, Anderson spoke of an 'imagined community' (Anderson, 2006), a concept which is contested both politically and theoretically. Anderson explains that 'it is imagined because the members of even the smallest nations will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives an image of their communion' (Anderson, 2006:6). The nation-state, with its defined borders, can both include or exclude, and therefore, define who can belong to its political community. Aliens, strangers and non-citizens have limited rights within the nation-state, and therefore, have limited ability to participate in political decisions which may affect them. As a system which recognises citizenship as the only valid means through which one can be politically recognised and politically active, the state is the locus of political authority which establishes the conditions to implement democracy. The nation-state is distinctly different from notions of collective political membership which existed prior to the Treaty of Westphalia (1648) and largely replaced dynastic and religious forms of state organisation (Anderson, 2006:12). Implicit in all of these definitions is the notion of linking power with a defined group of people accompanied by attempts to engender a sense of belonging and a shared history. In this context, and over the past ten years, the movement of people resulting from war and insecurity in Africa, the Middle East and to a lesser extent in Asia has posed challenges for the nation-state model. It has meant that many people have fled, seeking safety, becoming, as they fled, refugees and asylum seekers.

4.2.1 The Nation-State's Response to Migration

In the years following 2010, the Arab Spring brought political unrest in the form of anti-government protest to the Islamic world of North Africa and the Middle East. Discontent at oppressive government regimes, corruption and low standards of living escalated into armed conflict (Brownlee and Ghiabi, 2016:305). The wider global context suggests that interstate conflict, the involvement and complicity of other nations through war and arms-trading have also exacerbated tensions. Unrest broke out in Syria in 2015, resulting in continued civil war (Betts and Collier, 2018: 25) and the mass movement of people seeking safety (Betts and Collier, 2018:16). At the outset, European Union leaders recognised their moral obligations and agreed to admit substantial numbers of refugees. However, opposition from Hungary, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and the Czech Republic meant that groups of refugees were stopped at border crossings and denied entry (Nagy, 2017:1-7).

In a 2019 newspaper article, Mehta suggested that governments had successfully convinced their populations 'that the greatest threat to their nations isn't government tyranny or inequality or climate change, but immigration' (Mehta, 2019). Hungary, saw fear-mongering and anti-migrant messages during political campaigns, and decisions taken by Prime Minister Voktor Orbán left hundreds of migrants stranded in a Budapest train station in September 2015 (Deardorff Miller, 2018:4). Despite EU International Protection Law, and, in particular, Directive 2011/95/EU, stating that EU States should provide protection for a non-EU national or a stateless person, Western States would appear to waver in their commitment. The Refugee Convention of 1951, signed by 144 countries (UN, 2019), is underpinned by a number of basic principles relating to the rights of admittance and rights to a fair hearing for refugees. However, signatory states find ways to subvert their obligation. The notion of shared responsibility has been 'defeated by a Euro-centric legal mandate derived from a highly selective definition of burden-sharing' (Eurostat, 2013:144) and evident in the existence of policies of admission, selection criteria, border controls, camps, reception centres, detention centres and bureaucratic immigration procedures. Despite opposition to the arrival of refugees, Germany took a different approach. When almost one and a half million refugees entered the EU in 2015, a defining moment in the history of the Schengen space was reached. In autumn of that year, Chancellor Angela Merkel opened the borders to refugees enabling hundreds of thousands of people to enter German territory. When questioned about how the country might cope with the arrival of such large numbers, she replied 'we have

already managed so much – we will manage this! (*Wir schaffen das*!)' (Pries, 2019:2). However, in a move later designed to save her government, she tightened border controls and ended the open door policy of 2015. Since then, Merkel has defended the UN pact on migration, approved in July 2018, which sought to regulate the treatment of migrants worldwide. She referred to opposition of the agreement as 'nationalism in its purest form' (CBC/Radio Canada). This highlights the ways in which borders can be opened and closed to refugees and the differences in responses to migration across European countries. Furthermore, it shows that sovereignty is 'willingly ceded by States to gain economically from increased trade and capital mobility' (Rudolph, 2005:1), yet its preservation is called for when there are demands for access to social and political communities.

4.3 Theorising the Relationship between the Nation-State and the Non-Citizen

Definitions and conceptions of nations and nationalism contain, inherently within them, the notion of 'the other' (Kedourie, 1993) and a key feature of 'the other' is one who allegedly compromises or threatens the cohesion, uniqueness or distinctiveness of the nation. The nation is 'often assumed to be the state', while 'a second common understanding of the nation is as territory' and a third 'is that of ethnicity' (Kearney, 1997:3). Citizens are those who have formal and legal status within the nation-state, and they are granted equal rights and privileges that are guaranteed by law. Citizenship, therefore, signifies membership in the collective identity of the nation (Joppke 2007:38). The non-citizen is, therefore, the refugee and the asylum seeker, and definitions of both are highly contested and open to interpretation. Soguk notes that a refugee is understood as being 'in search of a homeland; and a citizen, whether Polish or German, is a citizen, and not a refugee' (Soguk,:1999:35). Article 1 of the 1951 Convention relating to the status of refugees defines the refugee in the following terms:

> …owing to well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence as a result of such events, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it.
>
> (UNHCR, 1951)

Section 2 of the International Protection Act 2015 uses the same definition. An asylum seeker, is 'a person who seeks to be recognised as a refugee in accordance with the terms of the 1951 Geneva Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and the related 1967 Protocol' (RIA). This definition understands the refugee and the asylum seeker in somewhat narrow terms, as international protection is only offered to those fleeing persecution on the basis of race, religion, nationality and membership of a social group or because of political opinions. People who need to flee for other reasons such as conflict, political insecurity, environmental degradation, poverty and violence directed towards LGBT people are not considered refugees but asylum seekers. Therefore, they are generally required to prove that they have a valid reason for fleeing their home countries. Those who seeking sanctuary are the modern day 'other' or non-citizen, as opposed to the citizen and necessary for the continual reproduction of the nation-state.

In his work, Skinner (1989) considered ideas put forward by Bodin and Hobbes, tracing the origins of modern political thought from the twelfth to the sixteenth centuries. He considered various beliefs about the nature of the state, about political liberty and debates about the need to prioritise duties over rights. He noted that 'if there is to be any prospect of attaining civil peace, the fullest powers of sovereignty must be vested neither in the people nor in the rulers, but always in the figure of an 'artificial man' (Skinner, 1989:121). In opposing the Aristotelian doctrine of *eudaimonia* or human flourishing (Skinner, 1984:197; Skinner, 1986:240), Skinner maintains that in any state the law must safeguard the liberty of citizens (Skinner, 1983:9). He notes 'laws can-and must-be used to force us to be free' (Skinner, 1983:10). He suggests that citizens should be concerned about the common good as an essential precondition of the rights to their freedom, and the law should be created in such a way as to encourage citizens to maintain their own liberty while considering the needs of society at large. Citizens should be encouraged or coerced to act honourably towards fellow citizens. The law must be used, 'to force us out of our habitual patterns of self-interested behaviour, to force us into discharging the full range of our civic duty, and thereby to ensure that the free state on which our own liberty depends is itself maintained free of servitude' (Skinner, 1984: 244-245). The law in this respect frees citizens from self-interest and a natural predisposition to exploitation and corruption. This is important as the state is recognised as the ultimate authority, it is concerned with protecting the security and well-being of its own citizens and safeguarding its own reproduction. The ways in which the state

is conceived has significant implication for the non-citizen, for those claiming asylum and for the stateless. For Arendt, refugees were the most distinguishing feature of contemporary politics (Arendt, [1951] 2017). Those who were viewed as not belonging were deprived of every political right.

4.3.1 The Stateless

Arendt described the non-citizen who existed beyond sovereign protection as 'rightless'. For her, being stateless or a non-citizen did not just mean the loss of protection of human rights, it was something much more fundamental. To be outside of the political community was to be removed from humanity itself.

> Not the loss of specific rights, then, but the loss of a community willing and able to guarantee any rights whatsoever, has been the calamity that has befallen ever-increasing numbers of people. Man, it turns out can lose all so called Rights of Man without losing his essential quality as man, his human dignity. Only the loss of a polity itself expels him from humanity.
>
> (Arendt [1951] 2017:389)

Non-citizens are vulnerable because they are dependent upon individual nation-states for protection and for access to political rights and no power is greater than that of the nation-state which can protect the stateless non-citizen. Returning to the definition of refugee as someone fleeing persecution, how persecution is understood and framed has implications for the way states determine the extent of their own legal obligations (Betts and Collier, 2018:35, Goldenziel, 2016:580). Let us consider for a moment the implications for groups who do not fit the legal definition of refugee. When people arrive in a State, they are entitled to a fair hearing which will determine whether they are in fact refugees, and if so, should be permitted to remain. 'Their arrival involves the state directly and immediately in their fate' (Carens, 2003:101). Their acceptance and admission are entirely at the discretion of the State's interpretation of their claim. They may be left languishing in camps, reception centres or other spaces of confinement for years, but in the eyes of the law, the State has fulfilled its legal obligations. Such spaces of restriction have been described are 'anomalous geopolitical spaces' (Feldman: 2014) representing a series of failures; a 'failure of states to protect, of societies to manage conflict, of infrastructures to withstand disasters' (Feldman: 2014). Much

of the politics of asylum and refugee practices is concerned with which state is willing to admit refugees, how many should be permitted to enter, who should be granted permission to remain and what rights they should be granted on entering.

Permission to enter a third country sometimes happens in a refugee camp or before people enter state territory, and this is often the case for those who are granted refugee status. Those who enter a State territory without permission, can claim asylum, and each case is dealt with individually. Betts suggests that 'what should matter here is not the cause of movement but the threshold of harm' (Betts and Collier, 2018:44). In making decisions about who should be allowed to enter, States continue to rely on a convention which is now considered outdated and no longer relevant, because the language and content have never been updated sufficiently to deal with the contemporary challenges of displacement (Betts and Collier, 2018:35, Goldenziel, 2016: 581). 'A Regime initially not intended to last a decade would become the basis of global refugee governance' (Betts and Collier, 2018:39). Despite the fact that images and stories of the suffering caused by war are met by 'sympathetic talk' (Nightingale et al., 2017:137), great efforts are also made to prevent people from claiming asylum. Compassion for international protection applicants is regularly manifest in public discourse but buffered by the idea that people have a nationality and naturally belong to a particular nation (Nightingale et al., 2017:138).

Inherent within the idea of the nation-state is a requirement for a 'manifestation of a national personality' and a notion that generations 'under a univocal designation, have handed down to each other an invariant substance' (Balibar, 1991:86). Miller notes the existence of deep social bonds and a sense of shared experience which have an important identity-defining value (Miller, 1995). Nationhood is not generally something people think about. It is simply part of everyday life and manifests itself on national holidays, through the medium of international sporting and cultural events. Yet, when faced with the 'other', the 'stranger', people can quickly define what makes them different from the 'outgroup' (Lentin, 2007; Quasthoff, 1978). Mitchell explains that 'a logic of inside/outside subtends the concept of nation wherein such "others" are the "constitutive outside" that invisibly clarifies and reinforces the status of those within. The nation, then, tacitly asserts and valorises its own putative qualities through the explicit identification and denigration of what it is not' (Mitchell, 2015:4). Furthermore, nationalism is changing, and ideas about unity and national pride have been replaced with rhetoric of wall-building, fanaticism and xenophobia. Located

between certainty and uncertainty, the non-citizen is positioned in an 'in-between space', on the margins of society. Ideas presented in the work of Agamben help us to understand mechanisms of exclusion deep-seated within understandings of the nation-state.

4.3.3 *Homo Sacer*: 'Inclusive Exclusion'

In this section, I use Agamben's concepts of 'homo sacer' and 'state of exception' to examine the relationship between the person who is the asylum seeker and the state, to understand the sovereign's power over life and how those devoid of legal identity are positioned. In his work, Agamben uses the terms '*homo sacer'*, which in Roman law was a representation of a depoliticised existence or bare life. Under the rules of Roman law anyone found guilty of a crime, lost their citizenship rights and was expelled from society. Similarly, Arendt wrote of 'naked life', a life devoid of political rights (Arendt, [1951] 2017:320). Agamben compares the 'bare life' of *homo sacer* with that of the life of the citizen, and demands an examination of citizenship as necessarily good. He refers to the writing of Nazi Jurist, Carl Schmitt, who established the link between the 'state of exception' and sovereignty. With its origins in the French Revolution and the World Wars (Agamben, 2005:11-12), scholars have depicted the state of exception as a suspension of normal law or emergency powers, but in essence, it forms part of the continuing moves by sovereign powers to take control of 'life itself', and marks a withdrawal from real political action. The state of exception is 'a no-man's land between public law and political fact, and between the juridical order and life' (Agamben, 2005:1). Referring to two differing viewpoints on the state of exception, the first suggests a judicial phenomenon advocating regulation through law, the second viewpoint understands the state of exception to be outside the law, other than the law or extra-judicial. In reality, the former approach separates basic rights from the rule of law. In that way, the state can abide by its laws while infringing upon individual rights. The latter approach suggests that there are many reasons why a state, and its people, may feel threatened, but that it is neither desirable nor possible to deal with these threats through constitutional means. Time and space must be created before regular constitutional law can be allowed to return. Agamben is critical of both viewpoints, stating 'the state of exception is neither internal nor external to the juridical order, and the problem of defining it concerns precisely a threshold, or a zone of indifference, where inside and outside do not exclude each other but rather blur with one another' (Agamben, 2005: 23).

According to Agamben, in order for state power to be created, recognised and legitimised, 'an "outside threat" must exist, and through which the State can be represented as the benchmark for what is regular and normal' (Agamben 2005). The outside is occupied by those whose virtue and credibility are questionable, and who may not be considered suitable for admission to the territory. Through this process, the totality of the citizen is marked out, and the somewhat 'sinister' and 'untrustworthy' figure of the asylum seeker is continuously produced, cast aside and expelled. Similarly, Arendt, in '*The Origins of Totalitarianism*', suggested that state boundaries are necessary for the existence of refugees. In attempting to make sense of the Irish System for the reception of asylum seekers, Agamben and Arendt have provided a mechanism for critical understandings of detention, persecution and the use of emergency powers by the State. Camps and detention centres are places of 'purgatory' and 'hell', places for people who have become expendable (Arendt, [1951] 2017:583). The Irish system for the reception of international protection applicants while lacking the moral equivalence of 'the camp' or 'concentration camp', exposes a key part of the workings of the nation-state: 'the hidden foundations on which the entire political system rests' (Agamben, 1998:9). Just as the camps had legal and political significance in World War Two Germany, so too do centres for the reception of asylum seekers in twenty-first century Ireland.

> In the camp, the site of exception, which is essentially a temporary suspension of the rule of law on the basis of a factual state of danger, it is now given a permanent spatial arrangement, which as such nevertheless remains outside the normal order.
>
> (Agamben, 1998:169)

The hallmark of these sites is the absence of any law which protects the individual. They are justified and legitimised to the nation as a necessary 'state of emergency', and Agamben contends that the presence, the permanence and the normalising of the 'camp' is a source of concern. The Irish state, like many across Europe, exerts its sovereign power in the face of continued immigration. Ireland has in place its own measures, to ensure it remains in control of its borders. According to Lentin, the 'racial state' (Lentin, 2007) has framed *homo sacer*: the asylum seeker and the migrant negatively to conjure up an image of 'cheat, liar, criminal, sponger – someone deserving of hostility not by virtue of any misdemeanour, but simply because she is an 'asylum seeker' or 'unwanted migrant' (Lentin, 2007). Furthermore, the 'state of exception', once reserved for war time and times of emergency, has now become the accepted norm in the form of the Irish dispersal and Direct Provision system. Although State

policy is inadequate in addressing the needs and welfare of asylum seekers and refugees, other voluntary and statutory bodies, such as Doras Luimní and the Irish Network Against Racism have campaigned to dispel myths about asylum seekers. Criticism of the framing and treatment of asylum seekers has come from religious orders working with asylum seekers and refugees such as the Vincentians, the Spiritans (Ní Chiosáin, 2016:96-97) or the Jesuits (JRS, 2014). CORI (2005) and the church hierarchy, through the Bishops Conference (McGarry, 2014) have also voiced their opposition to the Direct Provision system and the treatment of asylum seekers. Lentin, builds on Agamben's work as a means to understand the nature of reception and the paradigm of the camp, and the 'space of exception' provides a useful means to recognise its shape and purpose (Agamben, 1998). The risk of losing rights suggests a dichotomous existence, the possibility of a political life but also the possibility of a diminished, bare biological life, in which the individual is politically excluded and devoid of State protection.

4.4 Mechanisms of Exclusion

States demonstrate their ambiguity towards international protection in various ways. On the one hand, governments adhere to their legal duty in agreeing to admit the non-citizen, yet on the other hand, they offer individuals little else in terms of genuine hospitality. It is somewhat paradoxical that the power to exclude should form part of a refugee protection scheme. 'Signatory states in the developed world find ever more elaborate ways to disregard or by-pass the principle of *non-refoulement*, adopting a suite of deterrence or *non-entrée policies'* (Betts and Collier, 2018:42). The idea of shared practices and a shared commitment across the signatory states is practically non-existent as 'States adopted different standards' and 'governments thereby continued to compete with one another to divert, deter and deflect unwanted asylum-seekers' (Betts and Collier, 2018:63). Actions and policies created to deter asylum seekers have ranged from 'external measures such as visa regimes, carrier sanctions and airport liaison officers to internal measures like detention, dispersal regimes and restrictions on access to welfare and housing' (Gibney, 2004:2).

The European Council has called for the inclusion of migration and asylum concerns into the external dimension of EU policy. This is defined as 'cooperation with migrant-sending

countries and the 'transit' countries' (Boswell, 2003) suggesting that the aim of EU policy is to work with other countries to reinforce border controls and prevent movement of people. In 2004, the EU established Frontex, an agency designed to control and monitor Europe's peripheral borders and tasked with curbing the arrival in Europe of those deemed to be illegal immigrants. A further means of exercising control of entry has been the practice of interception before people arrive on State territory.

> Many States which have the ability to do so, find that intercepting migrants before they reach their territories is one of the most effective measures to enforce their domestic migration laws and policies.
>
> (International Organisation for Migration (IOM), 2001)

The lack of humanity in the above statement 'masks the seriousness of the assault on the institution of asylum' (Brouwer and Kumin, 2003:6) and shows a disregard for human rights and international protection. When states use interception policies to prevent people from accessing their sovereign territory, migrants are then compelled to use means and routes of travelling which may pose greater risk for themselves and their families. States regard these mechanisms of control and surveillance as 'defences against the subversion of orderly immigration and refugee resettlement programs by bogus refugees and queue-jumpers' (Brouwer and Kumin, 2003:6). Other measures have included the establishment of off-shore asylum processing to prevent individuals from physically entering a country. The Australian model meant that individuals are intercepted and sent to a third country. This has meant that from 2020 onwards, asylum applications have been processed on Manus Island (Papua New Guinea) and Nauru with the agreement of their governments. While awaiting a decision on their applications, asylum seekers are held in detention centres. Such a system has been the subject of much criticism as the centres are themselves considered violent, unhealthy and dangerous places for those already fleeing war and political insecurity (Grewcock, 2017:71). Additional measures such as carrier sanctions means that responsibility for immigration control falls to private companies or individuals. Sanctions and fines are applied to those who are considered to be responsible for transporting an individual who does not have the right to enter the state. In other words, 'states have succeeded in obliging private carrier companies to conduct *de facto* acts of immigration control before the migrant or asylum-seeker reaches the territory of the state' (Rodenhäuser, 2014). It would appear that the state, in interpreting

international law, can attempt to fulfil its moral and legal obligation and allow the non-citizen to remain, or it can in fact deport or detain her/him. In this case, the state does not violate any of its obligations, but by the same gesture, supports a precarious and sometimes hazardous daily existence for the non-citizen.

4.4.1 State Bureaucracy

Different jurisdictions have different systems of reception for refugees and for people seeking asylum. In Ireland, a problem of state bureaucracy is the speed or the tardiness in processing applications. However, a quick response also means that some asylum applications are dealt with speedily, resulting in immediate deportation from State territory. In the UK and Spain, those who are seeking asylum must do an initial interview when making their claim. In France, people are required to wait in accommodation centres, similar to that of the Irish system, however, few Sstates delay decisions to the degree that the Irish Department of Justice and Equality does. In France, in 2018, the average waiting time for a decision on an asylum application was 112 days. Both in Spain and in the UK, a response is usually received within six months. In Ireland, the average waiting time for processing new applications is fifteen months (UNHCR, 2020), with people waiting between eight and ten months for an initial interview with the Department of Justice's International Protection Office (Gallagher, 2019). However, it is generally the delay in the processing of claims which is problematic and forces people to live in states of uncertainty, sometimes having few or no political and social rights and entitlements. In addition, a range of other measures and policies seek to deter migration including the issuing of temporary forms of protection (EU, 2016), detention and a range of bureaucratic procedures such as a heightened burden of proof (Gibney, 2004, Czaika and de Haas, 2013:491). While all of the above represent an eroding of the original understanding of the system of international protection and the institution of asylum, it is however, government policies of admitting and 'warehousing' people indefinitely that are arguably the most damaging. In the next section, the state's understanding of exclusion zones is addressed and its attempts to deal with the asylum-reception nexus by placing people in camps and other types of 'exclusion zones'.

4.5 What is Reception?

Ambiguity or hypocrisy towards the 'stranger' is evident in how the state honours its human rights commitments yet offers limited hospitality. Attitudes among society and government are important factors in the context of the reception of asylum seekers and refugees since they have the potential to shape identity and experiences. Furthermore, how the notion of reception of the refugee or asylum-seeker is understood and framed has implications for how it is practiced. A promise of sanctuary which is not engaged in extending a sincere welcome or is ambivalent in its concern for those fleeing persecution, can work to further the problems of those displaced. The discourse of 'reception', 'reception centres' and 'reception conditions' appear inclusive, amiable and benevolent. As a means of understanding and receiving asylum seekers, it suggests a sympathetic and welcoming treatment of the outsider and a well-intentioned position on the part of the host country. However, closer scrutiny of the notion of reception reveals the difficulties with the concept and its shortcomings. Reception may be defined as 'the act of receiving or the state of being received', it contains the concept of the 'other' or 'the outsider' within it, since reception requires an encounter with another. Offering sanctuary to the stranger has been a religious and ethical duty for centuries, and 'the right to asylum is a historic right stretching back to Ancient Egypt, Hebrew civilisations, and the Greek City States that afforded protection and an inviolable place of refuge' (Betts and Collier, 2018:4; Peters and Besley, 2015:1367). Seeking asylum is a process that uproots, displaces and resettles people elsewhere, in a place where the initial impact of their treatment may have a long-lasting impact on their ability to settle and integrate. The nature of reception and hospitality extended to the newly arrived will determine their political, economic and social status and their everyday lived experience.

4.5.1 Hospitality- Moral Duty or Natural Right?

Both Kant and Derrida suggested that genuine hospitality is either absolute or based upon conditions. Their work has practical application for those seeking to understand current practices and policies in the field of migration and asylum. The right of the guest or, in the case of this research, the person seeking asylum, is limited, and in the context of Irish asylum policy their presence is tolerated as opposed to welcomed.

In his short essay from 1796, entitled '*Perpetual Peace: A Philosophical Sketch'*, Kant, considered whether perpetual peace among nations was possible and understood hospitality as a legal requirement not merely a moral duty. Written in the form of an international peace treaty, Kant preempted the need for international peace treaties, conventions and spaces for discussing peace agreements and international law. He noted that 'the rights of all men in a cosmopolitan system [are] restricted under the conditions of universal hospitality' (Lambert et al., ([1795], 2010). Here, he suggested that by the right of universal hospitality, the guest should be shown hospitality, but this is not a natural right. In fact, the natural state is for nations to be at war, and peace remains abstract. Few can claim to have fully achieved and mastered peace. Hospitality must, therefore, be established through the implementation of law and international law in particular, linking Kant's writing to the establishment of the League of Nations. It is 'the right of the stranger not to be treated as an enemy when he arrives in the land of another' (Kant, [1795]1996:322). One must be trusting and welcoming of the stranger, generous of spirit and willing to share what is ours, without any terms or conditions.

Kant defines hospitality as instinctive to all humans, by virtue of being human and possessing rights, to occupy space on earth (Kant, [1795] 1996:329). He points to the right to hospitality granted to the guest who can then make demands of the host for a given period of time. Kant notes that 'it is not a question of philanthropy but of right' (Kant, [1795]1996:328). However, these are visitation rights and not rights to reside. Hospitality may be denied, but only if we are sure that this will not cause the demise of the guest, who is permitted to remain as long as there is no hostility or harm directed towards others residing within that society. This does not bestow the right to remain permanently, but a temporary right to stay. Inherent within the principles which underpin Irish asylum law and the Direct Provision system are similar contradictions and limitations. Benhabib interprets the right to hospitality which is 'the space between human rights and civil rights, between the right of humanity in our person and the rights that accrue to us insofar as we are members of specific republics' (Benhabib, 2004:26). In that case, human rights presuppose political rights. Derrida built on the work of Kant and interrogates the ways in which we welcome the 'stranger'. I turn to this now.

4.5.2 The Ethics of Hospitality

In '*On Cosmopolitanism and Forgiveness'*, Derrida considered the concept of hospitality, and understood this as a duty. He cautioned those who attempted to define hospitality, and noted the difficulties in achieving unconditional hospitality. Inspired by Levinas' notion of messianic hospitality, his writing concerns alterity, the 'outsider', 'the stranger', 'the asylum seeker' and 'the refugee', and he calls into questions how one might engage and treat the 'stranger'(Derrida, 2001:3). Derrida differentiates between conditional and unconditional hospitality, suggesting that within unconditional hospitality, there are presuppositions. In inviting the stranger into our home, there are already conditions. The notion of a home implies a space with boundaries which can include or exclude. 'For there to be hospitality, there must be a door…. There must be a threshold. But if there is a threshold, there is no longer hospitality' (Derrida, 2000a:14). To welcome, suggests a spatialised relationship, between the member and non-member, between the sedentary host and the newly arrived guest. Such terms as host, hospitality, reception and guest are not straightforward. What is the relationship between the host and the guest or guests? What is the reason for their visit? Have they been invited? What will be the nature of their reception? Is there an obligation to welcome them? Derrida's understanding of hospitality as ethos or ethics, understood as our way of being while in our home country, is founded on what is considered to be the outside or the outsider. This is a useful way of thinking about how an individual is positioned as being different from the dominant group; permitted to enter but not quite belonging to the institutions of the State. His definition of absolute hospitality suggests that the guest should be free to behave as he/she pleases. Hospitality, therefore, does not necessitate 'the other' to behave in particular ways, and welcomes 'the other' without having any prior knowledge of her/his character (Derrida 2001). Conditional hospitality, therefore, is where the guest must respect certain rules and conventions.

According to Derrida, conditional hospitality which might be shown to the outsider, might involve maltreatment and injustice. Derrida does not oppose the idea of unconditional hospitality, but paradoxically, it is its impossibility which makes hospitality possible. Thus, it is the internal tension within the notion of conditional and unconditional hospitality which highlights discourses and policy which concern people who are migrants and international protection applicants. Unconditional hospitality is challenging, as it is a collective moral obligation to offer sanctuary to a 'stranger' and requires us to be open, welcoming and refrain

from imposing conditions. It calls on individuals to cast aside biases and fears regarding other people, and to afford them the same freedom bestowed on fellow-citizens. Welcoming another suggests that one is changed by her presence. In considering the challenges, one might believe unconditional hospitality to be impossible. It is something which must be practiced but failure is always possible.

4.5.3 Ambiguity in hospitality and conditions

One might ask how an understanding of hospitality can contribute to discourses on migration and asylum seeking. At the beginning of this chapter, I claimed that the nation-state is ambiguous in its approach to the international protection applicant and to the laws which are designed to protect those who seek refuge. I have noted that this ambiguity has, in turn, implications for how hospitality is understood and practiced. A system which should welcome the stranger offers minimum standards. It is one which offers accommodation, but no right to cook. It provides a roof over one's head; a safe place to live, but one which is often physically isolated from the remainder of society. It is a system which provides a weekly allowance of €38.80 for adults and €29.80 for children but denies financial independence and self-sufficiency. In more recent years, legislation has been put in place allowing people to work while also awaiting a response to their application, but it is one which has 'inexplicable limitations' (Khambule and Mulhall, 2018). It would appear to be a system which tolerates rather than welcomes and 'perpetuates the image of 'us' and 'them' (O'Donnell, 2015:1). What does it mean to be dependent upon the State during a prolonged period of encampment, detention or waiting? If one loses the ability to act or is not permitted to act, then voices are silenced. For Arendt, the ability to act means that one is free. She noted that action was fundamental to establishing identity and to letting other people know who we are. For her, action and voice were interchangeable; 'men show who they are, reveal actively their unique personal identities, and thus, make their appearance in a human world' (Arendt, 1958:179). With so many displaced both internally within their own countries and continents, and others who await in spaces of containment, government and societies should be concerned for their welfare.

4.5.4 Hostility

Arguments continue against the acceptance of asylum seekers and refugees, who are often positioned as a threat to society (Cooper et al., 2020:8). Coupled with this, is an assumption that social and political stability are dependent upon racial and cultural homogeneity (Laurence and Bentley, 2016). The rise of right-wing populism, based on the notion of a culturally homogenous society, views the 'other' as weakening the cohesion and relationships which exist within a country. In 2016, the election campaign and subsequent inauguration Donald Trump as president of the United States is an example of the success of incitement of racist sentiment among the US public, mainly directed at migrants and refugees. Ethnocentric and xenophobic comments aimed at immigrants are apparent, in particular in references made to Mexicans. Mr. Trump stated 'Mexico sends its people, they're not sending their best...They're sending people that have lots of problems, and they're bringing those problems with us. They're bringing drugs. They're bringing crime. They're rapists' (Kopan, 2016). These statements isolate create divisions among communities and position the host society as superior. These discriminatory remarks and racist beliefs are not new in the America, as Native Americans were subjected to many different forms of abuse and violence following the arrival of European Settlers, all with the intention of destroying their community. In hateful acts, blankets from smallpox patients were distributed to Native Americans in the late 1800's with the intention of spreading the disease. War and violence were encouraged; for example, 'European settlers were paid for each Penobscot person they killed. In the 19th century, 4,000 Cherokee people died on the Trail of Tears, a forced march from the southern U.S. to Oklahoma' (Holocaust Museum Houston).

In Britain, Nigel Farage, a Eurosceptic and an advocate of the Brexit campaign also demonised migrants, suggesting that the quality of life of the British was declining due to immigration (Swales, 2016: 2). *The Guardian* newspaper reported that, as part of his campaign, he used an anti-migrant poster which showed a queue of mostly non-white migrants and refugees with the slogan 'Breaking point: the EU has failed us all' (Stewart and Mason, 2016). It is now evident that using such rhetoric and ideology proved influential, as the UK voted to leave the EU in June 2016. A further example from Europe was the attempt by the French government in the summer of 2016 to ban burkinis which was justified as a response to the growing terror concerns and heightened tensions after a series of terror attacks in France (Quinn, 2016). This took place following pressure from the French far right party,

Le Front National and their leader, Marine Le Pen, who referred to the burkini as 'one of the multiple symptoms of the rise of fundamentalist Islam in France'. Former French President, Nicolas Sarkozy, advocated for the need to enforce all burqa and burkini bans. He stated that France's identity was under threat because of increased immigration and an absence of effective policy (Laurence and Goodliffe, 2013:4). Furthermore, in an act which would impact the lives of hundreds, if not thousands, of migrants, in February 2020, Greek and Bulgarian governments announced their intention to tighten border controls. This resulted from a statement by the Turkish government which indicated that they would no longer prevent refugee and asylum seekers from attempting to cross into nearby European States. It would appear that the migrants were the pawns in a move designed 'to force the EU and NATO to support Ankara's new military operation in Idlib, Syria' (McKernan, 2020). These acts controvert notions of hospitality. The hallmark feature of international discourse and policy has been continued withdrawal and diminution of legal and social rights on the grounds of preserving the integrity of immigration controls and protection of the nation-states. It is evident that the current nation-state model has brought tensions in the practice of extending human rights equally to both citizens and non-citizen. The following section proposes that political membership and systems of protection for refugees require new thinking. By reimagining new modalities of reception, we are also required to consider new modalities of political membership.

4.6 New Modalities of Membership and Reception

> In modern republics, the origin of sovereignty is in the people, but now we recognise that we have many other peoples. And many peoples means many centres of sovereignty-we have to deal with that.
>
> (Ricoeur, 1995:36)

Ricoeur recognises the complexities of global migration within the context of the nation-state. If we apply his thinking to the current global context, it is surely a call for new approaches in defining self-identity, self-determination and territorial belonging. In considering alternative ways of approaching political models which include and exclude, it has never been easy to bring about change to transform international thinking and systems. Understanding how citizens of other states 'fit into' and are welcomed or not welcomed by

the current political model, is of concern. The following section presents a number of ideas on how legal and political belonging could be reimagined.

4.6.1 Safeguarding Political and Human Rights

Arendt highlights the right to be part of a political community as the most basic of rights. She argues that individuals need to be recognised members of the nation-state in order to have any political rights, and, as a result, the only genuine universal human right is the right to be granted membership or citizenship of the nation-state (Arendt, [1951] 2017). The loss or denial of this right denoted an inability to enter and participate in a political community meaning that the individual can be defined as human. For her, the most important thing is the right to belong to a political community which enables 'the right to action and opinion' and in which 'one's speech and actions are rendered significant' (Birmingham, 2006:36). Changing beliefs about the nation-state brought about mainly by globalisation, and, in particular, migration, have led to questions regarding alternative models of political membership or alternative understandings of how we frame and treat asylum seekers and refugees (Betts and Collier, 2018, Kearney 2010, Benhabib, 2004; Thaa, 2001; Soysal, 1994; Rosenau, 1997). According to Benhabib, conventional approaches to political membership based on notions of state sovereignty and territorial legitimacy are currently under threat. She points out that the growth of 'a global economy', the increasing 'internationalisation of communication and information technologies' and 'the emergence of transnational global actors' have brought about an exchange and sharing of interests and concerns across national boundaries (Benhabib, 2004:4). With regard to Europe, the nation-state is considered to be in decline as it is being eroded 'from below' by regionalism and 'from above' by EU institutions and globalisation (Anderson and Goodman, 1995) and is too small (Kearney, 1997; Benhabib, 2004) 'to deal with economic, ecological, immunological and informational problems, yet too large to accommodate the aspirations of identity-driven social and regional movements' (Benhabib, 2004: 4-5). There is obviously a need to examine possibilities 'for a political "catching up" with globalisation by shifting the political arena away from the nation-state and to the multiple networks of a global civil society' (Thaa, 2001). Similarly, when Hobsbawn notes that the terms 'nation' and 'nationalism' are no longer suitable for exploring the workings of current political systems (Hobsbawm, 1992), he is perhaps suggesting that in the

third millennium, postnationalism would replace nationalism as a leading paradigm (Habermas and Pensky, 2001).

In suggesting a 'postnational constellation', Habermas envisages the creation of a space for 'cultural hybridisation, transnational mobility and emigration, cosmopolitan solidarity based on a neo-republican balance between private and civic liberties and opposed to the neo-liberal disregard for social justice' (Kearney, 2010:48). In essence, he is proposing an international system composed of sovereign communities, global entities, domestic actors, and the involvement of international agencies such as the UN, rather than a notably cosmopolitan democracy. He refers to the work of Kant, as does Benhabib, arguing that cosmopolitan law also denotes the need for penalty, particularly if governments are unwilling to defend the legal rights of its members as liberated, autonomous world citizens without association to distinct national membership.

In considering 'the rights of others', Benhabib asked how political membership should be conceived. She outlined her approach in the following questions.

> What should be guiding normative principles of membership in a world of increasingly deterritorialised politics? Which practices and principles of civil and political incorporation are most compatible with the philosophical self-understanding and constitutional commitments of liberal democracies?
>
> (Benhabib, 2004:12)

As a result of migration and globalisation, conceptions of homogeneity as the foundation of the nation have been altered. Both individual and group identities can no longer be understood within a defined political, narrow, bounded, geographical area.

4.6.2 A European Model of Federal Regionalism

In suggesting a practical, postmodern approach to sovereignty and territoriality, Kearney proposes a European model of federal regionalism as an alternative to the nation-state. He envisages a *Europe des régions* where 'federal association' and 'regional self-government'

are of equal importance. He outlines some key features of the federation. It would be a multi-state entity, not a large bureaucratic European state where power is centralised in Brussels. Any state which was willing to accept the rules of membership could voluntarily become a member. Based on Kant's notion of a 'league of peace', the cosmopolitan nature of federalism would mean a promise of freedom for all. Legislative, executive and judicial decisions would be made at federal and not regional level. Most noteworthy, this model would enable its members to hold multiple identities: individual, regional, national, constitutional and federal. Kearney points out that identity as it has been expressed in the formation of nation-states, 'might be better accommodated in some form of cultural and/or political regionalism' (Kearney, 1997:183). He suggests that such a system would offer a form of dual democracy and was participatory. This meant that members could elect 'their own quasi-autonomous regional government' and could 'choose parliamentary representatives in an enlarged European Chambers of Regions' (Kearney, 1997:182). The proposed system was envisaged as one which could facilitate integration and safeguard identity and culture, both at a regional and a federal level. However, Kearney's proposal invites a number of questions or dilemmas. How would the non-citizen, such as the international protection applicant benefit in such a system? Would an overlapping of the nation-state with some system of federal regionalism: a collective of superimposed sovereignties be a better model? How could one ensure that all federal regions were equal? Is it possible to separate cultural and regional identities from national identities? Is a cultural identity a credible equivalent to political identity? Kearney looks to the work of Arendt in order to answer these questions. In 'Nationalstaat und Demokratie*'* an unpublished paper, dating from 1963, she also advocates for a federal system where war and its outcome: the refugee, were to be avoided at all cost. 'It was a system where power would operate horizontally rather than vertically, the federated units –regional governments, councils or cantons - mutually checking and controlling each other's powers' (Kearney, 1997:67). Such a system might enable federal states to determine rules of membership, where entry might be based on the dangers and risk facing the non-citizen as opposed to where he is coming from. The creation of better locally-devised policies which meet the needs of residents as well as those they wish to welcome could be possible through this type of political configuration.

4.6.3 Cosmopolitan Federalism

Benhabib did not propose a replacement to the nation-state system but instead drew on Kant's ideas of 'cosmopolitan federalism' and Habermas' 'discourse ethics' to propose a cosmopolitan theory of justice. Her ideas were, in fact, a rethinking of how membership is conceived and practiced, a type of cosmopolitanism which recognises the individual rather than the group. Similarly, Arendt highlights that individuals only gain rights when they have political rights, arguing for a type of 'civic state' rather than one based on ethnic or cultural homogeneity, believing that this would bring political equality. Benhabib envisages a cosmopolitanism 'grounded upon the common humanity of each and every person and his or her free will which also included the freedom to travel beyond the confines of one's cultural, religious, and ethnocentric walls' (2004: 40). Similarly, Thaa proposed a cosmopolitan approach to the establishment of 'networks of global civil society as the social foundations of a new 'civil' community that would allow for reflexive political action without an exclusive collective identity and a territorially defined state' (Thaa, 2001:504). With increasing numbers of refugees, international protection applicants and economic migrants seeking a different life, governments are presented with issues and questions around how the demands of the sovereign, self-determined state are accommodated, on the one hand, and the assertion of human rights claims on the other. Migration presents ways to uncover features of political membership and the possibility of imagining a new political ideal which attempts to reconcile issues of homogeneity and a universal view of the 'other'. The state has the right to determine who has the right to political membership or citizenship and what the conditions of that membership might be. Benhabib proposed a transnational landscape as a more inclusive approach to migrations. This suggests a deterritorialised geographical area, with no defined periphery facilitating an inclusion of a human rights system through declarations, capable of legally protecting the immigrant in the face of sovereign power. The sovereign is then called upon to determine who is entitled to full membership and how to ensure that all individuals are treated equally and fairly.

Echoing the writings of Arendt's and her belief in the 'right to have rights', she proposed an 'injunction against denationalisation and the loss of citizenship rights; and the vindication of the right of every human being to have rights regardless of their political membership' (Benhabib, 2004:3). It was in fact a call for the inclusion of citizenship claims into a universal human rights regime. When considering the needs of the non-citizen, her concept of

cosmopolitanism proposes that states should provide full membership to people who are international protection applicants, refugees and migrants on the grounds that they adopt the founding tenets of democratic states and agree to use the principle of discourse ethics in attempting to resolve any arguments with members of that state. By proposing a 'post-metaphysical' reworking of Kant's concept of cosmopolitanism, Benhabib suggested that these should be 'grounded upon the common humanity of each and every person and his or her free will which also includes the freedom to travel beyond the confines of one's cultural, religious, and ethnocentric walls' (Benhabib, 2004:40). Hospitality shown towards people who are refugees and international protection applicant is therefore a key responsibility of states. The development of a federation of states, based on cosmopolitan principles and rights and the possibility of discussing membership through the political process of democratic iterations was a suggested means for the inclusion of refugees in the workings of the state. New possibilities are not without their practical challenges. In the face of growing nationalism and hostility toward non-citizens which has become evident in Europe, making a case for a cosmopolitan approach to the 'other' and for more expansive concepts of belonging may be difficult.

4.7 A New Paradigm of Refuge

It may be asked whether it is entirely fair and appropriate to lay all of the blame for the current migration-asylum nexus at the door of the nation-state. Does the humanitarian system of care and maintenance share some of the blame for the current problems associated with displacement? The structure of the UN and its Convention have changed little since their establishment and seem incapable of dealing with the challenges presented by recent migration. Current responses to migration appear to be 'encampment, urban destitution or perilous journeys' (Betts and Collier, 2018:55). Carens argues against expanding the refugee regime as it currently exists suggesting that it would do little to 'solve problems like global poverty, civil war or ethnic conflict' (Carens, 2013:201). Instead Carens calls for 'open borders' as this is the only means to demonstrate equality. He maintains that states express their legitimacy when they accommodate and welcome migrants. Scholars (Kukathas, 2004:12; Carens, 2013; Betts and Collier, 2019) note the need for a more expansive definition of 'refugee' and the need to consider the 'severity of the threat to human rights' (Carens,

2013:201) and its associated risk in the country of origin. Betts and Collier also call for new models of working with refugees and for new ways of thinking about how the state can aid them. They describe the current system as one which is broken and has become solely 'a *humanitarian* system' (Betts and Collier, 2018:157). He considers the need to restore autonomy to those who are displaced. People should be enabled to take up work, to access education and training and to develop their knowledge and talents. Without such rights, people witness the erosion of their job-related skills and their hopes for the future. This leads to increased social exclusion and despair, as people have few opportunities to recreate new lives in a host country.

Policies of warehousing people in camps and similar spaces of waiting have become a global phenomenon since the 1980's, suggesting that the UN has moved from protecting and defending rights to managing people and displacement. Perhaps a system which might provide some political rights would best support the well-being and interests of those who are displaced and in need of protection. It is one which may help us to position them as capable and determined, as opposed to traumatised and dependent. Arendt wrote about the lack of rights for refugees almost 100 years ago, yet the same issues continue to puzzle today. The non-citizen lacks the status and the rights to be ontologically and politically active. Unable to defend her/his own interests, she/he is dependent on aid from an external source. 'The moment for a rethink is long overdue' (Betts and Collier, 2018:9).

Chapter Summary

In this chapter, I considered how the model of the nation-state sought to prioritise the needs and interests of the citizen over those of the non-citizen. I noted that states may adhere to human rights treaties, yet offer the minimum standards to an individual seeking international protection. It is a 'race to the bottom' for states, in terms of the types of reception and hospitality which they offer to the non-citizen and I have suggested that new thinking is required in working with people who are displaced. New and reimagined communities and modalities of political membership call for a different conceptualisation of political identity where all individuals are considered equal and show equal regard for each other. It is time to reimagine a system which might be more open to the 'foreign other', more welcoming and one which recognises the autonomy and independence of individuals. The following chapter

provides the historical and political context for the research and it outlines events and beliefs which have led to the development of the current asylum system in Ireland.

Chapter 5: The Story of Reception and Non-Reception of Immigrants in Ireland

5.1 Establishing Context

The last chapter considered the origins of the nation-state and ideas about citizenship which have led to current understandings of political membership and hospitality. This, in turn, has implications for theories of justice for those seeking international protection and for refugees. I suggest that increased levels of migration have called for new and imaginative responses in creating alternative political entities and a rethinking of the current humanitarian system. This chapter outlines some of the principal events, ideas and discourses which have shaped immigration policy in contemporary Ireland. Many of these ideas have been framed by a legacy of discriminative practices and racism. This chapter is organised chronologically and details the arrival of various groups who sought the protection of the Irish State in the past. It, therefore, provides a political and human context for the study. In this chapter, my focus is on literature that relates to the reception and treatment of people who sought sanctuary in Ireland and, in particular, their rights in terms of access to accommodation, education and work. It explores the factors which influenced ideas and policies in the past, some of which persist and are evident in contemporary immigration policies. Hence, this chapter considers the broader European and global policies when appropriate and, in particular, the CEAS (Common European Asylum System) which led to the establishment of the Direct Provision. The negative impact of living in this system and attempts at reform, outlined in the McMahon Report, are also examined. I suggest that the historical study of systematic and bureaucratic exclusion of people who sought the protection of the Irish State helps to understand current political and public ideas about immigration. It raises questions about human behaviour and the collective national response to those who seek refuge in this country. It calls on citizens to avoid providing simple answers to complex questions about the way in which the Irish Nation wishes to be regarded in terms of its response to those in need. Engaging with the historical context draws our attention to the dangers of prejudice, discrimination and dehumanization. It exposes a range of human actions to the plight of others raising important considerations

about societal and individual motivations and pressures that cause people to act in particular ways or to not respond at all.

5.2 The Danger of Monocultural Imaginings

Contrary to nativist or popular perceptions about the single origin of the Irish people or that of a monocultural nation (Kelly, 2005), the population of Ireland has been influenced by the arrival of Celts, Vikings, Normans and English (Cullen, 2000:4). During the 20th twentieth century, groups of Hungarian, Chilean, Vietnamese, Iranian Bahá'í, Bosnian and Kosovar refugees have come to Ireland (Cullen, 2000:4) to seek sanctuary. Since the early 1990's, Ireland experienced unprecedented demographic change and greater fluidity of identity 'as new expressions of race, culture and religion' (Parker-Jenkins and Masterson, 2011:477) were recognised and acknowledged. When speaking of the complexity of Irish identity – Shaw notes 'I am a genuine, typical Irishman of the Danish, Norman, Cromwellian and (of course) Scottish invasions' (Shaw, 1911). For People who immigrate to Ireland and, in particular, for those seeking international, the idea of Ireland as a monocultural society is fraught with danger. Those who were deemed to transgress or deviate from the monoculture were often treated with disdain. In the past, ideas about a monocultural Ireland ignored the arrival and presence of different groups, both new immigrants and 'old' ethnic minorities in Ireland (Lentin and McVeigh 2002) and attitudes toward them were often ambivalent. Mac Eínri reminds us that 'one of the central myths of independent Ireland – this part of Ireland – was that we all shared in a common set of social values and a common culture. Yet, looking back this was never the case. Exclusion did not begin with recent immigrants' (Mac Eínri, 2002:2). Despite a reputation for offering a warm welcome, minority groups and immigrants, in particular, have often faced hostility on their arrival.

5.3 The Development of the Nation-State

The previous section challenged the notion of Ireland as a monocultural society discrediting the idea that people separate into biologically-discrete groups (Garner, 2004). Ideas about those who can enter and belong to a nation or society often start from assumptions manifest in

traditional definitions of citizen, nation, and state which suggest a territoriality of belonging. Many of these ideas have their origins in the French Revolution which marked the development not only of the nation-state but an understanding of the institution and ideology of national citizenship (Brubaker, 1989). Burke in *Reflections on the Revolution in France* (1790) considers the ways in which revolutions shape society. O'Donnell (2000:14) suggests that ideas presented in Burke's work have a 'strong affinity in terms of the depictions of key political concepts' with *Párliament na mban*, a prose piece blending moral and religious advised with the political. Composed by Fr. Donaill Ó Colmáin, (c.1645–c.1704) for his ill-fated student James Cotter/ Séamus Óg Mac Coitir, *Párliament na mban* addressed the issue of rights, *Ceart,* and the public good, *an Maitheas Poiblí* (O'Donnell, 2000:111). Burke's ideas are complex, and at the time, he advocated for the retention of the monarchy and the church, suggesting that the basis for the French Revolution was questionable. He argues that revolution of this nature should be approached with caution (Hitchins, 2004). He was reluctant to embrace abstract and undefined rights and opposed the notion of discarding a long-established system of monarchy and hereditary succession. Kirk suggests that Burke was opposed to the idea of a republic or nation-state as he 'detested the idyllic fantasy of a free, happy, lawless and unpropertied state of nature which Rousseau popularised' (Kirk, 2012:443). He considers the Divine or God as the only possibility of guidance 'to knowledge of justice' (Kirk, 2012:443). A supporter of Jacobitism and the Stuart Kings, conservative in his views, Burke was critical of colonial crimes, corruption and ill-treatment by those who held power (O'Donnell, 2000). His ideas, with their origins in Gaelic culture, meanst that he advocated 'genealogy as central in making a claim for kingship' (O'Donnell, 2000:115). Occupying an ambiguous position in legal, political and constitutional thought (Loughlin, 2015:49) and, paradoxically, a supporter of the American Revolution, he called for 'a repeal of the taxes the Americans find so hateful' calling for a right for people to have 'more control over their affairs' (Spinner, 1991:402). Burke's ideas have made an important contribution to the debate about who holds authority, how authority is achieved and the relationship between liberty and authority. His ideas brought to the fore the tensions which exist between 'national interests and moral law' (Armitage, 2000: 608). Burke feared the development of the nation-state model which involved a reimagining of sovereignty and a transfer of power from a ruler or monarch to the people.

This new way of thinking envisaged people as citizens belonging to a particular Sstate and being in possession of all the rights and responsibilities which citizenship bestows, within that

territory. This meant that those who were resident within clearly defined borders held greater rights. From the eighteenth century onwards, the exclusion of non-citizens deepened which had implications for the reception and treatment of those who were deemed to be 'other' and those who 'did not belong'. National discourses which connected people to places by exalting common heritage and origins became more prominent and rose in public esteem (Lavenex, 2001:9). With regard to nationalist discourses in Ireland during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the Irish State was conceptualised as one nation or nationality. It was considered to have its own cultural and social customs and was designated as having a single and unique government system (Daly, 2001:379). As in other states, the Irish State was conceptualised as a means to enable democracy to work and flourish (Brubaker, 1989:30-49). During the early part of the nineteenth century, changes began to take place whereby constructions of 'Irishness' emphasised a new Catholic Ireland. From this time onwards, Irish nation-building was characterised by the development of narrow and restrictive ideas about Irish identity and 'a socio-genesis of homogeneity linked to nationalism' (Fanning, 2012:30).

5.3.1 Hegemonic Constructions of National Identity

Debates about citizenship are often connected to discussions about immigration. However, at the time of the founding of the Irish Free State, in 1922, the idea of Irish citizenship principally sought to reinforce the homogeneity of Irish population. The draft of a new constitution came into being in December of that year, setting out the principles and rules which applied to citizenship. The 1922 Constitution and the Citizenship Act of 1935 conferred citizenship to those domiciled in Ireland, who were born in the Irish Free State or whose parents had been born in Ireland. It stated that citizenship bestowed rights, privileges and duties to those designated as citizens. At the point, Ireland adapted the *jus soli* citizenship which was connected to territorial claim (Daly, 2001:372). Fanning refers to this period as 'an "Irish-Ireland" phase of political nation-building' where ideas and practices were 'influenced by cultural nationalism which was "protectionist and isolationist" and a "national-non-national" dualism became prevalent' (Fanning and Mutwarasibo, 2007:449). This meant that through policy development and changes in economic and social power, minority groups and immigrants, in particular, were barely acknowledged and their 'distinctiveness refuted' (Fanning, 2012:52). Some of these ideas persist in contemporary

policy which often seeks to deter the immigrant and suggest unity and homogeneity are valued over diversity and multiculturalism.

In the late 1950's Eamonn de Valera served as President of Ireland. His views were politically, economically, socially and culturally conservative and his ideas of nation-building were based on earlier, nineteenth century beliefs which are frequently depicted as narrow, over romanticised and unrealistic. Cronin suggests that de Valera's actions attempted to create an exclusive national distinctiveness, which resulted in beliefs around the uniqueness of being Irish. 'Such narrow thinking led to blinkered vision toward [Irish identity], Gaelic and Irish became synonymous terms, which they were not: then Gaelic and Catholic became synonymous, which they were not' (Cronin, 1980:99). This meant that minority groups were ideologically and materially side-lined as hegemonic constructions of national identity were used to justify state practices. With regard to more recent immigration, Nititham notes that, in Ireland, 'essentialist constructions of identity become increasingly problematic as minority ethnic communities settle and grow..., particularly when 'Irish' as an ethnonational identity is linked to birth, descent and/or citizenship' (Nititham, 2016:9). Ireland is in fact a hybrid society, 'a social formation within which different cultures circulate and intersect based on: class, gender, sexuality, religion, ethnicity/race, politics, region, county, settler/traveller, language and including cultures based on perceived relationship to Britain' (Hickman, 2007:15). Despite the claim that Ireland was a land of 'a thousand welcomes', those arriving in this country have too often received a hostile reception. We look at one example of this in the next section: anti-Semitism.

5.4 Religious and Secular Justification of Anti-Semitism in Ireland

In this section, we can see that some of policy approaches to immigration which persist in the twenty-first century had their origins in ideas and beliefs which existed in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. During the early part of the twentieth century concerns regarding immigrants generally centred on employment and their ability to financially self-support. The Aliens Act of 1935 provided for the control of persons who were not citizens of Ireland, and the right to deny entry or deport persons rested with the Minister for Justice. It would appear that concerns about national security, but also beliefs about threats to Christian values were

used to countenance attitudes and treatment of Jewish refugees during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries (Fanning, 2012:59). This demonstrates that while, considerable cultural, ethnic, religious and linguistic diversity existed in Ireland for millennia. This diversity was not always warmly welcomed. According to O'Driscoll, 'Ireland was and is not free from the intolerance and prejudices endemic in western civilisation' (O'Driscoll, 2004:139). Jewish refugees were generally regarded with suspicion and it was suggested that permitting them to enter the country would lead to 'a homogenous Irish society under threat' (Fanning, 2012:5). The Irish State, and, in particular, the Department of Justice, was opposed to providing sanctuary to anyone who could become a burden on the young Irish Free State (Holfter, 2019). Ireland reluctantly admitted refugees during the early part of the twentieth century, but politicians were unwilling to admit large numbers of people during and following the world wars.

Anti-Semitic policies continued to receive backing, in Ireland, until the late 1950's and anti-Semitic speeches and publications by members of the Catholic clergy continued to influence beliefs about Jews among Irish society (Fanning, 2012:67). The Irish State continued to characterise itself through 'overt anti-Semitism from 1938 until Ireland's ratification of the UN Convention on the status of refugees (1951) in 1956' (Fanning, 2012:57). Suitability had religious overtones and suggested the selection of those who were of Christian background. Such policies were portrayed as being in the public interest. However, in the decades following the Holocaust, attitudes and policies began to change. Overt expressions and policies of discrimination became 'unfeasible within the context of an obligation to admit all those who sought refugee status' (Fanning, 2012:80).

5.5 The Post-UN Convention Period of 20th Century

Exploring the experiences of different groups who sought refuge in Ireland brings a human dimension to this study and allows one to see the impact of policy and practices on individual lives. It enables one to find a balance between understanding practical supports, policy impact, critical analysis of events and expressing empathy. It also enables one to see the power which governments exerted a different points in history and to consider the opportunities and roles which citizens might have in bringing about changes to policy.

Throughout the 20th century, Irish attitudes continued to be influenced by this legacy of exclusionary State policies and discrimination. By the end of the Second World War, following several years of evacuation, dispossession and expulsion, the mass movement of millions of people took place. In 1946, the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) recognised not only the plight of those displaced persons, but also the overriding principle that 'no refugees or displaced persons who have finally and definitely...expressed valid objections to returning to their countries of origin...shall be compelled to return ...' (resolution 8 (I) of 12 February 1946). Following the end of the Second World War and the establishment of the UN, a draft document outlining basic human rights was created, as it was felt that the atrocities witnessed during the Second World War should never happen again. This eventually led to the creation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948, providing a means for those fleeing persecution to seek asylum in another country (UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights 1948, Article 14). The 1951 Convention defined what is meant by the term 'refugees' and set out the rights of individuals who are granted asylum along with the responsibilities and legal obligations of the State to protect them. The Convention, with addition of the 1967 protocol, removed any temporal or geographic limitation and recognised the principle of *non-refoulement*, which forbids States to return refugees to a persecutor. This forms the legal basis of today's international and national protection of refugees. Ireland, despite initially declining to sign up to the Convention, eventually ratified the document in 1956. Despite approval of the convention, little or no legislation was introduced in the proceeding decades. It was only with the arrival of larger numbers of people in the 1990's that significant changes were made to Irish refugee practices and policies. In her work on the subject of Irish foreign policy and chaotic responses towards refugees, Ward recounts events which took place in October 1949, in Cork, which highlighted the state's response in supporting refugees and immigrants. When an overcrowded and damaged vessel was seized by Cork Harbour Authorities, carrying 272 Estonian refugees from Sweden to Canada, the Irish Red Cross took charge of their welfare, and they were accommodated in a local army barracks. At the time, the government stated that 'they would neither pay for their passage onwards nor support them if they remained' (Ward, 1996:135). The minutes of a cabinet meeting from 16th December 1949 showed that the Red Cross was asked to encourage them to leave Ireland. Despite the ratification of the Convention on Human Rights, the legacy of discouraging refugees and international protection applicants continued. The arrival of a group of Hungarians refugees in the 1950's provided further evidence of this.

5.5.1 The Arrival of Hungarian Refugees in Ireland-A Brief Welcome

In this section, I consider the arrival and reception of a group of Hungarian refugees. An understanding of their experiences shows that ill-treatment of immigrants is not a new concept and helps develop insights into the cultural, societal and political origins of the attitudes which underpinned actions and policies at the time. Shortly after Irish state's ratification of the Convention of Human rights, in 1951, the country was obliged to receive 541 Hungarian refugees. At the time, Ireland was a highly conservative country and its citizens were relatively impoverished. The announcement was made with great enthusiasm because, according to Ward, the Irish government was concerned about how the reception of the Hungarian group would be perceived by its European neighbours. Similar enthusiasm was echoed by the Catholic Church. Fanning explains that 'popular support for the admittance of refugees also owed much to Catholic solidarity' (Fanning, 2012:85).
They were housed in Knockalisheen Army Barracks in County Clare where their welfare and needs were the responsibility of the Red Cross. A pattern of confining and institutionalizing individuals, one which complies to a minimal attempt with human rights conventions while warding off unwanted outsiders appears to be the Irish government response to dealing with the arrival of people seeking protection. It is interesting to note that years later Knockalisheen Army Barracks continues to be used to house international protection applicants.

The early and favourable response to the Hungarian group soon dissipated at a governmental level. The resettlement of Hungarian refugees was described as a failure (Ward, 1996) as they faced challenges from the outset. While refugees had the right to work in Ireland, no efforts were made to help the newly arrived group to secure employment, and restrictions were placed on their mobility. Ward concludes that the Irish government displayed 'a weak interpretation' of its responsibilities under the Convention of Human Rights, and in agreeing to take the Hungarian refugees in the first place, the Irish State was more concerned with 'its prestige abroad', than with the future and well-being of the group (Ward, 1996: 140). The experience of the Hungarian refugees exposed a number of failures and misunderstandings on the part of the Irish State's post-Convention standpoint on refugees and the asylum process. Central to these failures was the expectation that Ireland could continue to manage asylum by employing the same approach and practices as it had done in the pre-Convention period. In ratifying the 1956 UN Convention, the Irish Government were called upon to make a break with the past and pledge its commitment to international cooperation and humanitarian

efforts. Underlying the celebrated claims of Ireland as a place of welcome, as a country which openly embraced the values of the UNHCR, was the harsh reality of incompetence on the part of the government and the Red Cross and a general indifference to the welfare of the Hungarians.

5.6 The Arrival of Programme Refugees (1950 to 1990): A Piecemeal Response from the Irish State

Following the ratification of the UN Convention on Human rights, Ireland's approach to refugees continued to be characterised by exclusion, restriction and selection. Fanning points out that 'the total number of programme refugees admitted in 1956 was fewer than 1,500, considerably less than had been accepted in the two decades prior to 1956' (Fanning, 2012:91).

Another group of refugees to seek asylum in Ireland came from Chile. They arrived in Ireland following a military coup by General Pinochet (Weeks, 2000:720-730). The 120 Chileans had the right to work and to seek social welfare but many eventually left Ireland. In the 1970's a small group from Vietnam also faced challenges in terms of integrating and finding employment. After the fall of Saigon in 1975, large numbers of refugees left South Vietnam, many by boat. In 1979, Ireland received 212 Vietnamese programme refugees (Fanning, 2012:93). However, challenges arose due to difficulties with language and many were pessimistic about their chances of finding employment (O'Regan, 1998:68). It would appear that the State was ill-equipped and poorly understood the kinds of supports which refugees required. State responses to the arrival of the Vietnamese's refugees was similar to that of the Hungarian and Chilean refugees and shaped by the Aliens Act (1935) and pre-Convention ideas and policies implying 'that refugees should not be a burden upon the State' (Fanning, 2012:109). Agencies and voluntary groups which supported the Vietnamese group learned a lot from their experiences, and by the time further groups of refugees arrived in the 1990's, changes to policy, influenced by EU and international events had been enacted. A State-funded refugee agency had also been established.

5.7 European Policy, Human Rights and Immigration

From the 1970's onwards, Irish immigration policy was largely shaped by EU decisions and worldwide events. In the wider European context, since the establishment of the Convention of Human Rights the scale of refugee movement had increased. Foreign workers, welcomed for the purpose of rebuilding post-war Europe, were attracted by the economic boom of the 1960's, and were often considered 'guestworkers'. In Europe, the welcoming and tolerant attitude began to diminish during the 1970's when an oil crisis impacted international relations and recession led to unemployment and a reduction in the demand for foreign labour (Ghosh, 2000:71). Until the early 1980's, the number of people seeking asylum in Western Europe remained fairly consistent at fewer than 100,000 annually. This began to change in the mid- 1980s due to uncertainties in a post-Cold War period when 'Western Europe spluttered economically and immigration quotas were slashed' (Cullen, 2000:9). As a result, those who would normally have entered European countries as migrants 'now sought entry through the asylum process' (Cullen, 2000:9).

Since the 1990's, the EU has attempted to regulate and tighten the movement of refugees, and this happened through the implementation of agreements such as 'Schengen and Dublin Conventions and "soft law" adopted under the third pillar of the Maastricht treaty' (Lavenex, 2001:860). The Schengen Agreement was signed on 14th June 1985, near the town of Schengen in Luxembourg. It is a treaty which was aimed at establishing the principle of 'free movement of persons in the European Community' (Carrera, 2005:700). In 1990, the Agreement was supplemented by the Schengen Convention which proposed the complete abolition of systematic internal border controls and a common visa policy (Carrera, 2005: 700). The removal of the border checks as well as the increased permeability of national borders 'led to many fears at the national level of the potential increase of massive irregular immigration and transnational organised crime' (Anderson, 2004). In 1991, Ireland endorsed the Dublin Convention, which formalised an agreement regarding which countries should take responsibility for examining asylum requests. The Convention was signed in Dublin, Ireland, on 15 June 1990, and first came into force on 1st September 1997 for the first twelve signatories. The Treaty was extended to other member States and some countries outside the Union. Since then, the Dublin III Regulation (No. 604/2013) was approved in June 2013, replacing previous regulations. It is based on the principle that the first Member State where

finger prints are taken and stored or an asylum claim is lodged is responsible for a person's asylum claim. One of the main aims of the Dublin Regulation was to prevent an asylum applicant from submitting asylum requests in multiple Member States and to reduce the number of international protection applicants who are moved from one member state to another (Mouzourakis, 2014:20). The country in which the asylum seeker first applies for asylum is responsible for either accepting or rejecting the claim, and she/he may not restart the process in another jurisdiction. In an interesting article, published in 2016, Trauner, suggests that the EU has sought to protect the key elements of its asylum policy 'by adding new layers of policy instruments in response to both the financial and economic crisis post-2008 and the refugee crisis starting in 2015'(Trauner, 2016:311). Noting that there is an assumption within these policies that 'comparable rules and procedures exist throughout the EU', this is, in fact, not the case (Trauner, 2016:321). In 2015, when larger numbers of people were seeking refuge in Europe, many countries such as Hungry, Greece, the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Poland considered their countries overburdened and effectively withdrew from the Dublin agreement (Trauner, 2016:320). A further agreement, the Maastricht treaty, introduced in 1992, entrusted EU 'Justice and Home Affairs Minister to establish a framework for European-wide asylum policy' (Cullen, 2000:13). In the following months, three non-binding resolutions were approved. These included:

1. The safe third country concept, allowing States to refuse individuals access to their asylum procedures if the applicant could have sought protection in another safe country.
2. The creation of the category of 'manifestly unfounded' asylum applications, giving States wide scope for rejecting asylum requests on formal grounds and for limiting appeal possibilities.
3. The creation of 'safe countries of origin' for which accelerated procedures apply in the case of claimants coming from countries in which there is generally deemed to be no serious risk of persecution.

(Cullen, 2000:13)

Despite ratification of various treaties and agreements between the 1950s and the 1980s, research suggests that 'Ireland was a reluctant participant in the international refugee regime of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees' (Moreo and Lentin, 2010:11). During this period, the Irish government was obliged to accept refugees yet struggled to provide sufficient means for short and long-term resettlement (Moreo and Lentin, 2010:11).

5.8 A Trend towards EU Cooperation

In 1987, twenty-six Iranian Bahá'í were accepted as refugees by the Irish government and given rights to work, access to social welfare and housing. This indicated a trend towards EU cooperation on the part of the Irish government and a move away from stringent and isolationist attitudes. During the 1990's and as part of the process in which the Irish government had been required to re-examine its approach to international protection applicants and refugees, an Irish Refugee Agency was established in 1991. The initial aim of the Refugee Agency was to achieve the recognition of the right to asylum and the implementation of a proper legislative system (McGuinness, 2014). It was a government funded body, entrusted with the care and resettlement of refugees coming to Ireland. The first programme refugees to be received by the Irish Refugee Agency was a group of Bosnians who arrived in Ireland in 1992.

Between 1992 and 1998, Ireland took in 455 Bosnian refugees indicating greater compliance with international agreements and EU policy. They were able to avail of the benefits of a structured reception and resettlement programme (Fanning 2012:94) and, under the terms of the resettlement programme, they were permitted to work, avail of social welfare and public housing (Fanning, 2002:97). The resettlement programme was somewhat successful, however, along with the Vietnamese refugees, the Bosnians suffered in both personal and financial terms. These refugees had disproportionally high rates of unemployment and found integration difficult (Regan, 1988:88-98). However, the resettlement programme formed the basis for an improved and more humanitarian approach to the reception of those seeking asylum.

In 1999, Kosovar refugees arrived in the country and were granted the status of leave to remain and the same conditions of resettlement as the Bosnians had been given. According to the Irish Refugee Council (IRC), a person may be granted 'leave to remain' in Ireland for humanitarian or other significant reasons, and decisions on the granting of 'leave to remain' rest with the Minister for Justice. People with this status can live and work in the country, but cannot apply for family reunification. However, any systems which had been developed by the newly developed refugee agency to help with the reception of refugees were reduced with the arrival of larger numbers of people seeking international protection. There were thirty-

one applications for asylum in 1991; 7,424 in 1999; and 10,938 in 2000, representing a forty-one per cent increase between the years 1991 and 2000 (FLAC, 2009:13). This brought about a significant change in attitude, practices and policies on the part of the Irish government. Prior to this, people who came to seek asylum in Ireland had the same social and welfare supports as Irish people experiencing homelessness (RIA, 2013:4, Thornton, 2007). In 2000, the Department of Social and Family Affairs issued Circular 04/00, outlining the legal basis for the Direct Provision system which was initially designed to be a short-term measure to accommodate people seeking refuge in Ireland.

5.9 The Establishment of Direct Provision

Direct Provision was established in April 2000 in response to an increase in the number of people seeking protection in Ireland and a shortage of suitable accommodation. It is a system which provides minimum support for those applying for refugee status, subsidiary protection or leave to remain. Applicants are generally dispersed to centres around the country, some of which are located in small towns and in remote parts which have poor transport links. Residents are provided with accommodation, often, in the form of a shared room, and provided with meals. An allowance of €19.10 per week for adults and, €9.60 for dependent children was initially provided. Since its inception, asylum seekers have been unable to access the social welfare system (Foreman et al., 2007:1155). In 2019, allowances were increased to €38.80 per week for adults and €29.80 for children.

Since the introduction of the Direct Provision system, there have been ongoing calls for an alternative, one which is more humane and efficient (Ní Raghallaigh et al., 2016). In recent years, media reporting has focused on the living conditions and access to services for those living in Direct Provision. Several recommendations were made in the Working Group Report to Government on Improvements to the entire Protection Process and published in The McMahon Report (McMahon, 2015). These included changes to the system of accommodation and the kinds of supports provided to international protection applicants.

5.9.1 -The McMahon Report-Recommendations for Reform of the International Protection Process and Direct Provision

The negative impacts of living in Direct Provision have been documented in numerous publications and criticised by various organisations including the Ombudsman and Information Commissioner, Emily O'Reilly (O'Reilly, 2013), the government's Special Rapporteur for Child Protection, Dr. Jeffrey Shannon (Shannon, 2012; 2014), by international organisations such as the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (UNCERD, 2011), by NGOs and community groups working directly with international protection applicants. Calls for reform of Direct Provision, years of campaigning by individuals and organisations along with protests within various accommodation centres around the country led the Irish government, in 2014, to establish a 'Working Group on the Protection Process and Direct Provision'. MASI were opposed to the working group from the beginning stating that it was a 'cosmetic exercise designed to make the government look concerned while delivering nothing of real worth to asylum seekers' (MASI, 2019:2). Following research and consultation, The McMahon Report was published in June 2015 setting out 173 recommended changes for reform of the international protection process including Direct Provision and supports to international protection applicants. The report's terms of reference were directed towards the identification of improvements to the existing system rather than the identification of an alternative system of reception. The report proposed changes in a number of areas and in the section below, I outline some of these. Firstly, it considered receptions conditions and suggested improvements to living conditions in Direct Provision centres aimed at showing greater respect for the dignity of persons and improving their quality of life (McMahon, 2015). Increasing physical space was suggested as a way to address the problem of cramped conditions that some residents endured. It was also suggested that additional accommodation centres should be sought. Regarding living conditions, it was recommended that all families should have access to cooking facilities, either in a self-contained unit or through use of a communal kitchen. The setup of appropriate play, recreation and study facilities and access to an on-site or off-site crèche/pre-school was proposed. Secondly, many concerns centred on the absence of financial supports, the prohibition against accessing the labour market at the time, and barriers to education for adults. As a consequence, the report suggest improvements in accessing financial, educational and health supports for protection applicants. It was recommended that the weekly allowance

for adults should be increased from €19.10 to €38.74 for adults and from €9.60 to €29.80 for children and that on-site Community Welfare Services for residents in Direct Provision be reinstated (McMahon, 2015). Access to the labour market for protection applicants who are awaiting a first instance decision for nine months or more and who have co-operated with the protection process was also proposed. Thirdly, improvements to existing arrangements for the processing of protection applications with particular regard to the length of the process were set out. It was suggested that no person should be in the system for more than five years. A single protection determination procedure was proposed as a matter of urgency in order to deal with the long delays in processing applications. It is generally acknowledged that improvements have been made to the protection process and the direct provision system since the publication of the McMahon Report, published in July 2015. However, many reforms have taken place more slowly than originally hoped for, and there is 'evidence to show that some were only in progress or partially implemented' (NASC, 2017:2). The criticism of the system and calls for reform are evidence of the unsuitability of the system. This section adds to previous accounts of the failure of successive governments to respect certain human rights obligations as outlined in international agreements of which Ireland is a signatory. The implementation of recommendations is outlined in greater detail in section 5.16.

5.10 Irish Policy Context from 1999 to 2018

The previous sections suggests that successive governments have been preoccupied with reducing the 'pull factors' which might attract international protection applicants to Ireland rather than with their international obligations. It would appear that ideas and thinking behind the development of policy which might improve the system would make Ireland more attractive as a destination and lead to a large increase in applications for international protection. For many decades throughout the 20th century, immigration to Ireland was low and, therefore, there was little requirement for any legislation in the area. It was only in recent decades, a legal framework for asylum was developed and a number of pieces of legislation were introduced. Immigration trends since the 1990's were impacted by the ending of the Cold War and increased prosperity in Ireland, and greater numbers of people arrived from Africa, Asia and the Middle East. Since 1999, countries within the EU have worked to create a CEAS. The Irish government initially choose to opt out of the CEAS, but,

in July 2018, opted into the EU (recast) Reception Conditions Directive (2013/33/EU). The Directive includes a framework that enables international protection applicants to access employment under certain conditions. Important provisions in relation to children's rights, health, education and material reception conditions for applicants, giving them a legal basis and underpinned by EU law, were included in the Directive (EMN, 2018). In contrast to other EU Member States, Ireland is not part of the Schengen agreement, opting instead to control its borders. This means that those who arrive from the Schengen area must pass through passport checkpoints.

Thornton explains that Ireland's initial refusal to agree to the CEAS 'relates to the refusal of the Irish government to place reception rights on a firm statutory footing' and that 'the right to accommodation and financial allowances do not *per se* clearly violate the core normative obligations' (Thornton, 2016:13). Irish immigration policy, generally based on the Aliens Act of 1935, provided for the monitoring of people who are not Irish Citizens. Prior to the implementation in 2000 of the 1996 Act, requests for asylum in Ireland were considered using the guidelines provided by the UNHCR assignee to Ireland. The Refugee Act of 1996 hailed the appointment of the Refugee Application Commissioner, the establishment of the Refugee Appeals Tribunal and the RIA. Changes to the 1996 Act were to be permitted in response to changing circumstances in terms of greater immigration into the country.

In December 2019, there were 4,872 applications for International Protection. This rose by a further 306 in January 2020 (IPO, 2002). Throughout the Irish economic boom of the early 2000's, perceptions and discourses demonised asylum seekers (as they were known at the time) negatively (Schuster, 2003). At the time, they were portrayed as being too costly for the state to support, and control of the numbers entering the country was presented as essential to the 'common good' (Schuster, 2003: 253). Therefore, at a time when immigration was encouraged in order to fulfil the needs of labour market, regulation of the number of people seeking asylum were also being considered by government (Vink, 2017:106).

5.11 The Irish Citizenship Referendum

The 1922 Constitution of the Irish Free State outlined a *jus soli* understanding of citizenship. Also referred to as birthright citizenship, this remained largely unchallenged until the 1980's because of Ireland's particularly restrictive approach to granting asylum. However, this began to change with the case of Osheku v Ireland, in which a Nigerian born man, his Irish born wife and their Irish born child were deported. Mr. Osheku arrived in Ireland in 1979, stating that he was coming to the country on holiday. He remained resident in Ireland until 1986, when his case came before the courts. He failed to provide proof that he could support both himself and his dependents. The judge held that 'the right to reside in a place was not fundamental or a constitutional right of a citizen' (Quinn, 2005:28). It was believed that families could draw on the constitutional rights of the family to escape deportation. However, this case proved that a person could be deported even if they were related or married to an Irish citizen.

Not long after that, and also in 1986, a similar case took place. It was the case of Pok Sun Shun, a Chinese man who had been living with his wife and children in Ireland for eight years. As a result of what the judge described as a 'serious incident', during his first year living in Ireland, he was informed by the Department of Justice that he would have to leave the country. The plaintiff claimed that he had the right to have his family protected, however, the court ruled that he did not have any such entitlements, and the Counsel for State outlined that 'the rights given to the family are not absolute' (Quinn, 2005:29). The family were deported. A better-known case was that of Fajujonu v Minister for Justice, in which a married couple, originally from Nigeria and Morocco, came to Ireland from London in 1981. They did not register their arrival with immigration authorities and remained in the country after a month, without permission from the Department of Justice. They were faced with deportation orders. In 1983, their child was born in Ireland, and they claimed their son had a constitutional right to remain in his country of birth and to be brought up by his parents. The Supreme Court, which ruled that the child had the right to be with her/her parents and unless it was in the 'common good' to deport the family, then the break-up of a family was unnecessary (Quinn, 2005:28). They were permitted to remain in Ireland on the basis that their Irish child had the right to the 'care, company and parentage' of its parents (Haughey, 2002). The outcome of this case was different to the previous two, outlined above, in that the

family were not deported. The courts gave precedent to the constitutional rights of the child to remain with his parents, rather than the right of the Department of Justice to remove them from the State.

A further significant event was the ratification of the 1998 Good Friday Agreement or Belfast Agreement, which 'copper-fastened a *jus soli* right to citizenship' (Fanning and Mutwarasibo, 2007:445). *Jus soli* granted the right to Irish citizenship for all persons born on the island of Ireland. This brought new concerns that immigrants might take advantage of this agreement and it was politically impossible to make amendments to the Belfast Agreement. Following this realisation, a government decision was quickly made to begin a policy to 'refuse leave to remain to asylum seeker families in the knowledge that this would trigger a further test case in the Supreme Court' (Fanning and Mutwarasibo, 2007:445). The case in point was that of the Lobe couple from the Czech Republic who had a son born in Ireland in November 2001 and sought to have their deportation order quashed in the high court (Haughey, 2002). In January 2003, this concluded in the case of Lobe V Minister for Justice, when the State ruled that a child who was an Irish citizen can be deported with his parents who were non-citizens (Quinn, 2005:26). In this case, it was stated by the courts that the child had no automatic right to remain within the State. These cases brought to the fore concerns for the rights of a child born in Ireland to non-Irish national parents to be brought up and cared for by them within the State, even if they would otherwise have been deported. The decision to permit the Minister for Justice to deport parents of a child born in Ireland, even if this meant that the child, an Irish citizen would also be removed, represented a significant break with prior judgements in similar cases. In the years before 2000, non-Irish nationals who had children born in the State had generally been granted residency in Ireland, even if their asylum applications were unsuccessful.

5.12 Media Portrayal of Asylum seekers and *Jus Sanguine* Citizenship

In the early 2000's, the ways in which people acquired citizenship and the rights which go along with being a citizen in Ireland, came to public attention. A sense of national anxiety about immigration and negative social constructions of immigrants, particularly international protection applicants, began to emerge in political and media discourse (Breen et al., 2008,

Schuster, 2003). ‘A rhetoric of siege, invasion and constantly growing numbers’ was presented to the public (Schuster, 2003: 236). This had already commenced, according to Cullen, in the late 1990’s when much media reporting of events around immigration was characterised by ‘inconsistencies, inaccuracies, exaggerations and generalisations’ (Cullen, 2000:37). Evidence of these are found in the following headlines:

‘Services face overload as refugee flood continues’ – Sunday Business Post 18/5/97
‘Floodgates open as a new army of poor swamp the country’ –Sunday World 25/5/97

(Cullen, 2000:37)

Haynes et al., point out that in media reporting the terms non-Irish national and asylum seeker were conflated and used interchangeably (Haynes et al., 2005:128). Moreover, ‘the asylum system is represented as a phenomenon which Ireland is subjected to by external forces’ rather than an arrangement in which the State has fully agreed to participate (Haynes et al., 2005:6). Much of the debate was shaped by initial assumptions about migrants’ motivations and behaviour while living in Ireland and their dependence upon a benevolent welfare state. There were allegations of ‘welfare tourism’ in the media and among politicians, suggesting that immigrants were entering the country solely with the intent of giving birth to children who were then automatically entitled to Irish citizenship. A statement by the Minister for Justice affirmed that he was ‘anecdotally’ aware of women, ‘who have come here on holiday visas, give birth, collect the birth certificate and the passport for the child and return home’ (Minister McDowell, Dáil Debate, April 21, 2004, cited in King 2004:7). Throughout the Dail debates on April 21st and 22nd, 2004, the number of asylum seekers who were pregnant on their arrival in Ireland was mentioned by Deputies O’Donoghue, O’Dea, Martin, Ahern, Callely, and Moloney (King, 2004:8). There was increasing political pressure for the government to act to avoid what was perceived as abuses of the Irish system, and therefore, a need to tighten Irish citizenship laws. In 2004, Minister for Justice, Michael McDowell proposed holding a referendum in order to amend *Article 9* of the constitution which would bring about a change to citizenship rights. This is outlined in the following piece taken from the Constitution of Ireland.

> Notwithstanding any other provision of this constitution, a person born in the island of Ireland, which includes its islands and seas, who does not have, at the time of the birth of that person at least one parent who is an Irish Citizen or entitled to be an Irish citizen, is not entitled to Irish citizenship or nationality, unless provided for by law (Constitution of Ireland).
>
> (Irish Statute Book, 2004)

Through the use of the referendum, Minister McDowell stated that he was attempting to defend Irish citizenship from exploitation and abuse. State discourses at this time continued the demonisation of those who sought refugee status as 'someone deserving of hostility by virtue not of any misdemeanour, but simply because he or she is an asylum-seeker' (Schuster, 2003:244). This led to squabbles and angry disagreements in the Dáil and heightened media frenzy. While the media had come in for some criticism by the equality authority for inaccuracies in reporting and for making irresponsible claims regarding the increasing number of asylum applications (NCCRI, 2004), news stories continued to appear which may have concentrated minds on the approaching referendum. The government attempted to win voters by referring to previous court cases and to abuses within the system (Fanning and Mutwarasibo, 2007:447). At the time, it was stated that the leading actor in creating anti-immigration sentiment was the State (Lentin, 2007, Lentin and McVeigh, 2006:6, Loyal and Allen, 2006). Fanning outlines the campaign of Fianna Fáil, the largest political party at the time, as using the slogan 'common sense citizenship' which 'tapped into existing distinctions between the still predominantly mono-ethnic nationals and non-Irish nationals (Fanning and Mutwarasibo, 2007:441). Similarly, the Progressive Democrat party focused their campaign on 'racialised claims about asylum seekers and baby tourists exploiting health services' (Fanning and Mutwarasibo, 2007: 441).

In June 2004, at a majority of four to one, the Irish people voted to change birthright citizenship, and in its place, accepted a solution of using both *jus sanguine* and *jus domicile* (Harrington, 2005:443). This decision meant that Irish citizenship was now confined to the children of Irish citizens, those who were in a position to apply for naturalisation and those who were married to an Irish citizen. There were little ethical consideration of this change from the perspective of the asylum seeker, and it meant that elected officials obtained the power to determine not only the terms under which people of migrant background, including refugee and asylum seeking background, could become naturalized citizens, but also the conditions under which the children of foreigners were eligible for birthright citizenship.

5.13 Direct Provision: Protest and Resistance by Residents

In 2014, people who were living in Direct Provision were part of the movement to raise awareness about the delay in processing asylum applications and to draw attention to the conditions in which people were living, sometimes for many years. Lewis described how a protest in the centre where he lived led to more widespread dissent and protest in other centres across the country.

Many centres followed after that. And then one of the things that we did as well in our centre, which was very, very successful, was to mention, was when during our negotiations, remember that we locked out the staff members and the management. So we were in control of the centre. So they [RIA and Dept. of Justice and Equality] had to try and fix things as quickly as possible and so we were negotiating on our terms. And one of the things that we said, they must give us in writing, that no one, amongst three hundred people that are here, that will not be forcefully removed after this strike, because of this strike (Lewis).

Lewis notes that, on that occasion, their protest was different because the residents negotiated with the Department of Justice without the help of a mediator or NGO.

So with us, we said there is no one else, we will talk on our behalf. We will talk ourselves. Let them come and talk to us and we said that …I was struggling here as well, was that they (RIA and Dept. of Justice and Equality] must not separate us and terms of negotiations. Let everybody be there in the meeting. We all meet in a big room like this, full of residents (Lewis).

Further street protests followed, demanding changes and abolition of the Direct Provision system. In November 2016, fifty-one year old Patricia Murambinda called for an end to Direct Provision, stating that it 'had taken [her] youthful days' (Holland, 2016a). Lucky Khambule of MASI called on the government to 'listen to what the people are saying' (Holland, 2016a). Following demands for reform, a number of policy and legislative changes came into effect in Ireland between 2014 and 2019. The first of these attempted to introduce a single application procedure to better manage the processing of requests for asylum. The second included the establishment of the Irish Refugee Protection Programme (IRPP) and the third provided access the Irish labour market, under certain conditions.

5.14 The Single Application Process: An Adherence to European Practices

Following the publication of the McMahon Report, there was hope that significant changes might be made to Direct Provision. While many the recommendations for change had been suggested previously by other groups, on this occasion, the proposals were being made by a group officially appointed to advise and guide the government. This gave reason for hope to people living in Direct Provision and those campaigning for the rights of asylum seekers. However, this optimism soon dissipated, as several months later, the government proceeded to push through the International Protection Bill in record time 'by guillotining all debate, despite protests about some aspects of the bill which, according to human rights groups, eroded certain rights of asylum seekers' (Ní Chiosáin, 2016:102). The Irish International Protection Act 2015 came into effect in January 2017. Described as a new streamlined process, it was designed to speed up decisions on asylum applications which meant that people would spend less time in Direct Provision. A 'single procedure' meant applications for refugee status and subsidiary protection were to be considered in one application. However, a newspaper article, published on Wednesday 16th June 2018, entitled 'asylum seekers now waiting longer to move through initial stage of process' highlights how various problems or 'bottlenecks' at the start of the process were continuing to cause significant delays. The article notes that waiting times had 'increased to an average of 18 to 20 months compared with about 11 weeks in 2015' (Holland, 2018). Reasons given for the lack of any progress in terms of waiting times were due to increased numbers of people seeking asylum, understaffing in the IPO and a lack of resources (Arnold et al., 2018:22). The experience of those who arrived in Ireland and claimed asylum continued to be characterised by delays in processing applications. This contrasts somewhat with the experience of people who arrived in the country as programme refugees. UNHCR Ireland notes the positive response from the Department of Justice and Equality in establishing the Irish Refugee Protection Programme (IRPP) following what has been termed 'a migration crisis' in Southern Europe (Arnold et al., 2017:x).

5.15 Irish Refugee Protection Programme (IRPP)

In 2014, the Syrian Humanitarian Admission Programme (SHAP) was introduced to facilitate family reunification for some Syrians residing in Ireland (Arnold et al., 2018:10). War in Syria and in other parts of the Middle East, led to the mass movement of people. The world looked on in horror while large numbers fled their homes in the Middle East and Northern Africa in order to avoid conflict. Unprecedented numbers attempted to cross the Mediterranean Sea in an effort to reach Europe. On 27th December 2018, Minister for Justice and Equality, Mr. Charlie Flanagan welcomed 158 Syrians including fifty-eight children to Ireland. He acknowledged the trauma which they may have suffered while referring to the efforts which Ireland was making in terms of resettlement.

> During this festive period, as we enjoy spending time with our own families, it is important to remember that many families across the world have been forcibly displaced from their homes by war and protracted crises. Under our national resettlement programme, working closely with the UNHCR, we prioritise those who are most vulnerable and provide a durable solution to enable them to rebuild their lives in safety and security, here in Ireland. The families that have arrived today are very welcome.
>
> (Ireland, Department of Justice and Equality, 2018)

An Emergency Reception and Orientation Centre (EROC) was set up in Ballaghaderreen, Co. Roscommon for the resettled Syrian group, and they were welcomed into the town by the local community. However, on Monday 1st October 2018, a newspaper article revealed that the Syrian refugee group felt as though they were imprisoned, and that promises given to them had been broken (Pollack, 2018a). It was stated that there was a lack of progress in moving them out of the reception centre and into private houses. Poor standards of cleanliness and lack of access to education and work were also cited as some of the reasons for their dissatisfaction (Pollack, 2018a).

In many ways their concerns reflected the case of the Hungarian and Chilean Refugees and the Syrian group also put forward a narrative of being mistreated and misunderstood by those in charge. Their vision for their future in Ireland was held back by the fact that it did not ‘fit’ with the needs, procedures and resources provided by the State. Families felt that they could not get any clear answers about how long they would need to remain in the Emergency

Reception Centre in Ballaghadereen, Co. Roscommon. In a study carried out by Ćatibušić with Syrian refugees in Ireland, she notes that most of the Syrian women saw their main role as being in the home and they were more concerned about the difficulties which men experienced in accessing work. Ćatibušić notes that 'overall, the men were very keen to find work' (Ćatibušić et al., 2019), reflecting those same desires to work as related by Lewis, Beth, Belinda, Diane, Alexander, Flora, Grace, Marlyn and Claude, some of whom participated in the first focus group. The ban on employment for people who seek refuge has meant a life of relative poverty and a significant factor in preventing integration (Conlon, 2014). This ban was challenged and overturned in 2018.

5.16 The McMahon Report-Attempts at Reform of Direct Provision and the Protection Process

Minister Frances Fitzgerald described the findings in the McMahon Report as 'much food for thought' (Ireland, Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform, 2015). Reform of the system was slow and NASC, an organisation which supports people of migrant background, published a document on the progress of implementation of recommendations made in the McMahon Report, in December 2017. It suggests that while progress was slower than had been anticipated, it was recognised that improvements to the system had been made. Further reforms included opting into the Recast Reception Conditions Directive, as outlined in section 5.11.7 of this chapter, the development of a National Standards and an inspectorate for the accommodation system. An extension of the remit of the Ombudsman and the Ombudsman for Children with regard to Direct Provision was also a welcome development. Added to this was the regularisation of over 1,000 people through an informal 'scheme' for people in the system for five years (NASC, 2017:2). Further small changes came in 2019, four years after the publication of the report. The weekly payment to persons seeking asylum was also increased to €38.50 for an adult and to €29.80 for a child in the government Budget 2019 (Thornton, 2019). However, in the 2017 review of the implementation of recommendations, NASC notes that 'implementation' had been difficult to track and that elements which had been listed as 'implemented' were still in 'progress' or 'partially implemented'.

Other elements were progressed by RIA, the body responsible for making the recommended changes to the asylum process. Out of 1,732 total recommendations in the report, twenty (12%) could be verified as 'implemented' (NASC, 2017:2). Five years on from the publication of the recommendations listed in the McMahon report, it was unclear the level of progress which had been made in reforming the asylum system. A newspaper article, published in *The Irish Times*, on 14th May 2016, outlined that the government had 'dropped a commitment to implement a report on the reform of the asylum and Direct Provision systems' (Holland, 2016b). The article notes that, in 2016, some ninety of the recommendations had been fully implemented and a further twenty-six were in the process of being implemented (Holland 2016b). It was apparent that further reforms, such as better access to the labour market, greater speed in processing asylum applications and improvements in accommodation centres were not addressed. In defence of the system, Eugene Banks from RIA said that despite its faults, Direct Provision centres provided 'essential initial accommodation and subsistence for asylum seekers'. He added that 'no realistic alternative' had been proposed to replace the system (Pollack, 2018b). In early 2020, the communal nature of life in Direct Provision came under scrutiny as the spread of the Covid-19 virus across the world became a major public health concern and where advice from government suggested that people should stay at home and limit contact with others.

5.17 The Right to Work for International Protection Applicants

Despite proposals set out in the McMahon Report advocating for greater access to employment, no advances in policy had been made to address the legal barriers to work for international protection applicants in 2017. Ireland was only one of two EU Member States (the other being Lithuania) which explicitly prohibited access to the labour market during the international protection process regardless of the length of time spent in the process. However, a blanket ban which prohibited applicants from working was deemed unconstitutional by the Supreme Court in May 2017. A Burmese national who lived in Ireland since 2008 and had applied for refugee status shortly after his arrival, was still awaiting a definitive response on the status of his application in 2017. He had been offered work during that time and applied, through his solicitor, for temporary permission to remain and work in Ireland. His application was refused and he sought a judicial review which was

granted by the High Court. It was argued that continuing to prohibit the claimant from working after such a long period of lawful residence in the State was in breach of the appellant's rights under Article 40.3 of the Constitution. The State was granted time to respond to the ruling. In June 2018, Justice Minister Charlie Flanagan stated that a temporary scheme of access would permit international protection applicants to take up any form of employment except positions in An Garda Síochána (the Irish Police force), the Defence Forces and the Civil Service. Applicants were required to apply to the Department of Justice, rather than the Department of Business, for work permits (Bardon, 2018). Prior to that, anyone seeking asylum was prohibited from working, and any breach may have resulted in a fine or imprisonment. The Irish Refugee Council welcomed the change in legislation, stating that it signalled 'dignity, autonomy, and the ability to maintain and develop employment skills' (IRC, 2019:20). Since the right to work for international protection applicants was introduced, 2,665 applications to work were granted by July 2019. While the ruling was positive, international protection applicants continue to experience challenges in terms of finding and sustaining work as permission is renewable every six months. According to Pollack, 'job options for asylum seekers under the new scheme are "exceptionally limited" as any jobs must provide an annual salary of €30,000' (Pollack, 2018b). This restriction meant that those who may not have worked for some years and whose qualifications may not be recognised in Ireland were going to find it very difficult to secure employment. The IRC stated that while the right of 'effective' access to employment was granted, significant barriers prevent people from accepting offers of work. Opening bank accounts, accessing driving licences, the remote location of Direct Provision centres, lack of awareness on the part of employers about the scheme and the rights of international protection applicants were cited as significant barriers to employment (IRC, 2019:21). As the right to work has only recently been granted, there is little data available on the experience of those who have sought and have been successful in securing employment. Despite a move toward a more positive media narrative and greater recognition of the agency of refugees and international protection applicants, Irish people are not united in their response. In late 2019 and early 2020, much media discussion about asylum seekers was concerned with accommodation and the opening of Direct Provision centres across the country. Ireland was in the midst of a housing crisis and considerable opposition to the establishment of Direct Provision centres in various small towns in Ireland began to increase.

5.18 Accommodating Otherness- YES to Refugees, NO to Direct Provision'

Since 2010, rising rents in the private rental market and an absence of home construction led to a shortage of accommodation. This has affected not only Irish citizens but also those living in Direct Provision centres. Some the criticism of the Direct Provision system has also been directed at private contractors and investors who have turned that system into a lucrative business. It is estimated that since its introduction in 2000, governments have paid close to €1.1bn to catering companies and private contractors for running the centres. In 2018, 'one company received €5.89m for operating centres at Knockalisheen, Co Clare, in Co Cork and Co Meath, where more than 825 asylum seekers reside' (Moore and Hosford, 2019). Lawrence, who participated in this study and wore a badge on the day of interview displaying the message 'end Direct Provision' was particularly exercised about the fact that private business made money from the situation in which people found themselves. He was appalled that any government should endorse such a system and described this in the following quotation.

When you look at it, it's their own way of making other people rich by using us. What I always tell people is that Direct Provision can be there but let it not be profitable. Let no one make money from it (Lawrence).

Despite continuous calls and protests claiming that the Direct Provision system was unsuitable for long-term living and demands for its abolition, on Thursday 3rd October 2019, the Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr.Simon Coveney, stated that people demanding an end to the current system for housing international protection applicants were 'not living in the real world' (McMahon, 2019). In October 2019, a decision to open a Direct Provision centre to house 100 people on the site of an old hotel on the outskirts of Oughterard, Co. Galway was withdrawn following public protests and media attention. When the plan became apparent to the local community, there was immediate opposition. Residents were keen to make the public aware that they welcomed people from other countries but that it was an unsuitable location for housing a large number of people who were seeking asylum. Protesters argued that the size of the town, with a population of around 1,500, lacked access to medical and transport services and noted that there had been insufficient communication from the Department of Justice about the plan for a centre in the town. Placards stating 'Oughterard says YES to refugees, NO to Direct Provision', were visible during the protest,

which showed an opposition to the Direct Provision system but a willingness to welcome international protection applicants and refugees (Bowers, 2019). The Department of Justice had faced similar resistance in Rooskey, Co. Roscommon and in Moville, Co. Donegal where arson attacks took place on the site of proposed centres. Local people in Oughterard described the centres as inhumane and residents were portrayed as voiceless. Despite their opposition to the opening of the centre, the local community in Oughterard was keen to stress that their opposition was not motivated by racism (Holland, 2019).

In light of opposition and protests organised in other small towns across Ireland, it has been suggested that far-right groups were exploiting these concerns., Communities in these towns attempted to disassociate themselves from anti-immigration groups (Gallagher and Pollack, 2019). Hubbard notes that such campaigns of opposition are often intended 'to maintain the privilege and prestige of white spaces' (Hubbard, 2005:52), suggesting that when communities are faced with change, a desire to control the boundaries and monitor who gains access to a space comes to the fore. On Tuesday 11th October, it was announced that the Direct Provision centre planned for Oughterard would not go ahead. Similar opposition was voiced in Borrisokane, Co. Tipperary and in Ballinamore, Co. Leitrim where plans for two new centres have become apparent. Communities in both towns voiced their displeasure at the lack of consultation with local residents. With regard to proposals for Borrisokane, it was decided that rather than relocating a large group of people, four families would be accommodated initially with more arriving at a later date. At a meeting in the town, local people expressed their concerns for those in the asylum process, but were worried that 'the families may not speak English' (Tipperary Star Reporter, 2019). At a second meeting, held in Borrisokane, leader of the National Party, Justin Barrett, who demanded an 'Ireland for the Irish', noted that 'the people of Oughterard said 'No' and as a result there was no Direct Provision centre in Rooskey. He stated 'there doesn't have to be one in Borrisokane either' (Byrne, 2019). However, on the day that people were due to arrive in the town, there was no sign of protest as the residents of Borrisokane had decided not to go the route of protest, but instead to welcome the families. Following meetings with various parties it had been decided that 'a foundation for ongoing consultation' would be established with the Department of Justice. Local Councillor, Joe Hannigan stated that Borrisokane could 'stand tall' in the way it has opened its arms to the newcomer families (O'Connell, 2019a). It was suggested that public opinion may have been swayed by the fact that thirty-nine bodies of illegally trafficked Vietnamese people were found in a container in Essex, in the south of England,

only a few days before, on 23rd October 2019. Some of the families due to settle in Borrisokane made a visit to the town and met with local people which meant that the initial fears had 'given way to a more welcoming attitude' (O'Connell, 2019a). Following on from this, Minister for Justice, Charlie Flanagan, accepted that a greater level of consultation should take place (O'Connell, 2019a). Similarly, in Ballinamore, local residents had a change of heart and set up a welcoming committee in the Co. Leitrim town. They stated that they wanted an 'alternative voice' to be heard on the issue of asylum seekers (McDonagh, 2019).

5.18.1 An Accommodation Crisis

The following week, the focus of what had become known as the asylum accommodation crisis moved to Achill Island in County Mayo. A further wave of protests objecting to plans to house thirteen females at the Achill Head Hotel received significant media attention. On Sunday 3rd November 2019, the Archbishop of Tuam noted in a sermon that 'vulnerable people are being exploited by those who trade in hatred and fear' (Casey and McDonagh, 2019). He referred to the need to welcome newcomers to Achill as residents of the Iisland had done in the past. He stated that 'as Christians we are morally obliged to welcome the stranger and, in the context of our improved circumstances, we have a responsibility to share with those who are less fortunate than ourselves' (Casey and McDonagh, 2019). A few days earlier, the Department of Justice stated that they would postpone plans to open the Direct Provision centre in Achill as it would not be appropriate to relocate people in light of such opposition. International protection applicants were also the victims of the ongoing housing crisis, and an RTE report from 1st November 2019 found that 1,531 asylum seekers were living in emergency accommodation, rather than in the thirty-eight dedicated Direct Provision centres which were at maximum capacity. Minister Regina Doherty disagreed with the suggestion that the housing crisis had resulted in increased levels of opposition to the establishment of Direct Provision centres, and that it was 'probably the most humane system' in any European Union country (Murphy, 2019). Shortly after that, Minister Charlie Flanagan requested that protesters in Mayo lift what he had referred to as the 'siege of Achill' (Ó Fátharta, 2019). In an attempt to defuse the situation, The Irish Refugee Council advised people not to oppose plans to move people to new Direct Provision centres in various small towns but instead to support calls to reform or end the Direct Provision system (Kildare FM).

5.18.2 Potential Changes to the Direct Provision System

Following on from the wave of opposition to the opening of accommodation centres in Autumn 2019, the government established an independent group to examine whether the existing system of supports given to international protection applicants was appropriate. Catherine Day, a former Secretary General of the European Commission, was appointed to chair the group and to look at a range of issues including accommodation, education, employment and social welfare rights. The group was also tasked with examining the way in which the Department of Justice and Equality consults and engages with communities on the topic of establishing Direct Provision centres. It was suggested that this group would be distinct from an interdepartmental group of officials, chaired by the Department of Justice and Equality. However, both groups would work together to consider the needs of people who seek asylum and what is currently provided to them (Kelly, 2019). On Friday, 22nd November 2019, the headline story in *The Irish Times* newspaper informed the public that 'the government is planning to house nearly 5,500 asylum seekers in new Direct Provision centres across the country at a cost of more than €320 million' (Bray and Lally, 2019). In light of the displeasure at the lack of consultation with local communities, it was suggested that 'a programme of engagement will be carried out with communities as the locations of centres are finalised' (Bray and Lally, 2019). This announcement came the day after sixteen men, believed to be from Iraq and Iran, were found in the back of a truck on the Cherbourg to Rosslare ferry, perhaps the final step in a journey that had involved sea crossings and travel through conflict zones (Clarke, 2019). In 2014 and 2015, similar attempts had been made to examine the working of the Direct Provision system and a working group considered changes to the system published in the *McMahon Report*. Following the publication of the report in 2015, and after a lengthy period of consultation with various stakeholders, including people living in Direct Provision, a number of recommendations were suggested. These are outlined in the following section.

5.18.3 'Covid-19 has exposed the 'unsuitability' of Direct Provision system'

The Covid-19 pandemic which arrived in Ireland in early-2020 represented the latest challenge for people seeking asylum and living in Direct Provision centres. Public health advice suggests that transmission of the virus increased where large numbers of people were

living and congregating together. However, the reality is that Direct Provision centres are often crowded, where single people share bedrooms with sometimes up to eight others and families sleep in the one space. With the arrival of Covid-19 to Ireland, the International Protection Accommodation Service (IPAS) which oversees the Direct Provision system, moved some people from their existing accommodation by setting up additional emergency centres in Dublin, Galway and Cork, between 6th and 31st March. By Friday 8th May, there were 149 cases of Covid-19 in Direct Provision (Power, 2020). A new emergency centre in the former Skellig Hotel in Caherciveen, Co. Kerry became the new focal point as up to twenty people who were moved there became infected with the virus. A document prepared by MASI and submitted to the Special Committee on Covid-19 states that some parents 'kept their children in bedrooms for weeks as they risked contracting the virus if they stepped out of the bedroom' (MASI, 2020). The statement also notes that groups from various Direct Provision centres, some having tested positive for Covid-19, were brought by bus to the Caherciveen Direct Provision centre. The statement argues that from the perspective of international protection applicants, 'staff were clueless on how to manage the situation' (MASI, 2020), insisting that people congregate in the dining area for meal times. Local residents opposed the opening of the centre, displaying posters with slogans stating 'Cahersiveen says yes to asylum seekers' and 'Cahersiveen says no to inhumane DPCs' (Hutton, 2020).

More than thirty of the group who had initially arrived at the centre, some with children, were later moved elsewhere because of testing positive for Covid-19. In an interview with RTE, Minister for Justice, Charlie Flanagan, apologised to the residents of the Skellig Star Hotel in Caherciveen and stated that he could not travel there to apologise directly because of Covid-19 restrictions (Lucey, 2010). The recent health pandemic has brought to the fore the unsuitability, inescapability and degradation associated with living in Direct Provision. It highlights the lack of dignity within the system as people share rooms with sometimes up to eight others who are not family members, do not have access to a private space and little or no access to cooking facilities (Fegen, 2019). Bulelani Mfaco from the Movement of Asylum-Seekers in Ireland notes 'there is no living in such environment but existing' (MASI, 2020). Shortly after that, the killing of George Floyd on 25th May 2020 in Minneapolis, drew attention to incidents of police brutality against black people. As a consequence, The 'Black Lives Matter' protests saw millions of people taking to the streets, globally, to oppose racism

and discrimination. In light of protests, the issue of racism in Ireland came to the fore, and central to that debate was the issue of Direct Provision (Clifford, 2020).

5.18.4 Could this be the end of Direct Provision?

While concerns about Covid-19 circulated in communities across the country, the expert group set up to examine reforms to the Direct Provision system, chaired by Catherine Day and referred to in section 5.11.7 of this chapter, noted the 'unsuitability' of the current system. The group set out a number of recommendations. It noted that 'lengthy processing times for protection applications, both at first instance and at appeal, are problematic for applicants', with consequences for mental health, and an inability to exercise skills (Power, 2002). Suggesting that delays were costly for the state and of public concern, a number of recommendations were made. These included setting time limits for the different stages involved in making decisions on asylum applications and working with local authorities to use public land for the construction of housing for international protection applicants. It was also suggested that the right to work should be extended to all those currently in the system and that people should only have to wait three months rather than the current nine-month period. The report recommended that difficulties in acquiring a driver's licences should be resolved by Road Safety Authority who refuse to 'recognise the proof of residency' (Power, 2020). Shortly after the publication of this report, Minister for Justice Charlie Flanagan promised 'root-and-branch transformation' of Direct Provision which, he suggested, will ultimately 'lead to the abolition of the system' (O'Halloran, 2020). This was followed by demands, from the Green Party, for an ending of the system, as part of a deal with political parties Fianna Fáil, Fine Gael, during government formation talks, in June 2020 (Kelly, 2020). These proposed changes show that the Direct Provision system and government policy on the issues of seeking asylum have come under growing scrutiny. Recent discourse and evidence produced in reviews by the expert group, in the McMahon Report and in demands made in the *Programme for Government 2020* suggest that the system of Direct Provision, described as 'a severe violation of human rights' (Logan, 2014) might soon come to an end.

Chapter Summary

This aim of this chapter is to offer an interpretation of the history of immigration and international protection in Ireland. It provides an analysis of some of the key debates which shaped current Irish opinions and policies with regard to the reception of refugees and international protection applicants. This chapter details, in particular, some of the legislative and policy changes which were introduced since the end of the twentieth century to address the increase in the number of asylum applications. It also shows the ways in which the Irish State responded both to the wider EU refugee and migrant crisis, which had limited direct impact on the country but which is reflected in the policy context (Arnold et al, 2018).

Given Ireland's history as a small country, which had endured years of colonial oppression, with a history of neutrality and a strong belief in democracy, support for humanitarian issues was often borne from a concern about the way in which the country and its government were perceived overseas. Schuster points out that the acceptance of international protection applicants has rarely been an altruistic act but one in which governments feel compelled to participate (Schuster, 2003:63). Some of the key events include the 2004 Irish Citizenship Referendum, a time when discourses presented international protection applicants in an increasingly negative way and the referendum saw the end of a 'jus soli' approach to citizenship. The establishment and continued existence of the Direct Provision system has been highlighted as inhumane and degrading throughout this chapter. Furthermore, the recent health pandemic has called into question the communal and crowded nature of Direct Provision spaces as well as the lack of privacy and respect for human dignity. This chapter shows, time and time again, Irish government policy has reluctantly considered the welfare of people who seek refuge in Ireland. A study of the Irish State's response to spontaneous immigration enables an understanding of concepts such as the fragility of democracy and ambivalent approaches towards the demands of peace agreements and treaties. It helps to avoid making generalisation and seeing immigrants as a homogenous group. It provides insights into the lives of different groups who came to Ireland and highlights their stories and motivations enabling greater connection with the human story behind immigration. In this chapter, I wanted to share stories of the reception and non-reception of immigrants so that succeeding generations of Irish people will have a more empathetic approach to those who flee their home countries and understand that racism and xenophobia, which sometimes exists in our midst, can lead to considerable human suffering. In the following chapter, I present

individual and singular stories and the consequences of the current system of reception for those who live within its confines.

Chapter 6: The Decontextualised World of the Asylum-Seeker

Introduction

The previous chapter challenged the notion that the Irish are a homogenous 'race' sharing common origins, culture, traditions and possibly blood line. The various waves of invasion and immigration to Ireland were detailed as was Ireland's response to the arrival of the 'stranger'. I explored immigration and asylum during the 20th century and detailed the subsequent reception and treatment of those fleeing war and conflict. This chapter considers how people experience feelings of being 'confined, encamped, imprisoned, detained, stuck' in 'sites of confinement' (Jefferson et al., 2019), particularly in the Direct Provision system in Ireland. They often live a depoliticised life, similar to that of the stateless. I explore how life is lived and given meaning in and across these spaces of 'statist regimentation' (Soguk, 1999: 245), by considering the approach and tools of everyday life. A decontextualised world denotes a space which is removed or set aside from what is normal or which operates in isolation from the general context. It holds that there are both legal and existential harms for the stateless individual who inhabits the decontextualised space. The stories that follow depict a diverse array of experiences in what has been described as a quasi-prison system.

6.1 Spaces for Citizens of Nowhere

There is a compelling 'symbiosis between ghetto and prison' (Wacquant 2001:95). Both spaces are not only unique, regulated and bounded, but they represent particular ways of being. These are spaces like no others, decontextualised, beyond what one might consider 'normal spaces'. Those who reside in such spaces experience 'stuckness' (Jefferson et al., 2019) which is not merely physical detention within a clearly demarcated space but 'expresses the way people make sense of confining dynamics and practices' (Jefferson et al., 2019:2). Their lives can be sharply contrasted with that of the citizen. Those who are citizens, and who can exercise their rights as citizens, assume, without question, the rights and responsibilities which citizenship enables. As citizens, there is a sense of belonging to

something larger than our individual lives. Protected by state institutions and with rights to vote, to work, to be politically active, the lives of citizen are different to those of the stateless who are not recognised as a national of any state or who await recognition. Agamben suggests that statelessness is a forgotten 'state of exception' (Agamben, 2005). Without a legally-accepted nationality, people are 'citizens of nowhere' (UNHCR, 2012). Their story is one of an existence without rights, without a sense of belonging to a political entity. Arendt described the stateless as those 'unprotected by any specific law or political convention' (Arendt, 1978b:65). Although there is, at present, no discrete procedure for the determination of statelessness in Ireland and no statutory definition of statelessness under Irish law (Immigrant Council of Ireland et al., 2015:2), people who seek asylum in Ireland are sometimes, though not always, either legally or *de facto* stateless, having few rights, privileges and duties. Despite the fact that Article 15 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights affirms that 'everyone has the right to a nationality' and that 'no one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his nationality nor denied the right to change his nationality' (UN, 1948), statelessness impacts the lives of ten to twelve million people around the world, approximately 600,000 of whom live in Europe (UNHCR, 2015). People who are stateless or who are international protection applicants, often coming from religious, ethnic, or linguistic minority groups (UNHCR 2017:1) live in 'camps' or 'border places', spaces that produce an experience of limitation, inside national territories (Mezzadra 2004; Campesi 2011 cited in Fontanari, 2015:714). Although statelessness is a phenomenon as old as the concept of nationality and nation-state, it was only over the course of the second half of the twentieth century that the story of statelessness became a story of human rights (van Waas, 2015). Agamben reminds us that following World War one, 'many European States began to pass laws allowing the denaturalisation of their own citizens' (Agamben, 2000:91). France and Belgium both revoked the naturalisation of citizens who had committed anti-national acts during the war. As a consequence of no longer being a national of any country, individuals were deprived of having any rights in that country or seeking its protection. Arendt decries the loss of rights, and, in her writing, highlights that without citizenship rights human rights were not respected.

> The declaration of the rights of man at the end of the 18th century was a turning point in history. It meant nothing more or less than that from then on, Man and not God's command or the customs of history, should be the source of law.
>
> (Arendt, [1951] 2017:380).

Arendt questions why human rights were not upheld in the case of state sovereignty, as the Declaration of the Rights of Man initially claimed that these were inalienable and universal rights. As someone who felt she could not truly belong because of her lack of rights, Arendt questions how human rights, supposedly free of government authority, and universal in nature, become non-existent in the eyes of states who fail to honour them. Her belief that the loss of rights to participate in any political activity was akin to exclusion from the world of human beings, and that life was relegated to 'a murky zone between morality and the law' (Benhabib, 2004: 183).

6.2 Why Statelessness matters?

> 905976-14, the number that identifies me and my three children for the five years that we have been resident in Ireland.
>
> (Vuma, 2019:65)

These words are taken from *'Correspondences'*, an Anthology to call for an end to Direct Provision and published in 2019. Donna Vuma, a fearless but soft-spoken resident of the Direct Provision system described in a few short lines her experience of living as an international protection applicant. In the above piece, she refers to herself and her children through their identification number and outlines what it feels like to live and to be considered 'less than human'.

> …Institutionalising and warehousing human beings is unacceptable and mother of a list of endless problems. Nobody should ever be placed in a situation where they feel like they are less than human.
>
> (Vuma, 2019:66)

For many, nothing is more taken for granted than the rights which citizenship bestows. Living as a formally recognised citizen of the state has untold benefits in a social, legal and political sense. If modern states are established in such a manner that holds nationality as the norm and a means to have a political voice, then those not in possession of that nationality are largely excluded. Statelessness matters because it concerns people, people without rights. While states have been willing to admit those seeking their protection, provide aid and adhere to policies of *non-refoulement*, human rights go beyond this form of care. Arendt's criticism

of such an approach remains relevant today, and human rights are equally difficult to apply. One would assume that, human rights should be enjoyed by all humans, simply by being human. Writing in 1943, Arendt explained that the condition of belonging to the Jewish community, but not being recognised as a national of any country, meant that she had no entitlements as a human being. Jews who were 'unprotected by any specific law or political convention, are nothing but human beings' (Arendt, 1978b: 65). In either case, any interpretation of human rights, according to Arendt and Agamben, is only possible through the institutions of the nation-state. Let us consider the consequences or political/legal and existential harms which impact the lives of the stateless. Statelessness is equated with vulnerability, confinement and exclusion which is evident in individual stories presented in this chapter, highlighting the challenges of dealing with the feelings which accompany such ways of being.

6.2.1 Political/Legal and Harms

In a collection of sacred texts, some of which are over 3,000 years old, the book of Leviticus appeals to people to care for the stranger **(**Leviticus 19:33-34). Yet, if the mass displacement witnessed in Europe after the Second World War, and more recently, from the Middle East and North Africa, presented opportunities to unseat the notion of citizen versus alien, then the promise of a true sanctuary remains elusive. With regard to this study, stories told in many respects, echo the sense of loss and dislocation found in the writings of Arendt. Once one has left one's own native state and lost its protections, then one remains excluded and without the protection of any law. If human rights were 'inalienable', ubiquitous and universal, then there should be no requirement for state protection for any individual. When this happens, people were left only with their humanity and no other legal protections. They were stripped of any form of legal security.

6.2.2 'You feel like nothing'

The many different experiences and stories related by people, as part of this thesis, are evidence that people experience asylum in a variety of ways. 'It reminds one that there are a thousand different ways to be and to feel displaced in the exhilarations of the world' (Soguk,

1999:6). When I carried out interviews for this research, international protection applicants did not have the right to work and people described how this prohibition affected their sense of self, their human dignity and their ability to provide for their family. For others, it was the years spent waiting for a decision on their application with little opportunity to question the system or to seek answers on their application which was most distressing. Many were disillusioned. This was borne out of a sense of exclusion and subordination, an ongoing feeling of confusion about how the asylum process worked and a sense of having lives which were different to those of other people. Lawrence, also from Zimbabwe, lamented the loss of rights in the following statement.

We understand that where we come from, the problems that we are facing back home, but what about our rights. It's like we don't exist (Lawrence).

Alexander, originally from Bosnia, had spent a number of years living in a Direct Provision centre in the west of Ireland referred to 'the forgotten people of Ireland'. He described how asylum seekers (as they were referred to at the time) were housed in the centre for many years before local people knew of their existence. It was an isolated building on the edge of a small rural town. In my interview with him, Alexander described moments of depression, despair and disillusionment, feeling 'outside mankind as a whole' (Parekh, 2016:84) and almost invisible to the rest of society. The loss of rights was, in fact, sometimes a cause of greater distress than the loss of home and identity. Arendt's story of statelessness, as outlined in *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, revealed the plight of refugees and the impotence of human rights. She described war refugees as 'welcomed nowhere and could be assimilated nowhere…once they have been deprived of their human rights; they were rightless, the scum of the earth' (Arendt, [1951] 2017:267). Arendt felt that human rights should bestow universal rights and a universal political identity upon people just by virtue of being human. The loss of rights meant a loss of an active political identity and the community from which that identity had stemmed. She concluded that human rights were contingent on having other rights, bestowed only to those who are nationals of a state. She stated 'even slaves belonged to some sort of human community', enabling them to remain 'within the pale of humanity. To be a slave was after all to have a distinctive character, a place in society' (Arendt, [1951] 2017:389). Thus, the loss of a political community was the most damaging outcome of statelessness. Parekh noted that for the stateless 'identities and modes of existence are defined

almost entirely by their exclusion' (Parekh, 2016:83). In these liminal spaces of 'inclusive exclusion' (Agamben, 1998; 2005), people created new identities in harmony with the asylum-seeking community, ones which clearly were demarcated by asylum law. Often described as a life of prolonged detention, lives in Direct Provision were lived in isolation from the rest of society where people were dependent upon the state and restricted by legislation and house rules. The following section explores statelessness from the perspective of two people who were involved in this research. Khalid and Zahir (see section 1.6), originally from the Rohingya community, spoke about the plight of their people, an ethnic Muslim group based mainly in Myanmar's western Rakhine state.

6.2.3 Embodied Statelessness

The 1982 citizenship law removed citizenship from the Rohingya people (Cheesman 2017:471). The 'Operation King Dragon' in 1978 and the 'Operation Clean and Beautiful Nation' in 1991-1992 'saw the mass movement of 250,000 Rohingya to Bangladesh' (Faulkner and Schiffer, 2019:1). I met Khalid and Zahir, brothers-in-law, both Rohingya Muslims who were living in Ireland for close to ten years. They spoke about the plight of the Rohingya population. They stated that their community was stripped of citizenship rights, a political voice and was required to occupy a space different from that of other citizens of Myanmar. Their story echoed the civil and political discrimination found in the writings of Arendt. The lack of citizenship meant the absence of many other rights and exposure to persecution. Khalid described this process in the following piece.

And that law totally strips Rohingya from citizenship, in that law that he set, you know. In order to get citizenship, Rohingya need to show documents dating back to 1824 so that they can get citizenship. And then, that policy of discrimination, persecution still continuing until today, and for one of the native people becomes totally stateless (Khalid).

Stories of statelessness are frequently equated with narratives of homelessness. Khalid explained the process of displacement and expulsion in the following piece. He was born in a refugee camp in Bangladesh, met his wife and got married there. He and his family now have refugee status in Ireland. While his brother-in-law, Zahir, was legally categorised as an international protection applicant at the time of interview, he has since received leave to remain. Passionate and horrified about the ill-treatment of the Rohyinga people, Khalid

explained how the Citizenship Law of 1982 excluded his people from for full Myanmar citizenship, which meant few if any legal protections.

Rohingya were pushed from south slowly north, Rohingya-free zone becoming slowly, slowly. You know, until 2012, Rohingya were like almost everywhere at a certain part. Then 2012, the genocidal campaign took place, and then, more than 140,000 Rohingya being removed from their home and internally displaced in nine townships (Khalid).

Arendt distinguished between 'public invisibility and natural visibility', explained as political activity and citizenship. She noted the importance of the opportunity to speak publicly and to have an audience which acknowledges one's opinion. This was referred to as 'the space where I appear to others as they appear to me' (Arendt, 1958:198). Without citizenship rights any kind of interaction or attempts at influencing state agencies, political figures or the public was impossible.

6.2.3 The Politics of Voice

Haden notes that 'statelessness is not an accidental development, but is a "normalised" systemic condition produced by an international order predicated upon the power to exclude as an essence of statist politics' (Hayden, 2008:250). The stateless are frequently absent from media discussions and relatively invisible in political life. For Arendt, the inaccessibility of the 'space of appearances', (Arendt, 1978a:10) in the political world, rendered her publicly invisible. She distinguished between 'being and appearing' and related this to the civic participation and the importance of action and speech. She referred to acting and speaking in public and the importance of being seen and heard by others. Action and speech carry with them recognition, and the need for both a speaker and an audience. In this study, Lawrence equated statelessness with being voiceless and argued that as *asylum seekers, we didn't have a voice of our own.* In this piece, Lawrence understood voice as 'practices of speaking and listening, based on a practice of mutual recognition' (Couldry, 2009:580). Thirty years ago, Spivak reflected Arendt's concerns and suggested 'who should speak' is less important than 'who will listen' (Spivak cited in Spivak and Harasyn 1990:60), since only if there are listeners, will voices be heard. When Lawrence suggested that he did not have a voice, he

was noting that his demands and claims, and those of other international protection applicants are generally ignored in government policy.

Couldry notes that 'listening here is, first and foremost, the act of recognising what others have to say, recognising that they have something to say or better, that they, like all human beings, have the capacity to give an account of their lives that is reflexive and continuous, an ongoing, embodied process of reflection (Couldry, 2009:579-580). The issues at play here concern which voices have power and which voices do not. Tacchi (2012) argues that 'voice is inadequate unless there is also a shift in the hierarchies of value and attention accorded to different actors and communities' (2012:7–8), and, in general, the voices of asylum seeking and refugee communities are absent from public discussion. Fassin (2005:) uses the phrase 'compassionate repression' to explain how refugees and people who seek state protection are not permitted to voice or claim political rights, but to only appeal to a common humanity though displays of suffering and ill-health. Despite Lawrence's reference to the absence of voice, he was politically active in the campaign to end Direct Provision and was very vocal on issues pertaining to international protection. Coles notes that listening is insufficient and that receptivity and responsiveness is what is being sought when people speak of the importance of having voice. He presented an interesting and useful understanding of listening and its derivative, reciprocity. 'I emphasise the terms 'receptivity', 'rather than listening, because I think that the former term evokes a broader notion of responsiveness and helps attune us to a broader range of practices (Coles, 2004:684). While the stateless may lack what is classified as political rights and, therefore, 'political voice', individual agency is perhaps not entirely dependent upon political status. Lawrence was in many ways undertaking the kinds of acts which any citizen may attempt but noted the limitation of voice in the absence of 'political receptivity' (Coles, 2004:681).

6.2.4 Existential Harms

The existential consequences of statelessness are complex. Parekh (2016:85) noted that for Arendt statelessness experienced by Jews had three facets. These included, firstly, 'the loss of identity and reduction to bare life'; secondly, 'the expulsion from common humanity', and finally, 'the loss of agency understood not as a subjective disposition' (Parekh, 2016:85). The loss of identity, a changed self, denoted an inability to have one's words and actions

recognisd as meaningful and politically relevant. As a stateless person, there is an aberration of one's individuality and inability to distinguish oneself from a larger mass of refugees. Arendt noted 'nobody here knows who I am' (Arendt, 2017:287). For Arendt 'the loss of fundamental features of humanity' (Parekh, 2016:85) was considered a far greater loss than the loss of national and political rights. She felt that losing all that was associated with her work, home and the everyday lifeworld of one's language, was catastrophic.

Jewish refugees lost not only their language but 'the naturalness of their reactions, the simplicity of their gestures, and the unaffected expression of their feelings' (Hauer, 2007:1165). They left behind family and friends, and many others died in concentration camps across Europe. According to Arendt, lack of acknowledgement or denial of agency of refugees through ghettoisation and long-term statelessness was difficult and damaging. She noted the powerlessness and discrimination experienced by people who did not have citizenship and formal identity documents. These were used as a 'social weapon' and a means of categorising people.

> We actually live in a world in which human beings as such have ceased to exist for quite a while; since society has discovered discrimination as the great social weapon by which one may kill men without bloodshed; since passports or birth certificates, and sometimes even income tax receipts, are no longer formal papers but matters of social distinction.
>
> (Arendt, 2007 [1943]:273)

Furthermore, having found themselves in a host country, the stateless Jews often tried to forget the past. Arendt noted 'even among ourselves we do not talk of the past' (Arendt: 2007 [1943]:111) However, this was not always possible and there were daily reminders of the uncertain and lowly legal status which the stateless Jews endured.

> Sometimes I imagine that at least nightly we think of our dead or we remember the poems we once loved...In daylight, of course, we become, only technically enemy aliens.
>
> (Arendt, 2007 [1943]:266)

She described the dreadful tension on feeling that she must forget but yet needed to remember the ill-treatment of Jewish people. For her, this tension led to a pretence or a front. 'The less we are free to decide who we are or to live as we like, the more we try to put up a

front, to hide the facts, and to play roles', she noted (Arendt, 2007 [1943]:270). Existing outside of society, faceless and forgotten meant distress and suffering which she suggested could result in suicide. She suggested that refugees could remain aloof or abandoned, and they often believe the only alternative is assimilation. Arendt provided a powerful and perhaps unfair critique of those who attempt to assimilate within a host nation.

> During seven years we played the ridiculous game of trying to be Frenchmen - at least, prospective citizens; but at the beginning of the war we were interned as 'boches' all the same. In the meantime, however, most of us had indeed become such loyal Frenchmen that we could not even criticise a French government order.
>
> (Arendt, 2007 [1943]:270)

She described the ways in which people, and, in particular, Jews eagerly attempted to assimilate characterising them as foolish.

> We did the best to prove to be just ordinary immigrants. We declared that we departed of our own free will to countries of our choice, and we denied that our situation had anything to do with so-called Jewish problems.
>
> (Arendt, 2007 [1943]:264)

For those attempting to make a new life elsewhere and seeking the kinds of recognition which they enjoyed in their homeland, she was disparaging of their desire to assimilate. She was sceptical of an individual's ability to integrate. This was perhaps associated with a sense of shame and disgrace. There was shame in being excluded, but there was also shame in attempting to assimilate or turning to pariah status. Living with 'pariah status' meant being a political outsider and the absence of membership of a commonly shared political community. In the early part of the nineteenth century and following on from ideas which had their origins in the Enlightenment, *Bildung or* self-cultivation, mediated by worldly experience (Curthoys, 2013), took hold. It was defined as a project that 'empowers creative and sentient modes of perception and is genealogically inventive, in the sense of being sympathetic to the excluded and marginalized' (Curthoys, 2013:377). Woven into the notion of *Bildung* was a belief that it could 'transcend the barriers of religion and nationality' and for many Jews and non-Jews alike 'it could help reduce disparities and foster cooperation' (Brenner, 2003:28), thus enabling human relationships to flourish (Bershady, 2014). For Jews, it was hoped that this would bring change in their status from that of 'pariah' which signified exclusion from civil society to one of greater acceptance and inclusion. Arendt's biography of the public

intellectual Rahel Vernhagen ‘based primarily on the un-printed letters and diaries from the Varnhagen collection of the Manuscript Division of the Prussian State’ (Benhabib, 1995:9) would appear to reflect Arendt's own view of herself as a German Jewish woman expelled from her own country and culture into a stateless existence. Rahel Vernhagen converted from Judaism to Christianity, and Arendt described Rahel's own attitude towards her Judaism ‘as a move away from the psychology of the *parvenu* to that of the *pariah*’ (Benhabib: 1995:11). The status of *parvenu* meant that one was not readily accepted by society, but must become and act like others in order to be accepted, whereas the *pariah* ‘is the outcast who either cannot or chooses not to erase the fate of difference’ (Benhabib, 1995:11). For Arendt, both the *pariah* and the *parvenu* were forced to inhabit a world which was parallel to that occupied by the remainder of society, and was, thus, rendered powerless. Being stateless is not the same as being a refugee but bears a greater resemblance to the legal status of those who seek sanctuary in a country which is not their own. It means living with few rights, in a sense of constant uncertainty and sometimes limited access to society and services. Stories told by Claude, Diane, Beth, John and Alain reflect the struggles presented in the work of Arendt, with a sense of exclusion the most striking feature of their situation.

The one thing that struck me is the isolation…there is nothing that system can do, which means the adults are really, really stuck (Lewis).

The decontextualised lives of the stateless means they are removed from the context in which other lives are lived. Shame which emerges from the loss of social status, social networks, and employment can profoundly colour lives and experiences (Womersley, 209:105). Arendt suggested that a sense of shame and frenzied wretchedness characterised the life of the exile.

6.2.4.1 Shame

The people who shared their experiences with me spoke regularly of shame and the need to hide the fact that they were international protection applicants and depended upon the state for their welfare. Shame was manifest in how children were unwilling to tell their classmates where and how they lived. Diane spoke about the difficulties which she and other people who were international protection applicants experienced in engaging with the world in which

they lived. She noted how many people lived in relative silence and did not attempt to make friends.

They tend to withdraw from everyone and just prefer to be alone. I don't know whether it's because of the shame that they can't speak or it's because it's too difficult (Diane).

When people did make friends or became part of a social network, they often lied about who they were and what their circumstances meant. As noted in the section above (section 6.2.4), for Arendt, the image of the Jew as social outcast typified the position of those who did not belong to any European nation and struggled to belong to any political or social group. However, in this research, Paulina and many others, Beth, Diane, Samir and Ahmed spoke about the need to move on from thinking about the past and from that position of vulnerability.

Leave it behind and move on because if you keep dragging the past with you, you'll have such a heavy load. You will not be able to move forward (Paulina).

Arendt believed that a life without political rights meant an alteration of one's identity and people in this situation had no control over the kinds of labels and status imposed upon them. However, they were free to think about how they considered, used, tolerated or challenged that identity. People were aware of how they became statistics which appeared in reports, and bodies which were cared for by the state of by humanitarian organisations. This is not uncommon in the Irish context which has a long history of exercising control over lives and institutionalising people who were deemed not to belong or who were considered a moral or physical threat to the rest of society. The following section looks at how people who did not fit with the notion of the ideal citizen were, and continued to be, treated by the State, placed in institutions, deprived of basic rights and subject to control.

6.3 The Institutionalisation of Hostility

As suggested in the previous chapter, the notion of biopower suggests a specific means of exercising power and control over populations, the meeting of power and life. It is a technology of governing, in which natural life is subjected to law. Through this hypothesis, Agamben attempts to provide us with a means to understand the logic of power and to

identify potential sites where human abuse can emerge. Irish institutions such as the former Industrial Schools and the Magdelene Laundries of the twentieth century and, currently, Direct Provision centres are surely the paradigm of our 'biopolitical present', the 'hidden matrix and nomos of the political space in which we are living' (Agamben, 1998:116).

Spanning several centuries, Ireland's history of institutionalising people who represented a moral or physical threat to the rest of society has, in the last few decades, been exposed by a number of investigations. Perceived as different and not conforming to the notion of the ideal citizen, people were removed to spaces beyond the realm of society. Evidence of ill-treatment of residents has come into the public domain as a result of the publication of reports on events which took place in psychiatric hospitals, orphanages, industrial schools and institutions for socially marginalised women. The Report from the Commission to Inquire into Child Abuse (The Ryan Report), published in May 2009, outlined a litany of ill-treatment inflicted on Irish children, who were placed, by the state, in residential institutions, run by the religious orders (CICA, 2009). In the case of Magdalene Laundries, the McAleese Report found there was State involvement in the running of these intuitions (Dept. of Justice and Equality, 2013). In 2013, the skeletons of about 800 children were uncovered in unmarked graves near Tuam, Co. Galway. It is believed that it was the site of a former orphanage for children who were born outside of marriage, and investigations into the facts are ongoing (Devine, 2017). Those who violated convention and moral behaviour were to be punished or hidden from the rest of society. Therefore, beliefs about morality, nationalism and social position provided a moral rationale for the existence of institutions which accommodated those who transgressed accepted conventions (Ferriter, 2009:101). Despite outrage and criticism, expressed by the public regarding Ireland's history of placing people in institutions, comparisons have been made between former systems of confinement and the current practice of placing people in Direct Provision centres. It could be argued that whenever the Irish State continues to perceive people as an internal or external threat to the social and political workings of the country, the automatic reaction is to *de facto* incarcerate them, using administrative powers. While it is not mandatory for international protection applicants to live in Direct Provision, there is little choice for many people. Those who do not speak English or arrive with little means of supporting themselves are compelled to accept the accommodation, allowance and the terms and conditions which are laid down by entering the asylum process.

6.3.1 Institutionalising the ‘Foreign Other’

Confinement and restriction appear to be an ongoing means to deal with perceived societal and political anxieties about the impact of seeking asylum. Hospitality shown towards international protection applicants has become decidedly conditional. Irish reception centres are ‘shocklingly other’ (Hage, 2000:105), perhaps even the ‘non-place’ (Auge, 1995:103). Goffman’s (1961) notion of ‘the total institution’, is useful in understanding delineated spaces, a clearly defined site that is both part of, yet distinct, from society, a ‘social hybrid, part residential community, part formal organisation’ (Goffman, 1961:22). It is a place where complex human needs are dealt with ‘by the bureaucratic organisation’ (Goffman 1961:18). The majority of people shared the sentiment that the institutional nature of accommodation was ‘horrible’ and ‘degrading’. People living in Direct Provision can be required to share a dormitory-style bedroom with ten other adults, are not permitted to cook their own food and have no private space (O’Connell, 2019b). Families are usually given two to three bedrooms to share depending on the size of the family. Since their inception, the majority of spaces set up to welcome international protection applicants have been located in hard-to-reach areas, particularly outside of the principal Irish cities. Placing these centres in remote and socio-economically disadvantaged areas has symbolic significance. Arendt noted that by cutting people off from the outside world, they ‘were treated as if they no longer existed, as if what happened to them were no longer of any interest to anybody’ (Arendt, [1951] 2017:445). The use of institutions on the edges of small, Irish, rural towns means that not only is the visibility of these centres obscured but access by those from the outside world is denied through the use of security guards and barriers. The location and structure of the buildings, such as Knockalisheen Army Barracks, are consistent with the belief that the government authorities are in control and make every effort to restrict contact between the resident and Irish society.

6.4 Conjecture as a basis for the Indefinite Detention

Deep-seated suspicion of international protection applicants and refugees has led to the creation of a range of regulations, laws and agencies to determine the level of risk associated with their arrival. Theorists point out that globalisation, migration and economic deregulation has brought about a 'single, overwhelming concern about personal safety' (Bauman 2000). In

the late 1990s, the rise in the number of people seeking state protection in Ireland brought about a change in the relationship between the applicants and the institutions of state governance. Regulation and control of bodies became the essential focus of immigration and asylum policy in Ireland and across Europe. As a result, conditions for entry and integration have worsened, and there has been a general erosion of the original understanding and commitment to those seeking international protection. Because of these changes, people seeking protection in Ireland and other European States are increasingly required to 'set forth and prove persuasively that he or she has been persecuted and how this happened. What is now required is some proof of physical violence, imprisonment or torture' (Ther, 2019:243).

Conjecture is the basis of asking people to wait for a decisions on their asylum application. It indicates suspicion or assumption. In the case of people who are international protection applicants and refugees, there is a suspicion or a supposition that he or she may not be telling the truth about their reasons for seeking state protection (Ther, 2019:243) or that they could pose a threat to the country and its people. In reference to the US, Butler considered those detained indefinitely and those who were believed to pose a threat of terrorism, noting that 'conjecture is the basis of an indefinite detention without trial' (Butler, 2006:69). With regard to this research, the stories told by Claude, Lewis, Diane and Marlyn provide evidence of a perception among people that they are required live in 'quasi-detention' or 'administrative detention' for years while they await a decision on their asylum application. Ther (2019) noted that governments are often slow to deport people as it requires cooperation from other governments and from individual applicants, yet the same governments are also unwilling to offer asylum. This means that people remain in 'administrative detention' (Weber, 2000:14) and are 'merely tolerated' (Ther, 2019) by the host society. People engaged in this study gave only brief details of their lives prior to coming to Ireland and their reasons for leaving their home country. Few had knowledge of the Irish reception system before their arrival, and it is unclear whether Ireland was the country in which they originally choose to settle. Diane described her initial concerns about living in Ireland.

Nervous, anxious. I mean a lot of feelings. I was afraid as well. I didn't know what to expect so-. I was coming with my children. So that was also a big concern of what is it going to be like? What is the culture there like? What's the language there? You know all those things were just going through my head. /you don't know what to expect when you go in there (Diane).

The majority of people expressed a desire and a willingness to remain in Ireland. Lewis described this in the following quotation.

Well, South Africa will always be my home. I have kids that are there. One is fourteen, the other one is twenty-four. The big one now has already started his studies now in January. He is doing a degree in civil engineering. So he's ok, but the little one is still doing his junior level. I still have connections at home, but I am settled, I am settled, I want to settle here (Lewis).

Lewis expressed a strong desire to remain in Ireland and looked positively upon starting a new life in the country.

I want to settle here. I have lived that life [in South Africa] for many, many years. So I believe that change is always positive (Lewis).

Even if Ireland was not the country which people had originally chosen, people spoke about the reasons why they wanted to remain. Alexander, Lewis, Diane, Belinda and Samir became accustomed to living in Ireland, and secondly, there was a feeling that it was a safe country.

Oh, my first impression coming from South Africa…I think we are the highest, one of the highest in crime in the world. Every 60 second the woman is being raped in Africa. For me, the safety, it's so safe. I have girls… they can walk in the street. They won't feel like someone is watching them to attack them. I think I love this country for that (Tia).

The majority of people in the study sought asylum as soon as they arrived in the country, and, therefore, believed they had done the right thing, were acting within the confines of the law, engaged fully with the process and considered themselves deserving of state protection. Nonetheless, people represented themselves as recipients of punitive and restrictive measures which sometimes reinforced the suffering experienced in prior traumatic and stressful life events.

6.5 Temporal and Spatial Uncertainty

The term 'lives in limbo' (Doná, 2011; McMahon, 2014; O'Brien, 2014; Seitz, 2017) is frequently employed to describe the life of the stateless as they await a judgement on their future. A unique characteristic of such a life is a temporal and spatial uncertainty which

pervades the past, present and future. People in this study equated the Direct Provision system with prison, containment and punishment, where their dignity and rights are undermined. Often perceived as a homogenous group, they live in isolation from a full and meaningful life, as outlined in Chapter 4, Section 4.5.3. Agamben's (2005) 'state of exception', referred to in section 6.1, builds on Foucault's notion of sovereign-judicial control. It suggests that the sovereign regulates interaction and boundaries between citizens and the excluded 'non-citizen other', typified as 'bare life'. It provides a framework for understanding the exclusion of international protection applicants and the ambiguous conditions in which they live. Within some semi-legal spaces or 'zones of indistinction' the law as we know and understand it is temporarily suspended. Butler asks 'what sort of legal innovation is the notion of indefinite detention. And what does it say about the contemporary formation and extension of state power' (Butler, 2006:51). Butler refers to Foucault's notion of governmentality as the principal way in which state power is exercised. She defines this as 'the way in which political power manages and regulates people and goods…and that this operates through policies and departments, through managerial and bureaucratic institutions, through the law, when the law is understood as a set of tactics' (Butler, 2006:51-52). As noted in Chapter 5, section 5.8.4, those who reside in Direct Provision centres are subject to a different set of rules and laws than those who reside outside of these centres. This is a case where 'sovereignty is reintroduced in the very acts by which state suspends the law to its own uses' (Butler, 2006:55).

If we look at the history of punishment we realise that the notion of detaining people is relatively recent. The eighteenth and nineteenth centuries saw a move away from public punishment and towards the development of a prison system. Foucault (1980, 1995) and Ignatieff (1981) have both documented the development of the prison system in their writing, and Foucault explains its emergence as a reflection of changing social sensibilities and a desire for greater governance of individuals (Foucault, 1995). The literature on prisons, institutions and asylums suggest that surveillance techniques are used to monitor movement, develop certain behaviours and control the lives of residents and prisoners (Foucault, 1980). For Goffman, prisons are places of re-development or re-socialisation, whereby an individual can rid themselves of bad habits and behaviours, and instead develop behaviours which are more pleasing to society (Gofffman (1961:5-6). History has shown us that the goals of detention have changed over time but are largely based on notions of punishment, retribution, deterrence, and restoration. Butler explains that individuals are generally detained when they

are considered to pose a risk to the state. However, 'the deeming of someone as dangerous is sufficient to make that person dangerous and to justify his indefinite detention' (Butler, 2006:59). Claude, spent more than twelve years in the asylum process in Ireland. He described the system in the following quotation.

It's a very bad system. I mean I've never been in jail, thanks be to God, but I think it's almost the same because you are not free to go wherever you want. You don't have a means to go where you want, so de facto you are in jail (Claude).

In light of what the stories reveal, it would appear that there are parallels between prison practices and those found in the Direct Provision system, where confinement and restriction are concerned with the control of people for political ends. Let us now consider the implications for individuals who feel they are 'held' or 'detained' yet have not committed a crime or are not suspected of having committed an offence.

6.6 Stories of Detention

Living in a prison-like environment requires one to abandon the power to make decisions or choices. In this study, people told stories of being rendered powerless by the asylum process. Lewis described the monotony and boredom of life in an accommodation centre and noted the deliberate intention to remove agency from people through enforced idleness.

Yes. Indeed, it's so monotonous that you wake up in the morning, you take your breakfast, you don't have anything to do, anywhere to go. You go back to your room, you sit in your room until lunch time, go for your lunch and you go back and then you have for the night. And that is the routine and that is the day-to-day life really and it's designed in that way. There is no other activities that have they in the centres, in most of the centres for adults, for children, in some of the centres there's not even access to computers (Lewis).

Alexander, a quiet rule-changer, originally from Bosnia described his initial surprise at the punitive nature of the system of reception. He described this in the following quotation.

It was a big shock at the beginning, really, to realise that I would have to go through all the process. No, I didn't know much about seeking refugee status in Ireland' (Alexander).

He quietly challenged the prison-like environment by engaging in the arts: in writing and painting. Creative work was also an attempt at meaning-making in an effort to understand and communicate how these institutions work and what they look like. People I spoke to had empathy with those who were just entering the system. Tia explained the surprise of the newly arrived at having to live in such conditions.

And so they're saying, now they're telling us to live in that prison. They call it a prison (Tia).

The majority of people described their initial joy at feeling safe and having a place to call home, but this sense of contentment dissipated within a few months. Belinda stated that she would wait, for as long as was necessary, to secure a positive decision on her application.

We will wait, it will come. Well it's important for the kids. But for us, honestly we have given up (Belinda).

Belinda had become disillusioned with the system. She could not see any end to the uncertainty with which she lived. She tried to remain hopeful for the sake of her children. According to Agamben, people appear to teeter on 'the threshold between life and death' (Levi in Agamben, 1999:55). He expands on this, stating 'there is thus a point at which human beings, while apparently remaining human beings, cease to be human' (Agamben, 1999:55). In a similar way, in this research, Claude used the word 'dead' to describe the existence of those who wait. He explained this in the following manner.

*There are people who, I mean if you go in many Direct Provision centres, you spot them straight away. You spot them. There are people you see that they are still alive and others who are completely dead (*Claude).

A key source of disillusionment and demoralisation was boredom often associated with the denial of access to employment. Beth who had left the system and was an Irish citizen at the time of interview also framed the system in terms of imprisonment, where permission must be requested in order to do even the simplest of things.

At the beginning, it felt like prison. You have to ask for permission and stuff...to do most things (Beth).

Limitations on her privacy and movement were painful to recall and had been difficult for her to endure.

6.7 'Normal' and 'Abnormal' lives

While coping with the lack of money, opportunities and limited social connections, adapting to a way of life which felt strange and 'abnormal' meant that people were changed and damaged permanently. Diane noted this in the following:

You'd find, well very few individuals who are able to cope with being here, and some find it very hard, I think. Some you can actually see, that they've developmental health issues. You can watch someone and see them changing. You can see them going from being, I hate this term, normal to abnormal. I know like previously, we've watched about three people like literally go insane. Like to the point of not leaving their room, sleeping outside, eating from the trash cans and all that. So that's … It's really hard to see because there's no way that it doesn't affect you, because you start to see yourself in that person. And you see people who have been very social before, like within the centre, starting to withdraw (Diane).

Diane spoke about the impact of institutional living, its psychological impact on residents and the need to be mentally strong in order to survive in such an environment. She framed her life as one where an ability 'to cope' is required. Witnessing others suffer severe psychological episodes had a profound effect upon her, and she feared deteriorating in a similar way. She suggested that this mental deterioration is due in part to the nature of the asylum system. The 'institutionalisation' or 'mechanisation' of life which occurs in such places requires individuals to adapt almost every aspect of their thinking, being and doing to meet the atypical demands of the system. Some people were more aware of the psychological changes and adaptations which were occurring within themselves.

That weights you, you cannot think freely. You can move but not freely, you know. We just want a bit of freedom. Because you stay in this Direct Provision you are limited to so many things in life (Greg).

Images of weight and burdens were represented in the vocabulary which people used in their descriptions. Greg was aware of how the current system depleted his life and understood

what it meant to be free as opposed to impeded. One might ask at what point might life become intolerable and what were the ways in which people navigate this type of life.

Most of the people here at the table are busy now doing our own thing, to keep our minds sane. We are busy with cookery books and things like that so (Marilyn).

Marilyn explained that the women in the centre, with the help of an NGO organisation were creating a cookery book. It was through small projects, through a local community initiative and through volunteer work that people challenged their perceived detention and expressed their agency. The women were eager to participate in classes, volunteer work and other small projects while men just wanted to be able to work.

6.8 Stories of Incapacitation

Paulina drew parallels between the limitations placed on international protection applicants and those of a child. She explained that a child will depend on a parent for a certain amount of time but will eventually seek freedom and independence. She suggested that people have a breaking point when they can no longer accept the restrictions and limitations which are placed upon them.

Look, the life of an asylum seeker is similar to a baby, when the baby is born, it relies on the mummy for milk, for food, for everything, for a bath, to be picked up, to be taken here, to be put there but as the child grows eventually they don't want to eat mashed up food, they want to pick pieces of meat. They don't want to sit in one place, they want to move around, they want to pick up things, they want to check what's in the cupboard, they want to reach for high things, they're exploring and they want to get more independence (Paulina).

Paulina offered a useful metaphor which shows that discontentment is a developmental process and takes place along a continuum. Claude noted that people would take any subject or any course of study in order to have something to do and he observed the futility of doing courses at the time when international protection applicants were not allowed to work and to put those skills to use.

They want just to get along, to do something quick and get it. So they start in those careers and whatever. Those one year, two years, they get a FETAC Level 5 and that's it.

Khalid and Zahir, spoke of their sense of imprisonment in a refugee camp in Bangladesh and the lack of any meaningful activity.

They don't have anything. Nothing to do, you know. Even giving education, for example, there is no school system in the camp (Zahir).

In light of an inability to work and to earn a living, there was significant material dispossession as opportunities to work and earn a wage did not exist. Beth described this in the following:

Y*ou are not allowed to work either. So it was hard and it makes you feel useless because you are not able to do anything for yourself or for your family. Like, I have children but I couldn't do anything for them* (Beth).

Contact with the outside world was complex and difficult for many, due to poverty as well as cultural and language barriers. But it appeared that it was potentially the mental and moral aspects of this perceived detention rather than the physical ones which were most damaging. Greg used the language of weight and burden once again in describing his experiences.

The idea that you can't think freely, that weights you down. you know. That weights you, you cannot think freely. You can move but not freely, you know (Greg).

He suggested that there was a psychological cost in having to forsake freedom and self-determination. Life in a prison-like setting forces human beings to adapt to a particular way of living and adjust in ways which were difficult to change upon leaving. It would appear from the stories gathered during the research that those who suffered mental anguish or psychological distress before entering the asylum process were more likely to suffer considerably throughout the asylum determination process and while they remain resident in Direct Provision centres.

6.9 A Culture of Suspicion

In discussion with and in writings by or about international protection applicants and refugees, or even in listening to their voices, there are often either explicit or covert references to trust. It was impossible to consider the experience of displacement and resettlement without considering issues of trust and suspicion, loyalty and betrayal. 'Suspicion', 'trust' and 'mistrust' were part of everyday life. Within this study, trust is understood as certainty about the benevolent and honest intentions of others. It is defined as 'a state of favourable expectation regarding other people's actions and intentions' (Turtiainen: 2012:42). Rousseau et al. note that 'trust takes different forms in different relationships—from a calculated weighing of perceived gains and losses to an emotional response based on interpersonal attachment and identification' (Rousseau et al.,1998:398). It lies at the centre of both personal and interpersonal relationships. Issues of trust and mistrust were frequently referred to in the writing of those who carry out research with international protection applicants and refugees (Baker, 1990; Bjornberg 2011; Daniel and Knudsen 1995; Hynes 2003; Hynes 2009, Ní Raghallaigh, 2014). Scholars noted that levels of trust in individuals, society, institutions and political systems can vary, fluctuate, recover and influence perceptions about the risks and benefits of engaging with others.

6.10 Mistrust of Others

To be trusted is valuable, and trust itself is desired in all relationships. Trust is important in social interaction, in forming social bonds and creation of personality. Associated concepts are reliance and predictability. It is called for when we venture into a new or unknown situation, when we are unfamiliar with the setting or what might be expected of us. It would appear that people move from a position of trust to one of greater vigilance in prison-like environments in order to protect themselves from others who might share the same space and represent a threat. Mistrust implies fear. Alain, a former unaccompanied child from the Democratic Republic of Congo, noted his need to be cautious of others. He imposed upon himself a type of self-alienation from those who lived in the centre. His motivation to disengage in free, candid, trusting conversation with others led to a withdrawal from genuine communication altogether.

I was fearful as well, because I didn't know what I would find there, what to expect in the house in the provision centre. I'm trying to live with other people, you know what I mean? So, it's not easy but I have to (Alain).

Diane was concerned about the safety of her daughter in the Direct Provision centre. She mistrusted others who lived there.

I've got a twelve year old. It's scary, she pre-teen you know. You think of all those crazy things that could be going wrong (Diane).

Hynes states that 'refugees mistrust, and are mistrusted' (Daniel and Knudsen, 1995:1). Issues of trust were associated with risk-taking, based on the perceived benefits, and where risk-taking implied a level of trust. As a former refugee, Baker saw the ability to communicate without fear as a key element of trust. When writing about levels of trust among refugee populations, he began by emphasising why trust was fundamental in creating a sense of security and belonging, and in maintaining relationships with others. He noted the need for trust is developing relationships, which 'give meaning and definition to life' (Baker, 1990:64). Baker described his sense of confusion around who he could trust, when he found himself in the UK as an unaccompanied child at the age of eight.

> Experience had taught me not to trust smiling people any more nor could I appropriately interpret behaviour that was genuinely empathic and accepting. I was filled with confused feelings and intense anxiety. My ability to realistically decode communications were damaged and the result was one of stress and confusion.
>
> (Baker, 1990:66)

My conversations with people would suggest that mistrust can be 'individual, institutional or societal – or from an international, national or local perspective' (Hynes, 2003:1). While it is impossible for any researcher to gain a knowledge of the extent of mistrust among any given person in this study, as in other scholarly research, I found that people who are international protection applicants and refugees feel they are mistrusted, they, in turn, mistrust justice systems, institutions, the public and each other. One of the possible reasons for this mistrust was based on their previous encounters where they had trusted, only to find, at a later stage, that they had been deceived. They may also have lost trust due to 'political circumstances in their countries of origin' (Hynes, 2009:104). The following stories reveal varying level of suspicion or mistrust in both individuals and political systems.

6.10.1 Suspicion of Systems and Governments

A deeper experience of mistrust is one of suspicion. This involves persistent vigilance which is particularly acute when engaging with state institutions. Soguk suggests that the system of 'statecraft' questions the credibility or the rights of the non-member of the nation-state, which points to the citizen as belonging and the international protection applicant as the unwanted 'other' (Soguk, 1999:9). It is the responsibility of the person seeking asylum to prove that their reasons for seeking state protection are valid and credible and they must be able to support their claim with material evidence. It is during the legal asylum hearing that the applicant is requested to share their life story in a way that fits with the tenets of 1951 Convention of Human Rights. It is here that the work of the Irish Justice System, in the process of examining the minutiae of a person's life, demonstrates the biopolitics of State control and objectifies the experiences and biographies of individuals. (Harrington, 2005: 428). In a study, entitled '*Vile Liars and Truth Distorters'*, its author, Griffiths states that those who seek asylum and refugees are some of the most mistrusted people in British society and are commonly assumed to be manipulating the immigration system (Griffiths, 2012). There is a prevailing image of the international protection applicant, in particular, as 'a conniving cheat' and 'compulsive liar' (Griffiths, 2012:8). With regard to the Irish Justice System, the low acceptance rate of international protection applicants in Ireland has led some to question the way in which the Irish system operates, and to the assertion that there is a 'culture of disbelief' amongst decision makers within the Department of Justice (Conlon et al., 2012: 1). It seems that the ability to present oneself, one's evidence and to be able to retell events in a logical, rational and reassured manner offers better prospects of securing a positive response to an application for refuge.

Research points to the fact that the ability to retrieve information has become highly important. The British Home Office tends to focus on the honesty of applicants and equate truthfulness with a clear recollection of events. An ability to 'provide 'plausible' accounts….in a consistent and unhesitating manner, and offer the 'right kind' of evidence and testimony is required (Coffey 2003; Herlihy et al., 2010; James 1997). Therefore, if found to be dishonest, the international protection applicant is viewed as unworthy of state protection. Criticism has been levelled at judgements where scrutiny of evidence and narratives by government officials may be more focused on finding out who is telling the truth and who is lying, rather than considering how best the state can provide for those who are seeking

protection here. In light of this, applicants frequently change or manipulate their stories and evidence in order to fit a type of narrative which may be more successful. Shuman and Bohmer note that when people are required to justify their claims for protection, narrative accounts of trauma memories shift from a personal purpose to a bureaucratic agenda (Shuman and Bohmer, 2004:406). By design, courts, hearings and legal appeals are adversarial and asylum applications are an example of how storytelling is of critical importance in the context of the law. A positive outcome is based upon an ability to tell a 'good' or 'credible' story. But for those who are psychologically traumatised, their stories tend to be 'fragmented and disjointed, both logically and chronologically. They may be lacking in detail, and the story will typically change over time' (Paskey, 2016). These inconsistencies may then result in a negative response to an asylum application. Intense questioning and cross-examination are difficult, but when people are fearful or living in difficult circumstances, distress is compounded and can eclipse the truth to an even greater degree. Shuman and Bohmer, (2004) note that during the interview process those who are traumatised often 'do not describe the trauma at all, or do so only in the most general of terms' (Shuman and Bohmer, 2004: 396). If a person claiming asylum gives an inconsistent account of their experiences and reasons for the need to escape their own country, it might be assumed that it is a constructed story and not the truth.

Similarly, in the UK, research found that 'consistency of an asylum seeker's account has become a central question in determining asylum status' (Herlihy and Turner, 2006: 82) and that the attitude of the Home Office interviewer was cited by the majority of participants as a factor facilitating disclosure (Herlihy and Turner, 2006:83). A study which was undertaken, in the UK, with thirty-nine Kosovan and Bosnian (UNHCR) program refugees, revealed that there may be many reasons why people find disclosure difficult and these included cultural reasons, trauma, avoidance, shame and cognitive and emotional difficulties (Herlihy and Turner, 2006:84-85). There are, therefore, important reasons supporting the case that inconsistent accounts of torture or persecution provided by those seeking state protection, should not be understood as fabricated stories or untruths.

6.10.2 Credibility and Refusal in the Asylum Process

The perceived authoritarian nature of the Department of Justice and Equality led to a fear of interactions and correspondence. Suspicion of immigration officers, police and those in uniform is not uncommon amongst those seeking asylum. Many spoke about their fear and suspicion of those who worked in the Reception Integration Agency, yet some of those who voiced such fears had rarely come into contact with them. Alexander noted the fear which surrounded court hearings.

When somebody would go to Court….the fear would spread around the centre, and nobody would come out to play football or to talk (Alexander).

This statement is an indication of the kind of contagious solidarity which can exist between individuals in vulnerable situations and, in this case, their awareness of the sensitive and sometimes demoralising nature of the asylum process. As previously mentioned, decisions to grant asylum were based on the accounts provided by people who were claimants and the kinds of documentary evidence which they were capable of providing. The majority of those involved in this research had entered the asylum process in the last 10 to 20 ten to twenty years. They referred to the lack of transparency around the process and a sense that it was highly subjective. Throughout the process they felt they were the objects of suspicion and that they were perhaps making fraudulent claims.

Diane (see section 1.6) told me on a number of occasion that she would be killed if she returned to Zimbabwe. In considering the best way to present her appeal, she had listened carefully to the stories of those who had already been through the process. Diane felt that the official who considered her initial application had made up his mind before even meeting her. She explained her experience of the first interview with a member of the Department of Justice.

I mean he didn't even have much to say, he was very satisfied with everything, you know. So, I was really hopeful and I said, oh, my gosh, this is going to go well. I'm going to be out of here (Direct Provision) soon, you know. I had my hopes high. And then the refusal came (Diane).

Diane was disappointed and confused by the process, maintaining that officials from the International Protection Office raised few questions about her application. It appeared to her from their demeanour and response that they were satisfied with her answers and that they believed she was providing a truthful story. Her ability to trust in the process ended when she received the letter of refusal. Her trust was replaced with confusion and what she felt was a misplaced naivety. It was difficult for her to know who and how to trust the process once again, and she was unsure how she could make a better case for herself the next time. She compared her situation, with that of Syrians who come to Ireland as programme refugees and who are generally granted status within a few months of arrival. She emphasised the difficulties in accessing documentary evidence when people leave their home country in haste and in dangerous circumstances.

It's a process of whereby you have to really prove that you are seeking asylum. And it's something that's really hard to do, considering the circumstances that you leave under. So it's like … Well it's different, like if you look at the Syrians. They have nothing to prove like, it's clear, it's out there. They are running away from war and what not (Diane).

Diane stated that if one has left a country which is perceived to be politically and economically stable, then there is further doubt about the need for state protection elsewhere. She had initially moved from Zimbabwe to South Africa, a country which she felt might be deemed to be safer than Zimbabwe. She was concerned that this fact weakened her case and, as a result, required further proof of the danger to her life. She suggested that this raises questions about how to acknowledge threats to human life in those societies where there would appear to be less conflict. Her ideas echoed those of Betts and Collier who suggested that 'the focus of international refugee law remains the antiquated notion of "persecution", the practical reality is that fragility ultimately underlies most of today's refugee movements' (Betts and Collier, 2018:29). This suggests that such a focus requires revision and expansion of the terms refugee and international protection applicant in light of the complexity of reasons for flight.

6.10.3 Displaying 'refugeeness'

Diane suggested that she was required to perform or demonstrate 'refugeeness' in the course of the interview process in order to become a suitable refugee subject and to match the demands of the asylum procedure. In the conversation and following the recorded interview, she spoke about the legal process as difficult and at that point, she considered it with a sense of foreboding and fear. She suggested that a risk to one's life was not an adequate reason for requesting asylum. Evidence that a threat or injury which had already taken place was necessary.

Then you take someone like me that's from a country well, like South Africa, everything is fine there. The political situation is not so bad in South Africa, as compared to Zimbabwe obviously, and the economic situation there is not really bad. So then the question comes up of, so what is your reason for seeking asylum, prove that your life is in danger? Why you are now here, that becomes extremely hard to prove (Diane).

Diane was presented with a moral dilemma as she wanted to be truthful and to be trusted, but her story needed to fit a prescribed notion of who might be deserving of refugee status or leave to remain status within Ireland.

There is no way you can really go back now and say ok, I'm going to go back and gather, you know, the things that they ask for sometimes, they are almost impossible for you to have. Like they'll probably ask for passports or past medical records and stuff. Stuff you couldn't get hold of here now (Diane).

Diane stated that she felt nervous in the environment of the Irish Justice System suggesting that the process is psychologically demanding and brings significant levels of stress to bear upon applicants. Conversations with the legal solicitor who had been assigned the task of representing her, had been a source of confusion and distress. Diane stated that she had received little or no communication from her solicitor prior to the hearing and that she didn't feel she could trust him to advocate on her behalf.

They don't actually give you advice on your case but they just explain to you the procedure and the questions that will be asked. And then, when I was going in now for my appeal, it was the same. It was like a ten-minute pre-consultation. I didn't get to talk to them beforehand or try and say to them, ok, listen, this is what I've come up with. Do you think I should be submitting this or not? There is no communication. With most of the people that I talk to as well, we start to feel like they are working on the side of the State (Diane).

In this account, Diane expressed her sense of isolation from the entire process. She was forced to rely on friends and an NGO organisation for details on how to proceed with her appeal. The complexity of explaining the details of one's life in another country and the reasons for escape while communicating political and cultural understandings, cannot be underestimated. These types of experiences drained people of their energy and positivity. This research suggests that mistrust of the Irish justice system exists, in part, due to the complex nature of making an asylum application and what would appear as considerable uncertainty and perceived arbitrariness of decision-making.

6.11 Recovering Trust - 'I have almost forgotten the fear'

If one lives with a continuous sense of mistrust, one is likely to live with a sense of social isolation and wish to withdraw to a psychologically safe space. However, if one's circumstances change can one's ability to trust and connect with others be restored? 'In the best of all possible worlds, at the point of a refugee's reincorporation into a new culture and society, trust is reconstituted, if not restored' (Daniel and Knudsen, 1995:1). Developing relationships of trust must surely be associated with positive outcomes for international protection applicants. Is it possible then to recover trust? The ability to connect with others, both inside and outside the Direct Provision system, and to develop those connections to form stronger social bonds, gave reason to believe that trust could be restored in some cases. Lewis who had received leave to remain shortly before we met, spoke about how life changed considerably once he left the Direct Provision system. He drew an analogy with Shakespeare's *Macbeth* by saying that his sense of fear and suspicion had diminished following a peaceful protest.

When Macbeth was faced by the troops, approaching his palace, he says to his troops, I have almost forgotten the taste of fear (Lewis).

He pointed out that living in Direct Provision distorts one's view of life.

When you come to the country and you just have the view of the country from the point of view of being in Direct Provision, it's a different view than what a person has who is just coming in the country and end up being in mainstream society (Lewis).

Lewis had, in a very peaceful way, refused to be fearful and he had moved on from that initial sense of foreboding about what the future might bring. John, originally from Tthe Democratic Republic of the Congo and a native French speaker, was jubilant when he spoke about how his life had changed upon receipt of Irish citizenship. *When you get your residency, you can challenge everything.* John's comment echoed the ways in which Arendt distinguishes between the life of the stateless and those who have citizenship, and, therefore, have rights. In '*The Origins of Totalitarianism'*, she states that that the stateless 'had no government to represent and to protect them' (Arendt, [1951] 2017:351). The stateless 'were worse off than the dispossessed middle classes, the unemployed, the small *rentier,* the pensioners whom events had deprived of social status, the possibility to work, and the right to hold property: they had lost those rights which had been thought of and even defined as inalienable, namely the Rights of Man' (Arendt, [1951]) 2017: 35). John described with great pride the citizenship ceremony when he received his certification of naturalisation. He explained that he was no longer afraid to challenge racism and poor treatment of international protection applicants. In his case, human rights were inadequate in protecting him and defending his interests. His short statement above is a reminder of the 'invalid and politically impotent notion of human rights' (Birmingham, 2006:5). Realising the value of being a state national, John was conscious that those who were stateless did not feel they had the right to speak out and challenge injustices. Benhabib calls for an end to the distinctions between 'citizens' and 'aliens', 'them' and 'us', noting that 'the negotiation between insider and outsider status has become tense and almost warlike' (Benhabib, 2005a:675). As noted in Chapter 5, she considers a new type of political membership and 'the extension of public autonomy to those who did not formerly possess it' (Benhabib, 2005a:676). John described his experiences as a long struggle, highlighting the ongoing tension between 'the concept of rights on the one hand and that of sovereign privilege on the other' (Benhabib, 2004:67). Becoming a citizen and having the right to work had changed his life.

I am working in an LGBT community centre...meeting people. I feel really comfortable with them. I feel like home...you see I feel like home (John).

Through these stories we have reason to believe that some people recover a sense of trust in others and in systems. On receipt of leave to remain, refugee or citizen statuses people felt that they could speak without fear of retaliation or negative outcome. Kafka's parable *The Trial*, illustrates the threat of the law to those who were unfamiliar with it and the suffering

which can be caused by those who administer it. This is achieved through metaphor and by emphasising the personal, social and legal gaps which distinguish those who administer the law from those who lack any kind of access to it. Kafka's work shows the importance of understanding and having access to a legal system, and also suggests the need for fair and equal treatment for all individuals. The unpredictability of the law is highlighted in the following comment made by John.

I feel very stressful. In my situation, they might accept me. They might reject me. If they reject you, they send you back Africa. You know I come from some place not secure and they send me back there again. I was very stressful (John).

In the first line of *The Trial,* Kafka writes 'someone must have been telling lies about Josef K. He knows he had done nothing wrong but one morning, he was arrested' (Kafka, 1925:1) [1998]. Josef is unable to speak out and defend himself as he was unsure of the reasons for his guilty status. However, throughout the parable, hope of Josef's innocence is maintained by the reader and by Josef himself. In another text written by Kafka, entitled, '*Before the Law',* the man from the country is forced to wait in the same way that those in this study were required to wait, reflecting the temporal aspects of seeking state protection. In returning to this research, John accepted the fear and uncertainty which had been endured over several years. He noted *I am telling you, Margaret, it was very stressful. You don't know what is coming tomorrow* (John). The account provided by John is evidence of the kinds of discourses or images which suggest the absence of 'a normal' life and the continuous sense of uncertainty for people who seek refuge. This section of the chapter has noted the decontextualised nature of the space of Direct Provision and the bureaucratic nature of the asylum process, both permeated by suspicion and mistrust.

Chapter Summary

In this chapter, three distinct but inter-connected storied threads were explored. The international protection applicant as depoliticised and stateless, the spaces of confinement which they occupy and the nature of mistrust which can develop in such spaces. Stories of incarceration and incapacitation as well as those of mistrust teach us something about what it is to live as an insider in these spaces. These decontextualised spaces are marked by control,

where state power permeates every aspect of life and where routines and relationship are desynchronised from that experienced by those in mainstream society. Home is generally a space which offers comfort and freedom, but for Diane, Claude, Lewis, Lawrence, Beth, Alexander and John, Direct Provision was a hostile space of suffering, where people queue for food, ask for permission to have friends to visit, where relationships are characterised by mistrust and where people feel they are not free. This chapter noted that time is experienced differently within this space, a theme which is explored in greater details the next chapter. People who are international protection applicants and refugees are often required to wait while in transit, and later, in the destination country where they are annexed by state bureaucracy. By reflecting on the ways in which time is experienced by people, we learn how they 'serve their sentence' in a state of 'permanent impermanence' (Brun, 2015:19).

Chapter 7: 'Doing Time, Killing Time or Hopeful Waiting'

Introduction

The previous chapter explored what it meant for people to live with few rights and to be *de facto* stateless. In their stories, international protection applicants and refugees compared life in the Direct Provision system with that of prison. People also spoke of trust and mistrust in the Irish legal system and in their lives in general. This chapter focuses on the temporal aspects of displacement and seeking state protection. I explore the concept of time and waiting with those involved in the study. Research suggests that temporality 'has become a multifaceted tool and vehicle – even a weapon of sorts – in the fight against illegal migration' (Andersson, 2014:2).

7.1 Time and Waiting

Time, and the passage of time, becomes increasingly important and complex for people who are awaiting a decision on their asylum application. On a warm sunny day in May, I met with Lawrence who was first mentioned in section 1.6 of this thesis. A young Zimbabwean and a father of two, he spoke about his experiences of the asylum process. Not far away, approximately 150 international protection applicants were housed together, and more than likely, shared the same sense of uncertainty and temporal angst which I witnessed in Lawrence. He questioned the transparency of the asylum determination process, and wondered how long it might take for a government department to correspond with him.

I don't know why it takes so long to write a letter. It takes a year or it can take a few years. You never know (Lawrence).

He had been in Ireland for two years, had made an application for asylum on his arrival and was awaiting a response. He noted the boredom associated with having nothing to do and its effects upon his well-being and that of fellow residents. Involved in various campaigns which

sought an end to Direct Provision, he worked in a voluntary capacity to support and provide information to international protection applicants living in centres across Ireland.

That is the only way that I am going to keep my brain intact? If I was to leave my brain to relax all day and do nothing upon nothing, trust me, I have seen the worst in Direct Provision (Lawrence).

Heidegger in his book, *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics* drew attention to the temporal nature of lives and being in the world. He considered how time, waiting and boredom were understood and experienced by people and how they were linked to each other. This is explained in the following quotation.

> The whole attitude of passing the time –is not really directed towards time eventhough in doing so we constantly look at the clock. What do we really want in constantly looking at the clock? We are fed up waiting, we want to have done with this waiting. We shake off boredom.
>
> (Heidegger, 1995:94)

Heidegger noted that not all waiting is boring and that it 'can be full of suspense' (Heidegger, 1995:94). Resonating with the stories which are detailed in this chapter, he considered the point at which waiting becomes boring. Thus, what really oppresses us is impatience. 'Perhaps it is because it is a having to wait, i.e. because we are forced, coerced into a particular situation. That is why we become impatient' (Heidegger, 1995:94).

Lawrence had lived in a number of centres in Ireland and he tried to remain positive about his future in the country. He felt that hope for a better future was all that remained for him.

So I cannot lose hope. That is the only thing that I am left with. So I would rather stick with my hope, with everything that I have gone through (Lawrence).

The fact that waiting is open-ended and indefinite for those seeking asylum compounded the uncertainty around the workings of the Irish legal system. Alexander described open-ended waiting.

The waiting and not knowing is one of the most difficult things. And the waiting list, the waiting period was very kind of stressful (Alexander).

Alexander, like many others, referred to waiting for envelopes to arrive in the post. Those which were important were recognisable by the harp symbol clearly visible on the front of the envelope. He noted that people quickly realised that these types of letters represented a significant piece of news.

So there was always fear what was going to come in the post, because the letter from the Justice comes through the post and it's a big envelope and it has a harp on it. So as soon as we saw a harp on letter, we knew that there was either good news or the bad news (Alexander).

Stories which expressed the temporality surrounding the arrival of letters and news of one's application were punctuated with a sense of anxiety and dread. Tia introduced me to Robert and Romeo and I interview them together. Aged nineteen and twenty, they were children of close friends and who lived in the same centre in the North-East region. Romeo remained relatively silent throughout the interview but was in a similar position to Robert who had completed Leaving Certificate examinations and experienced difficulty in accessing third level education. Robert referred to the futility of thinking about when one might receive permission to remain in the country.

I don't know. Nobody knows when they will get that (permission to remain in Ireland). The refugee status, whatever, because there are people that are in the system for nine years…yeah, like I know people that are in the system for 10 years (Robert).

People referred to the ways in which waiting and uncertainty caused mood swings. On certain days they felt more positive about their futures, but at other times this was not the case.

Sometimes you wake up very excited that something new is coming. One day you wake up very down (gives a laugh). Your mood swings like this because you don't know what will come tomorrow (John).

'Migrants have always been subjected to waiting and wasted time as they move across international borders' (Andersson, 2014:2). Time and waiting are difficult and complex concepts, and, are particularly so when examined from the perspective of the international protection applicant and refugee. Time has significance in how state mechanisms and processes function. From swift and unexpected late-night or early-morning raids and random cut-off dates to the protracted waiting for an asylum decision, time has been cited as a means to govern and perplex people who exist at the border (Griffiths 2013; Khosravi 2014: Allsopp

et al., 2014). The approach to time taken in this chapter is informed by the work of Melanie Griffiths who distinguishes between four experiential temporalities (Griffiths, 2014:1991). The first of these is 1) sticky time, when time passes slowly; 2) one in which time slows to a sense of torpor and passivity: suspended time, 3) when time moves quickly: frenzied time, 4) a fragmented existence or 'temporal rupture' where events transform people's 'temporal patterns and imaginings' (Griffiths, 2014:1994). Looking to the past may be a useful first step in understanding how time is positioned in the daily life of those who occupy 'in-between spaces'. While not claiming equivalence, examining the politics and workings of the *lager* or the camps of the Second World War can help to develop better understanding of how time is central to the experiences and sentiments of those who are powerless to influence decisions which will ultimately impact their future. Primo Levi's sad and compelling descriptions of his experiences and perceptions of a concentration camp are useful in understanding temporality in spaces of confinement. He described how perceptions of time changed inside the camp. In *The Drowned and the Saved*, Levi noted how time and memory were intertwined, and because of the horror and regimental nature of the camp, time had lost all meaning while memories slipped into oblivion.

> We had forgotten not only our country and our culture but our family and our past, the future we had imagined for ourselves, because like animals we were limited to the present moment.
>
> (Levi, 2013:79)

For Levi, the absence of things which give meaning to everyday life, meant that time did not have any importance. Hinton and Willemsen note that 'to be able to experience subjective time, it is necessary, therefore, to be able to insert intentionality into time, -intense prolonged trauma profoundly transforms the experience of *Kairos*, of subjective time, in which past memory, present perception and future desire flow together' (Hinton and Willemsen, 2017:113). For Levi, the need for noting or counting minutes, hours and days was unnecessary as time had lost its value.

> For us, hours, days, months spilled out sluggishly from the future into the past, always too slowly, a valueless and superfluous material, of which we sought to rid ourselves as soon as possible.
>
> (Levi, 1987:130)

Levi's descriptions of the altered understanding of time are perhaps extreme examples in the context of this thesis but reflect the way in which the control and structured routines, common to all spaces of confinement, serve to mark chronological rhythm for residents. The stories told by people involved in this study suggest that both trauma and the impossibility of predicting the future appeared to lead to a distortion in their sense of time.

7.2 'Indeterminacy' – The Reasons for Waiting

Waiting and immobility are important and defining aspects of the Irish asylum system. Following the application process there are a series of steps and processes which must be followed by international protection applicants. These include initial reception in a centre in Dublin, form-filling, attendance at interviews, provision of documentation and dispersal to a Direct Provision centre which can be located anywhere in the country. One must await a date for an initial hearing which may be followed by a period of waiting for a response. That response may be a refusal and that refusal must be appealed. In that case, one waits once again for a response. The negative aspects of institutional living are exacerbated by the inordinate period of waiting for a conclusive response to asylum claims. The requirement to wait reflects the powerlessness to effect time, and the need to accept the pace at which events take place. The protracted nature of decision-making in the asylum application processes and the institutional nature of the centres has been regularly associated with the difficulty in maintaining identity, and, therefore, with stress and mental health issues (Stapleton, 2012:7). Research carried out by the Irish Refugee Council has shown that delays have consequences for the 'social and mental well-being of an asylum seeker; including 'institutionalisation', loss of personal initiative, disempowerment and an aversion to the host society' (IRC, 2011: 4). Protracted waiting was viewed and experienced as an infringement on the rights to control time, to be autonomous, and thus an inability to get on with life.

7.2.1 Power and 'being made to wait'

The sovereign is he who decides 'the exception', while 'the undecidable' are those outside of the law (Schmitt, 1985). Agamben noted the difficulty in determining if 'it is guilt that grounds the rule, or the rule that posits guilt' (Agamben, 1998:27). Does the law render one guilty or does one's guilt require the law? Is this man made to feel guilty or is he guilty? The law will determine her guilt, but she will be required to wait for that decision to be made and announced. Research shows that people without power are often required to wait, thus, waiting is, in fact, an exercise of power (Griffiths, 2014: 1996, Bissell and Fuller, 2011, Schwartz, 1974). Schwartz suggested that the amount of time spent waiting is reflective of the legal and social status and the amount of power which one holds. 'Waiting is patterned by the distribution of power in a social system' (Schwartz, 1974:842). Standing by and living in anticipation is 'thus, about being subordinated to the will of others – an exercise of power that is enacted and re-enacted through acts of waiting' (Turnbull, 2016:76). Pijpers (2011:432) questions whether waiting is contingent on the inadequacies of state institutions to cope with human mobility or might it be a strategy which is 'not outside but fully part of the state'. Stories provided by international protection applicants suggested that these are indeed techniques of state control: ones which sustain the marginality and compliance of individuals (Griffiths, 2014:1996), which are, as noted earlier in this chapter, experienced a type of trial or punishment for those who dare to enter the country illegally.

7.2.2 Context – '*Waiting for a letter - I don't know why it takes so long to write a letter. It takes a year or it can take a few years'.*

Rotter noted that waiting for asylum is a particular kind of waiting (Rotter, 2016:81). This contrasts with instrumental/situational waiting which is directed towards a particular object or outcome. Existential waiting is that experienced by Vladimir and Estragon in Beckett's (1969) *Waiting for Godot*, where they await the unknown. For all those who engaged with this study, their waiting was more than targeted and purposeful waiting but grounded in a situation of powerlessness and lack of agency. People who seek international protection experience temporal tensions which arise from 'certain administrative procedures, chronic uncertainty and the systemic primacy of waiting' (Griffiths, 2014:1991). Lawrence, a political activist, who had dedicated considerable time to examining the social and legal

rights of those living in Direct Provision, was conscious of inhabiting a liminal space defined by temporal suspension.

It's like we don't exist. We are like commodities in Direct Provision. You are counted as numbers, numbers so …people don't even know us by our names. We are just reduced to numbers for someone to make money, while we are stuck in limbo, you know (Lawrence).

Those without power in society, such as refugees and international protection applicants, are people for whom 'waiting' is commonplace. In Ireland, the International Protection Office (IPO), which forms part of the Department of Justice and Equality, is responsible for the initial decision-making process. It has received considerable criticism due to the slow pace at which it provides responses to asylum applicants (IRC, 2017). Blame for the long delays and waiting times pointed to administrative procrastination and an inadequate staffing. Research suggested that, in 2014, three in seven asylum seekers had been waiting at least 5 years since they first applied for asylum in Ireland, and one in seven waited seven or more years (JRS, 2014). ECRE (2018), point out that, by the end of December 2017, people were spending an average of twenty-three months in Direct Provision, a system which is frequently described as unsuitable for long-term stays. The report also refers to 432 people who are in the system for five years or more. Despite the introduction of the new 'single procedure', which came into effect in January 2017 with the goal of reducing processing times, applicants continue to remain in the system for far too long (ECRE, 2018). Thus, delays are still a feature of the system, and, in 2018, people were continuing to wait 20 months before having a first interview. All of those involved in this study who were international protection applicants as opposed to refugees received a refusal as a first response to their asylum application. This was usually followed by an appeal but applicants were required to wait. As international protection applicants were not permitted to work in Ireland until 2018, those with whom I spoke had an inordinate amount of idle time.

7.2.3 Stuckness

Faith stated that for her there was a complete absence of information about how the asylum process worked and few details of the sequence and timing of the various stages.

We're in the dark. For me, I was supposed to go for appeal last year, I think. Yeah, but they postponed it. I don't know where I'm standing (Faith).

She associated the lack of knowledge about the process with limited information provided around timelines and an inability to move forward. She demonstrated 'stuckness' (Jefferson et al., 2019), confined to a space and time which she did not want to inhabit, where the future was out of reach. Even more than confusion, people articulated a sense of demoralisation. Feeling subordinated by the uncertainty, witnessing the loss of their skills and feeling helpless to prevent their erosion, people expressed anger at their 'semi-permanent state of affairs' (Brun, 2015:22), while they awaited 'a fixed, end-state solution' (Brun, 2015:22). The asylum process was experienced as one of perpetual change, where policies and house rules were constantly articulated, and yet changes in their own personal circumstances were not forthcoming. However, waiting should not imply that people were inevitably bored and idle. Das (2000) noted that the cornerstone of eliminating pain and distress is moving on and getting on with one's everyday life. People's stories demonstrated the need to be able 'to act in the present, in everyday time' (Brun 2015:24). In other conversations with people since this data was gathered, there was some hope that the right to work which came into effect in 2018, might bring a new dynamic to people's lives.

7.3 Perceptions of Time – *'I have to check the time. It doesn't look normal to me'*

Levi recalled 'empty days, without encounters to anchor the memory' (Levi, 1987:329). In much the same ways as prisoners are required to 'do time' or to wait for release international protection applicants are also subject to 'multiple temporal tensions' (Griffiths, 2014:1991). They mourned the ability to control and regulate time within their own lives. While Levi spoke of the 'rupture of contact with the rest of the world' (Levi, 2013:81), Griffiths uses the term 'temporal angst' (Griffiths, 2014:1994) to describe the sense of disconnection between how time is experienced by international protection applicants and by the rest of society, 'a

feeling of being out of sync with time' (Brun, 2015:23). Lawrence, Belinda and Paulina referred to waiting for a response from the IPO, and how time seemed to pass far too slowly while they waited. For others, this did not seem to be the case, because they occupied themselves with volunteer work and study.

7.3.1 'Ennui or Boredom' – '*They are sitting there. They are just sitting there'* (Lewis)

Anderson asks 'does boredom matter? (Anderson, 2004:739). This section looks at how waiting and time were characterised as a burden. Time and waiting were despised when they were perceived as slowing down or stopping altogether while others live 'normal lives' and experience time as moving. Time itself was defined by incapacitation. Vitus (2010:34) refers to the work of Heidegger, pointing out that 'boredom' is a specific way of being in the world, a 'state-of-mind' created by specific 'moods' arising in the relationship between humans and the world. Barbalet notes that 'ennui, but not boredom, is a languid surrender to emptiness' (Barbalet, 2000:634). For Barbalet, boredom is not apathetic acquiescence to a particular context or condition but 'is a key social process centred on questions of meaningfulness' (Barbalet, 2000:631). People are bored when lives and activities lack meaning or purpose. In that case, what is it that makes a life meaningful? A meaningful life is one which 'has a purpose, a direction, a kind of depth as opposed to shallowness' (Kauppinen, 2012:346). Meaningfulness is determined by the 'objective value of the goals that organise its core projects' (Kauppinen, 2012:346) and the likelihood of success in achieving these goals. Robert, Greg, Beth, John, Diane and Alexander spoke of their boredom, absence of routine and purpose for those living in Direct Provision. Diane noted how the asylum process had disappointed her and that she had expected something more than just basic protection on her arrival in Ireland.

It's been two years now that I have been just sitting idle…but I was hoping that, I would be in my own home, working and all that. I expected that I would be leading a normal life

(Diane).

Similarly, Robert described how difficult it was to fill his days. He had completed his Leaving Certificate and had hoped to go to Art College. In the meantime, he was doing a

short art course on a part-time basis. He also did some volunteer work. On the days when he was doing neither and was confined to the DP centre, he described how he filled his days.

Because when you wake up in the morning, you have nothing to do. You just go to the church, you just come back home and sit and watch the news and watch a football match (Robert).

Flora was a gentle, soft-spoken and shy lady. She worked as a childcare assistant for many years in her home country of South Africa and she desperately wanted to work again in that field in Ireland. She articulated a sense of feeling helpless and of being isolated from a profession which gave her life structure and value. She associated idleness and its consequent boredom with shame and a sense of demoralisation, having too much time to think and rethink about her situation.

Boredom affects your mind: Because if you are busy, you are happy. Staying there, nothing, doing nothing, just rewinding what will happen, you rethink all day. You watch TV and you see others deported and drowned in the sea. Then it comes to you and the child also is seeing that (Flora).

She was aware of the impact of her situation upon her mental health. Furthermore, at the time of interview, war in Syria was at its peak and thousands of people were crossing the Mediterranean in search of safety. Witnessing these images and TV news reports, which detailed precarious journeys, detention, deportations and drownings at sea, affected her and others. Being active was associated with positive physical and mental health for Paulina, Lewis, Grace and Flora. Employing Griffith's framework is a useful way to understand the lived experience of time and how it is perceived by people involved in the research. It must also be noted that people's experience of time tends to change as they moved from being a newcomer in the asylum system to someone who had waited for years for a positive outcome to their asylum application.

7.3.2 Sticky Time

Time and incarceration or 'stuckness' (Jefferson et al., 2019) are integrally linked. While the international protection applicant is not officially detained or incarcerated, control and authority are maintained in the same way as in prisons, through time-discipline and fixed routines. Sticky time is a perception of decelerating time. Belinda recognised the loss of time, the passage of time and the waste of time. She described the controlled and procedural nature of her life through her reference to the repetition of daily tasks, institutional living and fatigue caused by the routine nature of life. Her sense of temporal stagnation was in sharp contrast to the apparently dynamic time experienced by others around her. She felt as though she was waiting for her life to look and feel like that of others, and longed for a return to the 'forward flow of "normal" life' (Griffith's, 2014:1997). Her daily rhythms included waking early, queuing for and collecting food, getting the bus to take the children to school, returning to the school later in the day to collect the children, cleaning and sleeping. She stated that it did not feel normal for her to live in this way. Exhausted by worry and boredom, Belinda, like many others, slept a lot, even during the day.

Honestly, I would love to be like other people outside, wake up in the morning like a normal person, go to work. I don't like to do the food every time, it's not good for me. Every time, going to the kitchen, getting what everyone wants, go back to sleep, I have to run for the bus. Every time I have to check the time. It doesn't look normal to me (Belinda).

She was constrained by a fixed and imposed timetable which she felt controlled her access to both food and transport at determinate times only. If she decided to disregard these arrangements, she had to find and cook her own food and possibly walk as opposed to taking the bus. Sticky time is in many respects the antithesis of what is often described as the 'fast nature of modern life' (Foster, 2016:1). People involved in this study spoke not only of their own waiting but of also watching others wait. For example, Lewis recalled celebrating the tenth birthday of a child who had spent his entire life in the Direct Provision system.

One lady, Nigerian, Tanya, was with everybody together, in terms of organisation and all that. In 2015, her son, was celebrating this tenth birthday. She did a party in the centre for his 10th birthday. And he was born there, in the centre. He was born in the centre. It's painful for me to think about that (Lewis).

Faith, Claude, Lawrence and Vera explained how they became involved in volunteer work or took educational courses in order to stay busy and to have a reason to leave the centre on a daily basis. By doing this, they attempted to 'share the same space as mainstream society, if not their time' (Griffiths, 2014:1998). Claude explained how he managed his time during the twelve years he spent in Direct Provision.

And so, all the time, I was being in the asylum process, you know, you can't work, you can't study, you can't, you know. While there, you can do some basic things, but I somehow went along with that. I went to work as a volunteer assistant and I came here, so through my volunteer work, I was able to get some studies and some expertise, experience with colleagues (Claude).

Greg, Paulina and Claude spoke of futile and never-ending days and associated the restrictions on work with the loss of time. Practically all of the participants in this study attributed their need to wait with the delays and tardiness within the asylum decision-making process. Paulina explained how she waited for a response following an interview with a representative from the Department of Justice and eventually decided to forget about it rather than go on actively waiting for it.

So, it's when I went for my first interview for subsidiary protection in June and I didn't get a response in July. I was told I would get a response after about 4 weeks. So, July I didn't get anything, August I waited, eventually I just gave up (Paulina).

Pauline went on to describe how being in the centre every day and having nothing to do had a negative impact on her mental health. This led to periods of illness spent in hospital and requiring psychiatric treatment. On her return to the accommodation centre, she decided that she needed to occupy herself outside of the centre and enrolled for courses with VTOS. She explained how this changed her way of thinking and helped her to stay positive.

Oh yes it did because then I had something to focus on. When I came back I had assignments, so I didn't think a lot about where I am in the process, what's going to happen to me, you sort of forgot all about that and that was for starters (Paulina).

For Paulina, waiting became a less negative experience and she went on to attend a course at a local college of further education, and following that, completed a degree in an Institute of Technology. From this, it was evident that having worthwhile and meaningful activity interacts with human emotion and interrupts waiting. Paulina ruptured the imposed time of

waiting by creating different relationships to time, through education. By 'suspending' the waiting for a decision, she managed to move on with her life and avoid the boredom which characterises the Direct Provision system.

7.3.3 Suspended Time

Somewhat different from sticky time, this state of 'directionless stasis' (Griffiths, 2014:1996) was less rewarding, and one that was endured with difficulty. With this type of time, people can see 'no purpose, fairness or progression…and time not only becomes stuck but can morph into the Kafkaesque' (Griffiths, 2014:1997). In Kafka's parable '*Before the Law'*, previously referred to in Chapter 6, a man spends his entire life at the border, which is under the control of the law. He awaited permission to enter. Is he a legal immigrant, an international protection applicant, an economic migrant or in search of a safe place? The place of waiting is the 'waiting room' (Seitz, 2017), the 'in-between space', where the application of the law is suspended and the man from the country is neither inside nor outside the law. His experience is one of 'an endless becoming, it fills itself with meaning by self-reflection of one's own being and b/ordering' (Van Houtum, 2010: 286). He is waiting to take control of his own life and cannot truly be himself while in this state of anticipation. He is not merely excluded from the law but entirely discarded by it, existing in a limbo space. He appears guilty of something, yet it is not clear, even to him, what this might be. While people who seek international protection might 'move on' by imagining a new life in the host country 'they remain fixed within a political status and a humanitarian category that continues to produce uncertain futures' (Brun, 2015:20). As we have seen in the previous section, Lawrence, Faith, Diane, Claude, Paulina and Tia spoke of the need to comply with the asylum process in Ireland and to wait, often enduring delays and unpredictability. Diane distinguished between the different ways in which residents in her centre experienced and used time differently. Some experienced a sense of stagnation while others attempted to enjoy activities and keep busy.

You don't see them anymore, not because they are doing something, but just because they are in their room. You just see them going to get their meal and coming back. And then, obviously, there is the more, there is the ones that cope better with it. They are outside everyday playing cricket, having fun. But then with that again, I think it's a matter of time (Diane).

She sounded a note of caution in her last phrase 'I think it's a matter of time'. Suggesting that with the passing of time something inevitable will take place, she described a set of stages or motions which people go through. She implied a certain fatalism. The phrase 'a matter of time' draws attention to the fact that feelings of dissatisfaction within the Direct Provision process are pre-determined. The idea of inevitability is at odds with how we generally think about life and so much hope and positive emotion is lost if the course of our future is perceived as being pre-determined. Prolonged waiting fractures lives. Paulina explained how protracted asylum claims changed people's perception of their lives, as they became dissatisfied and disillusioned over time.

I mean this is more than I ever thought I'm going to get. I'm getting food, I'm getting shelter, and I'm getting this (Paulina).

Both Robert and Beth associated directionless time with a lack of opportunity and the lack of personal and professional progression, including the ban on attending third-level education and the prohibitions on work, which were in place at the time of interview.

Yeah, like I know people that are in the system for 10 years. It's no use. You waited for over 10 years so I don't know….. The only thing I just hope is that I can be able to go to college. And just get my masters you know. Because I work hard as any kid in school. And earned a place in college only to find that I can't go (Robert).

Beth spoke of the frustration she felt while waiting and the sense of loss for all of the years when she was not permitted to work or study. In fact, she preferred not to remember that time but instead to focus on the future.

If you are waiting for five years, some people wait for ten years, you know your life, and you are not doing anything. You can't work and you can't study or anything. So…. But like, I was twenty-nine then and now I am forty-two…but all those years, when it's past, it's past. You don't think about it. It makes you feel bad (Beth).

Time spent in Direct Provision was something that Beth was not keen to discuss. During those years, both her mother and her son had passed away in South African and she was unable to attend either of those funerals. Her voice tapered off on a number of occasions as she remembered that period of her life with great difficulty. Diane felt there was consensus among international protection applicants that waiting periods were detrimental to their lives and that change was long overdue.

And one thing that we would have been fighting for, a lot, is the length of time that people are spending in the system, because you know you're just in limbo and you're just waiting endlessly (Diane).

The stories suggest that the state exerts considerable control over the lives of international protection applicants. The absence of information about the legal process and the time frames for decision-making served to create feelings of insecurity and dread. Stories shared by Robert, Diane and Flora suggested loss, yet they waited with hope, even if they were locked in a 'type of existential purgatory or an experience of entrapment' (Sutton et al., 2011:34). Life in Direct Provision was marked by a particular routine around eating, sleeping, getting the bus, doing daily household chores and waiting for post. The impact of the bureaucratic power and processes that regulated the lives of international protection applicants which prevented them from full engagement with work and education perpetuated a sense of feeling excluded from 'normal life' through the imposition of an indeterminate waiting period. In this case, boredom was connected with the absence of freedom and accounts of waiting served to expose how policy which governs lives and activities actually worked. Freedom was valued by Agamben and Arendt. For Agamben sites of confinement were oppressive and brutal. The figure of the *Muselmann,* found in Agamben's writing symbolised 'bare life'. He wandered aimlessly through the space he inhabits where suffering led to an absence of emotion and inability to react to stimuli. These conditions undermined the human condition which for Arendt was one of publicity, plurality and natality. Responding to these, Arendt cherished freedom and related this to political freedom, power and worldliness. She considered political freedom as paramount to all humans, stating that 'the raison d'etre of politics is freedom, and its field of experience is action' (Arendt, 1961:15). This kind of freedom could only take place when one entered into the public spaces and was acknowledged there by others. In all other places, the individual remained hidden and voiceless, reduced to biological being.

When people came together in a further or higher education setting, they sought freedom to discover their self-identity, were enabled to take action and to resist conforming to the world. There is an interdependence that springs up when people come together, where students' diverse social identities both influence and are shaped by learning and the space in which it takes place (Cazden, John, and Hymes, 1972; Varenne and McDermott, 1998). In contrast to the slow movement of time characterised by endless day and hours to reflect on negative thoughts in confined spaces, there were also instances when people felt time moved too

quickly and was out of their control. This has been referred to as frenzied time to which I turn now.

7.3.4 Frenzied Time

A third type of time is that of 'frenzied time': when time moves rapidly, and at an accelerated pace, beyond which one cannot cope.

Really quickly and in whatever you're wearing, whether you are in pyjamas or shorts, they don't care, you don't have a chance to say okay, let me just pack a little bag or something, no it's literally come, let's go, that's it (Diane).

Diane described the speed, frenzy and cruelty of deportation in the preceding statement. Lack of possibility and absence of control over the coming seconds and minutes was presented as a horrific experience. In the section above, it was noted that sticky and suspended time suggested that individuals were 'stuck, caged, and forced by others to endure a period of empty time' (Armstrong, 2015:1) not of their own choosing and similar to that described by Diane. In contrast, Griffiths explained that this type of time is associated with the speed at which migration policies and bureaucracy can alter 'suddenly and without warning', and also that 'asylum and immigration decisions can be made very quickly' (Griffiths, 2014:1999). For Alain, Paulina and Diane, the most salient examples of 'frenzied time' were seen through their accounts of deportation and night raids. They were conscious of the changing nature of migration and asylum policy, both at a European and national level, and felt it was impossible to remain informed. Grace stated that *the laws of this country just change overnight* (Grace). Similarly, Tia spoke about the lack of power to question dispersal decisions, requiring people to move from one centre to another within days.

One day somebody will send a letter and say you have to go. No question asked. You have no right to say why? You can't ask why (Tia).

People I interviewed for this study also spoke about the speed of their decision to leave their home countries and seek sanctuary elsewhere. Before arriving in Ireland, many made these decisions, sometimes along with their families, and, in some cases, very quickly. Samir, who came to Ireland as a refugee in 1985, had not experienced the restriction of the current

asylum process and was very grateful for having had such as positive experience upon his arrival. He described his frenzied journey out of Iran.

Back in 1985 or '84, when I left Iran, the revolution was still fresh and there was a lot of conflicts, politically. The Iran/Iraq war was in its full steam and to leave Iran for guys in those days, meant that you had to literally find someone to smuggle you out of Iran, under the cover of darkness or though mountains or deserts, you know. It was very much like a James Bond movie, but just for real, you know. I left Iran with my sister actually. I've a sister and a brother from my father's first marriage, they are a bit older than me, and I'm from the second marriage. She was leaving at the same time with her husband and her son, who I think was four years old at the time. So that's what happened. So, we left together, you know (Samir).

His parents, who were of the Bahá'í faith wanted him and his sister to leave Iran in order to have a safer and better future. Religious intolerance was the reason for his departure as the Bahá'í teachings were considered to be inconsistent with traditional Islamic beliefs. At the time those who practiced the Bahá'í faith were subject to random arrests, imprisonment, beatings and confiscation of property (Momen, 2005). Samir's family also faced restrictions, and measures taken at the time prevented his family from owning a business in Iran, at the time.

Their businesses were constantly closed down or obstacles put in their way. I know like my sister still lives in Iran, my full sister let's say, and I know how hard it is sometimes for her (Samir).

Samir's parents paid smugglers to transport both Samir and his sister to Tehran using the only means available to them. Experiences of rushed time was also found in Samir's hasty decision in choosing to come to Ireland and not England, although he had originally completed applications for entry to both countries.

I went to British Embassy in Pakistan to tell them that I was coming to Ireland, because I had also applied to go to England at the time, I went to cancel my application. His response to me was where are you going? And I said I'm going to Ireland (Samir).

As noted earlier, frenzied time was regularly associated with deportations and swift removal from the country. Deportation, the last stage of the asylum process, denotes an unsuccessful asylum application. Diane spoke worryingly about how fast processing times had also led to

speedier deportations, and how this contrasted with the long waiting times for the processing of asylum applications.

So, we're shouting, saying we need a faster processing time. But then what comes up mostly now, with that happening, is deportations. So, the faster you're processing the cases, the faster then they are deporting people (Diane).

Paulina, Alain, Diane and Tia feared hasty deportations. Paulina described her fear of hearing noises in the night and a sense that circumstances could swiftly change both for individuals and families.

I know they used to come a lot to take people at night. So, when you heard the car going around the centre you knew somebody, people were being picked up. So, that was scary because you didn't know whether it was you or the person next door or someone you know, and so, you're probably thinking 'oh my God, I didn't answer properly [at the hearing] so I've messed up everything, even for my children (Paulina).

Paulina's feelings of trepidation and fear around deportation were clear in her story. While considerable anecdotal evidence exists which supports the claim that deportation from Ireland happens quickly and often during the night, official data from government sources explains only how the policy is operationalised. Disturbing stories of people being taken from their beds, escorted to airports and put on early morning flights circulate in the media and in stories told by international protection applicants themselves (Boswell and Geddes, 2010; Roche, 2019). Diane noted the need for hypervigilance in detecting potential deportation attempts. With even a small amount of advanced warning, people could attempt to escape. She suggested that immediate escape from the accommodation centre was the only solution available to people who felt they were about to be deported.

And I remember when deportation was really, really bad, 2015 deportations were really, really bad but people had not developed the strategy of like if you hear the noise, you see them coming, you run, like you jump out or something (Diane).

A newspaper article entitled *The Brutality of Deportations from the UK* reported that shackles and restraints were being used on hundreds of deportees as they were being removed from UK territory (Fletcher and Fearnley, 2019). In the case of Ireland, a report entitled *Return Migration: The Irish Case*, the author Emma Quinn points out that when a person seeks asylum and has their application rejected during the review process, they no longer have

permission to remain in the jurisdiction of the state (Quinn, 2007:15). People who have been refused refugee status and subsidiary protection by the Irish State can then apply for leave to remain. Voluntary return is an option for those who have been refused permission to stay in Ireland but when people do not leave and are unable to leave, enforced removals are carried out as 'a last resort' with the support of the Garda National Immigration Bureau' (Pollack, 2019). A deportation order is generally signed and sent by the office of the Minister for Justice and Equality, (Sheridan, 2017:10). Under Section 51(3) of the International Protection Act 2015, the Department of Justice and Equality issue 'a 15-day letter', advising an individual of their options to leave voluntarily and the intention of the state to dispatch a deportation order and setting out a specified period in the notice. International protection applicants who are issued with deportation orders can remain in the Direct Provision system, but are required to sign on with GNIB (Garda National Immigration Bureau). An article, published in *The Irish Times* in 2019, noted that in November of that year, 241 out of 1,759 people who received deportation orders were removed from the country. Many would argue that deportation is a moral failing of nations (Praeli, 2014). The human consequences of deportation can create an unexpected rupture, not only for those deported but for family, friends and community left behind.

7.3.5 Temporal Ruptures

A rupture suggests an unexpected break with a well-established pattern. It expresses a dramatic or sudden change in events and is linked with frenzied time because of its immediacy and unpredictability. The requirement to move from one country to another, or from one space to another, combined with unfavourable responses to asylum applications has the potential to dramatically alter 'people's temporal patterns and imaginings' (Griffiths, 2014:2000). The sudden requirement to leave or to move, calls for a renegotiation of relationships and identities among the displaced. It threatens people's feeling of emotional and physical security and their sense of powerlessness to resist these decisions. Tia lived in one of the larger centres close to a main city. A mother of two, she was a particularly vibrant and energetic woman and spoke with concern about the plight of young people and children who lived in her centre. She seemed more preoccupied with these issues rather than the need to realise her own life projects. She described her experience of the requirement to transfer between centres as both disempowering and turbulent. Explaining how she was forced to

move four times in a few short years, she commented on the fact that it is difficult to contest these decisions.

I was in Dublin, outside Georgestown, and I went to Terrywood and I went to Kilteeley, and now I'm in Murlow. My kids have been changing school (Tia).

She lived in four different centres. The need to move and resettle elsewhere called on her resilience and coping skills, and she worried for her children and their ability to live normal lives. The requirement to move, the loss of all stability and social connection, as one moves, was difficult. She described how she felt in the following piece.

It's very, very, very depressing, especially for my kids. They will be in a certain place, try to make friends, you know, develop friendships with different people and all of a sudden, they have to move. And as a mother, I can't explain, you know. When you're an asylum seeker, you have no right to ask questions. I think that's what makes people very scared and … I am a human being before I'm an asylum seeker. I mean, I am a mother, I have my own family. At least I should be able to explain the situation to my kids. Do I even have the right to do that because I'm an asylum seeker? I'm still a mother, I'm a woman, you know (Tia).

Compounded by the lack of explanation, Tia was at a loss as to how to explain their relocation elsewhere to her children. She suggested that the threat of transfer hung over people, particularly if they were perceived as being difficult by those managing the centre. She demanded to be treated with compassion and dignity. *I am a human being, before I am an asylum seeker* (Tia). This quotation erases any appeal to notions of choice or personal decision-making, it is one of powerlessness and uncertainty. Robert, whom we met in section 7.3.3, was nineteen at the time of interview and spoke about his general experiences of living in Direct Provision with his family who were from the Democratic Republic of Congo. He had come to Ireland as a child at but was a part-time student in further education at the time of interview. He described what it felt like when friends were forced to move suddenly.

So, you can meet friends and you meet people and they move out and you are left isolated for the next seven months (Robert).

Direct Provision can be, he suggested, a lonely place due to its transient nature. Referring to the difficulties he encountered in building the kinds of strong relationships he had originally formed with other young people in the centre, he noted that people come and go from the centre all the time. According to Griffiths, 'temporal ruptures are not necessarily

negative….as migration itself can be considered an act employed in order to break stasis and generate change' (Griffiths, 2014:2000-2001). In a very different story, Samir smiled as he recalled his sudden and dangerous journey out of Iran.

If you had asked me 10 days before I left Iran, what will you do next week? I would be telling you I would be going with my friends playing soccer and you know this and that, and there was no way I would say I would be on the back of a camel in the middle of the desert at midnight (Samir).

However much this might sound like an adventure, Samir was also aware that he was putting his life in danger and knew that there would be no return home. The need to flee quickly overtook any other plans. Another story of temporal disruption was that told by Claude. Upon receiving refugee status, Claude, who had worked as a volunteer and studied during the twelve years spent in Direct Provision, felt pressure from the offices of the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection to find paid employment. He explained how, on the one hand, he had been prohibited from taking up work as an international protection applicant, and on the other hand, within days of receiving leave to remain status, there was an expectation that he would need to find a job to support himself. He explains this in the following quote.

They want you to work. I mean in 12 years, when they say that you can do nothing, then the next day they said that you have to find a job now. You have to work now (Claude).

Vera, Tia, Lawrence and Claude noted that they were subject to striking and sudden decisions regarding dispersal and deportation. It became impossible for people to plan, as they remained unsure about how long they would be permitted to live in a particular centre. Temporal interruptions indicated that the lives of international protection applicants were tightly governed, experienced as disempowering and fractious. Using Griffiths framework of *sticky time*, *suspended time*, *frenzied time*, and *temporal rupture*, suggests that 'people in protracted situations of displacement often live their lives in a present and at a place where they do not want to be' (Brun, 2015:23) or which they find particularly difficult. Waiting is not the same as time. Waiting, a by-product of time, generally has a purpose and the complexities of waiting in this context will be discussed in the following section.

7.4 Types of waiting – '*It's a life time…all those years not knowing'* (Lawrence).

The earlier part of this chapter considered the ways in which time was experienced by people who seek asylum, and it suggested that those who have little power in society experienced time differently than other members of society. For Claude and Diane, this prolonged period of waiting for a final decision was described as being interspersed with shorter periods of waiting for meetings and for letters concerning dates for appeals and hearings. The end of waiting signified a potential release and freedom to get on with their lives; the freedom to become part of and fully integrate with the host society. But these stories also risked collapsing into a different understanding of waiting as indefinite, as a state of 'being stuck' in a particular space. In light of this, it is interesting to think about what does it mean to experience prolonged waiting? Is waiting always experienced negatively? When people are seeking the right to remain in a host country, will they always experience a sense of both spatial and temporal immobility? One of the themes that recurred through the interview was perhaps the uncertainty and unpredictable nature of people's lives that made waiting so intolerable. It could seem like a valueless waiting, similar to that experienced by Beckett's Estragon (Gogo) and Vladimir (Didi), as they wait for the ambiguous Godot to arrive. Beckett dramatises the struggle with time and waiting, and Godot represents, at least in some interpretations, a better life, understood messianically as always to come. There are 'arguably many different and varied configurations of what it is to wait' (Bissell, 2007:282). In the final section of this chapter, I suggest that people wait in different ways or that there is a continuum of waiting, starting with 'an active kind of waiting for something particular: known and tangible. At the other end is waiting for something, anything, in which case the object is not known or is unknowable,' (Rotter, 2016:160).

7.4.1 Agentic and Purposeful Waiting

Is it possible to wait and not feel disempowered or bored? Is it possible to transform enforced long-term waiting by creating meaningful experiences? Barbalet (2000:631) noted that 'meaning not only arises in but also directs and defines action'. Finding meaning is the antithesis of boredom, and signifies involvement with objects or activities which 'create salient social realities' (Barbalet, 1999:631). The complex affective aspects of waiting were

described by Tia, Robert, Flora, John and Claude in terms of boredom, fear, hope, disappointment, frustration and anger. However, individuals also waited with purpose and agency, and hope sustained the ability to continue waiting. Stories of boredom and enforced idleness were commonplace but so too were those experiences of waiting which were expressed as dynamic and active. In describing purposeful waiting, Claude spoke about the need for people who are international protection applicants to try to hold on to a 'normal time', and to do this by keeping busy. He described a seminal moment in the Direct Provision centre which forced him to consider how he was going to wait. Having witnessed other residents argue over the TV remote controls, Claude, emphasised how institutional living affected people to the degree that they had lost sight of what was worth fighting for. For him, it was vital to have a reason to leave the Direct Provision centre. I suggest that he waited for 12 years with a purpose demonstrating agency and courage.

So when I went one day, I went downstairs to see it, because it was cold in winter, I don't remember that time, but when I get there, I saw people, grown-up men fighting for the remote control. I said, 'this is not my place'. And I never went there anymore. Even now today, I don't watch TV because of that. Yes. So then I said that I have to find some place to go. So then I think that I started to work in a charity shop (Claude).

He advised others who lived in the Direct Provision centre to resist and avoid the imposed regime of idleness, where the only option was to sit and watch TV all day.

That's what I tell them. I say that if you start to watch the soaps, follow the match every day, you are done. You are done because your life has changed completely here (Claude).

Claude declared himself a rebel among those with whom he lived. He demonstrated 'agency in waiting' (Brun, 2015:19) when he sought volunteer work and found his voice through his advocacy role in a local NGO organisation which supported immigrants. This was a way to campaign quietly for the rights of international protection applicants and other immigrant groups, without ever making it widely-known that he was part of the asylum-seeking community. He was depressed by the prospect of watching TV and remaining within the confines of the centre for days on end. Through resisting what has been described as enforced idleness, he challenged the power relations which shape modes of participation for international protection applicants, and which generally dictate who has the right to belong and participate in mainstream society. For some, displacement, and its consequent waiting, facilitated innovation: a process of transformation and new possibilities (Brun, 2008). For

Claude, it enabled access to Irish society and was a way to maintain some of his professional skills, to feel part of something larger and more secure than the Direct Provision community. Most importantly, it was a way to make friends. Autonomy and self-determination mattered to Claude. Lawrence also kept busy through his involvement with MASI and spoke with conviction that he would receive positive news on his asylum application.

There are times, there, you don't know when you will be out and what is happening next. It's kind of bad… I am waiting for a date for an appeal. It's been a year now, waiting. I am sure it's on its way now (Lawrence).

Lawrence explains how he had hoped that one day he will leave the Direct Provision system.

One day I will get out, (Lawrence).

Time was directly linked to the ultimate aim of gaining freedom from the Direct Provision system and the legal right to remain in Ireland. This was often awaiting an event which was 'too slow in coming' (Bourdieu, 2000:209). Lawrence was engaged in, what Marcel might describe, as 'active waiting', where 'there is a continuous checking of the possibility that the object will be reached or the event will occur' (Marcel, 1967). Paulina, whose story will be explored in greater details later on, in Chapter 9, section 8.6, also engaged in purposeful waiting through her attendance at a VTOS course. By leaving the Direct Provision centre every day she avoided the petty conflicts which took place in the centre where she lived.

You can't stay at home the whole day and do nothing. The second thing was, it sort of got you out of trouble per se, because although it was a nice big huge family, there was so many fights. I mean they fought about a washing machine (Paulina).

She noted the ways in which the institutional nature of the centre caused her to feel depressed, to such a degree that she required trauma counselling and hospitalisation in a psychiatric unit for a number of weeks, and on different occasions. Her story shows that the harshness of the asylum system served to compound previous traumas. The arguments which broke out regularly between residents in the centre were something she feared could affect her fragile mental health and, therefore wished to avoid these at all costs.

Chapter Summary

Time, waiting and delays are part of the migration and asylum-seeking process. Exploring their impact upon lives provides an understanding of the ways that temporal realities for those seeking asylum may differ from those in mainstream society. Waiting was experienced as demoralising and disempowering. Time and living space were intrinsically bound together (Hägerstrand 1975), and many of the negative experiences which were articulated were closely connected with the notion of spatial reality. Lawrence, like, Tia, Robert, Diane, Belinda, Faith, Greg, Marlyn and Grace, were uncertain about when they might receive news of their application and were required to wait. Slow time was associated with daily routines, sameness and not knowing when their situation might change, while rapid change was denoted by the need to move to another centre or possible deportation. People both wanted yet feared changes which time would bring. Despite the prolonged uncertainty in which people lived, they remained strong and committed to pursuing their asylum applications. They held on to the idea of a positive future in Ireland and looked to their family and friends for strength and support. The following chapter presents an understanding of resilience and determination in the face of hardships. Accounts provided by people who participated in the study show the ways in which people protected themselves and maintained a positive outlook while they wait.

Chapter 8: Active Survival

Introduction

In the previous chapter, I explored the temporal dimensions of seeking asylum and considered the inextricable link between time, boredom and meaningful activity. Delays and waiting caused suffering and uncertainty, yet people remained hopeful and looked to the future. In this chapter, stories of resilience reveal the ways in which those who were and are international protection applicants and refugees found ways to deal with hardship and suffering. My attention was drawn to individual responses to displacement and resettlement and to legal, personal and social barriers. There was heterogeneity in the experiences of getting on with life outlined in the personal stories which only show a small range of the kinds of ways that people demonstrated their resilience.

8.1 Stoicism

In order to understand resilience, we can refer to the Greco-Roman philosophy of Stoicism which focused on dealing with pain and difficult experiences. Stoicism, a school of philosophy was founded by Zeno of Citium (in Cyprus) c.300 B.C. (Stanford Encyclopaedia of Philosophy, 2018a). Philosophers most commonly associated with Stoicism are Epictetus (c. AD 55–135), a second-century Greek slave, who was later freed and became a teacher and philosopher in Rome; Seneca (AD 4–65), a prominent Roman writer, teacher and politician; and Marcus Aurelius (AD 121–180), a Roman emperor, who presented claims about stoicism in his journal better known as *Meditations.* The Stoics associated emotional resilience with logic and reason and believed that feelings and emotions such as fear, jealousy, anger and passionate love came from poor or inaccurate judgement. The sage, who was educated, would, therefore, not experience these sentiments and would be free, while all others remained slaves. Sellers notes that stoicism has four main pillars, namely wisdom, justice, courage and temperance. It was believed that the purpose of a good and virtuous life was a calm mental state. Firstly, Stoics considered good-sense and behaviour making the assertion that emotions such as fear and envy ensued due to poorly-made value judgments. Secondly,

stoics claimed that one should act and feel correctly when faced with danger and in facing things seen as posing risks. The third pillar looked at persistence, righteousness and an action-mind set. The fourth and final pillar urges self-control and discipline, claiming that upset was the result of an inability to separate the things which could and could not be controlled. Acceptance is about understanding what is under one's control and recognising the futility of agonizing over future or past events (Sellers, 2014). It would appear that only some of these ideas have survived today, however, individuals continue to seek emotional well-being, happiness and a sense of being at one with life. What is of interest in this chapter is the exploration of how people understand difficult experiences and I explore responses to those experiences through the stories shared by the people in the study. Hardship and resilience would appear to coexist for many people. Some individuals appeared to recover from adverse conditions, whereas others appeared marked or changed permanently. The risk of being overwhelmed was always present.

8.2 Conceptualising Resilience

Within the media, and through fiction, international protection applicants and refugees are regularly portrayed as having fractured lives, as individuals who are broken, victims of trauma, as psychologically weakened and burdened with a sense of loss and grief (Duncan, 2001; Austin, 2003; Bixler, 2006; Ó Tuathaigh, 2019). It would appear that within stories of escape and arrival there is a voyeuristic or perverse fascination with trauma (Marlowe, 2010). While accounts of fear, trauma and adversity provide vivid details of the dangerous and brutal reality of people's lives, the outsider may tend to focus on these aspects at the expense of understanding other important parts of human lives and identities. Ní Raghailliagh and Gilligan noted that 'evidence of resilience is hidden within discourses of vulnerability' (Ní Raghailliagh and Gilligan, 2010:227). In that case, if only presenting one story in a complex, multi-faceted life, a narrow understanding of the individual is foregrounded. 'Other important considerations of identity and history (social, political, cultural) are easily lost or hidden' (Marlowe, 2010:183).

Described as one of the greatest puzzles of human nature (Coutu, 2002:46), research on resilience continues to grow as have its criticisms, referring to the concept as 'inappropriate,

imprecise or glittery' (Norris et al., 2008:1). According to Bekkers, qualities which make one resilient include- 'power, perseverance, self-esteem, creativity, a proactive attitude, optimism, intrinsic motivation' (Bekkers, 2015:4). This is what Bekkers called 'a nice list of the ideal citizen' (Bekkers, 2015:4) and cautioned the researcher in believing that resilience is 'an immutable trait of individuals' (Bekkers, 2015:4). Research on resilience has developed in opposition to studies which focused on deficit models and negative outcomes for individuals, organisations and systems (Boyden and Cooper, 2007). Caution has been advised in approaching the topic of resilience, suggesting that 'we should be critical about the conceptual origins and the political discourse in which the term appears'. Resilience has been conceptualised in a number of ways, including physical resilience (Gordon, 1978; Bodin and Wiman., 2004), ecological resilience (Waller, 2001; Longstaff, 2005), social resilience (Adger, 2000; Bruneau et al., 2003), community resilience (Brown and Kulig, 1996/97, Ahmed et al., 2004) and individual resilience (Masten, 1990; Butler et al., 2007). Research shows that 'early studies on individual resilience focused on child development in adverse settings' (Martin-Breen and Anderies, 2011:34) and that 'a risk and protective factors' or 'overcoming the odds' (Masten, 2005) discourse has been used by clinicians and policy-makers (Martin-Breen and Anderies, 2011:34). Yet, it has been noted that there is no single theoretical foundation upon which understandings of resilience are based, and various conceptions of resilience, 'lie somewhere along a path: from resilience in individuals or single objects, to systems, to complex adaptive systems' (Martin-Breen and Anderies, 2011:12).

Research would suggest that resilient individuals appear to possess particular traits such as 'a staunch acceptance of reality; a deep belief, often buttressed by strongly held values that life is meaningful; and an uncanny ability to improvise' (Coutu, 2002:48). Yet, Seccombe suggested that understanding 'resilience as an individual disposition, family trait, or community phenomenon is insufficient' (Seccombe, 2002). The word resilience originates from the Latin word *resiliens,* denoting adaptability and malleability (Ledesma, 2014:1) and various definitions can be found in the literature. It is often discussed in terms of human survival in the face of serious threat (Masten, 2005). It is a process of 'patterned adjustments' (Bourbeau, 2015:1958), or 'the ability to bounce back from adversity, frustration, and misfortune' (Ledesma, 2014:1). Resilience is a dynamic, active process of positive adaptation (Luthar et al., 2000:1) and the term denotes 'culturally as well as contextually specific aspects of life' (Ungar, 2008:234). Furthermore distinctions can be made between behavioural or

problem-solving resilience and emotion-based resilience (Lazarus and Folkman, 1984). Bekkers noted that some of the definitions which exist are misleading and that the concept of resilience 'appeals to our tendency to empathise with those in need of sympathy for the underdog. "Oh, how terrible is the misery that people are in, and how glorious their revival". (Bekkers, 2016:2). This thesis considered individual resilience which is often framed in terms of well-being. Doná noted that well-being during the refugee and asylum-seeking process was dependent upon 'being in' and 'of ' a place, 'both physically located and emotionally attached' (Doná, 2010:4). Belonging and inclusion are key to well-being, and, therefore, feeling excluded or on the margins brings a sense of 'alienation, frustration and stress' (Doná, 2010:4). Migration disrupts both individual and collective feeling of security and balance and 'well-being can only be re-established when some degree of balance is restored' (Doná, 2010:7). This research shows that determination to create new lives in Ireland was dependent upon levels of exposure to trauma, protective factors and individual strategies for overcoming perceived risks and challenges.

8.3 Human Responses to Adversity

Hutchinson and Dorsett noted that when people seek protection in new country, they often feel confounded at the prospect of resettlement, enthusiastic at the expectations of living in a new country and anxious about cultural differences. Tension and confusion about their relationship with their new surroundings are not uncommon (Hutchinson and Dorsett, 2012:57). Reactions to living in a changed environment with limited legal rights are multifarious. Expressions of strength and resourcefulness existed alongside stories of depression and sadness. Responses to circumstances revealed in the stories which were shared by people and, in particular, by Paulina, Alain and Ahmed show us the challenging and difficult experiences which people endured. In this chapter, I decided to focus on the stories of just these three participants as they illustrated the kinds of things that are demanded of people who seek international protection and the singularity and individuality of their responses. They experienced a variety of difficult and challenging emotions including anxiety, sadness, loss and frustration. Details of exposure to trauma, particularly experiences of witnessing torture, killing and destruction which are associated with an increased risk for mental disorders, including post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) (Steel et al., 2009) were

presented in their stories. However, research shows that the ability of people to cope in post-migration situations largely depends on the context and circumstances which follows (Hynie, 2018). Stories shared in this chapter emphasise the realities of experiences of people seeking asylum. Not all of those who participated in the study told stories of facing challenging circumstances, but Ahmed, Alain and Paulina witnessed the destruction of home, state violence, imprisonment, a dangerous transit journey and the difficulties in dealing with family who were reported to be missing.

8.4 A Positive Internal Narrative: Ahmed's Story

Ahmed explained how the situation in Syria had become intolerable. His parents and sisters fled Syria to seek safety in Lebanon, but he and his brother remained in Aleppo to finish their university studies. Some months later, Ahmed followed his family to care for his father who had an ongoing medical condition. Leaving his brother behind, Ahmed joined his family in the refugee camp. His story is of particular interest because of his perseverance and creativity in escaping violence in Syria, in seeking international protection, in reuniting his family and in creating a new life in Ireland. On his arrival in Dublin, his willingness to help other Syrian families, his ability to learn to speak English in just a few months and his persistence with an application to reunite his brother, Leith, with the rest of the family were examples of his perseverance and strength.

8.4.1 Self-Efficacy

For Ahmed, being a student was a source of strength. Progress and belonging at college and a learning community were important in adapting to life in Ireland and for his sense of self-efficacy and self-esteem.

I came with no English as I mentioned to you, so I said I have to build myself a plan (Ahmed).

Bandura (1977) suggested that individuals will have little motivation to act, defend themselves or to persevere when faced with adversity unless they believe themselves to be

capable of reaching their desired outcomes. Those with a secure and robust sense of self-efficacy are methodical in developing a plan for the future as opposed to those with lower levels of self-efficacy who may depend upon others and make decisions based on emotion (Luszczynska et al., 2005; Salanova et al., 2006). For Ahmed, developing a plan, firstly by learning English, and then applying for university courses were a means of establishing a new life in Ireland and moving on from the trauma of the past. He described his efforts to continue his education in Ireland, the difficulties he encountered in gaining access to the Irish University system and having his qualifications recognised.

I got rejected by different places… [three different universities]. They all refused that. I don't know why the reason, maybe because I was studying electronics, and electronics is only available in one of them. And do you know, everything is different: studying in Arabic and then studying in English here. The subject was different so they said that you are not meet the requirements (Ahmed).

Forced to leave Syria before completing a degree in electronics, Ahmed was determined to re-engage with education in Ireland despite initial refusals from various universities. At the time of interview, he was twenty-eight years old and in the second year of a software engineering degree in an institute of technology. Although familiar with many of the subjects through previous study in Syria, he recognised that learning through English was an ongoing challenge.

And they try to do whatever to help me. But I found myself, as I told you, all the subjects I have got, during now, I already know them from my old study in Syria and from program of study. So it's not hard for me. And when I got any new information, I do maybe double time studying. The first time is translating and the next time is study (Ahmed).

Watkins et al., (2011) noted that language barriers among people of migrant background significantly affect their ability to cope and could even be a source of depression and ill-health. Ahmed took pride in his high marks and in his English/Arabic bilingualism. He noted the ongoing struggle to achieve good marks in written assignments.

And even you could ask the lecturer right now about the feedback right now, I have got 100, 100 in some subject like maths and different programming. And some of them I got 73, that's everything writing because I'm just finding right now, an exam in writing is very hard for me. Not really hard, but you know I can't get idea exactly what I mean (Ahmed).

Frustration in not being able to fully express himself in English is evident in this quotation. The feeling of belonging in Ireland, within the college structure and the Irish workplace were important for him, particularly as he adapted to a new way of life and in a desire to feel accepted. This was expressed in an ambition to find work in an 'Irish business' and wanting 'Irish work'. It was also a means to advance his professional goals. He explained this in the following statement.

Yeah, I would like look for work. I have been in work interview a few days ago, with one of the big companies here in Ireland. Yeah, they need someone who speak native language in Arabic … Like I have a good experience in programming and is interested in writing stuff. So that was a good position for me. I am fluent in Arabic. I am in touch with the people, I love programming. I am free for summer. And even I apply for big companies, like…like internship. Just I don't want to stay over the summer, I want to be in touch more with the Irish market. You know, Irish business, Irish work, Irish People. Because I don't have this experience (Ahmed).

For Arendt, humans have an innate desire to belong to both place and people. As outlined is section 6.2.4, she spoke of a private or subjective belonging and public belonging. When living in exile one is required to abandon identity ('to be') in order to belong. The Jews were forced to relinquish their politics, history and beliefs in order to belong to the gentile community, only to be later shunned by that community. It appeared that Ahmed had left behind previous perceptions of place, belonging and identity as static and homogenous and conceptualised them as fluid and in a process of constant remaking. Place, culture and identity were instead viewed as dynamic entities (Gupta and Ferguson 1997) with an evolving meaning continually constructed as people practise, narrate and live them 'through social interaction' (Holm Pedersen, 2003).

I have to be good person for Syria and for Ireland' -I have told other lads before, they asked me this question. They said, do you want to go back to your country? I said I won't answer, but I will ask the question. Which country you are speaking about? They got confused. They said 'you know', 'what do you mean, which country'? I said, like, after a few months I apply for Irish citizenship, so I will be one of the Irish citizens, so I consider Ireland as a country for me (Ahmed).

The questions which were posed to Ahmed show that 'rootedness' in a culture of a specific territory was considered a logical and legitimate aspect of how society determines who should belong (Malkki, 1995:509). Ahmed reflected on the challenges of self-determination and belonging. The phrase '*I said I won't answer, but I will ask the question. Which country*

you are speaking about?' evokes resistance. He embraced transnationalism and refused the binary of Ireland or Syria as his home or 'his country'. He resisted any static, narrow frame of reference as a Syrian refugee, expressing his sense of belonging to both Ireland and Syria and articulating identity space between the old and new worlds. Casting aside his refugee identity in favour or a personal, 'insider' 'active survivor' categorisation, he resisted the stigma and vulnerability that often accompany these. By stating *I have to be good person for Syria and for Ireland,* there is both positive intentionality and a future orientation. Burnett suggests that those who are open to feeling like they belong in the host country and not only identify as being from the country of birth will be more successful in the resettlement process (Burnett, 2013:9).

I was the person who is living Ireland for three years, say if I left Ireland right now and I still miss Ireland. Yeah, even I expect to complete my life in Ireland. But you know, I can't say I won't go back to Syria (Ahmed).

Ahmed's story of identity and belonging provided an important understanding of ways in which people can accept or reject labels and social positioning and ways in which identity is linked to place.

8.4.2 Self-Determination

Before I began the interview with Ahmed he outlined that he wanted to participate in the interview as a student and not as a displaced person. I sensed his fatigue at being labelled a refugee and at demands to recount his journey from war-torn Syria to that of a third-level student in Ireland. He provided details in the following fragment.

Like, I'm now a student. I would like to speak about the future, about experiences I had here. Like I came with no English, how I learn through English, that part is more important. Because a lot of people come as refugee right now, and they have their stories. Because I live in the country since, I've been three or four years (Ahmed).

According to Zetter, 'labelling is a process of stereotyping which involves disaggregation, standardization, and the formulation of clear cut categories. It prescribes an assumed set of needs' (Zetter, 1991: 43-44). The legal label of refugee is used not only in the classification of people but also impacts the life of an individual to whom it is attributed (O'Neill and

Spybey 2003). Labels such as that of 'refugee' and 'asylum seeker' can act 'to other' people and can deny people a particular sense of themselves as an individual. Wanting to tell a different story about himself, something greater that the refugee story of escape and arrival, Ahmed explained *so, I want to go out a little bit from that part, of the refugee stories*. It has been noted that 'once a label has been given to someone, it is as if one has been branded for life' (Kebede, 2010:4) and the associated stigma gives less value to people, linking them to undesirable traits and characteristics (Goffman, 1963). By wanting to present his true and authentic self (Erikson 1995), Ahmed's statement suggests that refugee identities change as they respond to new environments and dominant actors. According to Côté, identity is understood in three ways, as 'ascribed', 'achieved', or 'managed'. These are defined as follows: 'ascribed means assigned on the basis of some inherited status; 'achieved' is used in the sociological sense by which social position is to be accomplished on one's own; and 'managed' means reflexively and strategically fitting oneself into a community of 'strangers' by meeting their approval' (Côté, 1996:420-421). Based on this understanding, interviews with people who participated in the research would suggest that all three might apply as people moved from being ascribed an identity to managing their identity.

Political and power dynamics are constantly at work in categorising and labelling people suggesting that 'although individuals as well as groups want to define themselves, they also become defined by the powerful and dominant in society', leading to power struggles in defining the identity of disenfranchised groups (Kebede, 2010:11). These were reflected in tensions which existed between discourses of the past and present, determining who can belong (Anthias, 2006). Separation from the country where one grew up, where previous generations resided and to which one might feel a deep and emotional attachment, can be difficult and upsetting (Said, 2000; Ghorashi, 2017; Räthzel, 1995). Developing a sense of belonging was portrayed as more difficult 'when the social perception in the countries of asylum reinforces this sentiment of belonging elsewhere' (Kebede: 2010:4). Although people who are refugees can feel a sense of belonging to a host country, that society may view them as belonging to their country of birth, suggesting that when self-identification does not match labels given to an individual by others, issues and tensions concerning identity can take place (Danico, 2004).

8.4.3 Perseverance

Ahmed explained how he had to leave Aleppo to help care for his sick father in the refugee camp in Lebanon. His story suggests that there were pivotal moments (Thomson et al., (2002) in responding to challenging circumstances.

I was studying with my brother in Aleppo. So, the situation and the condition were getting more worse and worse, and my father got sick and I said I will go to help my father in Lebanon (Ahmed).

His brother, Leith had chosen to stay in Syria in order to complete his third-level studies, and he planned to join the family at a future date, in Lebanon. However, difficulty arose when the family was given permission to come to Ireland before his brother had arrived at the camp in Lebanon. Family reunification became further complicated by the fact that Leith was no longer a minor.

Yeah, it was very stressful. My brother was always talking to us from Syria and I was doing the reunification of the family. I am always the person who was speaking English in the family. And I was always following the application for my brother. You know, the reunification is not easy for brother over 18. My mother applied for her son, aged over 18. Like he is 24 years old. They ask for a lot of documentation. They were always ringing for questions and answers. You have to see the solicitors, you have to see the lawyers. It was a really hard journey but I did it (Ahmed).

The final phrase *I did it* expresses his relief and his sense of pride in his own resilience by persisting with the application. I admired Ahmed for his calm and his tenacity in the face of such complex personal and legal obstacles. Looking back, he took positive meaning from his experiences and journey, via a traumatic chain of experiences, to a new life in Ireland. He, like many others who experienced difficult life events, appreciated 'recovering aspects of his "pre-turmoil" undamaged self' (Shepherd et al., 2010:285). He accepted that he had strength and vulnerabilities. His positive internal narrative of compliance with the legal reunification process contributed to his steely determination. He described this in the following statement.

And even I got a good experience of all the life in Ireland. How to apply, how to wait. Here you have to send by the post, you have to wait, you have a do a rule. You have to be very fussy (Ahmed).

Weil noted that 'to be rooted is perhaps the most important and least recognised need of the human soul' (Weil, 1987:41), suggesting that rootedness was something more than a sense of belonging to place but an imaginative or spiritual belonging. Doná, in turn, linked resilience to well-being and noted that people's ability to adapt to new contexts depends on the process rather than the location. It 'depends on negotiations between forced migrants and those who assist them, encounters with welcoming or exclusionary policies, engagements and interconnectedness between diverse social worlds and networks'(Doná, 2010:11).

8.4.4 Vulnerability and Resilience

Ahmed's story shows that adversity and its associated stress were not a single event but were ongoing for a period of years. While he appeared articulate and strong and described his resettlement in Ireland in positive terms, in others ways, it would seem that he struggled to belong. He compared his experiences of going to college in Ireland with that of his former university in Aleppo.

Like imagine I have two hours free between one lecture and next lecture, and I have to sit myself to drink coffee – I remember there was twenty person around me like sitting with each other [in the university in Aleppo, Syria]. I have never sit myself because I have a big number of friends. So while here I have not lots of friends, I have not found any one of them. So even to speak …Like when I speak to my friends, it's different than when I speak to any person here (Ahmed).

I understood Ahmed's resilience as active. A realisation of what the human spirit can endure appeared to provide new insights into his own abilities to cope with whatever challenges life might bring. He tended to see challenges as something he learned from and dealt with methodically.

I will keep doing until I lose my life one day, so I won't stop again and say I can't do it (Ahmed).

Resilience, in part, was understood as confronting challenges and reconnecting, to some degree, with life as it was experienced before migration. This powerful statement, revealing determination and readiness to confront adversity, meant that Ahmed viewed himself as a survivor of a crisis of mass terror. However, the sense of separation from a community with

which he identified closely and the loss of country and territory with its own unique history and culture were palpable. He referred regularly to Syria even when discussing other topics and expressed pleasure at having met many Irish people who had visited Syria. In Ahmed's case, immediate and sudden flight were required and he seemed almost incredulous that he could have undertaken and survived such an ordeal.

Everywhere but you can't be safe anywhere in Syria. You could be arrested, you could be bombed, you could be hijacked. Hijacked there. So it's not an easy life. Yeah, it's a really hard life. I spent three years under the war, it's a different story like (Ahmed).

In stating, *I was living under the war and I survived,* he suggested that there could be nothing in life that would ever challenge him in that way again and that future events could never be as difficult as anything experienced during the war in Syria.

So, there is nothing going to be more difficult than to be bombed in your house….so life is nice. Some friends of mine lose their life. So the life is still in front of me. So I will keep doing till I lose my life one day, so I won't stop again and say I can't do it. I will try, and when I can't, I will stay and I will say I will try again (Ahmed).

Ahmed's adaptive capacity, his ability 'to generate new ways of operating, new systemic relationships- the ability to withstand, recover from, and reorganise in response to crises'(Martin-Breen and Anderies, 2011:7), meant an awareness of a process for confronting and dealing with difficulties in a systematic manner. He understood that there had been 'tradeoffs' (Martin-Breen and Anderies, 2011:8) in leaving Syria for Ireland, but that displacement had offered opportunities to gain a new understanding of self and create a different life elsewhere. He articulated this in the following piece.

So before the war, Syria was only the country where I was born, but now I have two countries in my life so I have Ireland and I have Syria. So I want to go back to both of them, to keep going and back, keep doing my best to protect these countries (Ahmed).

He suggested that the war in Syria and its aftermath had taught him that there was no problem or crisis which could not be met with a solution, but there was a need to persist and not give up easily when faced with adversity.

There is no impossible at all in this life, you just have to try…Yes, I have experience. I have seen in my life, in Syria and Lebanon. So that gives me a lot not to give up from the first time trying. And there was a number of people who came in the same programme. Like there were more than twenty families (Ahmed).

Social ties to individuals and to resettled Syrian families was a source of strength and served as an important support network. Through this group, Ahmed and his family maintained stability and continuity in a changed context. Describing his father as someone who was respected within the Irish and Syrian communities in their local area and to whom people turned to for advice meant that there was a wider network of people with whom he and his family were connected.

They have to go and visit us because my father, they call my father the old one…He's not the old person in the community but by his acting and by his doing the stuff, they respect him as the oldest and wisest one (Ahmed).

Belonging to the Irish Syrian community facilitated gatherings and opportunities to speak about Syria, and Ahmed described this as being important for people to recall not only the horrors of war but stories of events and experiences which were in the past and which individuals associated with their home. Following flight and resettlement, research suggests that 'new communities or migrant networks need to be formed if the migrant is to regain her sense of identity and continuity with her previous self' (Akcapar, 2006: 843). Furthermore, it has been suggested that 'resilient families, not surprisingly, promote the resilience of individuals (Martin-Breen and Anderies, 2011) where continuity has been noted as a significant 'aspect of identity' (Harter, 1990). Practicing the Muslim faith, being part of a Syrian Muslim community, 'served as a bridge between the old and new worlds' (Ní Raghallaigh and Gilligan, 2010: 229). Ahmed held on to a vision of rebuilding Syria along with fellow Syrians. Returning home or going back was possible for Ahmed, in a way that it was not for many other people due to fear of death or imprisonment.

It was destroyed before. If you go back to the history of Syria, it has been destroyed many times. Yes, and the people rebuild it, so, we can rebuild it (Ahmed).

Ahmed's story revealed the impact of labels on individuals' lives and the ways in which people refuse and resist these. Issues of identity and belonging are complex for the displaced, and highlight the difficulties in negotiating an identity when this is often ascribed by the host

society. Ahmed's story is one of survival, yet it should not be assumed that concealed within it are moments and experiences of doubt and vulnerability.

8.5 Deliberate Self-Exclusion and Emotional Suppression: Alain's Story

Alain's story was different to the one shared by Ahmed for a number of reasons. Alain came to Ireland as an unaccompanied minor, whereas Ahmed arrived with his family. Ahmed was several years older, had the benefit of having completed second-level education and had been close to finishing his university degree. Alain had started the journey with his uncle but arrived in Ireland, alone, at the age of seventeen. Facing different challenges to Ahmed, he had to wait for a decision on his asylum application, and therefore, had fewer rights. He was alone, initially relying upon a foster family as well as State agencies and NGOs for support, rather than upon his own family. When he reached the age of eighteen he left the foster family and moved into Direct Provision. 'Whoever has experienced exile, in any of its forms knows how much one suffers when the nerve is severed' (Levi, 2013:112). Levi's depiction of the pain and suffering caused by exile resonates with Alain's story as he had no contact with his family in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Accounts provided by Ahmed and Paulina indicated that expressing hope and visualising a positive future in Ireland helped them in dealing with stresses connected with the experience of displacement. Even when people were not directly asked about how they coped and maintained a positive prespective, stories of exit journeys, separation, living as a refugee or international protection applicant were central to expressions of hope and resilience. It was only upon reflection that all three people realised the challenges they had overcome, although Alain did not speak about his experiences as though they were extraordinary or that he had shown great resilience in the face of hardship and solitude. Reflecting ideas put forward in the writing of Hannah Arendt, Van Dijk (1996) reminds us that those with less power in society only speak when invited to do so and are much less likely to have an audience. Plummer adds to this suggesting that 'domination, hierarchy, marginalisation and inequality operate to determine which voices will claim to dominate' (Plummer, 1995:30). Alain may have viewed the interview as an opportunity to tell the 'unaccompanied minor story' as he saw it, and also as an attempt to break with what Hebing described as 'a silence surrounding

refugee lives', reflecting the difficulty in finding communities willing to listen to refugee stories (Hebing, 2009:135).

8.5.1 The Independent Child Migrant

At the time of interview, Alain was twenty-two years old. He described the overwhelming effects of being separated from his family at the age of seventeen, and his attempts to create a new life in Ireland. As the independent arrival of children in Ireland is relatively recent (Horgan and Ní Raghallaigh, 2019), official figures on the numbers seeking state protection are scant. However, research in the European context, shows that 'since 2008, about 198,500 unaccompanied children have entered Europe seeking asylum' (Horgan and Ní Raghallaigh, 2019: 97). Scholars have suggested that the term 'unaccompanied minor' is unsuitable as it omits any understanding of the child as having agency and being resilient. Children in this category are also referred to as 'separated children rather' than unaccompanied' (Wernesjö: 2011:497). Bhabha (2014) argues that due to growing levels of child migration, often unconnected to persecution, new terms such as 'children on the move' and 'lone' or 'independent child migrant' would appear to be more appropriate for use in policy and child advocacy services (Bhabha, 2014). Wernesjö notes that narrow constructions of children's identities neglect current realities. Unaccompanied children are in fact, 'a heterogeneous group not only in terms of gender, age, ethnicity and religion, but also in terms of their past experiences and present life situations' (Wernesjö, 2011). Yet, they share similar experiences of loss: loss of home, family, including extended family, friends, school, cultural identity, values, customs, status and shared ideas (Berman 2001). While the term 'active survivor' (Ní Raghallaigh, and Gilligan, 2010), is applied to unaccompanied children, Alain did not describe his story as one of resilience and survival; it wasn't told in this way. Alain's story revealed two strategies for dealing with the difficulties faced by an aged-out unaccompanied minor. Firstly, he attempted to reduce risk factors through deliberately isolating himself from other people, and, in the process, appeared to suppress emotions and, secondly, he depended upon the supportive relationships which he had formed with resilient adults.

8.5.2 Family Context

Alain's family had been displaced by war in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and he was unsure where they were now living, or even if they were alive. It appeared that Alain's life was marked by his displacement, homesickness and a desire to belong. Yet, despite this, he maintained hope that he would one day receive news of his family.

At the moment, it's just like, no real friends actually, like just, no family, I miss home. I only called them, like once, and then there was like big troubles at home, so I didn't get to keep on calling them. So hopefully, probably, if they get a chance, they might call me or email me. Because the number I got from them since, doesn't go through (Alain).

He shared facts about voluntary agencies and the Red Cross, in particular, which were assisting him to locate and contact his parents and siblings. 'We've tried with Red Cross but it is not working' (Alain). The importance of this statement cannot be understated. The uncertainty of not knowing where one's family might be, whether they were dead or alive must cause indescribable suffering. The unexplained disappearance of a loved one, often referred to as 'ambiguous loss' or 'unconfirmed loss' (Powell et al., 2010), in the context of war and/or state terrorism, is 'the most stressful type of loss' (Lenferink et al., 2019). The Red Cross (2019) noted that when people go missing, those who are affected 'feel powerless in the face of this situation. They are prevented from moving forward as if in a state of paralysis, often without any chance to move on or find any closure. Moving on with life would be a betrayal of the person they are looking for' (Red Cross, 2019:11). Alain made little reference to the impact which this had on his life in Ireland. He described his journey from the Democratic Republic of the Congo to Ireland and told how he became separated from his uncle, during a stopover in Ethiopia, and never saw his uncle again. Alain, who was a minor at the time of leaving home, made the remainder of the journey alone and lived in Ireland as an unaccompanied minor without any family support.

I came on my own, so like lonely. I came with my uncle. We got lost at the airport. I never heard from him since (Alain).

Hopkins and Hill noted that children and young people rarely migrate and travel alone but are usually accompanied by an adult (an 'uncle'), often without knowing the route or destination which they are taking (Hopkins and Hill, 2008:265). Children and young people are often not included in the decision to migrate and are ill-informed about every aspect of a journey which

will have profound consequences for their lives (Hart, 1992). Being separated not only from close family but extended family members is particularly problematic 'for the emotional well-being and life situation of unaccompanied children and young persons' (Wernesjö, 2011:501). Assuming that children and young people enjoyed intimate family situations and close relationships before their departure, and the fact that many children often come from more collectivistic cultures compounds the sense of loss and associated distress (Derluyn and Broekaert, 2008:148). In the next section, details of the ways in which Alain dealt with everyday challenges, living in Direct Provision and the unpredictability which surrounded the delays in processing asylum claims are presented.

8.5.3 Inner Resources and Strategies

There is a general consensus among researchers that unaccompanied children are a particularly vulnerable category of asylum-seekers (Derluyn and Broekaert, 2007; Sourander, 1998; Horgan and Ní Raghallaigh, 2019). However, it is also suggested that research carried out with unaccompanied children tends to focus on 'vulnerability rather than on their own resources and agency' (Wernesjö, 2011:503), and few studies have focused on the ways in which unaccompanied children deal with challenges. In the case of this research, I wanted to focus on the ways in which Alain attempted to get on with life and the personal strategies which he deployed in overcoming obstacles and difficult experiences. Alain spoke about being 'on his own' and doing things 'on his own' more than any other person in this study. For Alain, it would appear that his separation from his missing family overshadowed any educational success he experienced in Ireland. Attempts to build strong and supportive relationships with others was a challenge for him. He appeared to trust a selected number adults such as his former Irish foster parents and other adults he had met through his engagements with formal supports within NGOs, state agencies and in school. Alain described the centre where he lived.

Yeah. It's families. Actually in the centre there are different floors. First floor is for families, like kids and women and second floor is for single and the third floor is for mixed. Sometimes there are single woman actually, single woman and single men, but that's it (Alain).

Ní Raghallaigh noted that distrust in others and in systems should be considered a coping strategy and an example of exercising one's sense of agency (Ní Raghallaigh, 2014). Alain's

coping mechanism involved keeping other people out of his life. He appeared to self-exclude from groups and situations which he felt represented a threat, but it was also possible that he was dealing with racism. Alain was cautious of developing friendships outside of certain contexts and spoke of his vigilance in developing friendships with people in the Direct Provision centre, located in one of Ireland's larger cities. This was a way of protecting himself from others, a strategy of resilience which he deployed in his everyday life.

It takes time to make friends in Direct Provision. Because you don't just kind of rush in to relationship. You don't know the person right, so obviously they come from different countries. So you need to … First of all for me, what I mean, I took my time observed, watching them and before I created a relationship with them, so that's it (Alain).

In describing the ways in which people related to each other in the Direct Provision centre, Alain draws attention to the heterogeneity of residents and their very diverse ways of being and dealing with everyday life.

And it's not everyone. Some people they don't care what you do. Because also they are stressed. Some people they don't talk. They won't talk to you. So it's just like, just keep your own stuff to yourself. You know, so. You don't need to make actually friends, because everyone now has his own story. Some people have been there for more than 10 years (Alain).

Living long-term in Direct Provision seemed to affects an individual's ability to connect with others. Alain described this as 'a wall' and suggested that not communicating with others and keeping things to oneself is damaging.

After 10 or 5 years, so can you imagine the wall, maybe what they keep inside of them? I don't know. It's just harsh for them. Everybody don't talk, that's it. So just kept quiet and just watch them (Alain).

Interestingly, in a study carried out in Ireland with unaccompanied children, Ní Raghallaigh and Gilligan noted that relationships with peers and with professionals were important to unaccompanied children, but that they never came across as dependent on these relationships (Ní Raghallaigh and Gilligan, 2010: 231). This finding resonates with Alain's story who had made a few friends through school and some through a youth group specifically set up to support children and young people who were unaccompanied. Alain expressed neither sadness at previous traumas which took place, nor joy and excitement at the prospect of his

future in Ireland. However, he spoke with pride about his achievements at school, and, in particular, his basketball skills which was a means to making friends and gaining popularity. He suggested that when others in his school realised his talent for the sport, they were more willing to adopt him as a friend. This was perhaps the one time in the interview when he expressed satisfaction.

So I'm really good at it [basketball] so I think from one day when we played against teachers, I did well, so from that on, so obviously people kind of like talk to me now and they sometimes now they know me now (Alain).

Alain provided meagre accounts of life in his home country and relatively short answers to all of my questions which indicated perhaps a certain level of discomfort with interview situations. He described his desire to live in Ireland and his attempts at gaining refugee status or leave to remain.

8.5.4 Dealing with Uncertainty and Precarity

Alain had just completed the single application form which came into effect in 2018. He tried not to think about his application but it was difficult for him to block out thoughts of delays, refusal, removal and deportation. He described this in the following quotation.

That's right, the single procedure. So actually I had to hand back the new questionnaire because I'm finished completing it so I have to wait for a date, hearing date (Alain).

He was fully aware of how precarious his situation was, and the threat of deportation was always present.

I am still trying, you know what I mean, and it's just not easy… Sometimes you know I think, I can't deny it. I have to think about it because that's obviously the key to everything here. Sometimes you are denied to travel, I can't travel… if you don't have it (legal permission to remain in Ireland), probably you cannot be like here, and they may take you out. Go back to your country, you know what I mean? So… (Alain).

His description of deportation in 'they may take you out' reflects his realism.
He noted the tensions which existed between attempting to work hard in school and focus on a future in Ireland, when so much uncertainty existed about his future.

Not easy, because I mean like on one hand I have to work hard to get a good result, you know what I mean. And on the other hand, because of my process like, the immigration process, so I got a rejection for the first time, so that was kind of stressful again (Alain).

On his initial arrival in Ireland, and although, English was not Alain's native language, he managed somehow to explain his situation to immigration officials. He described his experience of dealing with immigration officials at the airport and his initial arrival in Dublin.

Yeah, first time because they were asking for the ID. When I tried to explain myself, because my English wasn't that good. When I came here, I was trying to explain but the police like they were kind of …they listened to me and they took me to some area like where I talked to a police woman…then I was taken to Tusla. Tusla, then on to a residential house. Yeah, like at the beginning it was, say, kind of harsh. They were kind of harsh. But when I tried to explain myself, because I didn't have legal stuff you know what I mean. They were asking for legal stuff, everything (Alain).

This fragment shared by Alain communicates a feeling of being criminalised. The complexity and the difficulties faced by unaccompanied children are manifold. Arriving in a country where one might not speak the language, where one is alone and required to provide answers to immigration officials and police must generate considerable stress. This short fragment, related by Alain, shows that unaccompanied children can be screened, questioned and required to participate in complex and adversarial immigration procedures (Ataiants et al., 2018:5) and the asylum-seeking process itself can be a potentially difficult and traumatising experience for unaccompanied children (Bhabha, 1999; Thomas and Byford, 2003). Continued and repeated traumas imperil the mental health problems of migrant children, potentially leading to PTSD, anxiety and depression (Sourander, 1998). Alain described his fears on arrival but considered himself to be lucky to be allowed enter the country.

Yeah, yeah, scared, actually scared. Yeah. That I would be maybe pushed back, you know what I mean. Or told to get home, yeah. So just kind of lucky, you know (Alain).

Alain described his life in Ireland and in Direct Provision as one without choices.

It's so hard yeah. First of all because you're admitted. I may compare like Direct Provision to when I was living in the (foster) family. The family like you were given choices, you had choices. Let's say for example, for food, you had choices. I'd say, oh I don't want to eat these, I don't want to eat. When in Direct Provision, you can't say 'no' because that's what you're given. If you don't eat you'll be starving. So you have to eat it, not every day. Sometimes food is good, sometimes yeah it's good. Sometimes it doesn't work. And also like, sharing rooms, you might get bad roommate who smokes. I don't smoke. Or maybe who is no tidy, or maybe clean. You know what I mean? And you know, so you need to be cleaning, clean all the times, the bathroom. So that's it (Alain).

In addition to Claude, Lawrence, Diane and Belinda, Alain noted the lack of a private space, and therefore, a private life. Arendt spoke of the importance of a space to retreat to and be invisible. In *Crisis of Education* she noted the importance of protecting children from 'the merciless glare of the public realm' (Arendt, 1954:8). She considered education and schools to be somewhat problematic as they represent neither the public nor the private sphere but guide the child to learn the demands and ways of the world. They are 'institutions that we interpose between the private domain of home and the world in order to make the transition from the family to the world possible at all' (Arendt, 1954:9). Arendt suggested the world presents risks and threats to the child who must be protected from danger. Homes are private spaces which can 'constitute a shield against the world and specifically against the public aspect of the world. They enclose a secure place without which no living thing can thrive' (Arendt, 1954:8). This is true not only for the child but for human life in general. Whenever life is exposed to the world there is loss and destruction. 'The protection of privacy and security its [life's] vital quality is destroyed' (Arendt, 1954:8). The lack of a private space and the institutional nature of Direct Provision is problematic as it does not enable a space to think and to be alone. At the most basic level, it 'controls and confines' the lives of unaccompanied young people 'to years of shared bedrooms, unable to decide when to eat or what to eat' (Ní Raghallaigh and Thornton, 2017:400).

So that's kind of difficult also. Even though like, your privacy is limited. Because you share everything, kind of, the same room (Alain).

Despite of all of these challenges and the lack of privacy, space and friends, Alain did not describe life as a difficult one, filled with challenges. He, like many others, focused on his education and his future.

8.5.5 The Role of School

Research suggests that school and education play an important role in the lives of unaccompanied children. For Alain, it was not only a place to learn, but one which enabled personal development, an opportunity to meet peers, create friendships and build new social networks. The everyday 'routines and procedures' associated with school 'provide a safe and stable environment' for young people who often live in vulnerable and precarious circumstances in unfamiliar surroundings (De Wal Pastoor, 2013:32). Alain had learned English in the few years he had spent in Ireland. He was about to undertake Leaving Certificate examinations in six subject, through English, a language which was relatively new to him. I admired his stamina and persistence. He provided positive details of his experiences of the education system in Ireland, and noted how it differed from that of his home country.

It's actually, I will say totally different. The language, I'm like … I come from a French speaking country and Ireland is English-speaking country, so different. And the way the teachers do here, is different. They use technology a lot. Back home, you expect teachers to write everything on a blackboard. And because the network is so bad back home, no need for iPads, which is funny here sometimes. Computers, there's really nobody who can afford a computer back home. So it's really hard. I just need to write like, to study what you've been given in class, you know what I mean? (Alain).

He hoped to become a nurse when taking up a career as he wanted to engage in work where he could care for others.

And I feel it and it's kind of like a passion and I would like to help people and work with people and I really like, that's what I'm good at, working with other people (Alain).

Participation was a means to overcome other exclusionary barriers and a way to quantify his personal success. Research carried out with unaccompanied children and young person's show that they can often experience racism, inequalities and processes of being 'othered' continuously (Sinha et al., 2008). Although Alain noted the need to protect himself, he spoke with positivity about school and education. School provided a route to a better future and a sense of belonging, and research suggests that it is 'important for the psychological adjustment of refugee children' (Kia-Keating and Ellis, 2007). Duncan (2001) attributed resilience to a strong desire for education. Alain described the subjects he was studying with satisfaction.

For now, I'm doing Biology, Maths, English, Art, and French obviously. But they don't teach French in my school but I'm going to do it in my Leaving Cert. Yeah, and Geography and History as well. So about seven, seven subjects (Alain).

He appeared to have been able to call upon his inner strength. Without the external formal supports and the relationships which that brought, it is difficult to see how Alain would have survived and maintained well-being. I wondered if his ability to cope was culturally-embedded, passed on from more senior family members, or if this resilience came entirely from his person. He described his relationship with other unaccompanied children also a source of social support.

And they've in the same situation as me. So we get to share ideas and so encourage each other so you know how to go forward (Alain).

He described his relationship with teachers and noted that small classes meant that he received individual attention which he appeared to value.

Yeah, actually my teachers are really helpful, because as I said earlier, because our school is just …we're not that much, we don't have many, you know what I mean? So at least we get attention from teachers. We be like 12 or 15 people in a class (Alain).

Alain, though vulnerable, displayed a strong degree of resilience. An extraordinary amount of uncertainty and anticipation surrounded his life in Ireland and he relied heavily on the support of statutory and voluntary organisations, his teachers and other young people who held a similar legal position. His situation raises pertinent ethical questions concerning the actions of the policy-makers in providing no alternative to Direct Provision for young people who are unaccompanied on their arrival in Ireland. The consequent waiting, precarity and vulnerability which can have negative consequences for 'psycho-social wellbeing, and perhaps in turn, life trajectory' (Ní Raghallaigh et al., (2016:12) 'goes notably unexamined within the McMahon report' (Healy, 2018:19). As noted at the start of this section, Alain's situation differed considerably from that of Ahmed which was presented in section 8.4 of this chapter. Alain's young age, precarious legal situation and the fact that he was unaccompanied by his family rendered him vulnerable. The next section concerns Paulina, whose story diverges from that of Alain's and Ahmed's in terms of her experiences, age, and the fact that she was a parent of two children. However, she also valued education and the sense of belonging which that brought.

8.6 Solidarity, Occupation and Distraction: Paulina's Story

Paulina's story is of interest as her circumstances and responses to them revealed courage and strength mixed with expressions of depression and loss. She was a mother to two, who spent a number of years in Direct Provision before receiving permission to remain in Ireland. She was forty-seven at the time of interview, had been imprisoned in her home country and left Zimbabwe under difficult circumstances. Bouts of ill-health since her arrival in Ireland, six years prior to the interview, show the impact which displacement and resettlement can have on an individual. When I met Paulina in the classroom of an adult education centre one Friday evening, she was cheerful and keen to talk to me. Although the evening was setting in, she was in no rush to get home and was attentive to my questions. Multiple accounts of desperate and challenging experiences and her responses to them were evident in her story. Her vulnerability was characterised by her precarious legal situation, her ongoing health problems, boredom, unfulfilled expectations and a sense of exclusion from society, all leading to mental health issues. She was able to look back and laugh at unexpected and frightening experiences she had endured and her response to them. She described her journey to Ireland.

We got to the airport and I was relieved because, I always make people laugh because I travelled from South Africa to Abu Dhabi in the state of panic and everything, I forgot the flight was going through Abu Dhabi so on the way from South Africa to Abu Dhabi I was busy destroying the passport because I was told that if I arrived with the passport then I would be deported to Malawi. And not being a Malawian national with a Malawian passport, I would have been sent to prison in Malawi. So, I was told I had to destroy the passport. So, the whole way I didn't eat anything at all, I was busy chewing and swallowing the passport. So, I had to chew and swallow three passports and all I had was hard covers left. We ran and we got on the flight and we just sat I thought "Oh my God, thank you Lord (Paulina).

This excerpt of her story was related with bursts of laughter, and Paulina demonstrated her pride at having managed to get on flight without a passport and, most importantly, to have gotten away with it.

'Can I have your passports please?' so I passed him the boarding passes, he said 'Where are your 'My son looked at me and said 'Mom, what are we going to do? We don't have passports'. I said to him 'Let me think', and I sat down and I remember I went to the bathroom because I was sick. I got sick in the bathroom and I came back, and the queue was quite long and I just said to them 'sit down, I'm thinking' and we sat. And when there were only a few people left I said 'come on, let's go and join the queue' and we went. And I was thinking in my mind 'ok, so if they don't allow me, I'm going to seek asylum in Abu Dhabi' but I'd been told stories about seeking asylum in Arab countries –that you don't do that. So I was shaking. But when I got to the gentleman who was checking the passports and the boarding pass, he said passports?' and before I said anything, he just stamped the boarding passes and said 'quick you better run because your flight is about to leave'. And I thought 'Yes let's go' (Paulina).

Paulina had an awareness of the risks she had taken when crossing borders. Fears of being caught and arrested in Abu Dhabi were a reminder of the way in which the law distinguishes between the traveller and the asylum seeker. This suggests that borders, visas, passports and airports operate as political technologies in the lives of people. Salter noted that 'the border represents a unique case of entry into the social contract; it is not an entry that is inherited or claimed by right but a status that is requested' (Salter, 2006:168). Airports which exist at the frontier, are a permanent 'state of exception' in the sense that one cannot claim to have any rights while there yet one remains subject to the law (Salter, 2006). Similar to ports and borders, they are spaces where power operates and are sites of extreme authority, control and surveillance (Lähdesmäki et al., 2002). For those in transit and seeking asylum, the space of the airport is generally not welcoming but associated with border guards, detention and questioning, where passports and visas are used to control the movement of bodies (Salter, 2006: 167). Despite these expressions of control, Paulina challenged the ordering and workings of the airport by arriving and leaving a transit country without a passport, suggesting 'the originary fiction of modern sovereignty in crisis' (Agamben, 1998).
Paulina's story, from flight out of Africa to the creation of a new life in Ireland, showed that a number of strategies and factors helped her to cope. Firstly, love, solidarity and affectionate relationships with her children were modes of resilience; secondly, occupation and involvement in education offered opportunities for self-actualisation and self-expression. They were vital forms of distraction and important in maintaining self-confidence and self-esteem. Finally, personal traits and what appeared to be an unlimited capacity to maintain positivity and optimism were strategies which she used to face a range of challenges.
The bonds between Paulina and her children and those which she developed with other people who lived in the Direct Provision centre were a defence against loneliness and isolation. Rutter noted that it is clear that resilience may be strongly influenced by people's

patterns of interpersonal relationships (Rutter, 1999:120) and that such support 'is often regarded as simply given' (Shephard et al., 2012:282). She described some of the more fun moments in the Direct Provision centre and how the relationships with others made life easier.

For me, it was all the events that sort of took place at the centre. There was limited resources but people tried their best to get by with what they had. I mean we still had birthday parties in the small, little caravan. People came in and it would be packed but everybody would be dancing and singing and laughing and talking. And that was nice because it sort of took you away from this 'Oh God, this situation is bad' to 'I'm actually enjoying this' and the fact that you then had family. People that cared about you, that wanted to know what's happening with you. That in itself, you got another family. When you initially come you think 'I want my own home here with my kids', in the end you're thinking 'I've got so many people around me'. And it's funny because everybody with their different cultures, with different backgrounds, we all sort of had a familiar something (Paulina).

She noted that despite the diverse nature of those who lived in the centre, in terms of religious and cultural background, people supported each other and these relationships were a source of solace. The religious community and the ritual of meeting at church each Sunday was also an opportunity to break with the daily routine, to meet people and an avoidance of boredom and isolation strongly associated with Direct Provision. Newbold, in a study with newly arrived refugees in Canada, noted communities served 'as an advantage and enabler of social and economic acculturation to the host society' (Newbold, 2013:70). Paulina placed value on relationships with others. Folk noted that resilience was evident 'in a willingness to seek community support and positive social interactions with family, friends, and others' (Folk, 1997:6). In my conversation with Paulina, it was evident that belonging to a broader social network enabled her to turn to other trusted individuals with whom she could make sense of experiences.

I think the main thing that keeps people going is the church. And usually because the day is so long, there is something to eat there so you're eating something completely different or from your own home country. The main ones are the Nigerian Churches so you're going somewhere different and seeing different things and you just forget about everything and it's a place where you dance and laugh and sing and pray and you're encouraged (Paulina).

Engagement with spaces and people for newly arrived refugees was considered by Newbold as 'vital and provides support and a sense of belonging through attachment and place' (Newbold et al., 2013:70). It promotes resilience 'by providing coping mechanisms through social networks, infrastructure, education, encouragement, support and resources, and can

create opportunities that encourage meaningful participation in the community' (Newbold et al., 2013:70). For Paulina, the sense of social exclusion associated with living in Direct Provision, the absence of work and educational opportunities, and, therefore, an inability to integrate into Irish life, was a source of sadness and frustration. Her story suggests that opportunities and spaces for expressing individuality, developing identity and sense of self are necessary for well-being.

I can't do this' because you want to do things and explore. You can't stay at home the whole day and do nothing. You want to go to school and then you can't go to school. You want to do this and you're not allowed to do that and that's when all the problems really, really start (Paulina).

Her self-esteem was connected with a sense that she was capable of learning, working and being busy. Paulina received permission to remain in the country in 2011, and, prior to that, during the four years she spent in the asylum process, she did not have the right to work and had only limited access to education. She described her decline into depression and eventual mental breakdown. Engagement with education was described as a pivotal moment. Having a reason to leave the confines of the Direct Provision centre was viewed as part of her recovery.

When I stayed in Direct Provision I was sick all the time when I stayed at home. That must have been costing the Irish people money for my medical treatment. When I started going to school, I stopped going to the hospital a lot. I didn't visit the GP. The ambulance didn't come and pick me up a lot. I was much better. I still went for my appointments but I was much better. I wasn't going to the hospital as often and costing tax payers a lot of money. That's because I engaged myself in school. Now if I stay a year at home, I am likely to be in the same situation and the two of my kids are in school (Paulina).

In addition to Claude, Robert, Lawrence, Lewis and Diane, Paulina suggested that in order to stay healthy she needed distraction and occupation. Furthermore, though of less importance, it was an opportunity to maintain and gain new skills. For Claude, Robert, Lawrence, Lewis, Diane and Paulina, there was a dissonance between how they had envisaged their lives in Ireland and how their reality had manifested itself, leading to frustration and unfulfilled expectations. Coming to Ireland and claiming asylum was envisaged as something more than just state protection. Paulina attributed her mental health problems to idleness, boredom, previous trauma and lack of opportunities for self-realisation. She described this in the following terms:

I wasn't well for the first year and then after that I just decided then look if I am going to just lie here and think about everything that's going on and think about A, B, C, I'm really not going to be well. I need to do something. So I went to VTOS and I asked, I enquired about one of the courses and I was told to apply and I applied. And then they rejected me because I had a masters in Human Resources previously and they said 'you can't do a level 4 when you've got a level 9' and I had to go and beg the lady just to take me on so that I could have something to do just to keep myself sane. She initially said no she couldn't do that and then after about two weeks she rang me and said well look if you still want to come on the course we've got a space. So I said God thank you so I did level 4, I did level 5 (Paulina).

Keeping busy meant distraction and less time to reflect on the difficulties associated with the asylum process. Paulina's story provides evidence that 'humans are occupational beings with a need to use time in a purposeful way. This need is innate and related to health and survival' (Wilcock, 1993:23). Resilience research often focuses on protective factors such as personal traits, which help individuals to cope with adversity (Mohaupt, 2008; Rutter, 1999). These include an individual's ability to reflect and problem-solve. It concerns expectations, social skills, cognitive ability and self-confidence (Garmezy and Rutter, 1983; Werner and Smith, 1990). Paulina did not present herself as someone who was adept in overcoming difficulty but maintained positivity about the future. She believed in the power of God to protect her and her family, and she expressed gratitude for the way she had been able to raise her children, in what she felt, was a good way. She was grateful to have survived traumatic events associated with her flight from Zimbabwe and she gave thanks to God for simply being alive.

When I wake up I say 'thank you, Lord that I'm up' and, the way I've brought my children up. Don't focus on the past, focus on the future and look ahead. What happened yesterday is yesterday's story. Leave it behind and move on because if you keep dragging the past with you, you'll have such a heavy load, you will not be able to move forward. So, I try and forget all about it, and I always tell my children everything that happens, happens for a reason (Paulina).

She described the mental health issues she had endured for a number of years after her arrival in Ireland. She referred to one particularly distressing episode which is outlined below. She expressed the tension she suffered in admitting that she needed help and hospitalisation, but, at the same time, wanting to be present and remain strong for the sake of her children. We get a glimpse into the nature of her psychological distress in the following quotation.

I picked up my phone and I phoned my husband. He was in the UK, an asylum seeker in the UK. I said 'I think I have lost it' and he said 'what's wrong?' and I just started crying. So, he then hung up and he rang my son and he said 'go and check on mom, I don't think she's ok'. So, my son came running and I got inside and I was still naked. I didn't know what I was doing and he covered me with a blanket and he said 'Mommy, sleep!' I went into the room and I slept on the bed and went 'no, no I can't sleep because I have to go and get the laundry, I've got to get the food in'. He said 'mom, don't worry I will go and get the food' and then he went to get the food and I was just crying and just, 'oh God, I can't cry because the kids will see me. I'm supposed to be strong for the kids. I can't cry' (Paulina).

Paulina expressed concern about her inability to find work. She did not refer to these rejection letters as forms of racism or discrimination and did not want to focus on them negatively.

So, I've got a bit of experience in that and I thought I would be able to get a job and I did put my CV out quite a lot ..and I just got rejections, rejections, rejections, rejections (Paulina).

These worries, coupled with fear for her precarious mental health, suggested that hidden within the expressions of resilience was a sense of rejection and anxiety. She spoke about her health in the following statement.

I am grateful for every single day that I'm alive and well (Paulina).

Her fragments of story denote the fluid nature of resilience and distress. Research has shown that understanding individuals as 'either vulnerable or resilient is over-simplistic' (Ní Raghalliagh and Gilligan, 2010:227) as people live with challenges and concerns which may not be manifest in everyday conversations. Studies carried out with refugees and asylum show that stress associated with experiences of war and persecution may lower their ability to cope with everyday life (Fegert et al., 2018). Kleinman used the term social suffering to describe the distress due to a political, social, and cultural context (Kleinman, 1997). Uncertainty, lack of control over one's life, loss of family and social networks, the fragmented nature of life have been cited as reasons why people who are seeking asylum often suffer with poor mental health (Bjertrup et al., 2018). However, Paulina had learned to cope in the most awful of circumstances and her experiences had taught her to look positively to the future.

To be able to survive in any condition, any circumstance…so that's the way I cope. That's my philosophy and that's what I try and teach my children so that they know, that look, you make a mistake today. It's a mistake, it's happened, you can't reverse it. It's a learning step for tomorrow. You won't make that same mistake again. I don't think, yes, there was some bad things that happened, but I always try and pick up the positives from them and move on with life. For me, I feel that life is too short to be dwelling on (Paulina*).*

While stoicism was understood by Greco-Roman philosophers partly as the suppression of emotions, it was also concerned with learning what one could and could not change. Sellers, a scholar in the philosophy of stoicism, previously referred to in section 8.1 noted that many of the events and exchanges which bother people are of little or no consequence and are often out of our control (Sellers, 2019). Paulina had learned to separate what was and was not in her power, choosing not to dwell on things that were in the past and could not be changed. She did not reflect on mistakes of the past but focused on the future. Hutchinson and Dorsett (2012) refer to Toth's study with refugee women suggesting that 'personal qualities such as optimism, adaptability and perseverance helped them to cope and survive' (Hutchinson and Dorsett, 2012:59). A belief in her own inner strength was fundamental to Paulina's construction of resilience. From a reading of the research, it is not really clear what makes one person more resilient than the next. If we think about resilience as a trait we neglect responses to context, protective factors and supports. It would appear that pivotal moments can arise which call on particular traits and skills.

Chapter Summary

In this chapter, Alain, Ahmed and Paulina described how they gained new perspectives on the ways in which they dealt with difficult situations and new understandings of self. All three tried to psychologically separate themselves from adversity. They became immersed in learning which offered a sense of achievement but was also a distraction. Resilience was generally conceptualised as 'bouncing back', recovering from difficult experiences. It was understood as a virtuous and positive trait found in individuals, communities and societies, associated with strength, integrity and determination. The stories outlined in this thesis would suggest that resilience was something which developed over time and in response to challenging conditions. It was a process rather than an outcome (Rutter, 1999). For people who are international protection applicants or refugees, resilience was understood in terms personal traits and contextual factors such as relationships, culture, age, legal status and

opportunities for self-actualisation. However, this chapter did not claim that resilience is permanently embedded in peoples' lives. Paulina, Ahmed and Alain, among others, suffered traumatic events which one might assume they had overcome. Resilience was evident through their ability to block out traumatic experiences of the past, attend school and college, engage with friends and family, and manage on a small weekly allowance. Dealing with legal and personal obstacles was part of everyday life and not considered something extraordinary. However, there is not a clear-cut and neat ending suggesting that vulnerability did not exist alongside resilience. Stories shared by Ahmed, Alain and Paulina reveal that within the stories of people who seek state protection, anxieties about the future, sadness, a sense of loss and fears of deportation were interwoven with narratives of resilience. Education and schooling were described as some of the most positive things which allow people to see themselves as other than displaced persons. The following chapter considers experiences of education in the lives of international protection applicants and refugees and moves away from practical and utilitarian conceptualisations of education. In their place, spaces and practices which engender thinking, being and becoming are considered.

Chapter 9: Educational Spaces: Moments of Disruption, Resistance and Recognition

Introduction

Some of the most radical criticism of the treatment of international protection applicants and refugees is centred on their relative invisibility in society (Carastathi et al., 2018; Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, 2011; Bakewell et al., 2012), and in that context, this chapter considers experiences of education which offer a possibility to challenge that invisibility and make an entry into society. This chapter is divided into four sections. The first of these considers the role of education in people's lives in the context of asylum. The second considers spaces, in particular, the pedagogical space; 'a site of authenticity, as singular, fixed and unproblematic in its identity' (Massey, 1994:5), strongly bound up with a sense of identity and belonging (Keith and Pile, 1993; Urry, 1995). The third section presents understandings of recognition and resistance and their relationship to moments and spaces of education. The final section offers insights into individual perceptions and experiences of third-level education. This chapter brings to the fore the challenges which people face in seeking educational opportunities and it focuses on the intersection of educational opportunities, feelings of recognition and misrecognition and conceptions of time and space in public places. On that basis, I put forward an understanding of education and educational spaces which goes beyond schooling. It is one which invites encounters, where 'we learn not just about what we are, but who we are, such learning occurs not simply through the curriculum, but through moments that punctuate the apparent continuity of the classroom routine -small transformative moments' (Todd, 2014:232).

9.1 The Role of Education

People involved in this study provided accounts of education and schooling both in their home and host countries which were varied and complex. Recognition and resistance to a liminal status were sought through engagement with education, and, to a lesser extent, with work. Viewed as a means to help people to 'purge themselves of deprecating images' (Taylor, 1994:65), they sought opportunities which enabled them to 'speak back to discourse

of power' (McDonald, 2015:419). The philosophical ideas of Freire found in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1972), *Pedagogy of Hope and Education* (1994) and *Critical Consciousness* (1974) helped to explore experiences of education presented through the voices of people in this study. Freire argues that oppression leading to a sense of dehumanisation was the result of discriminatory and unjust practices. He noted the role of education in highlighting and addressing injustices.

> In order for the oppressed to be able to wage the struggle for their liberation, they must perceive the reality of oppression, not as a closed world from which there is no exit, but as a limiting situation which they can transform.
>
> (Freire, 1993:49)

Recognising the negative and harmful consequences of oppression as a process of dehumanisation, Freire advocated for education which gave hope to the oppressed and suggested that it restored a sense of humanity to individual lives. According to Freire, education should enable a deeper and more rewarding existence through dialogue and a pedagogy of hope. 'Dialogue is the loving encounter of people who transform the world and in transforming it, humanise it for all people' (Freire, 1993:89). In Direct Provision, experiences of hope would sometimes appear foreclosed, yet Freire noted the importance of hope as an 'existential concrete imperative' (Freire, 1994:2). In the context of education, hope requires safe spaces which facilitate 'critical emotional praxis' (Zembylas, 2013:203), a restoration of humanity and healing, enabling feelings of vulnerability and empathy to surface. Zembylas suggested that the classroom 'offers opportunities for transformation because teachers and students translate emotional understandings into new ways of living with others' (Zembylas, 2013:177).

Furthermore, Freire's pedagogy argues that humans have the critical ability to make choices and bring about change. According to Webb, Freire's entire philosophy of education was founded on his 'ontology of hope' (Webb, 2012:327), a condition essential to human life and 'rooted in men's incompleteness, for which they move off in constant search' (Freire, 1993:91). Freire transformed what we have understood as literacy by emphasising empowerment, the development of critical consciousness and 'reading the world'. He saw the role of education as facilitating students to attain this, through conversation and interaction.

In this tradition, education has long been regarded as a space which facilitates 'a flexible, emancipating process, which enables people to become more agentic in their own lives, and to bring about change in their worlds' (Connolly, 2003: 9). Freire's ardent belief that the manner in which our lives and the world around us develop is not pre-determined and sealed, bringing a belief that individuals have the capability to bring about change. If one occupies a unique hybrid space, 'full of contradictions and ambiguities' (Arvanitis et al., 2019:135), 'marked and reserved for particular populations' (Masschelein and Verstraete, 2012:1190), such as the Direct Provision system, then what are the opportunities or alternative spaces which might enable one to feel 'normal' and develop a sense belonging ? In considering the ways in which people might attempt to move from the 'in-between space' into mainstream society, people involved in this study considered the education space to be the most obvious means of so doing. It was regarded as a safe space, supporting a 'shift in the borders of our self-understanding' (Todd, 2014:232). Since the end of the twentieth century and coinciding with Ireland's economic boom, global and Irish higher education policy has come under pressure from neo-liberal agendas (Ball, 2016; Biesta, 2014, Rose, 2009). An increasing focus on the more utilitarian aspects of education internationally: the production of human capital and economic productivity have altered perspectives of the purpose of education, sometimes failing to recognise students as active, learning agents.

9.1.1 Context: Rights to Education for International Protection Applicants

People who are asylum seekers, migrant parents of Irish-born children and 'aged-out' unaccompanied minors have been largely excluded from participation in the Irish higher education system until recently. In Ireland, children and young people who seeking international protection and are, under the age of eighteen, are entitled to free primary and post-primary education and must remain in school until they are sixteen years of age. While many young people remain in school until the age of eighteen or nineteen to complete Leaving Certificate Examinations, they encounter significant difficulties in continuing their education beyond that point. Under the Pilot Support Scheme, those who have completed their Leaving Certificate and who have been in the protection system for five years and meet certain criteria can apply for student supports. Still, educational participation is often framed in terms of obstacles and challenges or those 'intimacies of exclusion' (Mountz, 2011:381) which must be overcome.

9.1.2 Obstacles to Education

The people involved in the study spoke in particular of their legal status as being the greatest barrier to progression and engagement. Other concerns were the cost of education and the physical access to education due to the remote location of accommodation centres and lack of information in some cases. Some students had managed through different means to attend third-level colleges and universities, and the introduction of Universities of Sanctuary in 2016, has been instrumental in bringing about changes in this respect. This is an initiative which encourages universities, colleges and institutes to welcome refugees and international protection applicants ensuring that 'their voices are heard and that their skills and talents are given an opportunity to flourish for their good and for that of Irish society as a whole' (Places of Sanctuary, 2020). This is part of a wider movement, known as 'Places of Sanctuary' encompassing cities, towns and communities which 'share the aim of promoting a culture of welcome, and inclusiveness right across every sphere and sector of society' (Places of Sanctuary, 2020). Access to education is a right but for adult international protection applicants and refugees it is complex and is often at the discretion of colleges and institutions. In 2016, while gathering data for this study, opportunities for access to higher level education were fewer than what would appear to be currently available. People who seek asylum do not qualify for the 'free fees' initiative, the student maintenance grant or the Back-to-Education allowance, which means that they are effectively precluded from participating in third-level education. A number of Irish Universities are currently providing access to third-level courses. The Universities of Sanctuary initiative has now been expanded and introduced at DCU, University of Limerick, UCC, UCD, NUIG, Maynooth University, and, more recently, Athlone and Tralee Institutes of Technology (Crosbie, 2020). The Irish School of Ecumenics in Trinity College Dublin has been an outstanding supporter of Places of Sanctuary and is an Honorary School of Sanctuary (Places of Sanctury Ireland, 2020**)**. Through this initiative, scholarships are offered to people who are international protection applicants and refugees (Bielenberg, 2018) which aims to advocate for the inclusion of all those seeking sanctuary (Crosbie, 2020). However, financial supports are often insufficient given the hidden costs of attending third-level education and the small allowance which international protection applicants currently receive. Diane discusses this in the quotation below. Supports with personal issues such as confidence and anxiety, dealing with concerns about family responsibilities, making friends, coping with an added workload, and developing a sense of belonging are all important in helping a student to succeed and feel happy in the setting.

Diane, Bandile and Anache, who participated in a focus group, began their university journey with an access programme which was initially designed as part of a range of initiatives to reduce educational disadvantage through the establishment of access to higher level education. However, research shows that non-traditional students, including mature students are more likely to feel isolated and have limited opportunities to participate in the wider social aspects of student life (Harvey et al., 2006; Smith, 2008). This was confirmed in the following quotation shared by Diane.

We were constantly running for the bus after lectures. You don't get to experience the student life or the social life but, as well, in terms of studying, if you wanted to do assignments at the library, it's a debate of either do I miss the bus and pay for a taxi. Do I have the money for a taxi, can I afford that or not? Can I afford to miss the meal in the centre or not? So, that was a challenge, also for me childcare was a challenge, you know, even if I did decide to stay, then I have to arrange childcare, I'm going to have to pay for that, pay for my food. So, there was a lot of things to consider, a lot of challenges (Diane).

With insufficient money and no alternative means of getting back to the centre, she felt that she missed out on a key and interesting part of college life. In the UK context, research shows that information, guidance, counselling and the need to find ways to sustain aspirations were initially considered significant in encouraging ongoing participation among non-traditional students. However, the three students who participated in the focus group needed little encouragement in sustaining their motivation and interest. They spoke at length about their efforts to access university courses.

I pushed, I pushed, and I met the Student's Union and the Chaplain that could help me, all this while I wasn't having a place to sleep. Sometimes I'm running around, at 11. I'm just in college, I wanted to study, I could even walk from [accommodation centre name] to the class to go to college, I was ready to do that (Anache).

The educational background and qualifications of all of those who participated in this study varied significantly. Some completed study to post-primary school level, while others held a third-level qualification. For some people, their education was disrupted because of war, the need to flee or the need to care for another family member. Many had spent a significant number of years in employment in the area of business, banking, education, media and journalism. Greg described the challenge of accessing education for his daughter in an institute of technology. 'You only get a piece of the cake, not the whole cake' (Greg). Although his daughter was granted a place in a third-level institution through the CAO

process, located within the Department of Education, financial and legal barriers remained in her way of taking up the offer. In the section below, to provide further context, I outline the kinds of issues which obstruct participation in education as well as in society in general.

9.2 The Politics of Location and Differentiation

W.E.B. Du Bois' opening question, 'How does it feel to be a problem?' is reflective of how people in this study felt trapped in the binary construction of 'insider' and 'outsider', or those who belong and those who do not. In response, they mobilised different resistance and avoidance techniques to deal with such narrow framings. Claude, through his work, viewed himself as an employee and a manager, even if he was unpaid for the work. Diane, Paulina, Alexander, Anache and Ahmed considered life from the perspective of a student. Lawrence, Lewis and Diane were political activists, attending street demonstrations when possible and contributing to the work of MASI. These were important roles, enabling them to view themselves and to be viewed by people as more than an international protection applicant and thus, restoring a sense of individuality and humanity to lives. As discussed throughout this thesis, the symbiotic relationship between the Inernational protection applicant and their living space has led to the 'mortification or the profanation of self' (Goffman 1961:24), where space and experiences strips a person of their identity. Spaces are imbued with and confirm the values and ideas which have been employed to construct and populate them, and at the same time, 'influence the identity formation of the people at stake and the public attitudes towards them' (Masschelein and Verstraete, 2012:1194). People felt differently about themselves as they moved in and out of private and public spaces such as schools and universities, leaving behind spaces which are corrosive of self, such as Direct Provision.
The reason for introducing understandings of time and space throughout this thesis stemmed from participants' demands for greater recognition, for visibility, for acknowledgement, and was informed by their stories of 'feeling normal' and 'belonging' in some spaces and not feeling so in others. As highlighted in Chapter 7, time and waiting were part of life for those seeking asylum and feelings of being trapped by time and space were commonplace. Striving to replace negative self-images with positive ones, people sometimes moved to a different space. Diane described her first visits to the city centre and how she felt 'out of place'. She questioned her right to be there.

Why are you here? What are you doing here? No one really wants to talk to you. Everyone is looking at you weird. And it was really … It's more of a feeling of like, well I started to feel am I like invading their space? Am I supposed to be here? Should I be here? Maybe I shouldn't be coming in to town. Maybe I shouldn't be going to the places where we are not supposed to be. I felt like, I constantly felt like I was at the wrong places, all the time (Diane).

Foucault (1995) captured this dilemma in his theory of disciplinary power, where people who are not deemed to belong or 'abnormal populations' are excluded from society, severing their contact with the outside world. In many ways, Diane's story epitomised 'externality' as she considered her right to be 'there' and potentially her right to belong 'there'. Diane suggested that the question of who belongs rests with somebody else, and was not hers to make. She spoke of the 'wrong places' where place or space was understood in the production and reproduction of difference (Armstrong 2003:20-8). She was unsure if she should occupy particular spaces and if these spaces are neutral in a time when space 'has become associated with the reigning values and norms in a particular society' (Masschelein, and Verstraete, 2012:1194). In considering the notion of difference, Greg stated that those who have received permission to remain in the country could easily be distinguished from those living in Direct Provision centres and who awaited a decision on their asylum application.

Someone said to me you can differentiate between an asylum seeker and ...you can put two Africans or two immigrants and let them walk towards you. You can tell which one has status and which one does not have status. Normally the one without status has a vacant look like, he is looking very far or he has his head down. You know, I tell my kids 'keep your head straight, keep your head straight' (Greg).

Greg suggested that body language is powerful and indicative of the way people are perceived by others and how they feel about themselves. It was as though the asylum seeker identity was fused to the body. Goffman noted that physical appearance or bodily cues which suggest a divergence from the ordinary are the source of disapproval, where an individual is subordinated 'from a whole and usual person to a tainted, discounted one' (1963:3). Greg did not want his children to suffer the pain of being identified as asylum seekers (as they were known at the time), as people dependent on the state, as 'other' or those 'outside mainstream society'. In contrast to what Greg related in this fragment of conversation, Marlyn, a mother of three from South Africa, advised her children to be themselves and to defy those who positioned the international protection applicant as being 'less'.

Never be ashamed of where you are because you are not going to stay there… it's not home…It's not your home, so, don't be ashamed to say you stay there (Marlyn).

The lives and personhood of international protection applicants and refugees are often segregated in many ways from the lives of citizens and even others who are non-citizens, and as such, they are stigmatised. But as occurred frequently, people in this study resisted the stigma and the reduction of their identity to the category of 'international protection applicant'. For example Diane's youngest child, Manny, resisted the signs that might betray his legal status. This was expressed through his demand for a lunch that would look like that of other pupils in his class and not one which looked like it might have come from the kitchens of the accommodation centre.

He said to me, can you make our sandwiches at home? So, I make them every morning when they have their breakfast and I was about to cut them in triangles, you know. And he said to me, no, no, no. Don't cut them that way. Cut them in rectangles. And I said why? Well if you cut them in to triangles, everyone there will know they are from the centre. That's how they cut them up, you know. That's how, cut them the other way. And then we'll be like the normal children (Diane).

Again his form of resistance was small and personal. His act highlighted small ways in which the external framing of people who seek protection can be unpleasant and hurtful. In a different space, that of school, he could hold a positive sense of himself and not only that of being a migrant and an international protection applicant. Riessman noted that 'when a condition is potentially stigmatising, individuals strategically manage information about themselves in interactions. They control what others know about them by selective disclosure' (Riessman, 2000:113). In Marlyn's case, she engaged in a different approach: that of 'resistant thinking' (Riessman, 2000:123), and rejected a particular representation or subordination of self. She, like some others wished to 'preserve alternative 'authentic' traditions of belief and value which allow them to see through those representations' (Ortner, 1995:182). Both adult and child international protection applicants and refugees are often defined and judged by their displacement or as 'living shadowed lives' (Chavez, 2010). They are stigmatised for being asylum seekers and, in addition, along lines of race and ethnicity. However, as we hear in these stories, many do not accept this passively but actively repudiate a negative representation. This is achieved by managing conversations with others, being alert, hiding any clues which might identify them, and finally, by resisting an internal narrative of subordination and domination by society as well as political actors.

9.3 Recognition

Arendt (1965) noted the impossibility of really seeing ourselves from our own personal perspective, stating that it is through others that we achieve an understanding of self. For Arendt, the true individual was only apparent through the eyes of others, suggesting that one cannot see oneself as other do. Our understanding of ourselves is never complete 'because our inner world never makes an appearance in the phenomenal world' (Arendt, 1961:145). It was therefore, recognition and acknowledgement by another which was important as one could never be an author of one's own story (Arendt, 1958). Lack of recognition, for Arendt, meant public invisibility where one was 'excluded from the light of the public realm where excellence can shine' (Arendt, 1965:59), lacking 'a place in the world which makes opinions significant and actions effective' (Arendt, [1951]) 2017: 383).

We generally understand recognition as acknowledgement by other people. Countless acts of recognition and misrecognition pervade lives shaping a sense of who we are and how we are perceived by others. The response which one receives from others demonstrates the ways in which one is considered. A cursory glance at the theories of recognition would suggest that recent interest in the topic has developed from an ethical and justice perspective linked to the increasing diversity of societies concerned with embracing and accommodating difference (Audard, 2006:3-6). Tully considers the ways in which minorities seek to participate in the established structures of a dominant society 'in ways that recognise and affirm, rather than exclude, assimilate and denigrate their culturally diverse ways of thinking, speaking and acting' (Tully, 1995:4). Martineau et al., note that scholars have focused on the politics of recognition as 'an increasingly popular way of thinking about a wide range of political phenomena, from the logic of social struggles to the nature of social justice' (Martineau et al., 2012:1).

In certain traditions within philosophy, recognition is considered significant to our being in the world and is premised upon understandings of justice and representation. Hegel understood recognition as a social process which was reciprocal in nature. Furthermore, mutual recognition is the basis for human self-esteem and freedom, and its denial is harmful to an individual. Taylor, building on ideas put forward by Hegel, suggests that we define ourselves and recognise one another through story or 'webs of interlocution' (Taylor,

1989:32). We describe ourselves to others in particular ways, and have, in turn, an awareness of how we are framed, by others, through language. Our sense of identity is defined by our sense of belonging to a group of people or a local community and our reciprocal visibility within these spaces, what Arendt calls 'spaces of appearances'. Thus, its antithesis 'misrecognition' or the act of withholding recognition 'can be a form of oppression' (Taylor, 1989: 36) and 'operate through a variety of markers including race, gender, sexuality, ability, and immigration status' (Villegas, 2010:149). Taylor goes on to state that 'a person or group of people can suffer real damage, real distortion, if the people or society around them mirror back to them a confining or demeaning or contemptible picture of themselves' (Taylor, 1994:25). In light of Taylor's theories and in considering the case of people who seeking state protection, it is important to think about the ways and reasons for their misrecognition. By whom might they be misrecognised? What kind of recognition should be expected or is deserved? Is recognition denied or withheld because of a particular individual or group characteristic? Butler deepens our understanding of invisibility and recognition and proposes a more nuanced account of recognition. She notes that 'if certain lives do not qualify as lives or are, from the start, not conceivable as lives within certain epistemological frames, then these lives are never lived nor lost in the full sense' (Butler, 2016:1). She argues that some lives are rendered less human and less intelligible as individuals are exposed to ill-treatment and violence, which has now become normalised. The concept of 'frames' suggests dividing the population into neat categories framed as human and less human, whose exclusion enables others to move to the centre. Butler qualifies her claim by suggesting 'the frames through which we apprehend, or indeed fail to apprehend the lives of others as lost and injured are politically saturated. They are themselves operations of power' (Butler, 2016:1). She considers the role of biopolitical power in influencing how populations are perceived, through the use of statistics and media reporting.

Questions around how recognition takes place, by whom, and in what capacity come to mind. Taylor notes the dialogical nature of human life and identity. We cannot construct personhood through monologue but through exchanges with others (Taylor, 1994:32). What is to be avoided at all costs is the existence of 'first-class' and 'second-class' citizens'. 'An equalisation of rights' (Taylor, 1994:337) is necessary. This leads us to think about the conditions or frames that produce norms of recognisability. If every human is understood and understands themselves in particular ways and we have our own unique way of being in the world, it is important to be enabled to live in that unique way and to be recognised as such. If

this does not happen, 'I miss the point of my life; I miss what being human is for me' (Taylor, 1994:30). Taylor argues that the feelings associated with being recognised or misrecognised become incorporated in the way people think about themselves, either consciously or subconsciously. He refers to this as an 'internalised picture of inferiority' and notes that for people who have been represented narrowly 'even when the objective obstacles to their advancement fall away, they may be incapable of taking advantage of new opportunities' (Taylor, 1994:25). Fated to endure a diminished sense of self-worth, this can become 'one of the most potent instruments of their own oppression' (Taylor, 1994:26). By segregating international protection applicants from the rest of society, the state distinguishes between citizen and non-citizen, suggesting that those who occupy the non-citizen status are not quite worthy of full participation or are somehow under suspicion. Arendt believed that the stateless were no longer recognised as belonging to humanity. To belong was to be able to speak and to have the right to be politically active. However, this requires an audience and membership of a political community. For her, 'political natality' (Arendt, 1958) was allied to ideas of recognition and, in particular, to human rights. Lawrence, Diane and Lewis also indicated that there were nuances in (self-) understandings, and achieving a sense of personhood through meaningful activity and resistance enabled an alternative sense of self.

9.3.1 From Compliance to Resistance

Closely related to the idea of recognition and misrecognition is resistance and even defiance. Reflecting on the Foucauldian notion of power, subjects can resist power and the power relations enforced upon them. Through stories and regular acts, individuals attempted to carve out new forms of subjectivity, moving between compliance and resistance, 'between a constraining reality and the dream of limitless freedom' (Esin and Lounasmaa, 2020:7). Humans consider what it is to resist through stories of individual, spontaneous and unsystematic resistance. Lewis was part of a group of people who organised and took part in peaceful protest in the Direct Provision centre where he lived. He described how he and others wanted to draw attention to the unacceptable conditions associated with living in Direct Provision and demanded reform.

Let's do something, let's group ourselves. And we started with two guys, it went to four guys, it went to six guys, it went to ten guys and eventually, got everybody involved. And that's

when then we started highlighting the problems that each and every one had. And we then decided to take things in our own hands and do things our own way and address issues. And if those issues were not addressed, that's when we then decided to take the action (Lewis).

Resistance was a response to framing practices which were unwelcome. Foucault noted that wherever there was power, there was also resistance. 'It exists all the more by being in the same place as power; hence like power, resistance is multiple' (Foucault, 1980:142). Lewis described the way in which he attempted to draw attention to the plight of asylum seekers.

There are so many organisations that already knew me, so I would go to meetings uninvited. Yeah, raising awareness. When people … I mean I would stand up and talk about Direct Provision. And things like that, going here and there (Lewis).

Foucault's view of power suggests, firstly, that everyone is subject to power, secondly, that knowledge and power are connected, and thirdly, that power denotes a plurality of resistances. He considered power as ubiquitous and inescapable, present in all social relations, and embodied in social interactions and discourse, institutionalisation and knowledge creation (Foucault, 1980:94). Quiet and peaceful protest was required as any other approach would be likely to frame asylum-seekers as criminals or vandals. Lewis described this in the following quotation.

The only thing that I always said to people is, when you are in such an action, that only thing that you cannot do, is to vandalise things, is to, you know, anything that would be criminal. Don't do that. But anything else you can do. You can shout as loud as you can, you know, as long as you address the issues. Be objective in whatever you do. And it's that fear that there will be broken windows, there will be no hostel when they come back, but there was nothing like that. Not a single cup that was broken (Lewis).

The Foucauldian approach invited reflection on the complexity, the multiple layers of power relations under scrutiny and the power imbalances which were so keenly resisted. Power was administered through house rules and routines within the Direct Provision centres, and there was a sense that people were under surveillance by Direct Provision staff, and, in particular, by managers. A further layer of control existed in the bureaucratic procedures which surround the processing of asylum applications. From political activism to engagement in education, a clear rejection of particular framings and ways of being, was evident in my conversations with Diane, Ahmed, Lewis, Lawrence, Paulina and Claude.

The arts also acts a form of expression about the political context in which people find themselves and provides a means for people to talk about the singularity of their own experiences. It is also a way to educate others about the harsh reality of life in Direct Provision and its existential consequences. *Correspondences*, a recent anthology, presenting the voices of those living in Direct Provision (see section 6.2), is one such example. In this publication, a range of emotions are expressed which capture the complexity of migration and asylum seeking. Owodunni Mustapha made comparisons between Dublin and Lagos.

> Safely tucked into my yellow wrapper,
> Strapped to my back is a nine-month-old baby
> With luggage dragged along
> And my two little fellas running behind me
> We're in Dublin
> The hustle and bustle like Lagos
> Dublin buses remind me of BRT buses in Lagos,
> The magnificent GPO resembles the Cathedral on Marina Street,
> The long stretch of O'Connell Street reminds me of Oshodi,
> Everyone in a hurry as if they were at Lagos Island Market.
> I feel at ease but it isn't home
>
> (Owodunni Mustapha, 2019:82).

Also in this anthology, Casey described the kinds of places which are often chosen to house international protection applicants.

> Perched on the outskirts of town, hidden from prying eyes.
> Blind windows, boarded over, the roof fallen in.
> Layers of bramble fences. Keep out and
> Trespassers Beware signposted. Were it habitable,
> A perfect setting to house Asylum Seekers
>
> (Casey, 2019:49)

Ellerman noted that 'even in spaces of greatest powerlessness..resistance is possible' (Ellerman, 2010:409). This was evident in Lewis's suggestion that each individual has the capacity to resist and take action to make a better life.

Awful as it is living in Direct Provision, there are things that you can do to make it better for yourselves. It's all about you, what you do when you are there (Lewis).

Two approaches to resistance were evident, that of the small, regular, piecemeal actions and that of large scale street protest, often organised by MASI. The first approach of small and incremental acts linked to everyday life, to education and work, signified that some international protection applicants and refugees do not feel they can engage in 'the luxury of open, organised, political activity' (Scott, 1985: xv). Instead, resistance was 'confined to the backstage' and to small 'everyday forms of resistance' (Scott, 1985: xvi). People spoke of their fear of retribution by Direct Provision staff and the stark possibility of relocation to 'a punishment centre' (Tia).

But you are not allowed to ask questions, especially if you are new in the system. It's so scary. You would be frightened to be sent to the most horrible centres. I remember one day when I asked when I was in Tralee, they said to me, oh do you want us to send you … Apparently there's a centre in Mill Street, they said, 'do you want us to send you there? Do you know it's in the middle of nowhere? It's surrounded by the graveyard (Tia).

Tia considered the benefits of compliance to outweigh the cost of punishment. However, this meant that many remained voiceless, anonymous and invisible, silenced in a place from which they cannot escape and which they cannot change. Power pervaded the lives of people, from intimate relationships through to interactions with state departments. Issues of trust arose when considering resistance. Acts of defiance, protest, refusal and resistance to 'policy-imposed liminality' (Hynes, 2009: 114) are difficult for people who have no political rights and live with the spectre of deportation. The structure and workings of the asylum process create an atmosphere of fear and repression where the 'primary lens' is 'suspicion' and mistrust (Fink, 2001:129), meaning that people do not want to draw any attention to themselves by engaging in what might be perceived as negative actions. Rendering themselves visible or conspicuous through discourse or action represented too great a risk. Fear meant that there were no dirty protests, no riots, no damage to buildings, no arson, and no violence. Non-participation in acts of resistance was due to a range of fears and a sense that protest was futile given the power held by state actors. Lewis suggested there was a tipping point which pushed people into taking action and described this in the following quotation.

There are people that feel that there is nothing that they feel they can do to make that effort, to make that change. But you can influence, you can educate, you can mobilise, you can educate, but let the time whereby a person reaches that stage, to say that 'ok, I can now jump' (Lewis).

For some people, any action which was greater than 'the quiet and anonymous welter of peasant action' (Scott, 1985), was potentially too dangerous, 'if not suicidal' (Scott, 1985:29). However, for the people in this research having to suppress their voices did not mean that they were not fully aware of the injustice of the system in which they lived. Small acts of resistance were evident in defying rules. The following section details how engagement with education is a form of resistance to marginalisation and boredom.

9.3.2 Education as Resistance

Through education, Ahmed, Paulina, Claude, Diane, Anache and Robert sought out ways to make friends, to understand their own lives in Ireland and to move into spaces not solely occupied by migrants, and refugees. Claude, a native French speaker and originally from Burundi, had spent twelve years in the asylum process (see Chapter 7, section 7.3.5). He taught himself to speak English during his first year in Ireland. He complied, to the minimum degree, with the rules of the asylum system within which he felt forced to live. It was perhaps 'the impression of compliance without substance' (Scott, 1985: 26). Arriving in Ireland with little or no ability to speak English, he described how he quietly defied the aims of asylum policy. At the time, asylum seekers were not permitted to work in Ireland but he engaged in volunteer work with an immigrant support service. Wanting to belong to a community outside of the direct provision community was not uncommon in the stories of people who were involved in this study and was also evident in those of Ahmed and Paulina.

Engagement with work was a way for him to cast off harmful framings, to become visible and to maintain a particular self-identity which bestowed dignity and agency. Claude moved from being 'an abstract citizen' (Lowe, 1996:13) to being an 'informal citizen' (Sassen, 2003). In explaining the notion of dignity, Taylor relied on Kant's ideas of respect and suggested that 'what commanded respect in us was our status as rational human agents, capable of directing our lives through principles' (Taylor, 1994:41). As a sound engineer, Claude had enjoyed a successful career working for a media company and had travelled to other parts of the world on various assignments. Accustomed to working and to having a professional identity, a life without work was difficult. Claude reflected on the restrictions which he transgressed on a daily basis.

S*o, all the time I was being in the asylum process, you know, you can't work, you can't study, you can't, you know. While there, you can do some basic things, but I somehow went along with that for a while. Then, I went to work as a volunteer assistant, and I came here, so through my volunteer work, I was able to get some studies and some expertise* (Claude).

The repeated use of the word 'can't', makes clear the impossibility of participation. He mobilised the need to be busy as a means to engage with people and the world outside of the accommodation centre. He resisted a pathologising narrative, one which positioned individuals as 'traumatised', 'psychologically scarred', 'indelibly marked,' 'emotionally damaged,' and 'hopeless' (Pupavac, 2002:489). While, he favoured instead a narrative of active agency, this is not to suggest that Claude's life was easy and that he was not marked by loss of his home country and separation from his children. He took pride in overcoming legal, financial and social hurdles as did many others, including Lewis, Samir, Ahmed and Paulina.

What I'm saying is that I'm proud of myself. I managed to survive because it's not everybody can do that, you know (Claude).

Claude was aware that the most valuable reward of working as a volunteer was engagement with others and having something meaningful to fill his day. He valued close relationships with colleagues.

And that taught me a lesson as well, you know. I mean they give you so few information, and even not accurate information, because they tell you that you can't study, you can't work and I tell people that 'no, that's not true'. You can work. You can't get paid. That's different…I prefer that I work and don't get paid, because even if by working, you can get some kind of reward. Ok? All the connections that I got, I got through my volunteer work. All the study I did, I got that through my volunteer work, so I didn't get the money from that, but I get something even more value than money. I get friends, you know (Claude).

He challenged the limited and narrow understanding of what international protection applicants can and are permitted to do. Engagement with the outside world was a routine and reality-maintenance technique (Berger and Luckman, 1991) and an opportunity to build social capital. Learning to deal with state bureaucracy, delays and setbacks were perceived by many, including Claude, as something routine which had to be overcome or resisted. Claude's three children, who were young teenagers at the time, had fled to Uganda, where they waited for a number of years. They were reunited with their father in Ireland a few years after he participated in the interview for this research. For Claude, resistance took place in both thoughts and actions, and one act of resistance encouraged other such acts, providing a

belief that he could bring small but important changes to his own circumstances. For Lewis, Lawrence, Claude, Ahmed, Paulina, Diane and Alexander resistance was a demand for another way of being, an alternative framing and a demand for recognition and acknowledgement by others. The following section considers how this was achieved through education.

9.4 Perceptions of Education and Work

In this section, I describe how engagement with education was a catalyst for change and a different understanding of self. Todd suggests that education is generally understood in terms of 'the transformation of the self' (Todd, 2014:232). She reminds us of how education is framed in the literature. For example, Dewey refers to growth while Piaget and Kohlberg consider education as stages. Noddings likens education to flourishing and Nussbaum to cultivation (Todd, 2104:232). Yet, despite the prospect of particular outcomes, products or 'things' most significant in education, Todd suggests, the possibility of 'relationships that would not have been possible before' (Todd, 2014:233). Education was considered positively by all of those I interviewed and opportunities to participate in education respected their human rights and enabled them to make a fresh start in Ireland. Education can bestow status, identity and a sense of positive self-worth. At the time of interview, one of the most regrettable aspects of the asylum process was the manner in which it denied educational opportunities to people. In research carried out in the UK with third-level students from refugee backgrounds, Ramsey and Baker (2019:56) noted the benefits of higher education 'were compelling'. While referencing the UNHCR, they point out that 'highly educated refugees can become leaders in their communities and support the future rebuilding of their countries. In countries of settlement, refugees who have engaged in tertiary education are more likely to find work and contribute to the local economy' (Ramsey and Baker, 2019: 56).

Denial of access to education, was experienced as frustrating and disempowering. Anache, who was in his late twenties and originally from Zimbabwe, had only just received 'leave to remain' status when I met with him in May 2018. At that time, he was still living in a Direct Provision centre on the edge of one of Ireland's cities. The previous year, he had accepted a scholarship through the University of Sanctuary initiative to attend university in Ireland and

had just completed his end-of-year exams. At that point, in 2018, he noted that if policies were more inclusive and accommodating, he could have been a graduate by then and, therefore, free to take up employment.

It's really frustrating in a way that sometimes. For instance, I was kept for like six years, I came when I was just nineteen or so, taking six years out of my life, that's quite a lot of time. I could be in my final year now because of the system, because of the programme now, I couldn't progress. So, it's just unfortunate that sometimes people really want to be responsible, they want to be able to become taxpayers at the end of the day by going to school and getting a job and supporting society that will embrace them. But, it's unfortunate that you can't do it (Anache).

His story was not dissimilar to that provided by Robert, Tia, Lewis, Diane, Grace and Greg. Grace noted the difficulties in accessing third-level education for her teenage sons, one of whom was about to complete the Leaving Certificate. She was tearful in describing her fears for his future.

What is he going to do when he finishes. He is not getting his papers this year. He will be just moving around the caravans doing what? Yah, even at the college, they ask you do you have stamp four, do you have this? I don't have. They are killing my children's life. They are killing my life as well. And children will be tempted to do wrong. He will watch the TV and see bad things. When he moves out and roams around, he will be tempted to take alcohol and things and destroy his future (Grace).

Having both instrumental and less obvious value, education was highly regarded by Grace and something which was highly desired for both her sons. For her, education could mark a break with the enforced idleness of Direct Provision for her sons, and it was a protective factor (Oldfield et al., 2016), preventing conflict with others or the law and making them less vulnerable to addiction and criminality. Her distress was evident in her delivery, and in the use of terms such as 'killing my children' and 'killing me'. Through the suggestion that idleness can lead to negative and harmful behaviours, blame was attributed to the authorities or government.

Dispersal cuts people off from exploring opportunities within a particular community, and therefore, from integrating. Disrupted schooling and uncertainty around an individual's ability to commit to either social or academic pursuits highlighted the difficulty in attempting to make 'home' while enduring the 'generalised condition of homelessness' (Said, 1979:18). Tia also explained a similar experience. She and her daughter had been forced to move to a

number of different centres over the course of just a few years which meant that her daughter was unable to accept the university course she had been offered. Eventually, with the help of the University of Sanctuary initiative, her daughter began a third-level degree programme.

When I came to Newtown, my daughter had finished her Leaving Cert. She got a space [in university] in Carriglea, but she couldn't go. I was so depressed, I was very depressed then. But she couldn't...She wanted to do Mechanical Engineering. Yeah, but she couldn't and-Yeah. She's kind of a geek. She's like that. So, she couldn't ... I was so depressed. And then last year, my daughter applied to another university and then she got a space. I said, 'no I have to do something'. The way she was so depressed, you know (Tia).

For Marlyn and Belinda the right to work was more important than access to education.

All we want is give us the right to work, to provide for ourselves. I mean, that will also make lighter on government (Marlyn).

Marlyn was a trained chef but at the time was not permitted to work. She noted the paradox of this restriction in a time when there were severe shortages of trained chefs in Ireland.

It's difficult because I know Ireland needs so many chefs. About 5,000, they are short of. But…most of the people here at the table are busy now doing our own thing, to keep our minds sane (Marlyn).

Work and education were viewed as a long-term or durable solution to displacement, as a means to make an entry into society and linked to ideas about identity and belonging. Bateson refers to the 'complex weave of work, pleasure and personal identity' (Bateson, 1996: 5) which suggests that work and occupation go beyond survival needs. Occupation, work and participation in education were presented as forms of expression of self, representing different kinds of effort and engagement. Wilcock suggests that 'occupation provides the mechanism for social interaction, and societal development and growth, forming the foundational stone of communal, local and national identity' (Wilcock, 1993:18). Furthermore, identities are developed and expressed through engaging with work when people can provide themselves 'with the contexts necessary for creating meaningful lives' (Christiansen, 1999:547). It has been suggested that 'occupation fulfils basic human needs essential for survival, provides the mechanism for people to exercise and develop innate capacities of a biological, social and cultural nature' (Wilcock: 1993:17). Beth noted the

social and professional benefits which she gained from working as a care assistant in a nursing home.

I made friends and I got references because I did work experience in a Nursing home and I started working here as well. I worked in the clinic (Beth).

Vera suggested the high cost of education excluded people from participation, and, therefore, people should be able to access work more readily.

Most people who come from different countries they can't afford to go to school, so how do you expect them to integrate into Irish society. You have this thing called free education. There is no such thing as free education. So if there are a few things, like work, that help them to achieve, they will be happy with that. They will be motivated to do that, which is important (Vera).

As outlined in this chapter, Diane, Claude, Marlyn, Flora, Belinda and Faith engaged in voluntary and community work, which meant they had a routine and 'somewhere to go'. More than 'a simple opportunity to make money, intended solely as a productive, rational and instrumental occupation' (Lintner and Elsen, 2018:17), voluntary work facilitated integration and belonging. Although policies and structures tended to limit opportunities for social or occupational engagement among international protection applicants, many of those involved in the study, through their daily routines, exercised a type of informal citizenship as their practices and identities 'assume some of the features of citizenship identities' (Sassen, 2003:13). This section demonstrates how spatial and social isolation prohibited human connectedness and the ways in which this can be countered through access to short courses, further education and voluntary work.

9.4.1 Understanding Spaces

Space is generally understood as territory, landscape, home, the city. To think about any space is to consider its practical aspects such as, its boundaries, its internal structures and its appearance, but also to think about its culture, its history and our relationship with that space. I suggest that Covid-19 has recently reconfigured our perspective and relationship with spaces. Confined to living spaces for a number of weeks, we have been forced to reconsider the kinds of spaces we should occupy and the 'space within spaces' enabling one to remain

socially distanced from others. Gupta and Ferguson, (1992) suggest that understandings of space in the social sciences rely on 'images of break, rupture, and disjunction', noting the uniqueness of groups and cultures is 'predicated on a seemingly unproblematic division of space, or the fact that they occupy 'naturally' discontinuous spaces' (Gupta and Ferguson, 1992:33). For example, the division of the world into neat nation-states, as outlined in Chapter 5, suggests a distinctive culture and way of being which is unique to each state. Migration and asylum-seeking challenge and disrupt these conceptions which become problematic through the notion of mapping or fixing people to particular spaces.

We have seen in previous chapters the nature of the space which is occupied by the international protection applicant and how it is experienced. This study suggests that the kinds of spaces we occupy are reflective of the legal and social position we hold in the world. In the context of this thesis, the Irish citizen occupies a space distinct from that generally occupied by the non-citizen and in which spatial restriction runs parallel to government control and surveillance. Having 'a central organising principle' (Gupta and Ferguson, 1992), similar to that of prisons, the temporal and spatial organisation of Direct Provision is unique. Power does not rest in the hands of any one individual but is operationalised through a range of mechanisms and forces found in relationships and spatial configuration (Foucault, 1995). However, running in parallel are spaces and moments which disrupt the dominant order and challenge the very harsh and rigid idea that the Direct Provision centre is the correct space for the international protection applicant. These are spaces which represent extremes within a range of possibilities 'where selves and subjects are partially constituted by the ways in which they become visible' (Marquez, 2012:7). Bhabha draws our attention to the idea of the 'third space' characterised as 'interruptive, interrogative and enunciative' (Bhabha, 1994:103). It is an ambiguous, alternative, hybrid and productive space which is constructed through 'physical, mental and social dimensions' (Arvanitis et al., 2019:136). Such spaces favour the blurring of fixed and binary notions of identity and how it is understood in particular contexts. Furthermore, Massey acknowledges the idea that our beings and our identities develop and continue to be shaped through relationships and the process of human interaction. She suggests that these processes result in the making of space, as 'space is a product of practices, trajectories, interrelations' and, therefore, produced through interactions (Massey 2004:5). Thus, spaces and identities are considered as dynamic and relational rather than fixed as they facilitate reflection on future aspirations. While this section considered the

nature of spaces and their relationship with identity, the following section examines the existential outcomes of living in a liminal space.

9.4.2 Ontological liminality

'the rupture of contact with the rest of the world' (Levi, 2013:81)

In her work with asylum seekers, O'Reilly uses the term 'ontological liminality' and 'spatial liminality' to describe the internalised sense of living as a liminal being, 'at the boundary of two dominant spaces, which is not fully part of either' (Dale and Burrell, 2008: 238). 'Ontological liminality' suggests a deterritorialised, uprooted people, having little control over their own lives. It implies that people who are asylum seekers are understood and framed as 'inbetween peoples' (Barrett and Roediger, 1997: 3-44), by others, and they, in turn, inscribe that identity upon themselves. It is the act of 'internalising a prolonged liminal situation, leading to a sense of being liminal' (O'Reilly, 2018:826) and can be understood in opposition to Gidden's concept of 'ontological security' (Giddens, 1984), feeling safe in one's daily existence and knowing what is likely to happen in the future. Liminality was manifest through a sense of despair and powerlessness, where people felt invisible to others in society. Therefore, exploring the concept of 'liminality' included a focus on recognition, lack of recognition or misrecognition. In this study, I considered moments and consequences of feeling 'neither here nor there' (O'Reilly, 2018:823). Returning to a home country was impossible, but the act of living a full life within the Direct Provision system was equally impossible. Zylinska relies upon the work of Butler in stating that 'singular lives are being barred from the life of the legitimate community' and that 'technology is mobilised to probe and scan the bare life of those wanting to penetrate the healthy body politic' (Zylinska, 2004:526). Such forms of non-recognition or misrecognition, can, according to Taylor, 'inflict a grievous wound, saddling its victims with a crippling self-hatred' (Taylor, 1994:26). The technology of barriers, high walls, and limited access to the nearby town resulted in relative invisibility. During a protest, held close to the Direct Provision centre, Paulina explained that people living in her neighbourhood were unaware that the space was used to house asylum seekers. She described this in the following quotation.

'What is this about?', 'Oh, we're asylum-seekers from the Direct Provision centre', 'where is that?' [ ]', and most people didn't know. 'But where is it?', 'it's right behind, you have to get into a slip road to go behind. A lot of people didn't know that they were living with asylum-seekers in a Direct Provision centre here in Abbeyglen until after the protest marches (Paulina).

Alexander, also noted that local people barely knew that the old building on the edge of the town was a Direct Provision centre.

But we lived in Ballyveigh, at the top of the hill, surrounded by the pine trees, so most of the villagers didn't know that we were living there (Alexander).

Life in these spaces meant that people felt excluded. Depending on an allowance from the Irish State and prohibited from working was a sources of shame and frustration for many people. The words 'useless' and 'nothing' were used to describe how people felt about their lives. In the next fragment, we see the embodiment of liminality, showing how state practices and particular forms of government control can affect the body and shape the very essence of personhood into 'fixed species of otherness' (Silverstein, 2005:364). Boredom, having nothing to do and nothing to say was difficult for Belinda.

I wasn't expecting that I would just sleep, wake up, sleep, wake up, doing nothing. You can get a lot of headaches, because when you know the place is so tiny and nothing to say and nothing to do (Belinda).

Her story is also suggestive of 'bare life'. The space and life there are meaningless, suggesting that people 'had lost their place in the world'. For Arendt, spaces of confinement were 'a routine solution' (Arendt, [1951] 2017: 365), where 'sovereign power establishes itself and perpetuates itself by producing a 'biopolitical body' on which it is exercised' (Genel, 2006:44). Biological life was transformed by state power and control with consequences for the well-being and mental health of individuals. Belinda noted the inescapability of one's legal position and the asylum system. Even when one physically leaves the space of Direct Provision, there is an impossibility of true escape from its control and what it represents.

Get away and just forget about every single thing. But, you know, people say even if you go, that things will come still in your mind. Because we've got a friend, she's out but then she always say, it always comes back, it's been eight years. And that she say, it kind of kills your brain. You feel useless. You feel like nothing, what can I do? (Belinda).

Belinda's question 'What can I do?' suggests an inevitability and a 'powerlessness' to change her situation. Uncertainty and mistrust in the asylum process, lack of information and understanding undermined peoples trust and confidence. Belinda expressed this in the following statement.

When you say it, at this stage I am not sure about anything. I've given up …

This section shows the power and inescapable nature of the Direct Provision system, reducing people to feeling obscured and without purpose. It reveals that the sense of living in a liminal space can become etched in the very core of the protection applicant or it can be resisted.

9.4.3 Spatial liminality

Mountz notes that states 'use space and time against asylum-seekers' (Mountz, 2011: 388) in order to deliberately cut them off from the rest of society and deprive them of regular and active lives. For the majority of the people, the Direct Provision space is a place where the act of daily living is subordinated to the final goal: the right to remain in the host society. It is a space of 'permanent temporariness' (Bailey et al., 2002:125), which embodies 'the uncertainty, angst and powerlessness or lack of control that accompany this existence on a daily basis' (O'Reilly, 2018:827). Being exiled or confined to a space was problematic and painful, particularly when one begins to feel mistreated or forgotten. Mountz notes the political nature of spaces, suggesting 'who one is, relates to where one is located ….re-subjectification happens geographically' (Mountz, 2011: 386). As highlighted in Chapter 6, people frequently described feelings of being trapped and imprisoned within the centres, where their movements were restricted and controlled. For instance, Paulina described the process from arrival to eventual understanding of the nature and significance of the system.

You hear people complain about the conditions and you're thinking 'what are you complaining about?' I mean this is more than I ever thought I'm going to get. I'm getting food, I'm getting shelter, I'm getting this. The longer you stay in that system, that's when things become really bad and you start thinking "I can't do this" (Paulina).

For many, it was housing but not home, where housing has been defined as lacking 'the experiential elements of home - as territory, as signifier and constituent of self' (Fox-

O'Mahony and Sweeney, 2010:285-286). Home could be one of three things, a political bordered territory, home as lived out in the subjective imagination, and home as the daily practices and spaces in which people actually reside (Doná, 2011:69). This is reflected in the conversations between Diane and her children when they discuss 'home' and 'going home'.

They used to ask, the first few months when we were here, when are we moving out of here? When are we going back home? When are we … Ok, so we're not going back home. When are we going to a normal home? (Diane).

Beth described Ireland as home but also refers to South Africa as home, noting that during trips to there, she often felt a longing to return to Ireland. For Beth, home was relational and loss of her mother meant the loss of sense of home and belonging to South Africa.

You know it's home. It is actually, because now when I go, when I go home, it is just, my mum she is passed away so I don't have anybody so I feel maybe after three day I would be missing it here. After three days I would be thinking about coming back, about that. It can be ok but that is how it feels now (Beth).

Alexander described his understanding and attempts to recreate home in the Direct Provision centre. He attempted to make home by surrounding himself with objects which were meaningful and by inviting friends to call. For Alexander, Yugoslavia or Serbia was no longer referred to as home.

The waiting and not knowing is one of the most difficult things, but then once when I got the room to stay, I knew this was going to be my home. So I did everything I could to recreate the home. So I think that's also very important because the home that I have had in former Yugoslavia, has been gone through the wars, has been decimated over a decade. It was really not ideal to try recreate the home in Direct Provision. But I had to. And subsequently I got a single room after a year and then I was able to bring the friends and little things that were meaningful to me and I was able to create the home there (Alexander).

For the people in the study the concepts of home or belonging to a space were generally framed in terms of physical space, legal status, rights to the space and relationships with others. The following section considers experiences of being in the space of education and provides descriptions of the ways in which moving from a private to public spaces brings changes to one's sense of self.

9.4.4 The Educational Space: Spaces of Transformation

The educational space was one which enabled possibilities and a positive future. Inherent within stories was a hope that educational spaces could, even temporarily, transform lives. Going to school or college and learning provided possibilities for thinking and feeling differently. Many of those who were involved in the study had children who attended primary and secondary schools while a number of the adults, and, in particular, the women completed short courses. A small number were in the process of doing degree courses. Education spaces were both formal and informal. Many people expressed hopes and fears for the future, but there was a feeling that education and skills would be beneficial once people received 'their papers' and permission to remain in the country. Diane, Belinda and Greg spoke about a 'normal life' and about being 'like other people', noting that children were more likely to feel 'normal' at school than in the Direct Provision centre. The UNHCR notes the vital role it plays in integration 'by providing the opportunity to learn the language of the country of asylum, ever so instrumental in the integration process'. Importantly, the UNHCR argues that the well-being of children is impacted by the classroom environment, and teachers play an instrumental role in providing quality holistic education which puts the learner first (UNHCR, 2011:18). While suggesting that education is a fundamental right for all, it is also important to acknowledge its limitations in improving the lives of people who are refugees and international protection applicants.

*One thing I've noticed is that they are not happy, but they are happy when they are at school (*Diane).

In this statement, there is a clear distinction made between the space of the Direct Provision centre and that of the school, where 'normal life' is more likely to be experienced. Furthermore, it tells the reader that when people moved from the space of the Direct Provision to other, and perhaps, more public spaces, they felt differently about themselves and their lives. Diane noted how temporality is experienced differently in the space of the university, which enables a different way of being.

But, you do not see the time at all, it's like your life is just completely transformed, and yes, you don't really see the burden of being in the centre (Diane).

The Direct Provision centre was regularly constructed by people as not being a 'normal space'. Diane looked forward to the day when she would be able to support herself and live a 'normal life'. She describes this in the following:

But if we were working, I would be able to move out, have a normal home, and have the normal challenges of saying 'the gas is crazy high this month or those kinds of things' (Diane).

Greg also described school and college as a space where children and adults feel 'normal', where children and adults were recognised as pupils and students, nothing more or less. He noted his children feel like other children when they are at school and when they have the opportunity to participate and excel in ways similar to those of other children.

They seem to like the school here. They seem to really like it. They come into their own when they are in school. I'm sure that is the only part, where they feel normal, you know when they are in school (Greg).

Diane went further by stating that her children prefer to be at school than in the centre.

Even on the weekends, on a Sunday, you can tell that, especially with my son I've noticed, because he's always itching like, when are we going back to school? We should be getting back to school already. And over the summer holidays it was like, the summer holiday has been too long, hasn't it? You know, like they really prefer being at school (Diane).

Space is commonly understood as bounded territory characterised by its geometric relations (McGregor, 2004: 351). However, in the context of this thesis, it was the nature of social and political relationships which existed within different spaces which was important. The school and the university facilitated different types of interaction and social engagement, not possible in the accommodation centre. Referred to as sites between spaces (Mountz, 2011), the non-citizen endures 'the experience of a gap with the official social world' (Agier, 2016:36). As a result of the way in which State power operates in the space of Direct Provision, people are unable to exercise agency and interact in ways which other spaces enable. Moving to a space beyond the centre disrupts that relationship of control. In this section, spaces have been constituted through the social and temporal, and school communities are not limited and bounded but extend across time and space. Massey argues that 'face-to-face' relations are never just that, but are 'articulated moments in networks of social relations and understandings' in which 'experiences and understandings are actually

constructed on a far larger scale then we describe as the place itself' (Massey, 1993: 65-66). Enabling people to connect to something bigger than their lives, spaces of education provided instances of participation, learning, belonging and representation.

9.5 Education as Relational

In this chapter, I consider education not only as emancipation for the student but as a space of inclusion and hospitality. Robert, Anache, Claude, Paulina, Diane, Tia and Grace spoke with great passion about their difficulties in accessing education for themselves and their children and its protective benefits. In the second focus group, Diane, Anache and Bandile, who had just completed an eight-month access programme at an Irish university, shared their experiences with me. It was their status as asylum-seekers which enabled the opportunity to participate in the university's access Sanctuary programme.

9.5.1 An Alternative Identity – Diane's Story

The ways in which we gain an understanding of ourselves is contingent upon relationships, time and the spaces we occupy. As noted earlier in the chapter, Massey suggested that 'there is widespread argument…that in one way or another, identities are 'relational'. That ….our beings, our identities are constituted in and through those engagements, those practices of interaction' (Massey, 2004:5). Furthermore and regarding education settings, Barad (2007:185) points out that practices of 'knowing' and 'being' are inseparable, and, therefore, the notion of onto-epistemology, invites us to consider the intersection of both learning and pedagogical relationships with identity. The term onto-epistemology, coined by Barad, aims at bringing together epistemology, ontology and ethics and suggests an inseparability of knowledge production from the world itself and its inhabitants. Education offers a radical hope of a fuller existence as through engagement with learning and the education setting, new ways of being and knowing emerge. Learning and its transformative impact on identity is inherent to the space of the university and not merely confined to conventional notions of learning within the classroom. Crosbie builds upon ideas put forward by Ranson to describe learning 'as a process that deals with how we interact with our world' and posits the notion of

learning as ‘becoming’ (Crosbie, 2006: 235). She suggests that by developing an understanding of ‘who we are as individuals and what makes us unique, we can begin to grasp how we can turn that uniqueness into agency to change our world’ (Crosbie, 2006: 235). Arendt considers education to be developmental (Biesta, 2014) and argues that education meant the provision of opportunities for individuals to grow and develop in order to be able to live in the world. As students are learning, they are involved in the process of ‘becoming’, of understanding and negotiating their place in the world where hope is the necessary catalyst in the context of ‘our unfinishedness’ (Freire, 1998:69). Arendt emphasises the role of the teacher in presenting the newness of things to students and in encouraging their sometimes radical and riotous approach to thinking. She notes ‘our hope always hangs on the new’ (Arendt, 1961:189). Diane, who was introduced in previous chapters, has three children, is Zimbabwean and was living in Direct Provision since 2014. She explained that she had a third-level qualification in marketing from a third-level college in Zimbabwe and had worked in the field of marketing for a number of years. Having completed a number of short QQI level 5 courses in Ireland, she aspired to study for a degree in an Irish University since her arrival. During the interview, she described her sense of a changing identity in the space and atmosphere of the university. She no longer saw herself as ‘merely an asylum-seeker’, nor did she feel the need to share details of her legal status with others. Her status as an asylum seeker did not seem to matter any longer.

I don't think there was a time when we went around saying oh yes, I'm living out in Lisfornan [in the DP centre] or I'm an asylum seeker (Diane).

Drawing in a different way on Butler’s use of frames, one might consider ‘how existing norms allocate recognition differently’ (Butler, 2016:6). This offers another way of understanding lives. Diane’s story indicated that frames are not static and absolute but they shift as bodies move between different spaces. Butler asks ‘what might be done, in other words, to shift the very terms of recognisability in order to produce more radically democratic results?’ (Butler, 2016:6). A response would be to consider what actions and structures might create possibilities for people to be understood in more positive and democratic

Yes, and the way we behave, the way we talk, you know, you start to dress differently as well, you stand out from the crowd in DP and a lot of people notice that and they want that for themselves now, you know. 'So, I feel like we've motivated people so we don't necessarily have to go to them saying this is important, but it would be important (Diane).

Diane challenges and disrupts the image of the invisible and silenced asylum seeker. The excitement and elation of being a student in the university was described as being almost contagious. Other residents within the same Direct Provision centre felt uplifted by the positive sentiments, transformative experiences and resistant identities. Diane was 'moving on' or 'moving out' from a process of essentialisation or racialisation, using it to create a positive self-identity (Wodak and Reisigl: 1999:176) and a basis for encouraging others to consider a similar path into education.

Not only does it help them [asylum-seekers who engage in education] in terms of their confidence and in terms of just them staying sane. I feel as well in terms of, I don't want to say secure, but helping their case to stay in Ireland, say further down the line, if you do get to a point where you have to apply for leave to remain for example and you have to provide things like references or just whatever reasons you can to give them to enable you to stay in the country. Something like that [participation in education] shows you are going to be a responsible citizen, you're not going to be a burden to the state but as well the friendships and connections that you would have made during the time you were there can also come in and play a part'. So many people have, I don't want to say, made the mistake because they didn't have the opportunities. But so many people did not have that opportunity and coming out of DP seven years later only having to start to try and go back to college or trying to get your life, that's another four years, so, that's almost 10 years of your life that's gone by. But, maybe to say to them, look! just start doing what you can. Start doing now or let's say, worst case scenario, you do get a deportation and you're sent back, you've got something to fall back whether you go, you can go back and say look. I went to whatever college. You can start up, you can carry on with your life, because if you're going back after six years and you're just thrown in there with nothing and you're already in a very depressed state (Diane).

In this fragment, Diane shows how she considered her level of 'usefulness' or 'attractiveness' as a potential citizen, and she also expressed a desire to manage and have control over her own life and future. Refugees and international protection applicants are rarely seen as healthy and capable individuals. Consequently, they are often denied the benefits of work and engagement in education which are fundamental elements in overcoming poverty, social exclusion and in creating a sense of belonging (Doná, 2010:6). In my discussions with Anache, Bandile and Diane, a sense of liberation, self-confidence and positive self-image were most striking. However, other short fragments of their stores revealed vulnerability and unpleasant experiences of discrimination.

The discrimination thing, it's normal. I don't see it's anything, there are some kids like they just do it sometimes just because of their age. I had that experience when I first started here and we're two Africans meeting one other girl and this young fella came, I think he was just 17, 18 and he was looking at the black girl like he was trying to laugh and she became upset (Aneche).

Diane countered this by saying that she felt the campus was a neutral space where diversity was part of life, particularly for younger people.

Why I feel like the university is such a neutral space is because it's so diverse, no one has any time to even think of that. But, with the newer kids coming in, it's new to them, it's like oh okay, it's something so new and they might have different ideas (Diane).

For Anache, Bandile and Diane, the space favoured a different way of being, an entry into alternative and more inclusive worldviews.

You know, being included, being welcomed into that space, recognised. Like you know, while we were there, there is no one who knows what your residency status in Ireland is or what your living conditions are. Not one of them cares but people just look at you and see you as a human being, a student. I remember we felt like we were international students (Diane).

For all three participants, the contrast between the space of the university and that of Direct Provision could not have been greater and is a reminder of the vulnerability which remained part of their lives.

I'll tell you one thing for sure, like the moment the bus gets out of the centre, you have this sense of okay, that's great. The moment you're heading, you will see this, I promise you if they had cameras in the bus, it will be absolutely depressing, the moment that bus heads up to [ ] and people just sigh and then it's like, oh gosh, we're back here, it just weighs you down, it almost kind of cancels out whatever you've experienced that was beautiful during the day (Anache).

Aneche described the inescapability of the Direct Provision in the following quotation.

Direct Provision doesn't change, the only time it changes is when you are out of it, if you are in it, you are in it and that's the reality (Anache).

As noted earlier, Taylor considered the damage which non-recognition or misrecognition can cause and its potential to diminish an individual's sense of self-worth and self-esteem. Diane

described its antithesis: a dialogical or two-way process of engagement. For her, inclusion and recognition were created in and by the space and the atmosphere of the university.

9.5.2 Learning to Dream: Anache's Story

Anache's story reveals how lives can be changed by engagement with education and described the space where this takes place.

But, the fact that we could just be ourselves and just pursue our dreams and just look forward into the future and say, you know, this is what I am supposed to be doing, this is what my life should be like, this is what my life will be like in the next four years or five years, but just to start to revive those dreams and those hopes that we can have here and have suppressed for so long. But, it was an amazing year, it was just beautiful (Anache).

A sense of feeling included and of being like other people was described most vividly by both Anache and Diane. Needs and personal ambition had been recognised and acknowledged. For Anache, the only true route to employment and to being accepted and respected in society was by securing a third-level qualification.

A few years previously, he was granted a place in a university in Ireland through the CAO but was unable to afford the fees. He described himself as *'battered and shattered'* by his pursuit and numerous refusals and challenges. However, he was not deterred. He wrote numerous letters to the president of the university asking him to waive the fees. He received vague responses from the university and was unsuccessful in progressing his case. He decided to defer his place but continued in his efforts to draw attention to his situation by writing to the then Taoiseach on ten different occasions. He was advised to consult with the Department of Education and Skills who then advised his to contact the Irish Refugee Council. Due to the fact that he had made his case known to the university authorities, he was contacted about potential scholarships in Spring 2017 and started his university access programme in September 2017. He then had to make a request to move from the Direct Provision centre where he was living, in the north west of Ireland, to an accommodation centre closer to the university. He explained this by saying *I don't care if there is no space, I am moving*. He was not going to let the lack of accommodation deter him from taking up what he felt was his rightful place on the programme. Eventually he was provided with

accommodation in a Direct Provision centre a few miles from the university and stated that he would walk to the university if necessary, such was his desire to move on with life. He used the term 'amazing' and 'beautiful' to describe the first year of his university experience and spoke about the possibility of pursuing dreams which had lain dormant for many years. He later added to this, stating that *inclusiveness gives you freedom* (Anache). This statement echoes Freire's understanding of education as 'education as the practice of freedom' (Freire, 1993:81). For Freire, education denoted freedom as 'a tool for self-determination and civic engagement' (Giroux, 2010: 716). Freire's philosophy suggests that those excluded from civic society have the potential to achieve increased participation through education, and I would suggest that the stories expressed in this thesis (Section 8.6, Section 9.7.1 and Section 9.7.2.) give credence to his beliefs.

There have been many criticisms of the restrictions on Irish asylum-seeker educational opportunities (IRC, 2018), but the short yet powerful fragment, provided by Anache above represents a call to action for policy-makers and those who have the capacity to influence the social justice trajectory of higher education. In international terms, education for international protection applicants and refugees generally refers to primary education so that access tends to focus on availability and not on outcomes and individual experiences. Boni and Walker developed concepts emerging from the work of Nussbaum (2006) and Wenger (1998), noting the importance of participation in education 'as being central to the well-being of individuals' (Boni and Walker, 2013:181) and for learning communities where 'learners move from a peripheral to a more central position as they gain knowledge and competence' (Boni and Walker, 2013:181). The key argument in this section is the need for a broader understanding of inclusion, and the importance of participation and belonging. During the fieldwork stage of this research, I heard many other poignant and personal stories, similar to that provided by Anache, which support a claim that obstacles still remain in the way of educational participation for this group. Positive benefits not just for the individual but for children and the asylum-seeking community in general have been considered in research carried out with Syrian Refugees. This showed that 'it is increasingly recognised that education delivered in a safe environment can provide recovery, healing and empowerment for the vulnerable. At the same time, it can drive the long-term recovery process in households and communities by providing a sense of normality and hope for the future, as well as a means to build bridges in host communities' (Bubbers, 2015). In Ireland, inclusion within education has largely focused on provision for those with disabilities and those of minority faith backgrounds.

Inclusiveness or inclusion denotes the act of involving or including those who might otherwise be excluded. O'Donnell (2015:1) notes that 'inclusion has tended to be understood in spatial terms identifying those who have been traditionally excluded and inviting them inside'. What seems desirable is that our institutions should leave no one outside. It thus provides 'a powerful image of democracy as a mechanism for incorporation of those bodies previously seen as not sufficiently human to belong to a polity' (O'Donnell, 2015:2). Policy efforts to include asylum-seekers need to 'go beyond just hospitality' (Moskal and North, 2017:109) and to employ a 'durable solutions' discourse. Targeted policies which address the complexity of asylum-seeking, accompanied by system supports and a holistic approach to their education and their futures is required. Strategies which seek to include asylum seeking and refugee adults and children need to consider principally the process of social integration, and, therefore, require a genuine commitment to social justice underpinned by respect and tolerance.

9.5.3 Pedagogical Relationships

Returning to Taylor's understanding of recognition and its two-way or dialogical nature, he notes the transformative powers of interaction. 'The good things in life can be transformed by our enjoying them in common with people we love; how some goods become accessible to use only through such common enjoyment' (Taylor, 1994:33). Engagement with learning, facilitated by the Universities of Sanctuary, called for a rethinking of the kinds of relationships which international protection applicants generally have with other members of society, and particularly those who occupy comfortable and powerful positions. Todd states that 'through our encounters with others (human and non-human alike) we shift the borders of our self-understanding. That we alter and transform in this way is not merely the hope of education, but is the pedagogical act of living par excellence' (Todd, 2014: 232). What Todd describes here is the complex, social, formal and less formal interactions which take place in the classroom. It is the humanising of pedagogical relationships which enables student reflection and change.

Considering accounts of the kinds of interactions which people described with teachers and fellow-students, these were generally positive with the exception of one difficult situation described by Vera. She suggested that one teacher lacked culturally appropriate knowledge

and understanding. She described how that teacher in her child's primary school continuously gave her daughter library books which included stories about children of diverse ethnic backgrounds.

Also some of the teachers, they need to be taught how to deal with children from any background because for them, its new. But if you ask you learn. But some ...I found it very offensive because when she would come home she would want a book with a princess and she said ' the teacher refused to give me that'. She would give me a book with a child that is of ethnic background. She couldn't understand why. As a child it's kind of hard. A child should have a choice to say 'yes, I want this one, or not'. So, its difficult (Vera).

Introduced in Chapter 8, Alain held the legal status of aged-out unaccompanied minor, was in his final year of post-primary education and described his relationship with his teachers as caring and supportive. This enabled him to develop a sense of belonging to the school and those who studied and taught there.

So it's a really good relationship with teachers and I like it. Actually when you get home sometimes they might email you so, you know what I mean? At least, the teacher will have time to look after you and follow all of your work, because actually they give much homework (Alain).

Alain's story invites one to consider the ways in which power can move over and back between the student and teacher, and that reciprocity (Shelton, 2019:34–35) means students' perspectives are considered and respected. Having a degree of control over one's learning, and the circumstances in which it happens would appear central to the development of a positive learning experience. Beth, who, at the time of interview was an Irish citizen and was studying social care in an institute of technology, spoke about her fear of racist abuse when she arrived in Ireland initially. Fear of leaving the Direct Provision space and going into public spaces was overwhelming. She mentioned a racist incident in the following quotation.

I was in the city centre with my boyfriend. We were angry at the beginning but then later on we realised what you can do about these things. You can't blame anybody. Its maybe wrong place, wrong time (Beth).

She had been in Ireland for thirteen years at the time of interview, in 2017, and had spent five of those years in Direct Provision, in the early 2000's. She described that period in the history of the Direct Provision as one in which people were even more isolated than they are

currently. She noted that when people flee their own countries, they already have problems and these are compounded by the system of reception.

You are in a position when you leave your country you already have problems. So when you come here you think things will be better. It takes you back (Beth).

Beth recognised the practical and existential difficulties sometimes associated with the label of international protection applicant and with being black.

It was very different when I came here because when you are a black person, you have to stay back to see how people react before you can talk to them and know where you stand (Beth).

However, like many others, education was seen as a means to create a better future for herself and her second daughter and a means to integrate. She overcame her fears and engaged in learning. Todd notes that 'change can occur in a mixture of disturbance and delight' (Todd, 2014: 233) or 'a stretching out beyond our limits, both figuratively and literally, occasioning a different form of being' (Todd, 2014:236). Beth went on to describe the positive experiences and relationships which had helped her to gain confidence since her initial arrival in Ireland.

It is very hard. It takes time but it happens but like the way I say I am a shy person and I think it took me …if I didn't do those courses because of communication, I don't think I would even be able to sit and talk to you now (Beth).

Beth recalled how she worked as a receptionist in Ireland for a short while after she received her 'leave to remain' status, but when recession caused an economic downturn, she found herself with few job opportunities. She began to engage with education and was on course to complete a degree at the time of interview. She spoke positively of her experiences in education and noted that without qualifications, secured in Ireland, it would have been impossible to find permanent and well-paid work.

You just think that you need education so that you would be able to get a job that would be able to look after you well… something you want to do (Beth).

Beth noted the importance of positive interaction with teachers and fellow students. Her words implied that 'education in all its realms is posited as an inherently dialogical process'

(Bonfield, 2015:20) suggesting that 'life offers countless opportunities to go beyond one's initially limited perspectives and to take profound cognisance of the understandings of others' (Bonfield, 2015:21). Beth recounted her journey into work and education in the following piece.

When I got my status I was able to do things. I worked as a receptionist because that was my background. Then there was recession and I couldn't get work. Then I went to do FETAC level 5 in Social Care and I am still doing that. Actually, it was good because the tutors were really welcoming and we had to introduce yourself one by one…where are you from?.. so it was not bad. It was good. There were different nationalities. That is my experience now. I say that maybe you get back what you give. If you give respect you get respect back. I made friends and I got references because I did work experience (Beth).

I suggest that there are lessons to be learned both for those who oversee educational policy and those who teach. Teaching, learning and the education space are complex and interrelated. Relationships, interests, learning styles, aspirations, abilities and inclusion are part of that complexity. Bonfield (2015:22) considers the work of Buber in suggesting that to be a truly inclusive educator is principally to concern oneself with nurturing 'a feeling of sharing in the revelation of what is hidden' (Buber, 1979:98) where students should be seen as 'the processor of an imprescriptible capacity for dialogue' (Bonfield, 2015:22).

Chapter Summary

Alexander, explained how engagement with a community of learners sustained him during the time he spent in Direct Provision and beyond. Learning and doing were bound up with his sense of self and a key survival mechanism.

Education was very important for me really. All along in my life, and then as soon as I got my papers, I did a masters….and then, I'm doing a PhD at the moment, so learning, researching, reading, was crucial at that moment, it's a part of survival really, survival mechanism (Alexander).

Crosbie refers to the work of Coffield (2002) and Hughes and Tight (1995), in noting that 'the ills of our time cannot be cured by educators alone, rather, the political will from the most powerful agents of state, the politicians, needs to be harnessed' (Crosbie, 2006:235). This suggests that greater political will is required in a broad range of areas and not just in the

field of education. If those who are marginalised are to be welcomed into spaces that they do not generally occupy, then stories such as those shared in this thesis need to be communicated to those in power. This chapter has outlined some of the silences, forms of exclusion and struggles for recognition which exist for those seeking asylum. It also highlights attempts to resist the 'liminal personae' (O'Reilly, 2018:834) so prevalent in the stories shared by people. Human beings occupy particular spaces based on who they are or some other defining characteristic. A 'spatialisation of otherness' (Masschelein and Verstraete, 2012:1194) suggest that individuals who occupy a space, share some common characteristics with fellow residents and that there is a production and reproduction of difference in regard to those outside of that space. This idea contributes to 'sustaining particular attitudes towards segments of the population which have been attributed to 'this or that special place' (Masschelein and Verstraete, 2012:1194). Self-actualisation can only happen in different and public spaces and through achievements which are valued by society and individuals themselves. Policies and mechanisms continue to prevent particular types of participation by international protection applicants both in education and in society in general. When people have limited legal rights they find themselves struggling to be recognised and to be heard. The purpose of the chapter is a call to think about who is excluded from our education system and the human consequences of that exclusion. It is an invitation to educators to consider education and learning in the broadest sense and to go beyond narrow understandings of education as merely schooling. In her writing on the topic of education, Arendt makes a distinction between schooling and education, noting 'one can go on learning to the end of one's days without for that reason becoming educated' (Arendt, 1977:192). Thus, in her view, conventional schooling does not necessarily result in education, freedom and an ability to think critically. She notes that 'an education without learning is empty, and, therefore, degenerates with great ease into moral–emotional rhetoric' (Arendt, 1977:192). According to Biesta, she focuses on a practical or functional understanding of education, a process of giving and receiving knowledge, but with little opportunity for reflection which is important in 'grasping the world' (Biesta, 2016:184).

Current discourse from governments and the business world would suggest that alternatives to a skills-based education are not desirable or necessary. Hofstadter (1992) refers to the rise of 'social Darwinism': a belief that competition is a natural feature of human existence, while Hayek suggests that uncontrolled capitalism is an accepted part of a free world (Hayek,

1944). There is a need to move away from discourse of indicators and benchmarks for accountability, quality and accreditation in which ‘individuals cannot be truly human’ (Freire, 1993:72), to one which informs and which is inclusive, utopian and creative. Based on Freire’s understanding of critical literacy, students who are also seeking international protection in Ireland need to be aware of both international and government policies, political movements, and the background to other factors in society that affect them. The following and final chapter considers the importance of consciousness-raising among policy-makers, the contribution which the thesis can make to research in the field and brief summary of the study.

Chapter 10: Reflections

Introduction

In *Black Skin, White Masks*, Fanon states 'I think it would be good if certain things were said' (Fanon, 1986:9). This thesis has listened to the voices of 26 people seeking international protection in Ireland. These voices say 'certain things' that need to be heard. Refuges and international protection applicants, have been viewed as 'some of the most bureaucratically problematic people' (Griffiths, 2014) in the Irish State presenting legislative and administrative dilemmas for governments who often hold ambiguous attitudes towards them. On the one hand, outpourings of empathy and solidarity are sometimes directed at them by the public, on the other, they are the recipients of anti-migrant and xenophobic rhetoric. People seeking international protection can be individually vulnerable, existing in an ambiguous space in which they are concurrently beyond state control and yet subject of excessive state power.

Every participant in this research recounted a difficult and stressful experience, often characterised by loss, rejection, ill-health but also adaptability and determination. Many of those who shared their stories developed survival strategies and found ways to move on with their lives. Some of them were able to turn their lives around and regain control over their futures. However, many continued to display sadness, depression and a mistrust of others and of policies and systems. The impact of flight, arrival and seeking international protection for some may be so detrimental that full recovery is made very challenging for some.

10.1 An Intimate Exploration of Experiences

Previous qualitative and mixed methods PhD research in Ireland with refugees and international protection applicants has focused on a broad range of topics. These includes the work of non-profit organisations (Sheehan, 2017), experiences of people following the international protection process (Howlett-Southgate, 2020), an exploration of power in Direct Provision (Hewson, 2014), acculturation experiences of African adolescent refugees (Kennedy, 2014) and the experiences of unaccompanied minors living in Ireland (Ní

Raghallaigh, 2016). These studies have referred to aspects also covered in this research but no study has, thus far, provided an intimate and, hopefully sensitive, exploration of the lived experience of both refugees and international protection applicants and the ways in which they navigate policy and practice to create new lives in Ireland. In the international, European and Irish contexts, research with refugees and international protection applicants often tends to focus morees on displacement, reasons for flight, and journeys to safe places, all important issues but not always able to communicate the complexity of lived experience over time in a new society.

10.2 Returning to the research question

A focus on stories is at the heart of this research, and participants were asked to keep in mind the kind of story they wished to tell about themselves. I wanted to provide an understanding of individual experiences and, equally, given the emancipatory intent of the study, I wanted to consider the role and function of telling stories for participants. I was interested in the personal reflections of telling stories and in the ways in which people saw themselves, their own lives and experiences and what role, if any, did education play. However, the aim of this research was principally to explore the experiences of navigating a new life in Ireland from the perspective of people who are or were international protection applicants and the refugees. There was a focus on the application process, the negative impact of living in limbo while in the Direct Provision system and they ways in which people sought to engage with Irish society. The research provides evidence that continuing to build a new and fulfilling life in Ireland was important to people at each stage of the migration journey. The stories which participants told also described, how they arrived full of hope, a feeling of hope which was gradually eroded by delays, restrictions and a sense that one's credibility was questionable. The findings of the research suggest that legal and financial barriers impact people's ability to exert control their own lives and that of their children. Of course, the participants in the study were not a homogenous group, their ability to create new lives for themselves was influenced by a number of significant factors such their legal status on arrival, their own motivations, social supports and networks, educational experiences, cultural background and access to opportunities. A recurrent theme was that engagement with education and work was

important in restoring dignity to lives and in enabling them to provide for their families; in short in building a new life.

10.3 Listening to the Voices

In order to understand the world of the newly arrived and the way in which they navigate a life in Ireland, whether they are living in direct provision or not, we need to listen to them. This research aimed to bring these stories to public attention, particularly as a means to counter misunderstanding, stereotyping and racism. The voices of those who have experienced migration need to be heard, a point made throughout this thesis through the empirically informed theoretical literature of people like Arendt, Butler and Agamben. Part of this involves understanding more about the ways in which people who seek international protection in Ireland have to navigate a bureaucratic and inadequate system of reception and the ways in which they disrupt and challenge the isolation and segregation which characterises Direct Provision. This thesis was a means to enable them to share their stories. These are particularly difficult times for those seeking international protection. Recently the risk associated with the spread of the Covid-19 virus added a new urgency and highlights overcrowding and poor living conditions in accommodation centres and refugee camps across the world. This serves as an important reminder that people who seek protection are not a homogenous group and that different contexts, in particular, an experience of a pandemic can impact lives in different ways. Listening to the voices involved hearing participants from a range of different socio-economic, ethnic, religious and cultural backgrounds weaving a varied and insightful tapestry of narratives. Each life story was different, even though common phenomenological themes were revealed. For example, difference in age, family, personal and legal circumstances influenced experiences and strategies which people employed as they adapted to life in the host country.

10.4 What do the findings reveal?

The research question considers the experiences of creating new lives in Ireland among people who are refugees and international protection applicants. The findings from this research pointed to the significant impact which policies and practices had on individual experiences. Polices which segregate people, delay decision-making and create fear prevented people from moving on quickly with their lives, and attempts to overcome these issues became routine for people. Other important themes were coping and resilience, often enabled through engagement with education and work. People who are refugees and international protection applicants have been largely excluded from the Irish further and higher education system. Access to programmes at this level has been at the discretion of individual institutions or through sanctuary scholarship courses. Legal status, the physical location of accommodation centre and the cost of tuition fees have been significant barriers. For international protection applicants there was an interplay between two-worlds, that of Direct Provision and that of the University Campus. This was evident in the descriptions of how they felt and constructed their own identities in each of these contexts. A strong sense of personal achievement was expressed by participants along with a sense that they had finally been recognised as individual with the need to learn and move on with their lives. Waiting and temporal anguish due to the absence of a time frame for decision-making shows that time is paramount to understanding migration. Delays in processing applications and the requirement to wait meant their experiences of time are different to from others in society. Social isolation and the restrictions associated with living in Direct Provision added to feelings of loss and trauma. Participants appeared vulnerable yet they demonstrated resilience as they adapted to a new society, precarious legal conditions and in attempting to regain control of their lives. The findings are presented in greater detail in the following sections.

10.4.1 The Impact of Policy and Practice

This thesis found the impact of migration policy and practice on individual lives was brutal and dehumanising. From their initial arrival and treatment by immigration officers to their dispersal to accommodation centres around the country, people felt fearful, unwanted and under suspicion. People described the legal system as adversarial and felt they were working

alone as they defended their need for state protection. When decisions are eventually made, lives and a sense of hope for a better future had sometimes been ravaged and wasted. Participants suggested that the system of reception attempts to discredit individual accounts as untruths or lies. People described their lack of understanding of legal procedure, fearful of writing and recounting details which might damage their case. They felt applications were scrutinised for inconsistencies, gaps and errors, and people described a hunt for details which could discredit an individual's credibility.

10.4.2 The Impact of Living in Direct Provision

While people stated that they were happy to be in Ireland and wanted to make their lives here, they experienced multiple challenges and suffered the cumulative effects of legal and financial barriers. Participants in this study portrayed Direct Provision as an apartheid-like system which sought to segregate them from a society and suggesting 'a hierarchy of lives'. Rights appear as though they are a charity conferred by governments rather that a set of entitlements which everyone possesses by virtue of being human. People spoke about Direct Provision as a system of incarceration and the way in which it ground them down. The lack of a future, of an independent life, the inability to plan, the endless waiting had a negative impact on their lives. There was stress, domestic violence, mental breakdown, depression among residents. Accommodation centres was described as unsafe place for children and teenagers and spaces where conflict between residents quickly arose. Education and voluntary work were a means of distraction and escape from boredom and the institutional nature of life there. The right to work and to access education should be permitted from the start of the application process, enabling people to provide for themselves and their families and restoring dignity and a sense of normality to people's lives. While the current government has proposed to end Direct Provision, the findings from this study would suggest that a return to the conditions which existed prior to 2000 is necessary, where applicants are afforded equal treatment with citizens, with full rights to work and access to housing and health. As yet, and despite promises regarding the abolition of Direct Provision, there has been little change or the creation of an alternative system of reception.

10.4.3 Maintaining Hope

During my conversations with people, they tended to speak about the present and focused, in particular, on the future. This suggested that people lived in hope of regaining control over their lives in the future yet aspects of their history, culture, religion, relationships continued to impact their lives. Past lives were generally not spoken about but some people referred to fond memories of their lives prior to migration, others referred to difficult circumstances such as imprisonment, conflict, bombing and poverty. This presented a bleak and harsh picture of life in their countries of origin. Looking to the future meant possibility, hope helped people remain resilient and positive about their lives.

Social and family support was found to be important in people's ability to remain positive and in coping with the process of adapting to a new culture and enduring a precarious legal position. Loneliness, isolation and a feeling of not belonging were evident in participant's lives, yet they showed immense courage and strength and mobilised a number of strategies in coping with their circumstances. Some people indirectly described their own personal strategies for dealing with adversity such as overcoming negative thoughts and emotions often through a focus on learning, education and other distractions. Some people adopted an autonomous and independent approach and were very proud of their ability to cope and to start a new life alone in a host country. Others drew on support provided by immediate and extended family members, siblings, and friends as well as through fellow international protection applicants and refugee communities. Furthermore, for all those seeking international protection, the importance of direct and indirect social and emotional support provided by NGO's and by fellow international protection applicants and the refugee community was an essential element in the motivation not to give up and to the eventual adjustment to the host society. Agencies and organisations such as MASI, Doras Luimní and NASC acted as pathways to connect people with the wider refugee community and provided important legal advice and resources such as English language classes, information of education and healthcare support and advocacy services. For some, religion and spirituality enabled participants to adjust and cope with the process. This experience of meaning-making through religion acted as a shield against fear, stress and potential mental health problems and provided the much-needed hope that circumstances would improve in the future.

10.4.4 Temporality

This thesis shows that the importance of developing an understanding of the role of time and waiting in people's migration experiences, particularly in relation to how people are prevented from thinking about their futures. The indefinite and endless waiting for a final decision on their application meant that integration and sense of belonging were hampered and delayed. Those with refugee status could move quickly to create new lives for themselves, engage with education and work and move to a sense of greater belonging. For international protection applicants, the complexity of waiting for a response to their application, and, until recently, the ban on work and access to third level education meant that resettlement was much slower and more precarious. The sense of 'stuckness' was viewed as part of contemporary regimes of migration control. Understood as 'a form of capital..time was here withheld for a deferred future gain' (Andersson, 2014:20). Waiting was a deterrent, a means to discourage new arrivals and to produce a protracted shock to current applicants. Difference in interpretations of time and space became more apparent when people came into contact with others, with structures and systems. People resisted and challenged their period of waiting in different ways and some continued with life as if there were few or no restrictions placed upon them. The burden of lost years was evident as people awaited a decision on their application, and many appeared mentally broken in process.

10.4.5 Education, Recognition and Participation

This research showed that education was key in helping people rebuild their lives and considered a pathway to finding work and supporting a family in the future. Access to higher education is, thus, a 'necessity, not a privilege in a knowledge-driven society' (Lynch, 2004, 19). The findings show that education is more than schooling and the social aspects of education, belonging to something beyond the refugee community and educational relationships were important factors in helping people to integrate and in gaining a positive feeling of moving on from always feeling like a newcomer. The research also demonstrates that opportunities for engagement with society through voluntary work and through education were seized by the majority of people (Ahmed, Samir, Alain, John, Vera, Beth, Vera, Diane, Claude, Grace, Flora, Greg, Lawrence, Aneche, Bandile, Robert and Romeo). Education was viewed as a distraction from concerns about a precarious legal status (Patricia, Vera, Diane,

Claude), it was a means of personal fulfilment (all participants referred to education in this way) and a means to demonstrate a commitment to being a good citizen for Ireland (Diane, Aneche, Claude, John, Beth, Vera and Samir). It was also considered a preparation for secure employment on receipt of permission to remain in the country (Diane, Grace, Flora, Beth and Vera). It showed the role which education can play in helping people to create new lives. Participation in adult and further education and access to a sanctuary scholarship meant that people could shake off a previous identity in favour of a more positive one. The study provides details of the important role that education can play in individual lives and shows the multiple pathways to engagement with learning. It shows that further and higher education played an important part in helping people navigate their way from a much-marginalised space of Direct Provision to one which enables greater participation. QQI Programmes in colleges of further education and sanctuary scholarships were important in moving on from the refugee identity, maintaining positivity, contacting others in society and preventing depression and isolation. It shows the importance of pathway to greater social engagement. The findings from this research show that people viewed education as a way of gaining recognition, of engaging with others, of finding their own place in Irish society and in creating a new life. Without such opportunities, people would remain refugees, in both practical and ideological terms for much longer. The right to education should be non-negotiable as it is an international fundamental right laid down in international treaties (European Convention of Human Rights 1950). Groups of people who face cumulative disadvantages and are consistently denied certain opportunities that other groups have access to, can quickly feel unwanted, like second class citizens with a diminished sense of self-worth (Nussbaum, 2011). Policies and practices which lead to deskilling, exclusion and leave the international protection applicants living on the edge of society as outsiders cannot be socially justified. While the current government committed, in the recent white paper (2021), to enabling greater access to education, my research findings emphasise its utmost importance.

10.5 Methodological and Theoretical Contribution

In the following section of this chapter, I will discuss the methodological and theoretical contribution of this thesis. This is also outlined in figure 1, (following the chapter summary) a

framework showing superordinate themes, findings and unique contributions which the thesis makes.

10.5.1 Methodological Contribution

This thesis contributed to research in terms of method and approach. The emancipatory framework shows that research can involve and benefit those who seek international protection in Ireland. It enabled me to recognise the impact of my own privilege and develop research interventions that were sensitive to the people and the context in which I researched. I added to understandings of how emancipatory methodologies can enable people who are the subjects of research to exercise continued and systematic authority in representing themselves and in naming their own world, by seeking to involve them throughout the research process. I have attempted to answer calls (Lynch, 1999; Stone and Priestley, 1996; Oliver, 1996) for researchers to use more ethical approaches in carrying out research with groups who hold less power. Through my reflexivity and critically questioning the ways in which I wrote about people, their experiences and the methodology, I have added to understandings of how emancipatory methodologies can support people who are the subjects of research, to exercise authority in representing themselves and in commenting on their own world and their lived experience. With regard to the layout, this thesis did not follow a traditional thesis format, instead, this alternative approach was more responsive to the lived experiences of research participants. It enabled exploration of the lives on a detailed level by intersecting theory with meanings which people attributed to their own singular and unique experiences. Furthermore, it enabled me to see the stories shared by people from a diverse range of backgrounds from several angles (legally, personally and individually, collectively, educationally) sometimes not possible in a single literature review chapter, and, perhaps, it set the stage for others to consider a different way of presenting a thesis. The exploration of empirical findings though philosophy shows the possibilities which exist for abstracting and exploring concepts and pivotal moments in a sensitive manner enabling new understandings of loss, suffering, success, resistance and resilience in people's lives. The study, therefore, commits and adds to established ideas about the ways in which research topics, processes and the politics of research are inter- connected and reflect the position of the researcher.

10.5.2 Theoretical Contribution

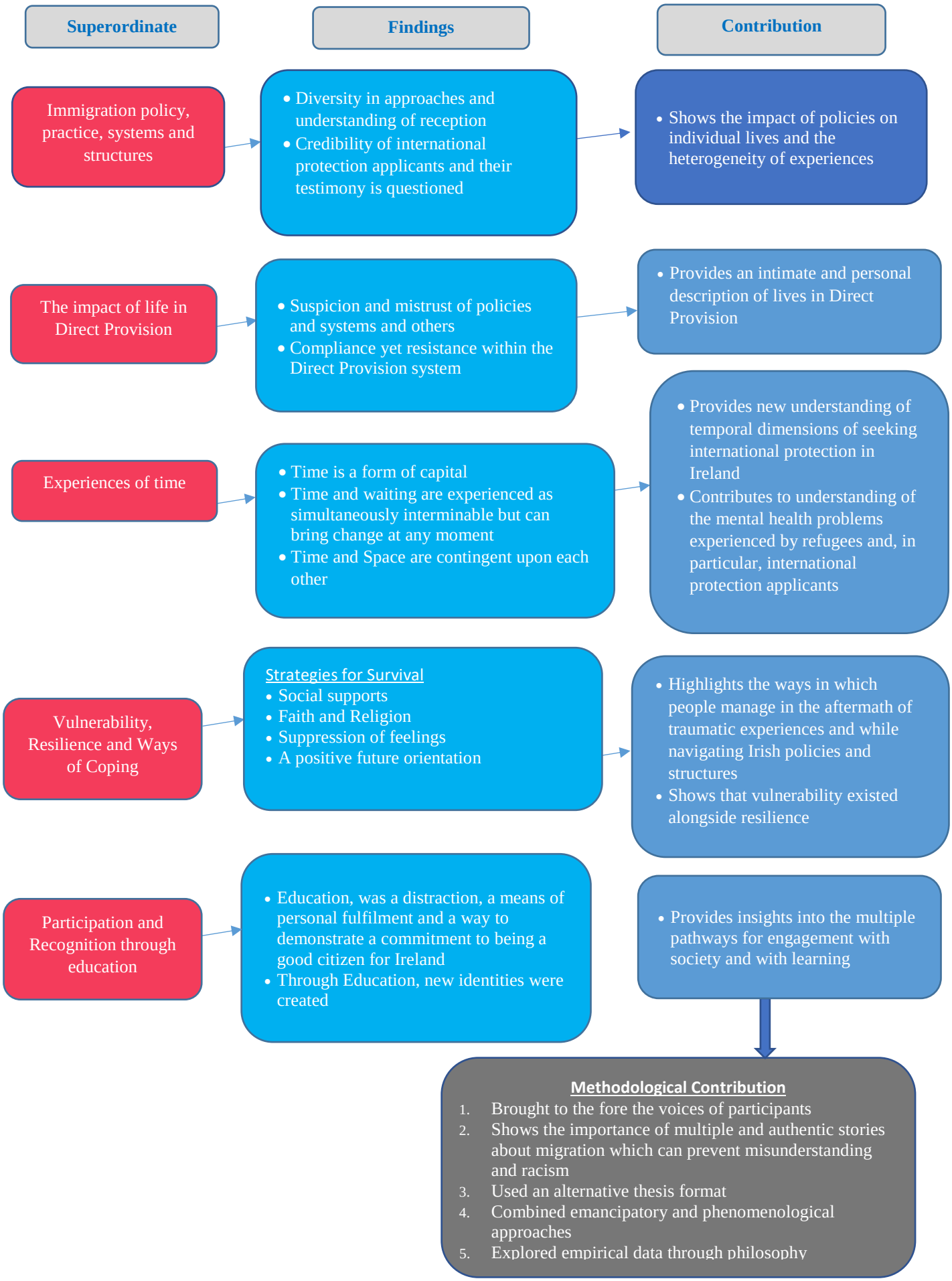
From a theoretical perspective, this thesis makes a unique contribution as a conduit for the voices and stories of a group of twenty-six people. It brings to the fore the daily lived experience of international protection applicants, the political context in which they live, mechanisms of exclusion and principally, the ways in which people attempt they cope with adversity as create new lives for themselves in Ireland. It challenges notions of homogeneity, fixedness of migrant status and identity as their stories reflected the uniqueness of their interpretation and response to their individual circumstances. It builds on the idea of the nation-state as an imagined community (Anderson, 2009) and highlights the interplay, as well as tensions, between policies and newly arrived individuals and communities, between identities, cultures and values.

This study is unique in its specific multi-disciplinary approach and considers historical, legal and educational and temporal aspects of seeing international protection. It traces the experiences of people who have come to Ireland to seek protection during previous decades. Attitudes and policies originate from ideas about citizenship, the nation-state and who should belong. This research highlights the ungenerous response of the Irish State to the predicament and reception of the non-citizen. Recent efforts to implement structured resettlements programmes for Bosnian, Kosovar and Syrian refugees have been somewhat effective in helping people to move on quickly with their lives and, therefore, shows that robust supports and alignment with international assistance programs, including financial supports and structured resettlements programmes can effectively minimize the impact of migration and help people to adapt to life in the host country.

The emancipatory framework of the research can help to dispel myths and stereotypes which exist about the lives and intentions of people who seek international protection. This thesis counters narratives which frame refugees as an economic and security risk. When political leaders refuse to host and support immigrants and instigate fear-mongering, they are, not only violating international law but also inciting hatred and suspicion. Studies, such as this, with people who have experienced migration can help counter and challenge the idea that international protection is a burden. The findings of from this research sample illustrates that people who seek sanctuary are determined, independent, eager to learn and integrate. They can, in fact, enrich a host society, contribute and bring new knowledge. A study of temporal

aspects of lives shows that time and waiting were co-created by participants and the system and structures within which they live. Within the long period of waiting for a final decision on their application were other temporal manifestations. It shows the difficulties and confusion which arises when there is no clear timeframe regarding the processing of applications. Inactivity and extended pauses stood in opposition to purposeful activity.

Few, if any studies, in the Irish context, have considered the complexity and multiple aspects of the lived experience of both refugees and international protection applicants, the ways in which individuals deal with adversity and the opportunities for greater social interaction with the host society. This study highlights the ways in which current discourse and policy overlook the needs but also the capacities of people who seek international protection. Narratives, shared in this study, challenged understandings of international protection applicants as traumatised victims unable to cope. This thesis presents narratives of vulnerability, resilience and resistance which were, in fact, strategies of active survival. This, in turn, opens up discussions on the opportunities and spaces which allow 'liminal beings' to move from confinement to greater social belonging, sometimes a testing and difficult journey. Figure 1, shows the superordinate themes, the findings and contributions of the research.


Superordinate
Findings
Contribution
Immigration policy, practice, systems and structures
• Diversity in approaches and understanding of reception
• Credibility of international protection applicants and their testimony is questioned
• Shows the impact of policies on individual lives and the heterogeneity of experiences
The impact of life in Direct Provision
• Suspicion and mistrust of policies and systems and others
• Compliance yet resistance within the Direct Provision system
• Provides an intimate and personal description of lives in Direct Provision
Experiences of time
• Time is a form of capital
• Time and waiting are experienced as simultaneously interminable but can bring change at any moment
• Time and Space are contingent upon each other
• Provides new understanding of temporal dimensions of seeking international protection in Ireland
• Contributes to understanding of the mental health problems experienced by refugees and, in particular, international protection applicants
Vulnerability, Resilience and Ways of Coping
Strategies for Survival
• Social supports
• Faith and Religion
• Suppression of feelings
• A positive future orientation
• Highlights the ways in which people manage in the aftermath of traumatic experiences and while navigating Irish policies and structures
• Shows that vulnerability existed alongside resilience
Participation and Recognition through education
• Education, was a distraction, a means of personal fulfilment and a way to demonstrate a commitment to being a good citizen for Ireland
• Through Education, new identities were created
• Provides insights into the multiple pathways for engagement with society and with learning
Methodological Contribution
1. Brought to the fore the voices of participants
2. Shows the importance of multiple and authentic stories about migration which can prevent misunderstanding and racism
3. Used an alternative thesis format
4. Combined emancipatory and phenomenological approaches
5. Explored empirical data through philosophy

10.6 Dissemination and Future Plans

I have committed to using this research to benefit those who generously shared their stories with me and, therefore, have considered how I can create impact with this work. This study concerns the participation of an underrepresented minority on issues which affect them and I have created research which I believe can add value to previous research, campaigns and calls for change of thinking and treatment for those seeking international protection. The emancipatory intent means that I want to bring this research to the attention of the wider Irish public, those involved in policy-making in the area of immigration, reception, education and health, educators and, in particular, those who work in further and higher education. It calls on people to think about the kind of society they want to live in and for their greater engagement with government policies and practices. We might like to think of Ireland as an open, liberal and welcoming democracy, yet with its long history of incarcerating individuals who were deemed to transgress and hiding abuses and crimes against those who were the most vulnerable in society, we might now consider groups who continue to be treated in this way. How might these groups have their voices heard? This thesis foregrounds the voices of those who have been subjected to policies which have devastated their lives. On completion of the thesis, I firstly want to re-engage with some of the participants who worked closely with me on this study. I will reconnect with members of MASI and the Irish Refugee Council to determine if aspects of this research might be useful in their own campaigns and publications, and in this way, my work might inform the formation of policy and draw media attention. I hope to reach a national and international academic audience through presentation of my research at conferences such as *Historicising the Refugee Experience, 17th-21st centuries,* to be held in Essen (Germany) from 12th-15th October 2021 and the Sociological Association of Ireland Conference in May 2022. As previously stated, this research has relevance for those who work in education and those interested in issues relevant to migration and diaspora, therefore, I have selected *The Adult Learner, Irish Educational Studies, Journal of Refugee Studies* and *International Journal of Migration and Border Studies* as suitable forums for me to tell the story of the research, to unpack the findings and to add to theoretical understandings of forced migration, policies, practice and experiences of displacement in Ireland. It is vitally important that the voices of those who participated in the research are heard by the wider public so that they too have a greater understanding of the lives of others. This may be possible through podcasts, public lectures and by sharing my work with

journalists who may have greater access to the wide public audience. At each stage of the dissemination process, I want to keep in mind those who should benefit most from the research and therefore, I intend to consult with Faith, Diane, Lewis and others to gather their opinions and inputs. Ideally, I would like them to co-present this work with me and, in this way, it may have a more lasting impact while fulfilling the shared emancipatory intent within the research.

10.7 Limitations

The process of writing what I did and what I found out enabled me to reflect upon the gaps and limitations in this research. I consider the emancipatory approach and my success in the co-creation of knowledge with research participants.

10.7.1 Language and Access

Language and Access were limiting factors. Diane, Faith and Lewis were the three participants who provided the greatest level of engagement and time to the research. This was, perhaps, because they were already politically engaged with MASI, worked as advocates for their own communities, spoke at conferences and public events, were fluent English speakers and were perhaps more well-informed about the legal aspects of the international process than others. Furthermore, in my emails and discussions with people, I tried to convey the notion of equal partnership and right to influence the chosen literature, design and data gathering techniques. In many cases this did not appear to interest many participants as they just wanted to speak about their lives and they enjoyed meeting someone new who was not connected with their accommodation centre or their legal application. In addition, I made the assumption that many had never been asked to participate in a piece of research in this way. Sometime, in my communication with Faith, Diane and Lewis, I had to wait for days and weeks for responses to questions and sometimes these never arrived as people were preoccupied with issues which impacted their own lives. At this point, I have a greater understanding of how issues of power come into to play to a greater degree with international protection applicants rather than refugees. It is difficult for people who have so few rights to feel that they are entitled to have control of a piece of research, even if the topic

concerns their own lives and welfare. Although people enjoyed the opportunity to meet with me and to talk about their lives, a greater involvement in the structure and development of the research would have taken them away from issues which were important to them and their families. Their lives can be busy, disrupted and chaotic and, sometimes, trying to keep in contact with people on a regular basis was challenging. Choosing an emancipatory or participatory framework is therefore, messy and difficult and I would conclude that the emancipatory goals of the research were only partially realised.

10.7.2 Power Imbalance

My lack of experience and perhaps naivety at the beginning of the research project became evident as I began to meet people and discuss education. I came to this research as a teacher and very much an 'outsider', trying to find out about experiences of school and college, when, in fact, in thinking it through, it should have been apparent that what matters to people is safety, an ability to plan for the future and the right to create a permanent home in Ireland. While I wanted to build trust with the international protection community through open communication and valuing their knowledge and perspective, I did not apply the same thinking to my research topic and, in hindsight, greater consultation with people prior to beginning the research might would have been beneficial. Furthermore, in giving pseudonyms to participants and failing to consult them on this matter, I feel that I overlooked some key parts of the partnership between me and those who shared their stories so generously. However, it was a delicate balance of involving participants in every step and also asking too much of them.

10.7.3 Absent Voices

I had originally hoped to gather more stories about the experiences of children and I consider the absence of their voices a limitation of the study. It would have been difficult to get ethical approval to research with children but their voices would have added new perspectives on the issues which affect them. Furthermore, given the emancipatory intent of the study conducting research *with* children and young people rather than *on* or *about* children and young people may have been challenging. Finally, and most importantly, I thought about those absent

voices, the marginal voices and, therefore, I feel my work is not fully complete. There were those who were too unwell and too depressed to participate. Their voices were not heard and I am not sure I could have done anything to address this shortcoming. Perhaps their stories were recounted or shared to some degree by others, by Diane and Lewis who described how people were optimistic on their arrival but often experienced mental breakdown. Diane recounted how she had seen people sleep on the grass outside the Direct Provision centre and eat from the bins.

10.7.4 Generating Interest in the Research

It was difficult to recruit participants for this study and as I sent emails and phone call, I thought about the ethics of doing this research and how it might appear to those I was attempting to recruit. All of the participants self-selected but there is an imbalance in terms of nationality and language. As previously stated, perhaps by employing the services of an interpreter, maybe even an interpreter who had also sought international protection in Ireland, I might have attracted more people from the Middle East, from Latin America and from other countries. This would have meant a broader range of linguistic and cultural diversity in the study. While fourteen out of twenty-six participants were male, I feel that many of the females provided more details in their stories. Interviews with them were longer and they were more open in sharing the intimate details of their experiences. Perhaps the fact that I was a female meant that women were more attracted to the study or perhaps women were more willing to speak about their lives and were more likely to engage in adult learning and university courses meant that the study had more relevance for them. This imbalance means that study not fully representative of the attitudes, beliefs, and experiences of the full population of international protection applicants and refugees. Access to direct provision centres and to participants is restricted and I was cautioned by participants that my arrival at centres would not be welcomed by management and security staff. This meant that reaching participants had to be done through trusted contacts and organisations as noted in Chapters Two and Three. This research is not total and complete but a snapshot in time and in place. Therefore, one cannot conclude that the experiences described by participants are similar to those of other international protection applicants or refugees. The research shows that flight from a home country and arrival in Ireland is perceived and experienced very differently and

factors such as country of origin, level of education, age, family situation and legal status upon arrival have a significant impact on peoples' experiences and perceptions.

10.8 My own learning, challenges and change

When I consider the start of this research journey, I reflect on my first encounter with Donna Vuma when she spoke at a conference about her life and that of her family, her struggles and aspirations. I think about my preparedness and positionality in undertaking this study and the kind of emotional labour which followed. Perhaps some of the greatest learning came from the emotional impact of listening to the sometimes sad and sensitive stories which were recounted. I also think about the challenges encountered when trying to create original and interesting research, honouring marginalized voices through accurate and honest representation, yet dealing with the power difference inherent in the researcher-participant relationship. The emancipatory approach to the research added complexity. It was a challenge and a balancing act. At interview I felt that I should perhaps steer the conversation in a way that would help me to gather sufficient and relevant data to answer the research question, yet my ethical approach meant that I should enable people to speak about what was important to them. Without wanting to make assumptions, I hoped that our conversations were cathartic or therapeutic for people and I wondered if they were distressing and called on individuals to try and make new meaning from experiences. After interviews, I often felt disappointed with myself, I wondered if I had been sufficiently empathetic and responsive. Had I shown enough solidarity or should I remain neutral and establish a greater distance between myself and research participant. As I continued with interviews, I grew more confident.

The ethical review and clearance process considered the risk of upset to research participants but I knew that there were few mechanisms of support for researchers who may experience emotional distress. On some occasions and particularly following interviews, I felt saddened and exhausted. I often felt there was so much wrong in the world. I reflected on my own reactions and rationalised that I needed to take time to think about topics, experiences and trauma. Keeping in touch with people by email and telephone helped in teasing out ideas helped me to show solidarity and care towards people. I realised my own privilege as a citizen, a parent, a professional and a student-researcher. I believed that as a younger

research, I would not have been successful in understanding the complexity of life experiences, in adopting a reflexive stance toward power or positionality and in documenting the ethical issues which I encountered. I often reflect on some of the more difficult stories which were recounted by Ahmed, Alain, Patricia and Lewis and how I could barely hide the horror I was feeling as they described harrowing and life-changing events. I often struggled to think of my next question and to remain calm. I wanted to help, to show empathy and care but sometimes they were remote and distant and I was frustrated and saddened by my inability to do anything.

Following interviews, I regularly recalled emotional upsetting stories and I felt changed by the stories which people told me. I no longer jump to conclusions or make assumption about individual reasons for seeking resettlement in Ireland or experiences of migration and I will never underestimate the impact which a precarious legal status can have on people's lives. I realise that despite technological advances, knowledge, wealth and privilege exists in the world, there is also persecution, displacement, vulnerability and suffering. I am more empathetic to people's difficult and precarious situations and try to think constructively about how one might help and provide support to those who encounter difficult legal, financial and social circumstances. I believed that I managed to navigate all of this new learning because of the high quality of academic supervision and support which I received and through continuous critical reflection.

Chapter Summary

Throughout this study I have shown that much of the current legislation relating to immigration is about the protection of state interests and responses to the non-citizen have been largely characterised by indifference and apathy. I have substantiated these claims with stories and voices of those who sought international protection in Ireland. Refugees are often denied opportunities to offer an account of their own experiences and stripped of meaningful agency in responding to their circumstances and in leading productive lives. This was not how an ethical and human rights- centred approach to international protection was originally envisaged. Collaborating with the international protection and refugee community in this study meant that I handed over power to those who shared their stories. It was their voices which brought unrivalled insights and knowledge of their communities, lives and

experiences. Themes which emerged from my conversations with people related to time, education, resistance and resilience. The unique contribution of the study came from participant voices often describing lives as characterised by hardship but also by the survival strategies. They succeed to difference degrees in turning their lives around and regaining some control over their destinies. However, narratives indicated that lives were marked by unpredictability and vulnerability. While some people, Claude, Diane, Lewis, Samir, Ahmed appeared to overcome adversity with greater ease, others, John, Alain, Faith, Belinda, Khalid and Zahir were more vulnerable and described greater challenges in their daily lives. It appears that for some people determination and energy, or capacity for agency was diminished. They were marked by their experiences and, in particular, the fear of deportation. This research showed that people wait endlessly as they are trapped by the tardiness of the international protection process and Direct Provision. In this thesis, the voices and life stories of refugees and international protection applicants, show how people make meaning of newly-established lives in Ireland. It has provided interesting insights into how people steer their way through policy, legal, personal, social and linguistic challenges.

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Appendix A: Interview Schedule

1. How do people who are asylum seekers and refugees find ways to be part of communities in Irish society?
2. Can you tell me about your impressions of Ireland and Irish society?
3. How is it different from your country of birth?
4. What were your experiences of education in your home country?
5. What is your experience of education/training in Ireland?
6. What types/ structure of courses and programmes would allow asylum seekers and refugees to participate more fully in Irish society?
7. What is the biggest challenge for asylum seekers and refugees who want to participate in education?
8. How do you think opportunities to participate in education and in society makes asylum seekers and refugees feel?
9. How long have you lived in Ireland?
10. What are the things which help people to feel they belong to a particular place?
11. What is it like to live in a country in which you were not born?
12. What is it like to live in direct Provision? (for people who are asylum seekers)
13. (For Asylum seekers) What do you think it might feel like to receive refugee status?
    (For Refugees) What did it feel like to receive refugee status?

Focus Group 1

Questions for Focus Group

1. What is the experience of school for children and young people?
2. What do children like about school in Ireland?
3. What are the opportunities to get involved in extracurricular activities?
4. What educational opportunities are available to adults who live in Direct Provision?

Focus Group 2

Focus Group Questions

1. Is education and training of importance to asylum seekers and refugees? Why? How does the opportunity to participate make people feel?

2. Do you think that education/ training which was undertaken in the country of birth might benefit asylum seekers and refugees here in Ireland?

3. Are there things that prevent people who are asylum seekers and refugees from participating in education? How does impact their lives?

4. What is life like for people who are asylum seekers and refugees?

5. What is life like for people living in Direct Provision?

INFORMATION SHEET

Title of Project: – 'Stories of Education and Belonging: The Experiences of Asylum Seekers and Refugees resident in Ireland'

Dear Participant,

My name is Margaret Murphy and I am a doctoral student in the Faculty of Education in Mary Immaculate College (UL). I am working on a study about the educational experiences of people who are asylum seekers and refugees. Before you decide to take part, or not, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. I have not gone through the asylum process myself, but one of the reasons for doing this research is that I think it is important that there is a wider understanding of what life is like for those seeking asylum and for refugees, who are part of Irish society.
I am inviting you to take part in this research and to speak about your experiences of education or training. Regardless of whether or not you have had the opportunity to participate in any type of education or training in Ireland, in your home country, or any other country, I am inviting you to participate. This information sheet will tell you what the study is about. A meeting will be held between potential participants and the researcher to explain the study. Consent forms will be distributed at the end of the meeting.

What is the study about?
The project aims to research the experiences of people who are asylum seekers and refugees in Ireland. I will attempt to gain an understanding of your experiences of education and the role education plays, if any, in your everyday life in Ireland. I understand that everyone will have different experiences and it is important that you know, whatever your experience of education is, your story is important. For those of you who have children in Irish schools, we may, if you choose, also discuss your perceptions of their educational experiences. The broader purpose of this study is to explore, with you, your ideas about the kind of education that people who are asylum seekers and refugees in Ireland might want.

Do I have to take part?
It is your choice to take part in this research, and you can decide to continue or to withdraw at any time. Participation is completely voluntary.

What will happen if I choose to take part?
The approach used in this study will be individual interviews and also focus groups. The research will run over the course of a six month period, beginning during the summer 2016. As a group we can arrange a timetable to meet. I will suggest that we could meet once a month, for one to two hours, in the organisation which supports you. It is no problem if you are sometimes unable to come to a meeting, or only come for part of a meeting.

What will I have to do?
In an initial meeting, I will explain the research. I will also ask you to think of some questions you are interested in exploring and answering. We will meet as a group, first of all (phase one), and at a later date, research will be done individually (phase two). In group meetings we will be able to discuss each other's ideas. We will discuss this research method when we meet as a group, but please ask me if you wish more information before we begin.

As part of a small group discussion you will be invited to think and talk about what is the role of education in the lives of people (both adults and children) and in Irish Society. You will be asked to think about the things that influence how education develops within a country, and how education might

need to change to accommodate all of those who are residents in that country. I will ask you think about how participation in education can contribute to feelings of belonging.

In the second phase of the research, one-to-one interviews will be held and your experiences of education/lack of educational opportunity as a child, a young person or an adult will be explored. I will ask you to focus on thinking about how education and your everyday life are connected. This may lead to an exploration of what is it like to live in Direct Provision.
Finally, you will be asked to think about future educational needs and expectations and the significance of this in your life.

What are the benefits?
This is an opportunity to share your ideas, to hear different stories about the role that education has played in people's lives. It is also an opportunity to think about what education and training means for people who are asylum seekers and refugees as well as the role of education in society, and to ensure that these stories and your thoughts and ideas can enter the public domain through this research. This study, which will include groups in various parts of the country, will argue for much more in-depth and rich understanding of the experience of life during and following a period of time spent in Direct Provision. It will also ask what part, if at all, education plays in your lives and your sense of belonging in Ireland. The study won't be able to provide an immediate solution, but it will highlight stories and identify what needs to be addressed if Ireland is to consider itself a welcoming and inclusive society.

What are the risks?
You are asked to come to group meetings regularly and to be active in researching your experience of education and how it is part of your everyday life. It is not intended to be "hard work", but it will take up some of your time. There may be a risk of upset to you, if sometimes telling these stories means that you also reflect on difficult times in your life.

What if I do not want to take part?
Participation in this study is entirely voluntary. You can choose not to take part or to stop your involvement in this study at any time without consequences. If you wish to withdraw from this study, you do not have to give any reasons for doing so to the researcher.

What happens to the information?
The information that is collected will be kept private and stored securely and safely on the researcher's computer, in the researcher's office. The computer is protected with a password. Your name will not appear on any information. You will be assigned a different name when the information is being written in a report by the researcher. The information that is gathered in the study will be kept for three years. After this time, it will be destroyed.

Who else is taking part?
People who are asylum seekers and refugees resident in various parts of Ireland will participate in this research study.

What happens at the end of the study?
At the end of the study, your stories will provide insights into the nature of life during the asylum-seeking process and beyond. It will map the different kinds of educational experiences held by the participants, and your ideas about the educational needs of people who are asylum seekers and refugees. The research will be part of a PhD thesis and will be placed on line.

The information will be completely anonymous. No participant's name will appear in the published study or any other publication.

What if I have more questions or do not understand something?

If you have any questions about the study you may contact me, Margaret Murphy, or the administrator of the Mary Immaculate Research Ethics Committee. It is important that you feel that all your questions have been answered.

What happens if I change my mind during the study?
At any stage should you feel that you want to stop taking part in the study, you are free to stop and take no further part. There are no consequences for changing your mind about being in the study.

Contact Information, Email and Phone Number of the Principal Investigator:

Margaret Murphy, PhD Student, Mary Immaculate College, South Circular Rd, Limerick.

Email: 0883298@micstudent.mic.ul.ie / marg.murphy@gmail.com

Thank you for taking the time to read this. I would be grateful if you would consider participating in this study.

Yours sincerely,

_____
Principal Investigator

This research study has received Ethics approval from the Mary Immaculate College Research Ethics Committee (MIREC). If you have any concerns about this study and wish to contact someone independent, you may contact the Administrator of MIREC through the following email or phone number: mirec@mic.ul.ie or 353 (61) 204511/204980 [MIREC Administrator] or by post to:
Administrator of MIREC
Research and Graduate School
Mary Immaculate College
South Circular Road, Limerick

CONSENT FORM

Title of Project: Stories of Education and Belonging. The Experiences of Asylum Seekers and Refugees resident in Ireland.

Dear Participant,
My name is Margaret Murphy and I am a doctoral student in the Faculty of Education in Mary Immaculate College (UL). I am working on a study about the educational experiences of asylum seekers and refugees. Before you decide to take part, or not, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. I am inviting you to take part in this research, and to speak about your experiences of education or training and feeling of belonging. Regardless of whether or not you have had the opportunity to participate in any type of education or training in Ireland, in your home country, or any other country, you are invited to participate.

Should you agree to participate in this study please read the statements below and if you agree to them, please sign the consent form.

- I have read and understood the participant information sheet.
- I understand what the project is about, and what the results will be used for.
- I understand that what the researchers find out in this study may be shared with others but that my name will not be given to anyone in any written material developed.
- I am fully aware of what I will have to do, and of any risks and benefits of the study.
- I know that I am choosing to take part in the study and that I can stop taking part in the study at any stage without giving any reason to the researchers.

This study involves audio recording. Please tick the appropriate box

- ○ I am aware that my participation in this study may be recorded (audio) and I agree to this. However, if I feel uncomfortable at any time I can ask that the recording equipment be switched off. I understand that I can ask for a copy of my recording. I understand what will happen to the recordings once the study is finished. ☐
- ○ I do not agree to be audio recorded in this study. ☐

After considering the above statements, I consent to my involvement in this research project.

Name: (please print): _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Investigator's Signature _____ Date: _____

Appendix E: Debriefing email

Dear

Many thanks for taking part in the interview and being willing to share your experiences and thoughts. By taking part in this research, it is hoped that you will help people and policy makers to better understand the experiences of people who are asylum seekers or refugees.

I sincerely hope the findings of this study will help educators, policy-makers, health professional and those who support and advocate on behalf of people who are refugee and asylum seekers to gain a greater understanding of what it means to individual lives.

The research will be written up in the form of a dissertation and submitted to my university. I would like to reassure you that all your information, including your name, names of others and names of places and centre which you have mentioned, and any other identifying features will be kept completely confidential and anonymous. After I have completed the research, I will e-mail you a summary of the results. This is purely for your own interest and information. If you change your mind and feel you would like to withdraw any information from the study, please e-mail me.

If you would like to talk to me further about your experiences or feel you would like to alter any part of the story you have shared, please contact me.

Thanks again for your generosity in sharing your stories and thoughts.

Kind Regards,
Margaret Murphy

Appendix F: Poster which was sent to various direct provision centres

INVITATION FOR PEOPLE LIVING IN _____ RECEPTION CENTRE TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

Thank You!

Margaret Murphy

Mary Immaculate College, Limerick

I AM INVITING YOU TO TAKE PART IN THIS RESEARCH AND TO SPEAK ABOUT **YOUR EXPERIENCES OF EDUCATION OR/AND**

THE EXPERIENCES OF YOUR CHILDREN IN THE EDUCATION SYSTEM.

It will only take 40 minutes, a quick chat to talk about your experiences of education.
(The research will be anonymous, your name will **never** be mentioned or written in any publication)

Would you like to be part of a Research Project about Education?

The Project

I would like to invite you to take part in a research project. I am interested in understanding experiences of education and opportunities, and their importance, in the lives of new immigrants. The study will be guided by your own needs and opinions.

The purpose of the research is
1) To study the educational background and experiences (both in Ireland and home country)
2) To think about the educational needs of new immigrants and their families who are resident in Ireland. However, following discussion with you, the study may change and develop.

- The aim of this project is to work in collaboration with new immigrants and their families to explore issues around education and opportunity.
- I invite you to think about how such a piece of research may be useful to you.
- I would like to invite you to have a discussion about the place of education in your life? Is education and training important to you?
- If you have children, what is their experience of education, as understood by you, the parents.
- I hope this this study may help to bring about the kinds of change you might like to see either in your everyday circumstances or with regard to education? What type of changes would you like to see?

The project will take place over a period of a few month starting June 2016 and will be one interview of one hour approximately.

Margaret Murphy is my name and I am currently studying for a PhD at Mary Immaculate College, Limerick. If interested please contact me at email: 0883298@micstudent.mic.ul.ie or marg.murphy@gmail.com /Telephone: 0879647891

Appendix H: Profile of People involved in the study

Name	Country of Birth	Estimated Age	Sex	Legal Status in Ireland at the time of interview	Participation in Interview	Participation in Focus group
Vera	Zimbabwe	45	F	Irish Citizen	✓	
Beth	South Africa	42	F		✓	
John	Democratic Republic of Congo	47	M	Irish Citizen	✓	
Lewis	South Africa	55	M	Leave to Remain	✓	
Claude	Burundi	42	M	Leave to Remain	✓	
Alain	Democratic Republic of Congo	19	M	Asylum Seeker (formerly an accompanied minor)	✓	
Lawrence	Zimbabwe	35	M	Asylum Seeker	✓	
Paulina	Zimbabwe	47	F	Leave to Remain	✓	
Tia	South African	42	F	Asylum Seeker	✓	
Romeo	South Africa	22	M	Asylum Seeker	✓	
Robert	Democratic Republic of Congo	20	M	Asylum Seeker	✓	
Khalid	Myanmar/ Burma	28	M	Asylum Seeker (has since received permission to remain in Ireland)	✓	
Zahir	Myanmar/ Burma	32	M	Irish Citizen	✓	
Ahmed	Syria	26	M	Refugee	✓	
Alexander	Serbian	38	M	Irish Citizen	✓	
Samir	Iranian	45	M	Irish Citizen	✓	
Greg	Zimbabwe	35	M	Asylum Seeker		✓ (1st Focus Group)
Marlyn	South Africa	33	F	Asylum Seeker		✓ (1st Focus Group)
Flora	South Africa	40	F	Asylum Seeker		✓ (1st Focus Group)
Grace	Zimbabwe	45	F	Asylum Seeker		✓ (1st Focus Group)
Faith	Zimbabwe	30	F	Asylum Seeker	✓	✓ (1st Focus Group)
Belinda	Zimbabwe	35	F	Asylum Seeker	✓	✓ (1st Focus Group)
Diane	Zimbabwe	37	F	Asylum Seeker	✓	✓ (2nd Focus Group)
Anache	Zimbabwe	30	M	Asylum Seeker/ (had just received leave to remain)		✓ (2nd Focus Group)
Bandile	South African	22	M	Asylum Seeker		✓ (2nd t Focus Group)

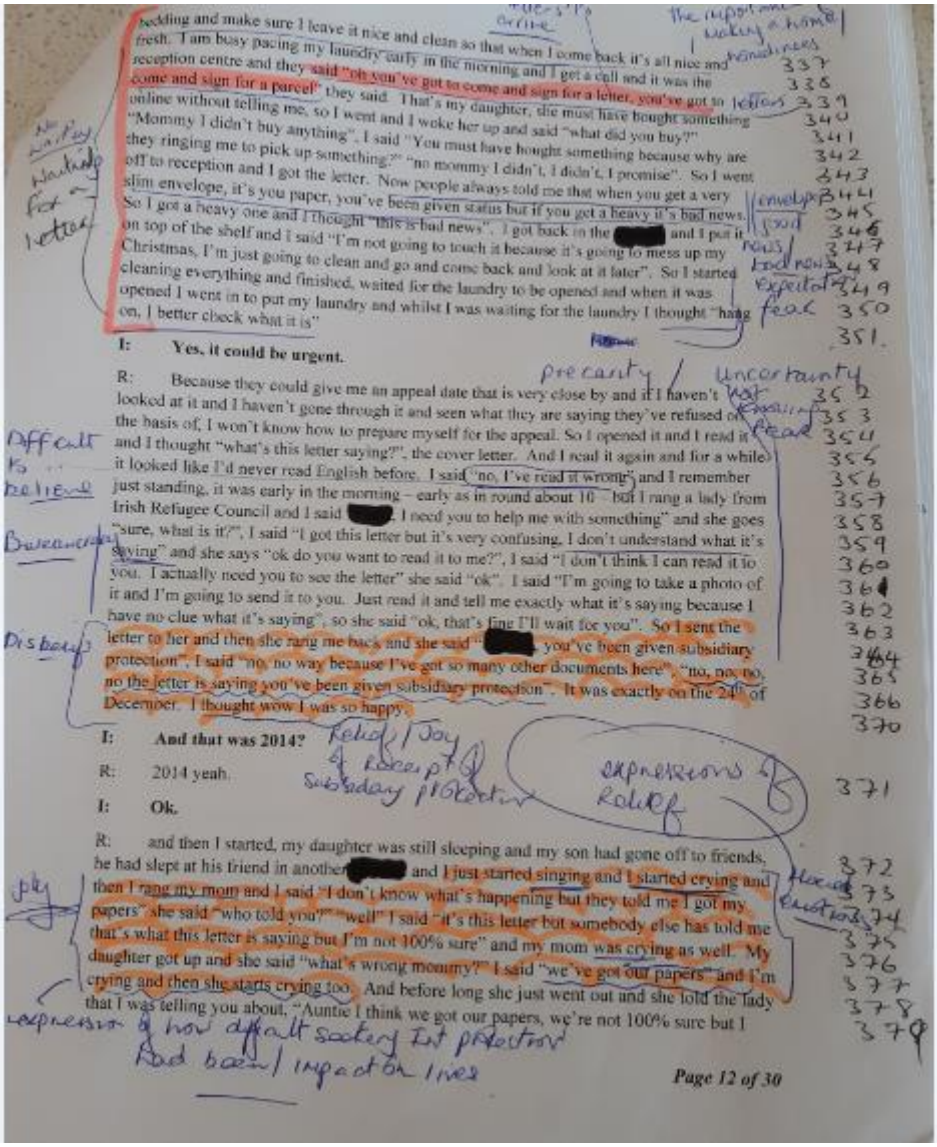
Detailed Profile of People who participated in the Interviews and Focus Group

Vera was in her forties at the time of interview and had spent eight years in Direct Provision. She has one daughter who was two years old when they arrived in Ireland. She had been in the country for 11 years at the time of Interview. When she arrived from Zimbabwe, she claimed asylum and lived in a few different centres in Dublin, and was moved to the west of Ireland for a short time.
Beth was 29 years old when she left South Africa for Ireland. She had lived in Ireland for 13 years at the time of interview. She initially came alone, but her daughter joined her after two or three years. She lived in Direct Provision for five years and had been required to move to different centres around the country. She was living in Dublin at the time of interview.
John had been in Ireland for 12 years. He was born in Kinshasa in Democratic Republic of Congo. He spent four years in the asylum process and had lived in various Direct Provision centres around the country. He received permission to remain in Ireland in 2005 and became an Irish citizen in 2013.
Lewis came from South Africa to Ireland in 2013. He had lived in Direct Provision in the South of the country for about three years. He was politically engaged and active in attempting to raise-awareness and seek justice for people who sought international protection in Ireland. Lewis introduced me to other participants and become one of my key advisers in doing this research.
Claude, originally from Burundi, was a native French-speaker and had received leave to remain shortly before we met for interview. He had lived in Direct Provision in the Mid-West region for a period 12 years. During that time, he had worked as volunteer in his local community and had made lots of contacts and friends.
Alain, who came from Democratic Republic of Congo and was 17 years old when he came to Ireland. A native French-speaker, he came into the country as an independent child migrant and lived with a foster family for a few months after his arrival. When he was 18 years old he moved to Direct Provision and, at the time of interview, he was legally categorised as an aged-out unaccompanied minor.
Lawrence came from Zimbabwe and was in his 30's when I met him. He had been in Ireland for two and half years and have lived in several different Direct Provision centres in the South, East and West of the country. He was politically active and was involved in various campaigns to end Direct Provision and in the work of MASI. He was a father to two girls who also lived in Direct Provision.
Paulina was 47 at the time of interview. She came from Zimbabwe and along with her son and daughter sought international protection in Ireland. She spent four years in Direct Provision and received permission to remain in 2015. In her interview, she described bouts of ill-health and hospitalisation, but felt that through education and keeping busy she had managed to overcome a lot of the challenges which faced her.
Ahmed fled Syria for a camp in Lebanon with his family. Following that, they came to Ireland. They has spent a few months in a reception centre before receiving refugee status. At the time of interview Samir was completing his degree in an Irish Institute of Technology.
Tia was a bubbly and talkative person. Originally from South Africa, she was 42 years old and a mother to two daughters, aged 21 years old and 15 years old. She had been living in Direct Provision in the East of the

country since she arrived five years prior to the interview. She campaigned for young people living in Direct Provision to be able to take up places in third level education.
Robert was much younger the majority of participants. From Democratic Republic of Congo, he was almost 20 years old when I met him. He had been living in Direct Provision in the East of the country since he arrived three and a half years ago. He had completed his Leaving Certificate and hoping to go to Art College the following year.
Romeo was a very shy, quiet and soft spoken 20 year old South African. He spoke very little throughout the interview which I conducted with him and Robert. Along with Paulina, they lived in a Direct Provision centre in the North East of Ireland. Romeo had finished his leaving certificate and expressed a desire to find a job and work.
Khalid was about 30 years old and prominent voice for the Rohingya community in Ireland. He had spent much of his life in a refugee camp in Bangladesh before coming to Ireland as a programme refugee. He lived in a town the east of the country with his wife, children and brother-in-law Zahir.
Zahir who was 28 at the time of interview had come to Ireland in 2000 using a false passport. He eventually claimed asylum. Not long before I met him he had received a deportation order and was concerned for his future. He had suffered bouts of depression and anxiety during the 16 years he had spent in Ireland. A few months after the research interview, he received permission to remain in the country and has pursued third level studies since then.
Alexander, originally from Serbia, spent three years in Direct Provision in the west of Ireland. At the time of interview, he was an Irish citizen, had a partner and child and lived in Dublin. He was interested in the arts and was completing post-graduate studies at the time of interview.
Samir, a member of the Baha'i community, was born in Iran and, in 1985, fled to Ireland along with his sister following ongoing persecution of people of the Baha'i faith. He arrived in Ireland as a programme refugee and, therefore, was entitled to housing, healthcare and education at the time. He had completed a university degree in Ireland, was married and had two children.
People who participated in the 1st Focus Group
Greg was from Zimbabwe, was married to Belinda (who also participated in the research) and they had two children. He had lived in Direct Provision since 2010 and his family had arrived at a later stage. At the time of interview, he was concerned that his oldest daughter would not be able to take up her place on a third level course in an Institute of Technology due to the cost of fees. He really wanted to have the right to work.
Marlyn, lived with her husband and three children in a Direct Provision centre in the midlands for a year and a half. She was from South Africa, was a trained chef and appeared to be a leader within the group. She was frustrated with the asylum process and really wanted to be able to work.
Flora was a soft-spoken, 44 year-old South African childcare worker. She had been living in Direct Provision in the Midlands for one year. She had two children who had remained in Africa.
Grace, originally from Zimbabwe, was 44 years old and a mother to two teenage boys. She was outspoken about lack of educational opportunities at third level for young people who are in the asylum process. She had been living in the midlands in Direct Provision since her arrival 2 years and a half years before the interview.

Faith (also participated in an interview), aged 28 years old, was from Zimbabwe. She is a sister to Belinda and mother to a nine year-old girl. She was very proactive in helping me to do this research, in organising the first focus group and has kept in touch with me since we first met a number of years ago. She was living in Direct Provision for nine months at the time of interview. I have maintain contact with Faith who had helped me throughout the entire research process and in organising the first focus group and in providing advice and ideas for the thesis.
Belinda (also participated in an interview) is a sister to Faith and is married to Greg. At the time of interview, she had been in Ireland for three years and was living in Direct Provision in the Midlands with her husband Greg and two daughters. She described how she really wanted a 'normal life' for herself and her children.
People who participated in the 2nd Focus Group
Diane (also participated in an interview) originally from Zimbabwe, was almost 40 years old at the time of interview. She was politically active and determined to complete a degree in an Irish third level institution. She had been living in Direct Provision for two and a half years with her three children. She had received a University of Sanctuary scholarship and had just completed an access year when we met for the focus group discussion. She was generous in helping me find other research participants and I remain in contact with her.
Aneche was 26 years old when I met him. Outspoken about the harm which Direct Provision caused to peoples' lives, he had lived in various centres in different parts of the country. When I met him, he just had received permission to remain in Ireland. He took part in the University of Sanctuary focus group but was critical of how the asylum process had inhibited him from participating in third level education.
Bandile was a very quiet and soft-spoken 20 year old from South Africa. He had completed his first year of the University of Sanctuary programme and had been living in Direct Provision for about two and a half years.

1) Phase 2 of Analysis- Excerpt from Interview Transcript



bedding and make sure I leave it nice and clean so that when I come back it's all nice and fresh. I am busy pacing my laundry early in the morning and I get a call and it was the reception centre and they said "oh you've got to come and sign for a parcel" they said. That's my daughter, she must have bought something online without telling me, so I went and I woke her up and said "what did you buy?". "Mommy I didn't buy anything", I said "You must have bought something because why are they ringing me to pick up something?" "no mommy I didn't, I didn't, I promise". So I went off to reception and I got the letter. Now people always told me that when you get a very slim envelope, it's you paper, you've been given status but if you get a heavy it's bad news. So I got a heavy one and I thought "this is bad news". I got back in the [redacted] and I put it on top of the shelf and I said "I'm not going to touch it because it's going to mess up my Christmas, I'm just going to clean and go and come back and look at it later". So I started cleaning everything and finished, waited for the laundry to be opened and when it was opened I went in to put my laundry and whilst I was waiting for the laundry I thought "hang on, I better check what it is"

I: Yes, it could be urgent.

R: Because they could give me an appeal date that is very close by and if I haven't looked at it and I haven't gone through it and seen what they are saying they've refused on the basis of, I won't know how to prepare myself for the appeal. So I opened it and I read it and I thought "what's this letter saying?", the cover letter. And I read it again and for a while it looked like I'd never read English before. I said "no, I've read it wrong" and I remember just standing, it was early in the morning – early as in round about 10 – but I rang a lady from Irish Refugee Council and I said [redacted], I need you to help me with something" and she goes "sure, what is it?", I said "I got this letter but it's very confusing, I don't understand what it's saying" and she says "ok do you want to read it to me?", I said "I don't think I can read it to you. I actually need you to see the letter" she said "ok". I said "I'm going to take a photo of it and I'm going to send it to you. Just read it and tell me exactly what it's saying because I have no clue what it's saying", so she said "ok, that's fine I'll wait for you". So I sent the letter to her and then she rang me back and she said "[redacted] you've been given subsidiary protection", I said "no, no way because I've got so many other documents here", "no, no, no, no the letter is saying you've been given subsidiary protection". It was exactly on the 24th of December. I thought wow I was so happy.

I: And that was 2014?

R: 2014 yeah.

I: Ok.

R: and then I started, my daughter was still sleeping and my son had gone off to friends, he had slept at his friend in another [redacted] and I just started singing and I started crying and then I rang my mom and I said "I don't know what's happening but they told me I got my papers" she said "who told you?" "well" I said "it's this letter but somebody else has told me that's what this letter is saying but I'm not 100% sure" and my mom was crying as well. My daughter got up and she said "what's wrong mommy?" I said "we've got our papers" and I'm crying and then she starts crying too. And before long she just went out and she told the lady that I was telling you about, "Auntie I think we got our papers, we're not 100% sure but I

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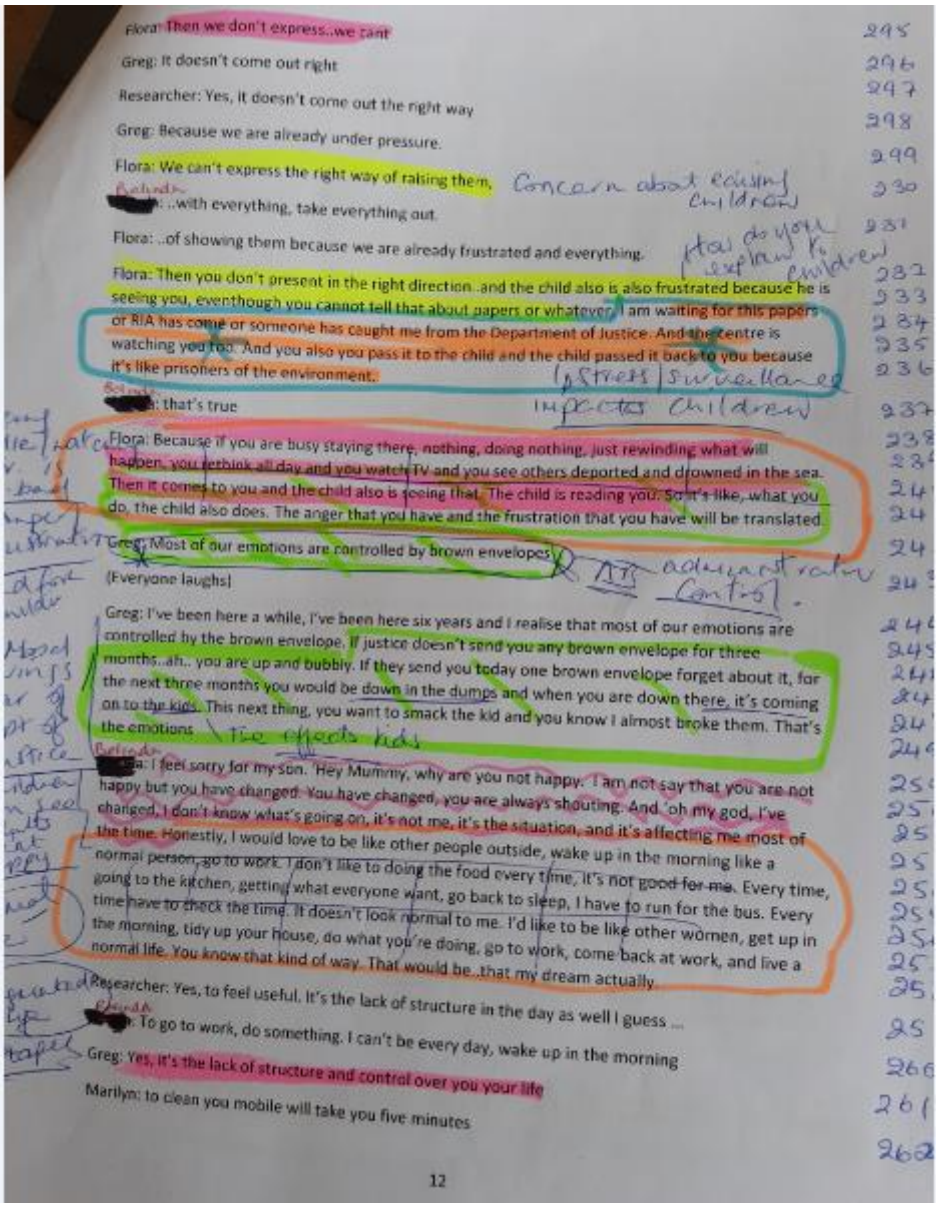
1) Phase 2 of Analysis- Excerpt from 1st Focus Group



Flora: Then we don't express..we rant

Greg: It doesn't come out right

Researcher: Yes, it doesn't come out the right way

Greg: Because we are already under pressure.

Flora: We can't express the right way of raising them, Concern about raising children

[redacted]: ..with everything, take everything out.

Flora: ..of showing them because we are already frustrated and everything.

How do you explain to children

Flora: Then you don't present in the right direction..and the child also is also frustrated because he is seeing you, eventhough you cannot tell that about papers or whatever, I am waiting for this papers or RIA has come or someone has caught me from the Department of Justice. And the centre is watching you too. And you also you pass it to the child and the child passed it back to you because it's like prisoners of the environment.

Stress | Surveillance

Impacts children

[redacted]: that's true

Flora: Because if you are busy staying there, nothing, doing nothing, just rewinding what will happen, you rethink all day and you watch TV and you see others deported and drowned in the sea. Then it comes to you and the child also is seeing that. The child is reading you. So it's like, what you do, the child also does. The anger that you have and the frustration that you have will be translated

Greg: Most of our emotions are controlled by brown envelopes

administration control.

[Everyone laughs]

Greg: I've been here a while, I've been here six years and I realise that most of our emotions are controlled by the brown envelope. If justice doesn't send you any brown envelope for three months..ah.. you are up and bubbly. If they send you today one brown envelope forget about it, for the next three months you would be down in the dumps and when you are down there, it's coming on to the kids. This next thing, you want to smack the kid and you know I almost broke them. That's the emotions

The effects kids

[redacted]: I feel sorry for my son. 'Hey Mummy, why are you not happy. I am not say that you are not happy but you have changed. You have changed, you are always shouting. And 'oh my god, I've changed, I don't know what's going on, it's not me, it's the situation, and it's affecting me most of the time. Honestly, I would love to be like other people outside, wake up in the morning like a normal person, go to work. I don't like to doing the food every time, it's not good for me. Every time, going to the kitchen, getting what everyone want, go back to sleep, I have to run for the bus. Every time have to check the time. It doesn't look normal to me. I'd like to be like other women, get up in the morning, tidy up your house, do what you're doing, go to work, come back at work, and live a normal life. You know that kind of way. That would be..that my dream actually.

Researcher: Yes, to feel useful. It's the lack of structure in the day as well I guess ...

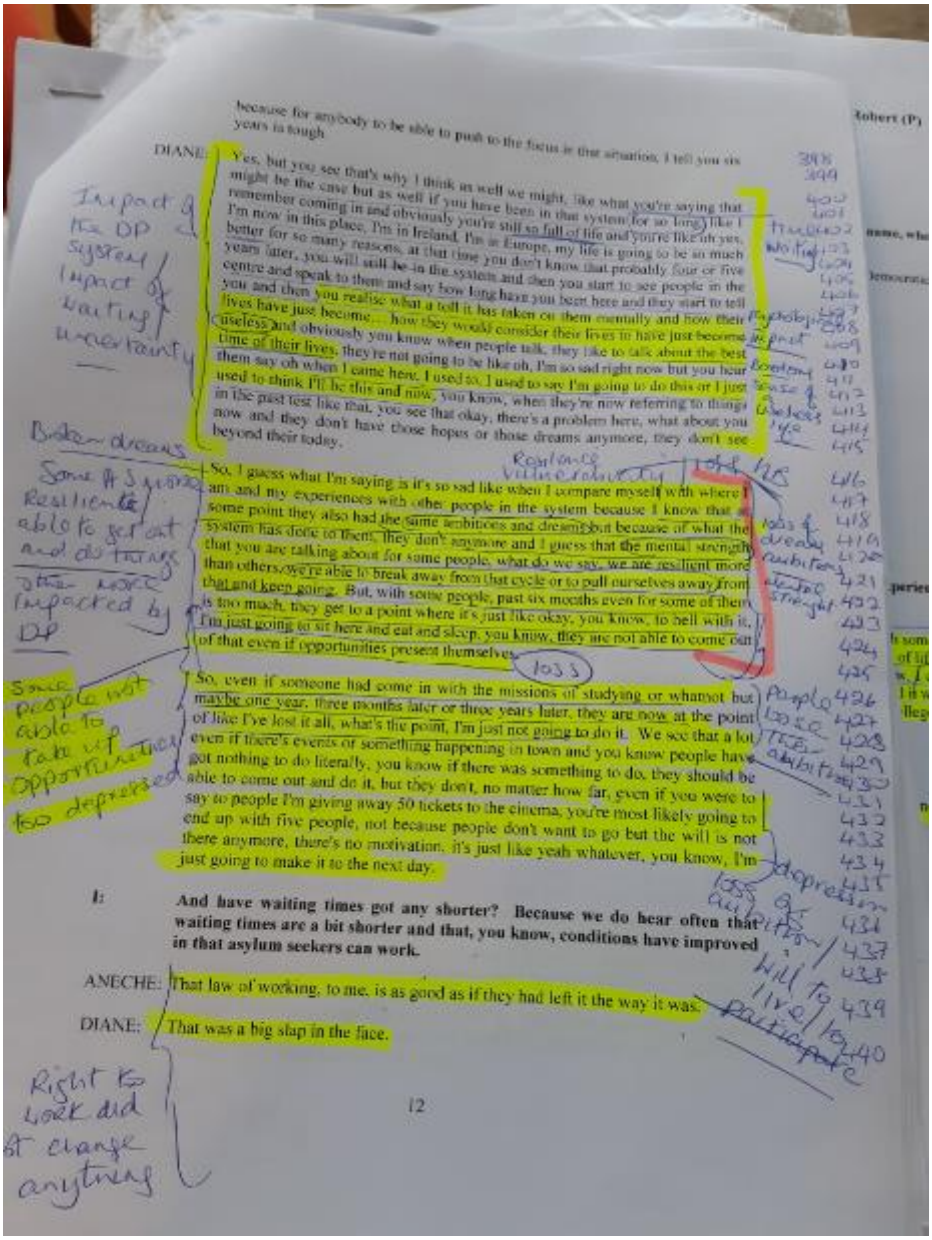
[redacted]: To go to work, do something. I can't be every day, wake up in the morning

Greg: Yes, it's the lack of structure and control over you your life

Marilyn: to clean you mobile will take you five minutes

12

2) Phase 2 of Analysis- Excerpt from 2nd Focus Group



because for anybody to be able to push to the focus in that situation, I tell you six years is tough

DIANE: Yes, but you see that's why I think as well we might, like what you're saying that might be the case but as well if you have been in that system for so long like I remember coming in and obviously you're still so full of life and you're like uh yes, I'm now in this place, I'm in Ireland, I'm in Europe, my life is going to be so much better for so many reasons, at that time you don't know that probably four or five years later, you will still be in the system and then you start to see people in the centre and speak to them and say how long have you been here and they start to tell you and then you realise what a toll it has taken on them emotally and how their lives have just become… how they would consider their lives to have just become useless and obviously you know when people talk, they like to talk about the best time of their lives, they're not going to be like oh, I'm so sad right now but you hear them say oh when I came here, I used to, I used to say I'm going to do this or I just used to think I'll be this and now, you know, when they're now referring to things in the past test like that, you see that okay, there's a problem here, what about you now and they don't have those hopes or those dreams anymore, they don't see beyond their today.

So, I guess what I'm saying is it's so sad like when I compare myself with where I am and my experiences with other people in the system because I know that at some point they also had the same ambitions and dreams but because of what the system has done to them, they don't anymore and I guess that the mental strength that you are talking about for some people, what do we say, we are resilient more than others, we're able to break away from that cycle or to pull ourselves away from that and keep going. But, with some people, past six months even for some of them is too much, they get to a point where it's just like okay, you know, to hell with it, I'm just going to sit here and eat and sleep, you know, they are not able to come out of that even if opportunities present themselves.

So, even if someone had come in with the missions of studying or whatnot but maybe one year, three months later or three years later, they are now at the point of like I've lost it all, what's the point, I'm just not going to do it. We see that a lot even if there's events or something happening in town and you know people have got nothing to do literally, you know if there was something to do, they should be able to come out and do it, but they don't, no matter how far, even if you were to say to people I'm giving away 50 tickets to the cinema, you're most likely going to end up with five people, not because people don't want to go but the will is not there anymore, there's no motivation, it's just like yeah whatever, you know, I'm just going to make it to the next day.

I: **And have waiting times got any shorter? Because we do hear often that waiting times are a bit shorter and that, you know, conditions have improved in that asylum seekers can work.**

ANECHE: That law of working, to me, is as good as if they had left it the way it was.

DIANE: That was a big slap in the face.

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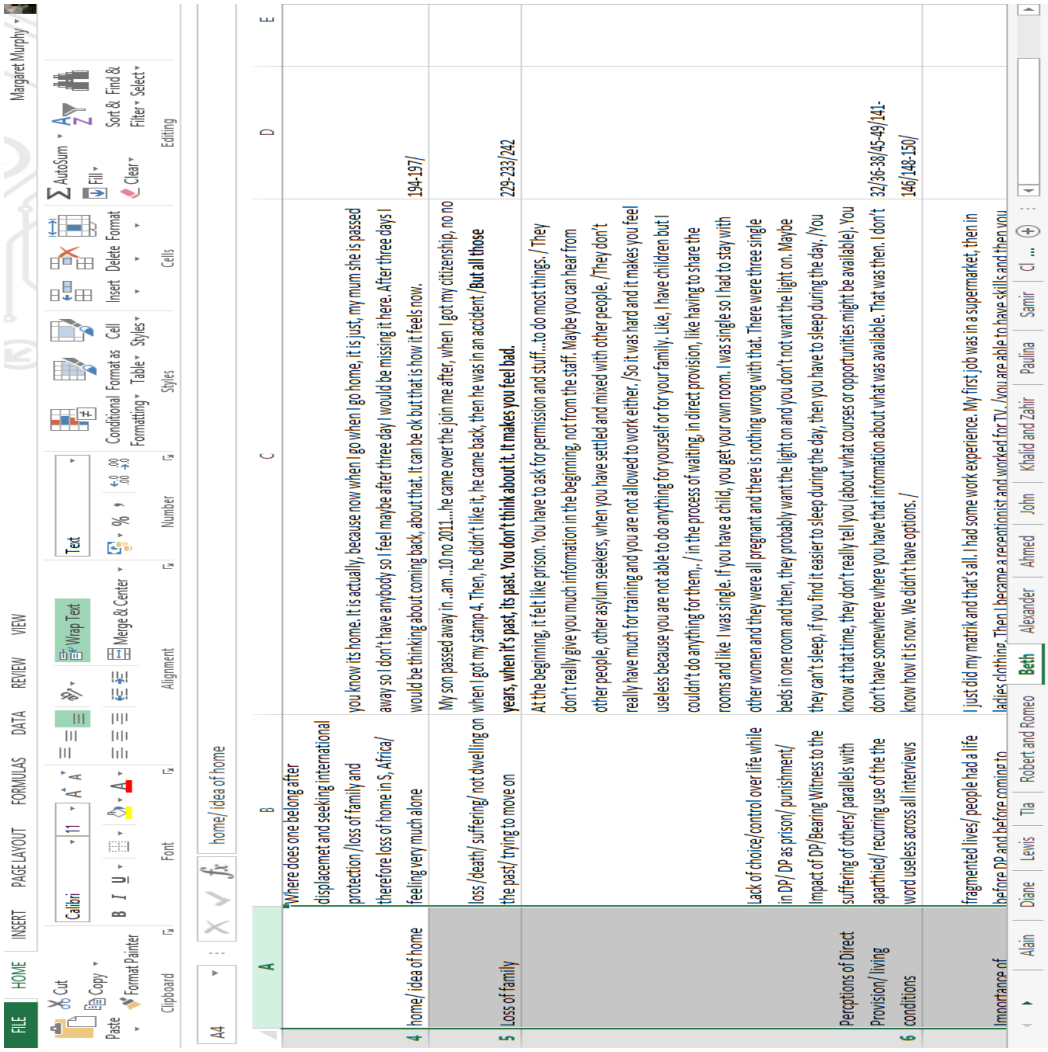
Appendix J: Phase 2 of the Analysis –Spreadsheet 1 'Initial Analysis of Interviews and Focus Groups' containing individual worksheets for each participant interview and Focus Group

Analysis of Interview with Beth –(Headings in worksheets show 1) potential themes; 2) comments from the researcher; 3) quotations from the interviews and line number taken from the original transcript)



	A	B	C	D	E
4	home/ idea of home	Where does one belong after displacemet and seeking international protection / loss of family and therefore loss of home in S, Africa/ feeling very much alone	you know its home. It is actually, because now when I go when I go home, it is just, my mum she is passed away so I don't have anybody so I feel maybe after three day I would be missing it here. After three days I would be thinking about coming back, about that. It can be ok but that is how it feels now.	194-197/	
5	Loss of family	loss /death/ suffering/ not dwelling on the past/ trying to move on	My son passed away in ...am ...10 no 2011...he came over the join me after, when I got my citizenship, no no when I got my stamp 4. Then, he didn't like it, he came back, then he was in an accident /**But all those years, when it's past, its past. You don't think about it. It makes you feel bad.**	229-233/242	
6	Perceptions of Direct Provision/ living conditions	Lack of choice/control over life while in DP/ DP as prison/ punishment/ Impact of DP/Bearing Witness to the suffering of others/ parallels with apartheid/ recurring use of the the word useless across all interviews	At the beginning, it felt like prison. You have to ask for permission and stuff...to do most things. /They don't really give you much information in the beginning, not from the staff. Maybe you can hear from other people, other asylum seekers, when you have settled and mixed with other people. /They don't really have much for training and you are not allowed to work either. /So it was hard and it makes you feel useless because you are not able to do anything for yourself or for your family. Like, I have children but I couldn't do anything for them,. / In the process of waiting, in direct provision, like having to share the rooms and like I was single. If you have a child, you get your own room. I was single so I had to stay with other women and they were all pregnant and there is nothing wrong with that. There were three single beds in one room and then, they probably want the light on and you don't not want the light on. Maybe they can't sleep, if you find it easier to sleep during the day, then you have to sleep during the day, /You know at that time, they don't really tell you (about what courses or opportunities might be available). You don't have somewhere where you have that information about what was available. That was then. I don't know how it is now. We didn't have options. /	32/36-38/45-49/141-146/148-150/	
	Importance of	fragmented lives/ people had a life before DP and before coming to	I just did my matrik and that's all. I had some work experience. My first job was in a supermarket, then in ladies clothing. Then I became a receptionist and worked for TV. /you are able to have skills and then you		

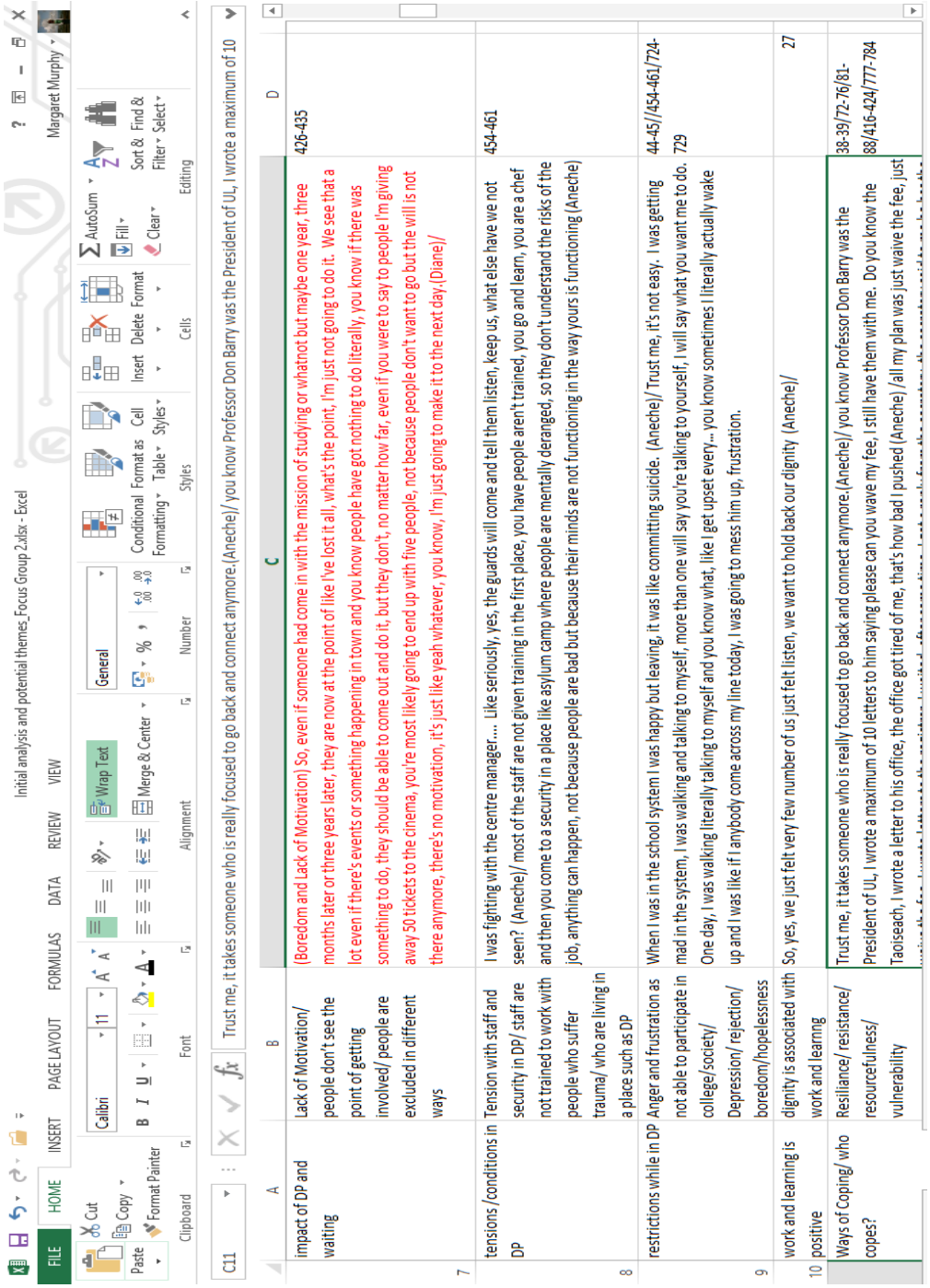
Analysis of Interview with Alain

	A	B	C	D
14	importance of education	the importance of planning for the future/ need for ed qualifications but difficult to progress while in DP/ restricted from progressing to degree level	so probably I'll go for a PLC course/you know, let's say ... Let's talk about school. You can't go further than level 4 or 5. You're denied from being to level 6 to level 7, because you could go out before. Because it's actually like something which is very important.	183/347-350
15	Safety/ friendship/support dependancy from others in a similar situation /ways of making friends	The importance of meeting other unaccompanied children/ solidarity with others in the same situation/ the need to share expereinces of joy, loss etc/ the importance of friendships and support from others and from school	And like I here in (inaudible) we get to meet, like we meet up sometimes once in a week, so its something good. You know, like me. So we get to share ideas and you meet different people....And they're in the same situation as me. So we get to share ideas and so encourage each other so you know how to go forward. / Yeah, I've joined some youth clubs. /Yeah, actually you've some (other aged-out unaccompanied minors) in youth class. Actually in school. Yeah, there are some in school. They all come over separate. All of us in the same process. So we do talk sometimes, sometimes yeah.	193-196/188/302-303
16	Fun moments/sport as a way of making an entry into a group	people find ways to make friends / to get to know people/ different ways of belonging	Yeah, sometimes because I play basketball, so sometimes I might find friends on the basketball court, you know what I mean? So I play, that's it. For me, it might be different for other people who like to drink. I don't drink so-	193-198
17	heterogenity of experiences	people have their own stories about why they seek asylum and what troubles them/ the uniqueness of experiences of seeking international protection	in the centre because everyone now has his own story	392
18	waiting/ not knowing /bureaucracy	lack of control over one's legal sitation/ changing procedures/ managing on his own/waiting for a date for a hearing/ having to present a story at the legal hearing	That's right, the single procedure. So actually I had to hand out the new questionnaire because I'm finished completing it so I have to wait for a date, hearing date./Because they know actually ... They have experience so they might tell you, you have to do this in the right. Although the story stays the same, because I'm the owner of the story. They won't change it. They just guide me, in a good way, you know what I mean? /. Some people have been there for more than 10 years.	382-384/393-395/503-504

Analysis of First Focus Group

	B	C	D	E
1	1st Focus Group			
2	Potential subordinate theme	Comment	Quotations	
3	School is a positive place	people feel different in different spaces/ the importance of relationships outside of DP	They seem to like the school here. They seem to really like it. They come into their own when they are in school. I'm sure that is the only part, where they feel normal, you know when they are in school. For some reason, the schools are very receptive. (Greg)	5-7
4	NGO's/ Voluntary Organisaitons reach out the AS and not the state	help from individual institutions/ individuals but not really the state/ who will help in acessing education / cost of education	I would say that the college, they have tried, they have tried in this part year to incorporate most of the ...They have tried to come to the people, they have really tried. The college have really tried to come to the people with this adult education system...(Greg)/ You have a kid who has done school, with me,it was the grace of the college that they analyse the results adn they feel that it was like too good brains to go to waste. So they said' bring the kid, however much you pay, it will be alright. So I normally pay about forty-five euros a month (Greg)/	551-553/585-588
	Difference between adult and child	adults feeling depressed/ children have a better experience / greater acceptance of Children in society / children having their own lives	Us adults, it seems like we are foreigners (Greg)/ I think our kids are coping better. Its just us is depressed (Greg)/ children are accepting other children more easily than adults/ children are accepting other children more easily than adults...you understand? So they don't care where you are from. This is my friend and it doesn't matter where you stay. Things like that. ..yah. (Marlyn)	8/69/88-90
5	Asylum Seeker Experience/			
	Solidarity among children of similar background	children adapt and find friends/ often those in a similar situation	there were only two immigrant kids that I could see, one South African boy and him. Normally, because of the language issues, this affinity between the child..cos we speak mostly the same language. I could see, like ok, that this one, my boy is a bit clever but I always think he is a loner, but they look happy. Ok ..this is his world now. (Greg)	18-22/
6			You know from the fact that you can't work and cannot provide what they are used to in life. I mean ..my children was already..because I have a 13 years old, an 11 and a 6 year old. The 6 year old is fine but the two	

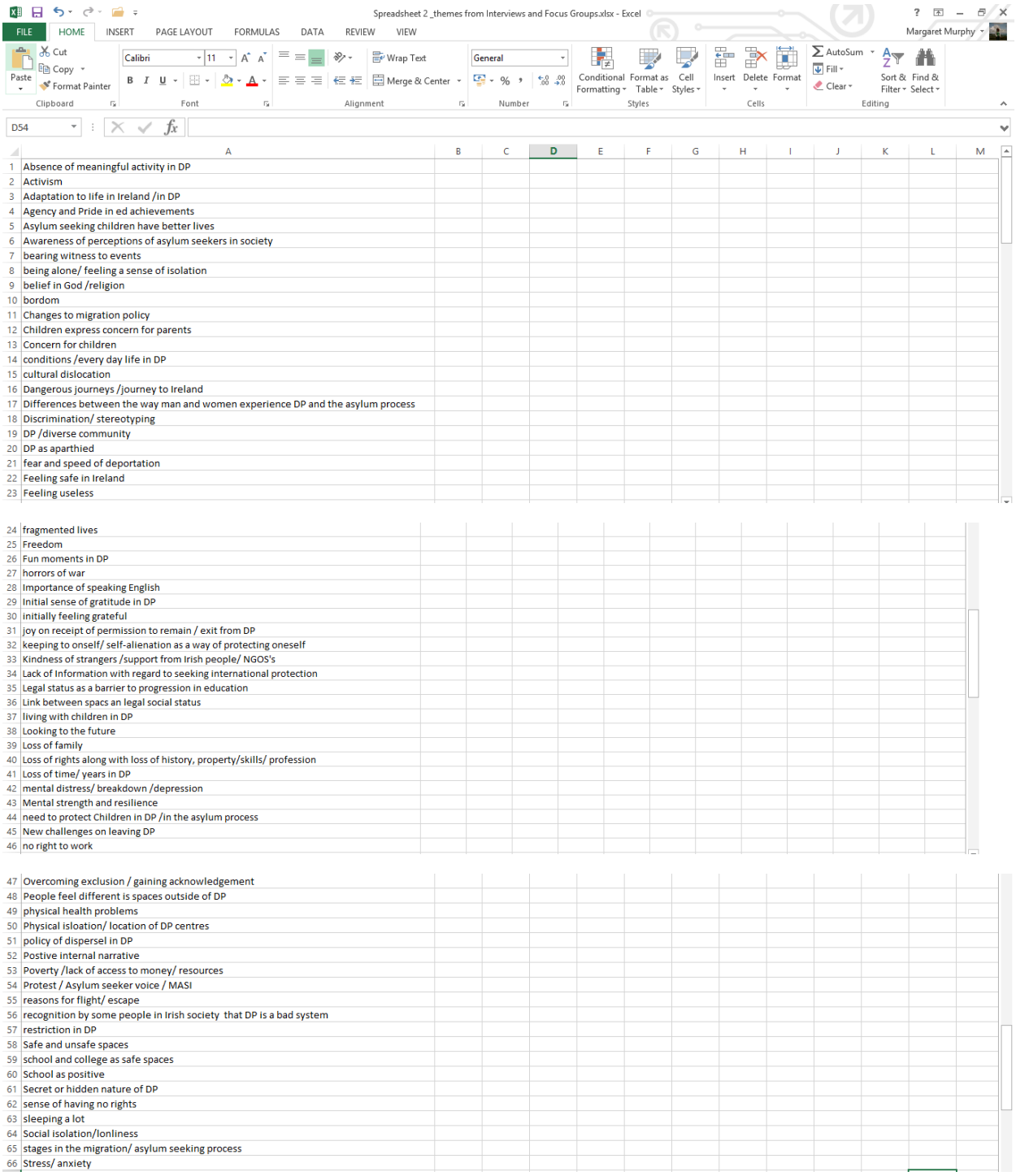
Analysis of Second Focus Group



	A	B	C	D
7	impact of DP and waiting	Lack of Motivation/ people don't see the point of getting involved/ people are excluded in different ways	(Boredom and Lack of Motivation) So, even if someone had come in with the mission of studying or whatnot but maybe one year, three months later or three years later, they are now at the point of like I've lost it all, what's the point, I'm just not going to do it. We see that a lot even if there's events or something happening in town and you know people have got nothing to do literally, you know if there was something to do, they should be able to come out and do it, but they don't, no matter how far, even if you were to say to people I'm giving away 50 tickets to the cinema, you're most likely going to end up with five people, not because people don't want to go but the will is not there anymore, there's no motivation, it's just like yeah whatever, you know, I'm just going to make it to the next day.(Diane)/	426-435
8	tensions /conditions in DP	Tension with staff and security in DP/ staff are not trained to work with people who suffer trauma/ who are living in a place such as DP	I was fighting with the centre manager.... Like seriously, yes, the guards will come and tell them listen, keep us, what else have we not seen? (Aneche)/ most of the staff are not given training in the first place, you have people aren't trained, you go and learn, you are a chef and then you come to a security in a place like asylum camp where people are mentally deranged, so they don't understand the risks of the job, anything can happen, not because people are bad but because their minds are not functioning in the way yours is functioning (Aneche)	454-461
9	restrictions while in DP	Anger and frustration as not able to participate in college/society/ Depression/ rejection/ boredom/hopelessness	When I was in the school system I was happy but leaving, it was like committing suicide. (Aneche)/ Trust me, it's not easy. I was getting mad in the system, I was walking and talking to myself, more than one will say you're talking to yourself, I will say what you want me to do. One day, I was walking literally talking to myself and you know what, like I get upset every... you know sometimes I literally actually wake up and I was like if I anybody come across my line today, I was going to mess him up, frustration.	44-45//454-461/724-729
10	work and learning is positive	dignity is associated with work and learnng	So, yes, we just felt very few number of us just felt listen, we want to hold back our dignity (Aneche)/	27
	Ways of Coping/ who copes?	Resiliance/ resistance/ resourcefulness/ vulnerability	Trust me, it takes someone who is really focused to go back and connect anymore.(Aneche)/ you know Professor Don Barry was the President of UL, I wrote a maximum of 10 letters to him saying please can you wave my fee, I still have them with me. Do you know the Taoiseach, I wrote a letter to his office, the office got tired of me, that's how bad I pushed (Aneche) /all my plan was just waive the fee, just	38-39/72-76/81-88/416-424/777-784

Appendix K: Analysis of Interviews and Focus Groups- Spreadsheet 2 showing a list of preliminary subordinate themes

List of Subordinate themes from Interviews

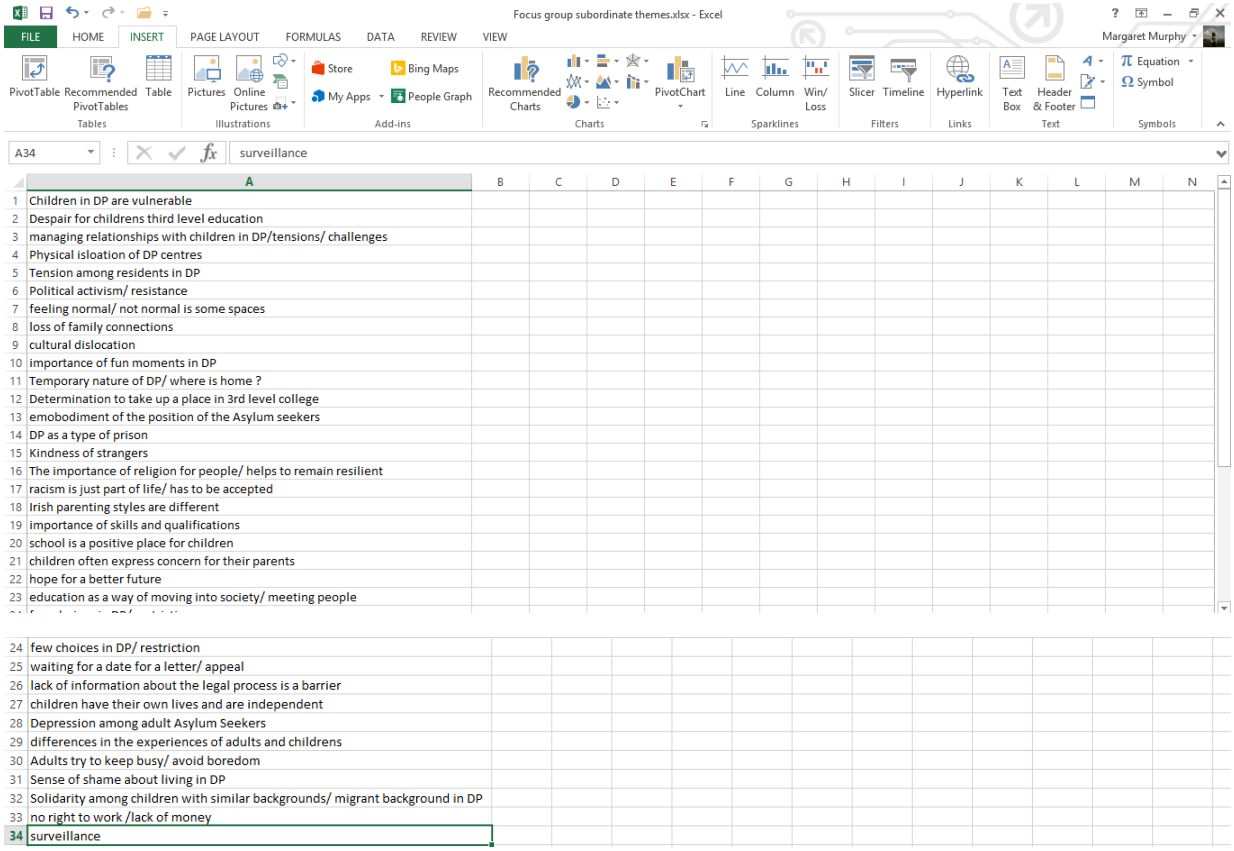


	A
1	Absence of meaningful activity in DP
2	Activism
3	Adaptation to life in Ireland /in DP
4	Agency and Pride in ed achievements
5	Asylum seeking children have better lives
6	Awareness of perceptions of asylum seekers in society
7	bearing witness to events
8	being alone/ feeling a sense of isolation
9	belief in God /religion
10	bordom
11	Changes to migration policy
12	Children express concern for parents
13	Concern for children
14	conditions /every day life in DP
15	cultural dislocation
16	Dangerous journeys /journey to Ireland
17	Differences between the way man and women experience DP and the asylum process
18	Discrimination/ stereotyping
19	DP /diverse community
20	DP as aparthied
21	fear and speed of deportation
22	Feeling safe in Ireland
23	Feeling useless
24	fragmented lives
25	Freedom
26	Fun moments in DP
27	horrors of war
28	Importance of speaking English
29	Initial sense of gratitude in DP
30	initially feeling grateful
31	joy on receipt of permission to remain / exit from DP
32	keeping to onself/ self-alienation as a way of protecting oneself
33	Kindness of strangers /support from Irish people/ NGOS's
34	Lack of Information with regard to seeking international protection
35	Legal status as a barrier to progression in education
36	Link between spacs an legal social status
37	living with children in DP
38	Looking to the future
39	Loss of family
40	Loss of rights along with loss of history, property/skills/ profession
41	Loss of time/ years in DP
42	mental distress/ breakdown /depression
43	Mental strength and resilience
44	need to protect Children in DP /in the asylum process
45	New challenges on leaving DP
46	no right to work
47	Overcoming exclusion / gaining acknowledgement
48	People feel different is spaces outside of DP
49	physical health problems
50	Physical isloation/ location of DP centres
51	policy of dispersel in DP
52	Postive internal narrative
53	Poverty /lack of access to money/ resources
54	Protest / Asylum seeker voice / MASI
55	reasons for flight/ escape
56	recognition by some people in Irish society that DP is a bad system
57	restriction in DP
58	Safe and unsafe spaces
59	school and college as safe spaces
60	School as positive
61	Secret or hidden nature of DP
62	sense of having no rights
63	sleeping a lot
64	Social isolation/lonliness
65	stages in the migration/ asylum seeking process
66	Stress/ anxiety

67	Support and solidarity from others in DP/ a sense of community
68	Surveillance in DP
69	Suspicion of asylum seeker/ suspicion of structures/ others
70	Suspicion of processes and structures associated with seeking Int protection
71	Temporary nature of life in DP/ feeling like an unwanted guest
72	Tension among residents/ disagreements
73	Tension with Management in DP
74	The arts as a distraction/ escape
75	Time passes slowly in DP
76	trust/ mistrust
77	using wating time in a positive way
78	waiting for an appeal date
79	waiting for family reunification/ family members/ bureaucracy/ stress
80	Waiting for letters/ papers
81	Waiting means to erosion of dream and aspirations
82	Ways of belonging
83	participation in work and education as a mean to belong
84	Where is home?
85	friendships/ connection to others
86	The impotance of family
87	The role of the school/ education in helping people to belong
88	work as means to belong
89	differences between adult and children sense of belonging and home

90	differences between adult and children sense of belonging and home
91	the apprearance of compliance/ but resistance
92	
93	
94	
95	

List of Subordinate themes from First Focus Group



	A
1	Children in DP are vulnerable
2	Despair for childrens third level education
3	managing relationships with children in DP/tensions/ challenges
4	Physical isloation of DP centres
5	Tension among residents in DP
6	Political activism/ resistance
7	feeling normal/ not normal is some spaces
8	loss of family connections
9	cultural dislocation
10	importance of fun moments in DP
11	Temporary nature of DP/ where is home ?
12	Determination to take up a place in 3rd level college
13	emobodiment of the position of the Asylum seekers
14	DP as a type of prison
15	Kindness of strangers
16	The importance of religion for people/ helps to remain resilient
17	racism is just part of life/ has to be accepted
18	Irish parenting styles are different
19	importance of skills and qualifications
20	school is a positive place for children
21	children often express concern for their parents
22	hope for a better future
23	education as a way of moving into society/ meeting people
24	few choices in DP/ restriction
25	waiting for a date for a letter/ appeal
26	lack of information about the legal process is a barrier
27	children have their own lives and are independent
28	Depression among adult Asylum Seekers
29	differences in the experiences of adults and childrens
30	Adults try to keep busy/ avoid boredom
31	Sense of shame about living in DP
32	Solidarity among children with similar backgrounds/ migrant background in DP
33	no right to work /lack of money
34	surveillance

List of Subordinate themes from Second Focus Group

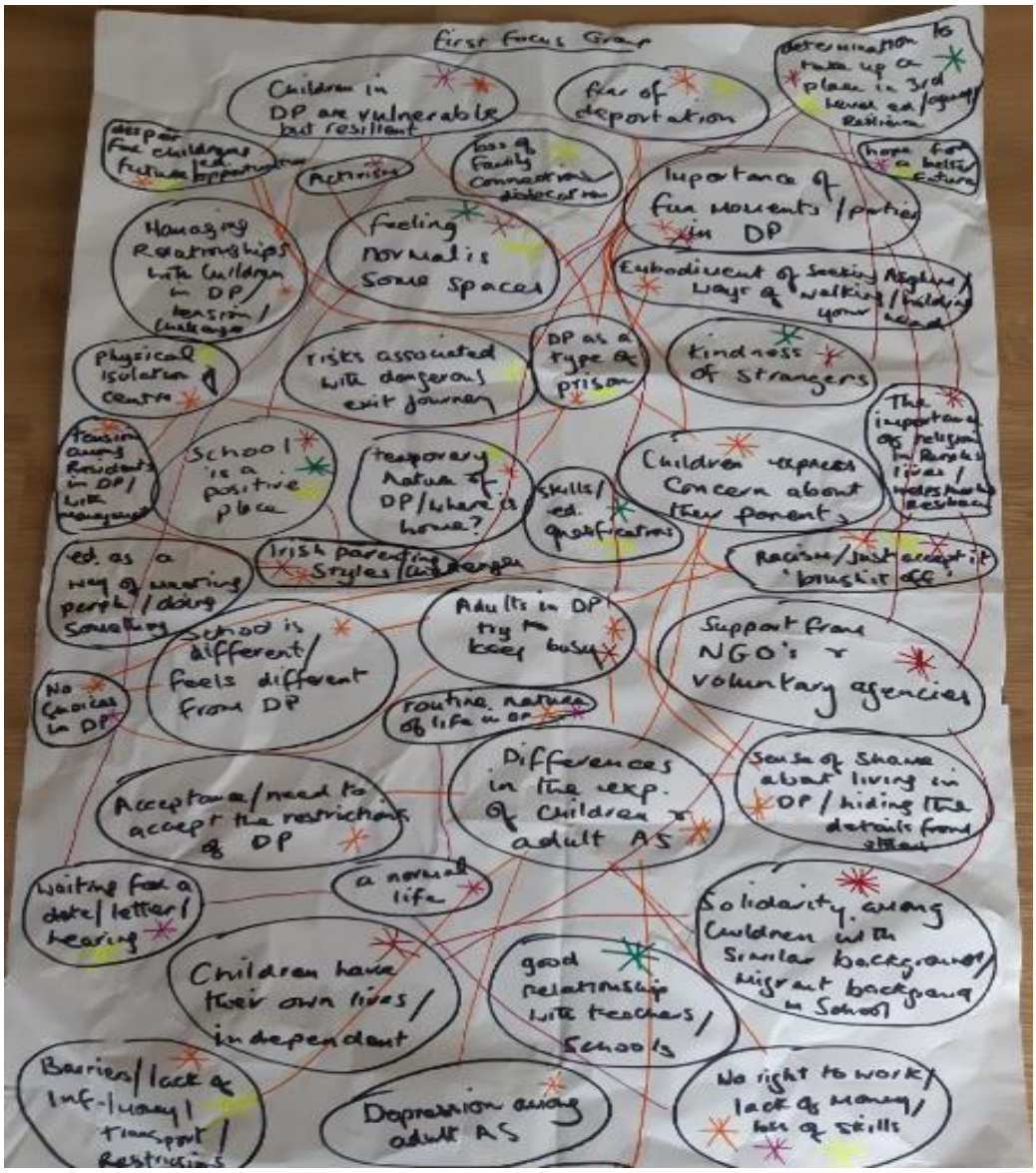
	A
1	Waiting to move on with life/ to go to college
2	suspicion of legal system/ DP
3	freedom
4	Lost time
5	Conditions in DP
6	restrictions while in DP
7	work and learning is positive
8	Ways of Coping/ who copes?
9	Time passes differently in College
10	cost of third level education /access to study and work
11	Distrust in the legal system / confusion
12	Wanting to be a good citizen/ wanting freedom and to move with life/ be a taxpayer
13	Children having to experience DP/ they have to wait also
14	People are demotivated while in DP
15	Depression and a sense of hopelessness
16	Tension with staff and security in DP
17	Anger and frustration as not able to participate in college/society/
18	dignity is associated with work and learnng
19	Resiliance/ resourcefulness in managing money /while waiting /little freedom
20	Broken dreams/ reviving dreams
21	Identity/ Positioning /Are you always a refugee/ moving on from a particular narrative
22	Fragmented lives / receipt of status/ leave to remain
23	Kindness of others in society /help does not come from govt.
24	college as a place of inclusion/ enables a sense of belonging
25	Being a role model for her children by going to college
26	studying just to stay busy
27	being a students helps to build a case to remain in ireland / multiple benefits of going to college
28	Experience of College (Freedom/ Inclusion/ Recognition/ change
29	lack of money/ funding for college/ choices that have to be made
30	Lack of choice/control over life while in DP/ surveillance
31	Fears/ barriers around not being able to progress with university course /uncertainty
32	Education/a way of making friends
33	Education as a way of filling time
34	Living in hope/ Hopes for the future
35	Racism and Discrimination/ religious discrimination/ stereotyping
36	Envy among residents in DP
37	Breaking new ground for Asylum Seekers
38	changes to the law/ the right to work
39	Deportation/ fear of deportation
40	Bearing Witness/ watching others decline
41	sense of achievement
42	
43	

Appendix L: - Phase 5 of Analysis: Mapping Activity

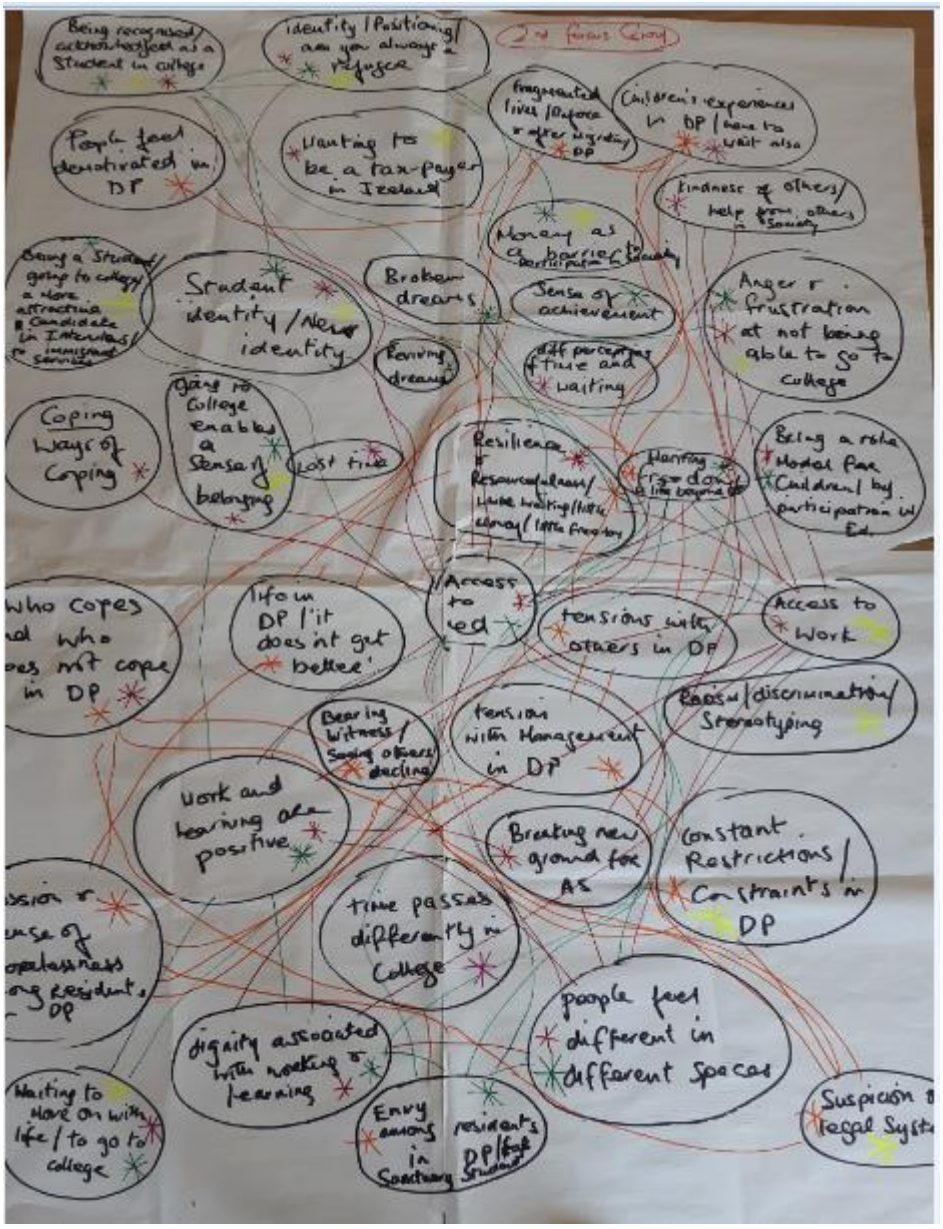
Mapping of subordinate themes from Interviews

Close-up of Mapping Exercise of subordinate themes from Interviews

Mapping of Subordinate themes from First Focus Group



Mapping of subordinate themes from Second Focus Group

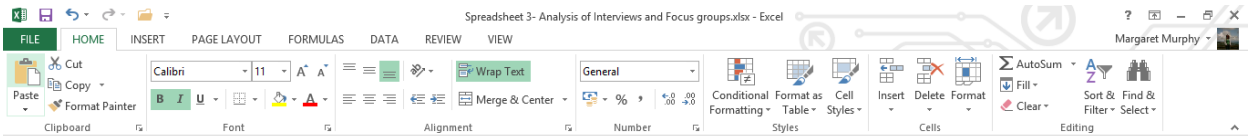


Appendix M: - Analysis of Mapping Exercise using Spreadsheet 3 (arriving at superordinate themes)

Interviews - subordinate themes and preliminary superordinate themes (before subsumption)

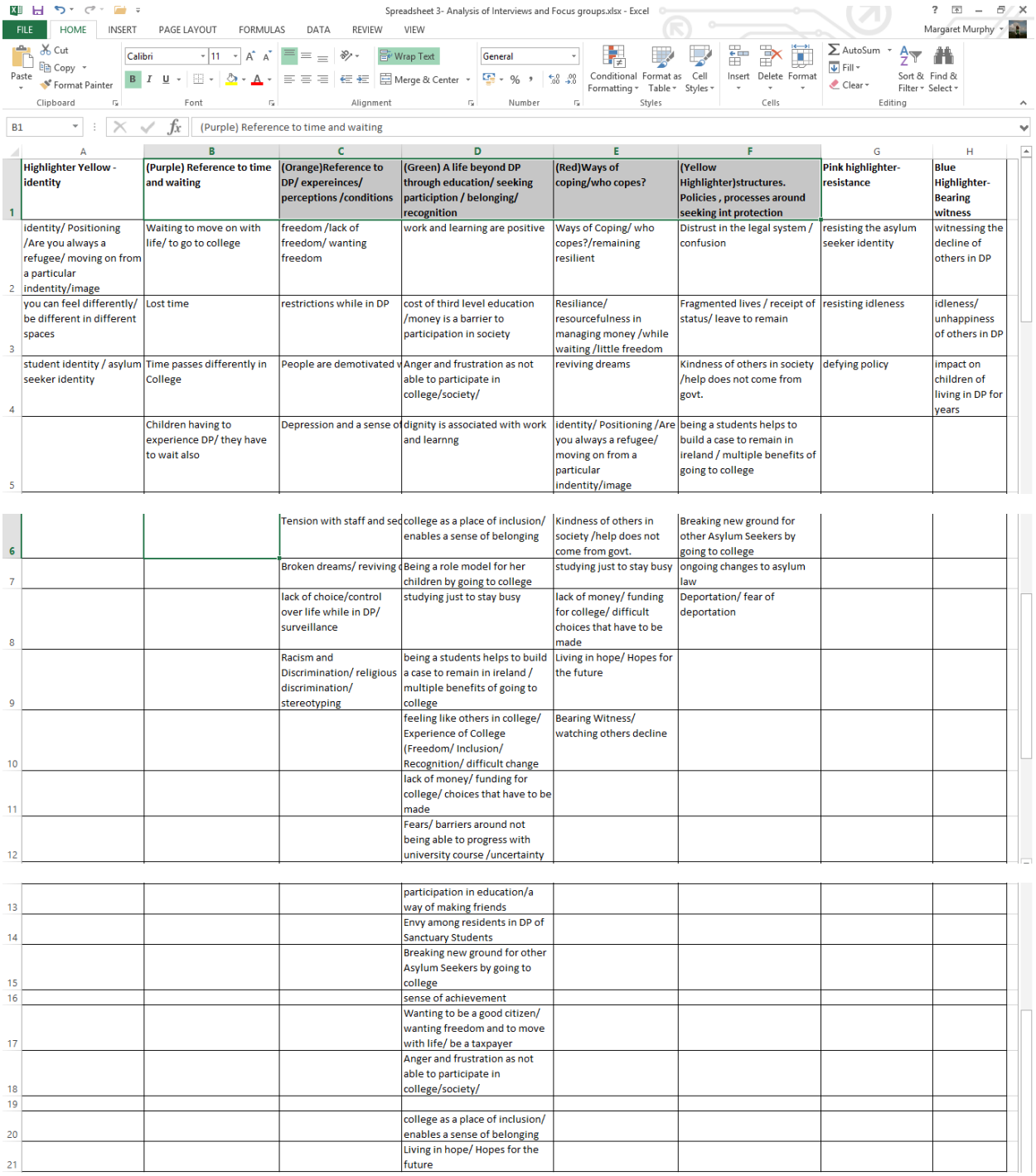
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
1	***Orange- reference to DP***	***Green -ways of engaging with the world/irish society***	***Red - how does one cope ?***	***Yellow highlighter- State structures/ policies/ practices***	***Purple -Waiting and time***	***Blue Highlighter- Resistance***	***Pink highlighter- Belonging***
2	feeling useless/ connected to bad on work/ restrictions	Overcoming exclusion /gaining recognition from others	kindness of strangers	awareness of perceptions of AS/ created through policy and govt discourse	Waiting for letters/ papers	Resisting invisiblity	Where is home?
3	no right to work	Ways of belonging and integrating	political activism	trust/ mistrust / suspicion	having too much time/ no right to work	Attending college	friendships/ connection to others
4	people sleep a lot	No right to work	waiting/ looking forward to family unification	discrimination/ stereotyping	a sense of endless/ directionless waiting	Making friends	The impotance of family
5	trust and mistrust	limited access to 3rd level education	support from others in DP/ solidarity and friendship among residents	resistance	how can one belong when waiting/ uncertainty	conneting with Irish soceity	school/ education in helping people to belong
6	differences between men's and women's experiences of DP	Resistance to positioning/ to restrictive nature of DP	feeling safe in Ireland	secret and hidden nature of DP	different perceptions of time	activism and protest /but small acts of defiance also	work as means to belong
7	physical isolation/ remote location/ no transport	school as a positive place	engagement with education	loss of rights/ history/ profession/ skills/ due to policies	feeling useless/ idle connected to boredom and not being able to work	the apprearance of compliance/ but resistance	differences between adult and children sense of belonging and home
8	tension and disagreement with management	College as a positive place	overcoming exclusion	fragmented lives	waiting for family reunification		
9	tension and disagreement among residents	Safe and unsafe spaces	support from others in DP/ solidarity and friendship among residents	waiting is part of the legal process	waiting for a date for a hearing /an appeal		
10	stressful environment	structures, policies and practices	Participation in education /volunteering	the horrors of war/ remembering in the interview /appeals process	changes to migration policy can happen quickly		
11	living in a small space	agency and pride in ed. achievements	fun/positive moments in DP e.g.. birthday parties. Lasting friendships	Tensions in DP with management/ among residents	speed and fear of deportation		
12	secret /hidden nature of DP	people feel different in spaces outside of DP	agency and pride in ed. Achievements	Protest/ activism	always looking to the future		
13	DP/ described as apartheid	wanting freedom	mental strength /positivity	where is one allowed to be? Who is allowed to enter and be part of society ?	trying to forget the past		
14	absence of meaningful activity	Legal status is a barrier to progression/ to moving on with life	positive internal narrative	laws/ policies/ structures	temporary nature of DP/ uncertainty		
15	positioning of people in DP	volunteering is a way of keeping busy and participating	keeping to oneself/ self-alienation	stress and anxiety associated with legal processes			
16	mental distress/ breakdown/ physical health problems	stages in the migration process	protest/ MASI / asylum seeker voice	lack of information about the legal process			
17	living with children in DP/ need to protect them/ how do you explain the situation/conditions to them		need to overcome new challenges all the time /even on leaving DP	Joy and relief on receipt of permission to remain/ citizenship			
18	surveillance		a strong belief on God	stages in the process of seeking International protection			
19	cultural dislocation		engagement with the Arts as a form of distraction	impact on physical and mental health of policies			
20	children have better lives than adults in DP		remembering the horrors of war	reference to waiting envelopes/ letters/ powerlessness			
21	constant restrictions/ barriers			What is reception? Gap between expectations and reality			
22	wanting to be a good mother when in DP			rightlessness and statelessness			
23	dispersal						
24	initial sense of gratitude in DP						
25	temporary nature of life/ feeling like an unwanted guest						
26	DP described as prison						
27							
28							
29							

First Focus Group- subordinate themes and preliminary superordinate themes (before subsumption)



	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
1	***(Purple) Reference to time and waiting***	***(Orange)Reference to DP/ expereinces/ perceptions /conditions***	***(Green) participation / belonging/ recognition***	***(Red)Ways of coping/who copes?***	***(Yellow Highlighter)structures. Policies , processes around seeking int protection***	***Blue highlighter- Children's experiences of education and seeking int. protection***	***Pink Highlighter - Loss***	***Dark Blue Marker- Education***
2	Waiting for a date for a letter/ appeal	Children in DP are vulnerable	feeling normal/ not normal is some spaces	Political activism/ resistance	Embodiment of the position of the Asylum seekers	Children in DP are vulnerable	loss of family connections	Determination to take up a place in 3rd level college
3	how to explain waiting to children	Despair for childrens third level education	few choices in DP/ restriction	Kindness of strangers	racism/ discrimination is just part of life/ has to be accepted	Despair for childrens third level education	Loss of skills and work	Schools is positive place
4	not knowing when you will receive a response to asylum application	managing relationships with children in DP/tensions/ challenges	differences in the experiences of adults and childrens	Children as a support/ keeps one busy	lack of information about the legal process is a barrier	managing relationships with children in DP/tensions/ challenges	cultural dislocation	importance of skills and qualifications
5		Physical isloation of DP centres	Adults try to keep busy/ avoid boredom	The importance of religion for people/ helps to remain resilient		Irish parenting styles are different		education as a way of moving into society/ meeting people
6		Tension among residents in DP		an assumption that education for adults is a solution to DP		children often express concern for their parents		loss of income
7		feeling normal/ not normal is some spaces		hope for a better future		children have their own lives and are independent		
8		Feeling useless		Adults try to keep busy/ avoid boredom		differences in the experiences of adults and childrens		
9		importance of fun moments in DP		Solidarity among people with similar backgrounds/ expereinces in DP/ in school		Sense of shame about living in DP		
10		Temporary nature of DP/ where is home ?				Solidarity among children with similar backgrounds/ migrant background in DP		
11		DP as a type of prison						
12		Depression among adult Asylum Seekers						
13		Sleeping a lot						
14		Sense of shame about living in DP						
15		Surveillance						
16		the inescapability of DP						
17								
18								

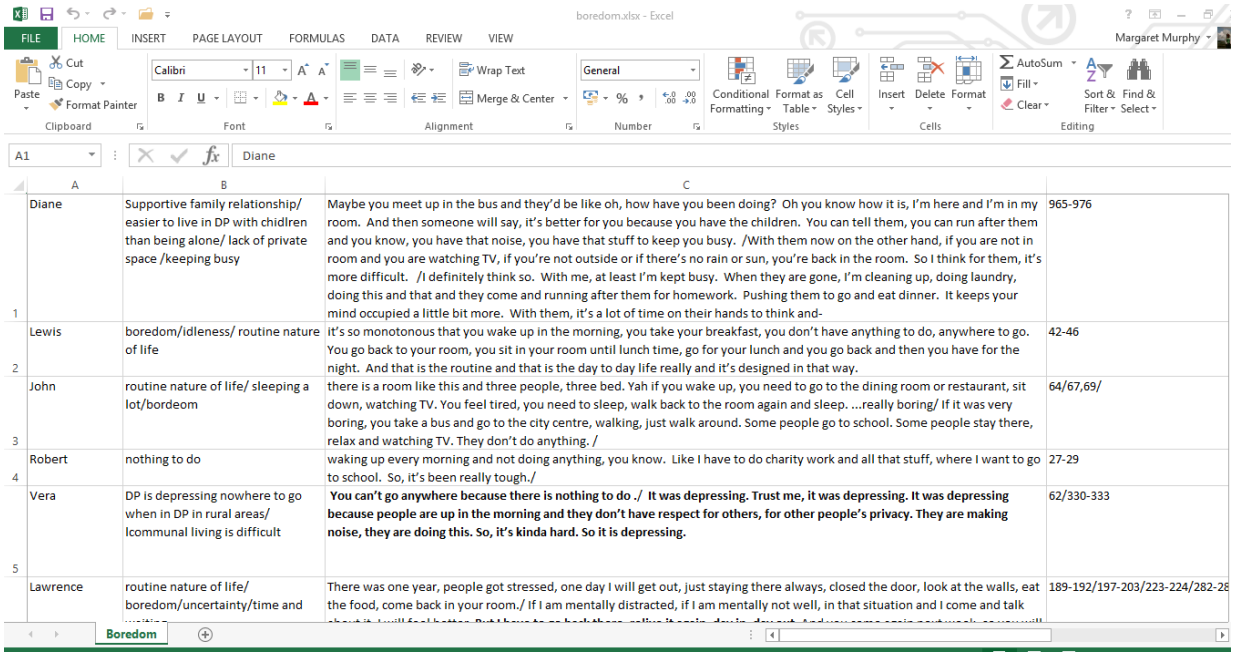
Second Focus Group- subordinate themes and preliminary superordinate themes (before subsumption)



	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
1	**Highlighter Yellow - identity**	**(Purple) Reference to time and waiting**	**(Orange)Reference to DP/ expereinces/ perceptions /conditions**	**(Green) A life beyond DP through education/ seeking participiption / belonging/ recognition**	**(Red)Ways of coping/who copes?**	**(Yellow Highlighter)structures. Policies , processes around seeking int protection**	**Pink highlighter- resistance**	**Blue Highlighter- Bearing witness**
2	identity/ Positioning /Are you always a refugee/ moving on from a particular indentity/image	Waiting to move on with life/ to go to college	freedom /lack of freedom/ wanting freedom	work and learning are positive	Ways of Coping/ who copes?/remaining resilient	Distrust in the legal system / confusion	resisting the asylum seeker identity	witnessing the decline of others in DP
3	you can feel differently/ be different in different spaces	Lost time	restrictions while in DP	cost of third level education /money is a barrier to participation in society	Resiliance/ resourcefulness in managing money /while waiting /little freedom	Fragmented lives / receipt of status/ leave to remain	resisting idleness	idleness/ unhappiness of others in DP
4	student identity / asylum seeker identity	Time passes differently in College	People are demotivated v	Anger and frustration as not able to participate in college/society/	reviving dreams	Kindness of others in society /help does not come from govt.	defying policy	impact on children of living in DP for years
5		Children having to experience DP/ they have to wait also	Depression and a sense of	dignity is associated with work and learnng	identity/ Positioning /Are you always a refugee/ moving on from a particular indentity/image	being a students helps to build a case to remain in ireland / multiple benefits of going to college		
6			Tension with staff and sec	college as a place of inclusion/ enables a sense of belonging	Kindness of others in society /help does not come from govt.	Breaking new ground for other Asylum Seekers by going to college		
7			Broken dreams/ reviving (	Being a role model for her children by going to college	studying just to stay busy	ongoing changes to asylum law		
8			lack of choice/control over life while in DP/ surveillance	studying just to stay busy	lack of money/ funding for college/ difficult choices that have to be made	Deportation/ fear of deportation		
9			Racism and Discrimination/ religious discrimination/ stereotyping	being a students helps to build a case to remain in ireland / multiple benefits of going to college	Living in hope/ Hopes for the future			
10				feeling like others in college/ Experience of College (Freedom/ Inclusion/ Recognition/ difficult change	Bearing Witness/ watching others decline			
11				lack of money/ funding for college/ choices that have to be made				
12				Fears/ barriers around not being able to progress with university course /uncertainty				
13				participation in education/a way of making friends				
14				Envy among residents in DP of Sanctuary Students				
15				Breaking new ground for other Asylum Seekers by going to college				
16				sense of achievement				
17				Wanting to be a good citizen/ wanting freedom and to move with life/ be a taxpayer				
18				Anger and frustration as not able to participate in college/society/				
19								
20				college as a place of inclusion/ enables a sense of belonging				
21				Living in hope/ Hopes for the future				

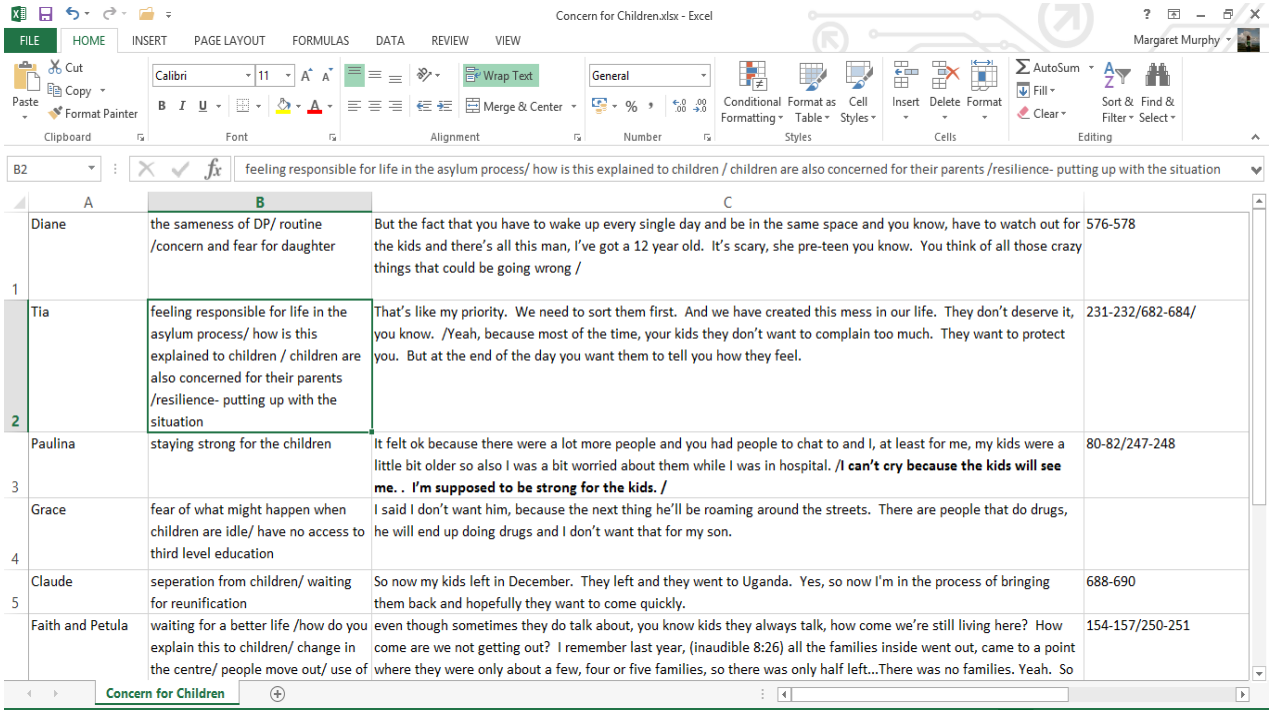
Appendix N: - Exploration of subordinate themes

Screenshot of spreadsheet showing comments and quotations from the subordinate theme of 'Boredom'



	A	B	C	
1	Diane	Supportive family relationship/ easier to live in DP with chidlren than being alone/ lack of private space /keeping busy	Maybe you meet up in the bus and they'd be like oh, how have you been doing? Oh you know how it is, I'm here and I'm in my room. And then someone will say, it's better for you because you have the children. You can tell them, you can run after them and you know, you have that noise, you have that stuff to keep you busy. /With them now on the other hand, if you are not in room and you are watching TV, if you're not outside or if there's no rain or sun, you're back in the room. So I think for them, it's more difficult. /I definitely think so. With me, at least I'm kept busy. When they are gone, I'm cleaning up, doing laundry, doing this and that and they come and running after them for homework. Pushing them to go and eat dinner. It keeps your mind occupied a little bit more. With them, it's a lot of time on their hands to think and-	965-976
2	Lewis	boredom/idleness/ routine nature of life	it's so monotonous that you wake up in the morning, you take your breakfast, you don't have anything to do, anywhere to go. You go back to your room, you sit in your room until lunch time, go for your lunch and you go back and then you have for the night. And that is the routine and that is the day to day life really and it's designed in that way.	42-46
3	John	routine nature of life/ sleeping a lot/bordeom	there is a room like this and three people, three bed. Yah if you wake up, you need to go to the dining room or restaurant, sit down, watching TV. You feel tired, you need to sleep, walk back to the room again and sleep. ...really boring/ If it was very boring, you take a bus and go to the city centre, walking, just walk around. Some people go to school. Some people stay there, relax and watching TV. They don't do anything. /	64/67,69/
4	Robert	nothing to do	waking up every morning and not doing anything, you know. Like I have to do charity work and all that stuff, where I want to go to school. So, it's been really tough./	27-29
5	Vera	DP is depressing nowhere to go when in DP in rural areas/ lcommunal living is difficult	**You can't go anywhere because there is nothing to do ./ It was depressing. Trust me, it was depressing. It was depressing because people are up in the morning and they don't have respect for others, for other people's privacy. They are making noise, they are doing this. So, it's kinda hard. So it is depressing.**	62/330-333
	Lawrence	routine nature of life/ boredom/uncertainty/time and	There was one year, people got stressed, one day I will get out, just staying there always, closed the door, look at the walls, eat the food, come back in your room./ If I am mentally distracted, if I am mentally not well, in that situation and I come and talk	189-192/197-203/223-224/282-28

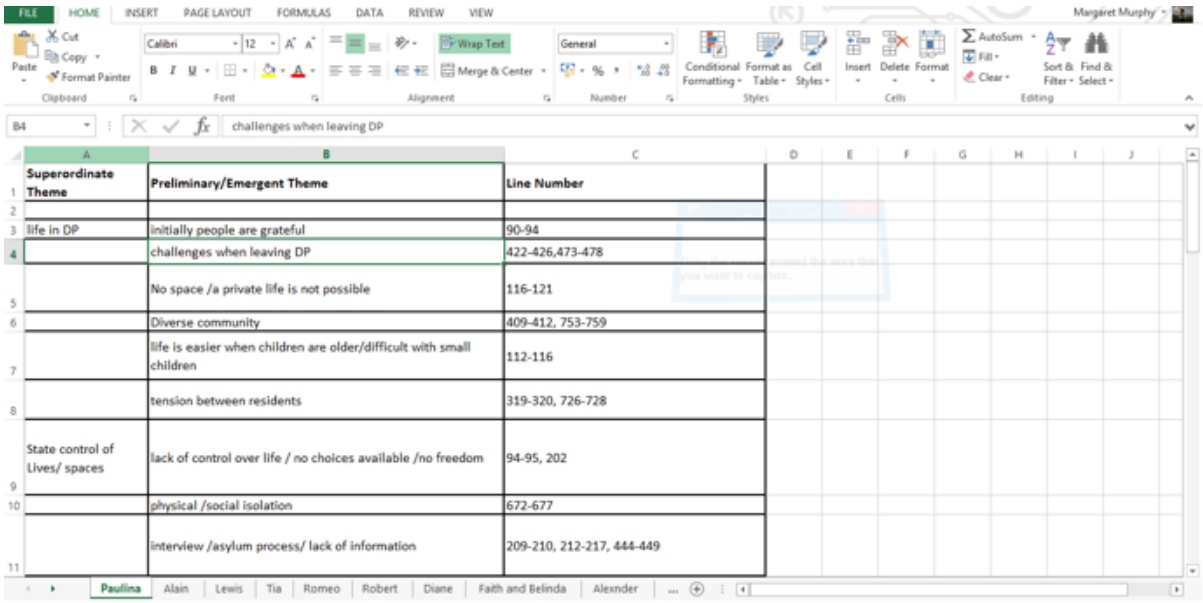
Screenshot of spreadsheet showing comments and quotations from the subordinate theme of ‘Concern for Children’



	A	B	C	
1	Diane	the sameness of DP/ routine /concern and fear for daughter	But the fact that you have to wake up every single day and be in the same space and you know, have to watch out for the kids and there’s all this man, I’ve got a 12 year old. It’s scary, she pre-teen you know. You think of all those crazy things that could be going wrong /	576-578
2	Tia	feeling responsible for life in the asylum process/ how is this explained to children / children are also concerned for their parents /resilience- putting up with the situation	That’s like my priority. We need to sort them first. And we have created this mess in our life. They don’t deserve it, you know. /Yeah, because most of the time, your kids they don’t want to complain too much. They want to protect you. But at the end of the day you want them to tell you how they feel.	231-232/682-684/
3	Paulina	staying strong for the children	It felt ok because there were a lot more people and you had people to chat to and I, at least for me, my kids were a little bit older so also I was a bit worried about them while I was in hospital. **/I can’t cry because the kids will see me. . I’m supposed to be strong for the kids. /**	80-82/247-248
4	Grace	fear of what might happen when children are idle/ have no access to third level education	I said I don’t want him, because the next thing he’ll be roaming around the streets. There are people that do drugs, he will end up doing drugs and I don’t want that for my son.	
5	Claude	seperation from children/ waiting for reunification	So now my kids left in December. They left and they went to Uganda. Yes, so now I'm in the process of bringing them back and hopefully they want to come quickly.	688-690
	Faith and Petula	waiting for a better life /how do you explain this to children/ change in the centre/ people move out/ use of	even though sometimes they do talk about, you know kids they always talk, how come we’re still living here? How come are we not getting out? I remember last year, (inaudible 8:26) all the families inside went out, came to a point where they were only about a few, four or five families, so there was only half left...There was no families. Yeah. So	154-157/250-251

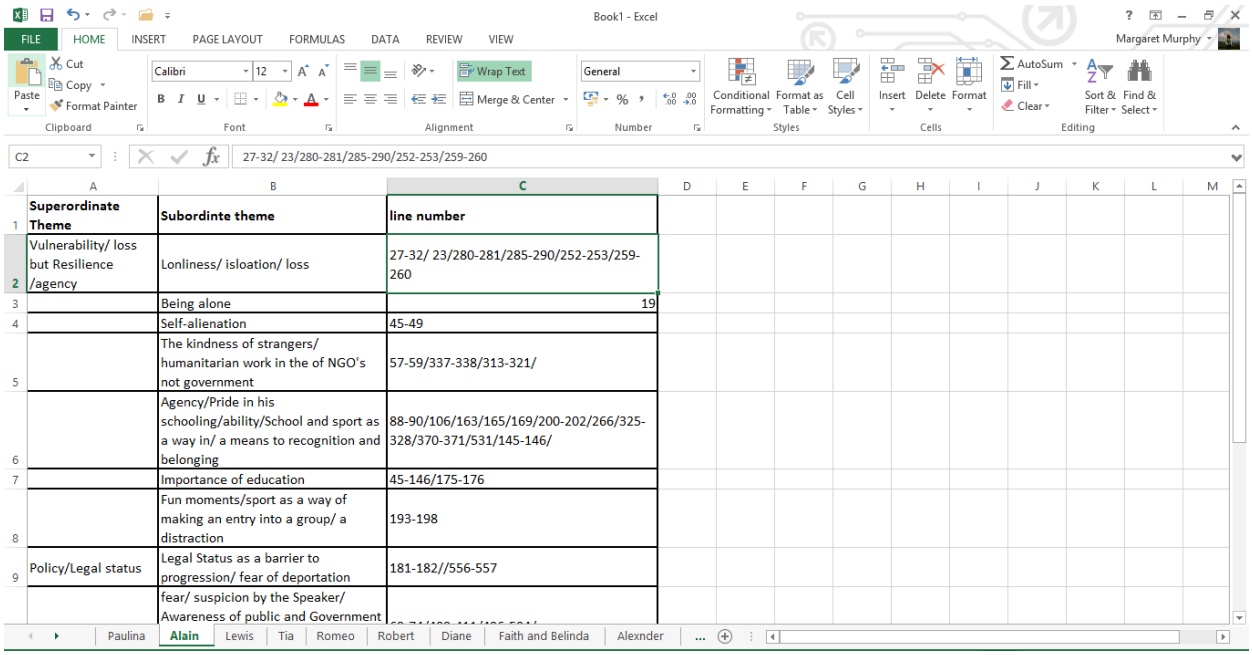
Appendix O: Screenshots of spreadsheet 4 showing development of superordinate themes

Development of superordinate themes from interview with Paulina



Superordinate Theme	Preliminary/Emergent Theme	Line Number
life in DP	initially people are grateful	90-94
	challenges when leaving DP	422-426,473-478
	No space /a private life is not possible	116-121
	Diverse community	409-412, 753-759
	life is easier when children are older/difficult with small children	112-116
	tension between residents	319-320, 726-728
State control of Lives/ spaces	lack of control over life / no choices available /no freedom	94-95, 202
	physical /social isolation	672-677
	interview /asylum process/ lack of information	209-210, 212-217, 444-449

Development superordinate themes from interview with Alain



Superordinate Theme	Subordinte theme	line number
Vulnerability/ loss but Resilience /agency	Lonliness/ isloation/ loss	27-32/ 23/280-281/285-290/252-253/259-260
	Being alone	19
	Self-alienation	45-49
	The kindness of strangers/ humanitarian work in the of NGO's not government	57-59/337-338/313-321/
	Agency/Pride in his schooling/ability/School and sport as a way in/ a means to recognition and belonging	88-90/106/163/165/169/200-202/266/325-328/370-371/531/145-146/
	Importance of education	45-146/175-176
	Fun moments/sport as a way of making an entry into a group/ a distraction	193-198
Policy/Legal status	Legal Status as a barrier to progression/ fear of deportation	181-182//556-557
	fear/ suspicion by the Speaker/ Awareness of public and Government	

Table of Superordinate themes for Paulina (MS Word Version)

Superordinate Theme	Preliminary/Emergent Theme	Line Number
life in DP	initially people are grateful	90-94
	Danger/ Dangerous transit journey	8-29
	challenges when leaving DP	422-426,473-478
	No space /a private life is not possible	116-121
	Diverse community	409-412, 753-759
	life is easier when children are older/difficult with small children	112-116
	tension between residents	319-320, 726-728
State control of Lives/ spaces	lack of control over life / no choices available /no freedom	94-95, 202
	physical /social isolation	672-677
	interview /asylum process/ lack of information	209-210, 212-217, 444-449
	joy -receiving permission to stay in the country	322-323, 370
	Controlled lives	26-270, 800-811
	Desire to be free	95-111
	Little Money	122-135, 788-790
	men more isolated/ women get involved in things	742-750
	life is easier for children /more opportunities	516-519, 552-569,573-576
	system is better now / recognition by government t that it was a bad system	265-2666, 455-466
	Aspirations and dreams	95-98
	Dependency on the government	99-107
Positioning in Society and Policy	Government attitude towards asylum seekers/lack of information and support	209-221
	Societal attitudes towards asylum seekers	507-508, 818-826
	stereotyping	179-201, 585-591
	Cultural dislocation	540-551
	finding a place in society	204-208
	discrimination	422-426, 655, 812-813
	treatment by immigration officials	48-50, 59
	Suspicion /fingerprinting	65

	feeling different to other people in society	446-551
Imprisonment /restriction	confinement	107-111
Positive aspects of DP	Some aspects of life in DP positively positioned/ friends/ solidarity among people /friendship	285-294
	Everybody in the same situation	80-86
Resistance / agency	Agency/ determination is getting to Ireland	6-44
	writing to Dept. of Justice	427-440
	agency determination in accessing education	506-508, 764-770
	involvement in protest	679-716
	Pride in achieving	167-177
	Education as way of gaining access to a 'normal life' / Education is positively positioned	204-208
	resists stigma and discrimination / 'you take me as I am'	501-504, 514, 592-603
	Education as participation/ distraction	311-318, 832-844
Stress/ depression/ challenges	Legal Status as a barrier to opportunities for progression/ source of stress	504-508
	physical health problems	59-64, 122-125, 134-135
	mental illness attached to seeking asylum	222-245, 251-253
	Wanting to be a good mother	30, 54-57,246-248
	Stress caused by the uncertainty of the asylum process	632-634
Resilience/ coping	Resilience / Adaptation /	56-60
	relationship with children/ dependence	1-5, 32-34
	Looking to the future	608-624, 626-631
	Keeping to herself-'I mind my own business'	165
	not taking no for an answer	178-182, 764-770

	Belief in God / going to church/ church community	45, 401-407, 610
	Keeping busy associated with good health	167-168
	solidarity with others in the same situation	80-83, 84-85, 290-303, 304-310, 657-661
	fun moments	285-294, 801-809
	Having something to do	170-174, 850-851
	seeking medical help for mental health issues/ but wanted to be strong for the children's sake	249-253
Fear	suspicion of management/suspicion of the justice system/ disbelief	67,
	fear /confusion of the asylum process	337-362
	ill-health	
	fear and stress during transit	32-44
	Coming to Ireland/arrival in Ireland	51-59
	Fear of deportation /speed of night raids	271-276
	fear of the DP staff /difficult relationship by DP staff	140-144, 147-155,
	Suspicion	256-261
	a safe place /Unsafe place	647-648
Waiting	Boredom/ Idleness	773, 898
	Depression	209-246
	bureaucracy in the asylum process	63, 324-331
	Time passes slowly	
Involvement/ Ambition / Work and Education	Wanting to go to school/college/ value of education	95-98, 573-576, 878-893
	work is valued	649-650
	limited opportunities	763
	Education as a way of staying sane	170-174,
	Wanted to learn	175-177
The kindness of strangers	People want to help	478-486
	Sport as an opportunity for engagement with people	664-671