

Do people come here to take our houses or get benefits?

No, people do not come to get social housing or for the benefits. People arriving here from other countries are not automatically eligible for social housing and many migrants do not want social housing.

There are rules that must be met, with criteria, to decide who would be eligible or not eligible to go on a social housing waiting list. Most migrants are not automatically entitled to benefits.

Asylum seekers do not have access to the mainstream benefit system but have an allowance usually around just £50 per week.

People fleeing from violence or persecution usually don't think about what house they may live in or what benefits they may get. In fact, in the UK just 0.2% of social housing goes to refugees.

Migrant workers often stay in poor quality, privately rented accommodation

There are housing issues and shortages, some insecurity of tenures and high rentals. These issues are real, but they are not caused by refugees or migrants. The poorest and most vulnerable are rarely the cause of wider societal issues and problems.

Do migrants or refugees commit crime more?

No, multiple research projects show there is no causal link between crime and immigration. Indeed, the prison populations in both Ireland and the UK show a roughly same proportion, or a little lower, of immigrants compared to the general population.

Is what you see and hear in the media always right?

There is a lot of good reporting, especially by well-known and reputable media sources. But take care, especially of what you read on social media as it can be inaccurate or inflammatory. Many studies link stereotyping of ethnic groups and increased racial violence to social media. It is thought this profiling by the media generally can bind negative issues to minority groups. That includes elements of the mainstream media. For example, the Leveson Inquiry said there was, at times, careless or reckless reporting which was imbalanced and discriminatory towards immigrants, refugees and asylum seekers. Separately the Council of Europe has accused some newspapers of fuelling prejudice especially towards Muslims, immigrants, the LGBTQ+ Community and Travellers. During the Brexit debate, it was estimated that 50% of anti-Muslim social media comments came from just 6% of users.

So, whether mainstream media or social media, check sources and believe only reputable media outlets. Don't believe everything you hear or read!

How can you help?

You can help by:

- 1. Challenging prejudice when you see or hear it.
- 2. Promoting the positive things about our wonderful city and district, regardless of the background, traditions, faith or identity of who is involved.
- 3. Sharing stories and learning about different cultures – it's like travelling without leaving home.

Contact and Assistance?

There are many ways to get help. To get in touch with the Derry City and Strabane District Council, the Policing and Community Safety Partnership, or to contact someone about hate crime here are their email addresses.

However, if you scan the QR code below, you will be provided with more information and contact details for other organisations that may help:

Derry City and Strabane District Council
goodrelations@derrystrabane.com

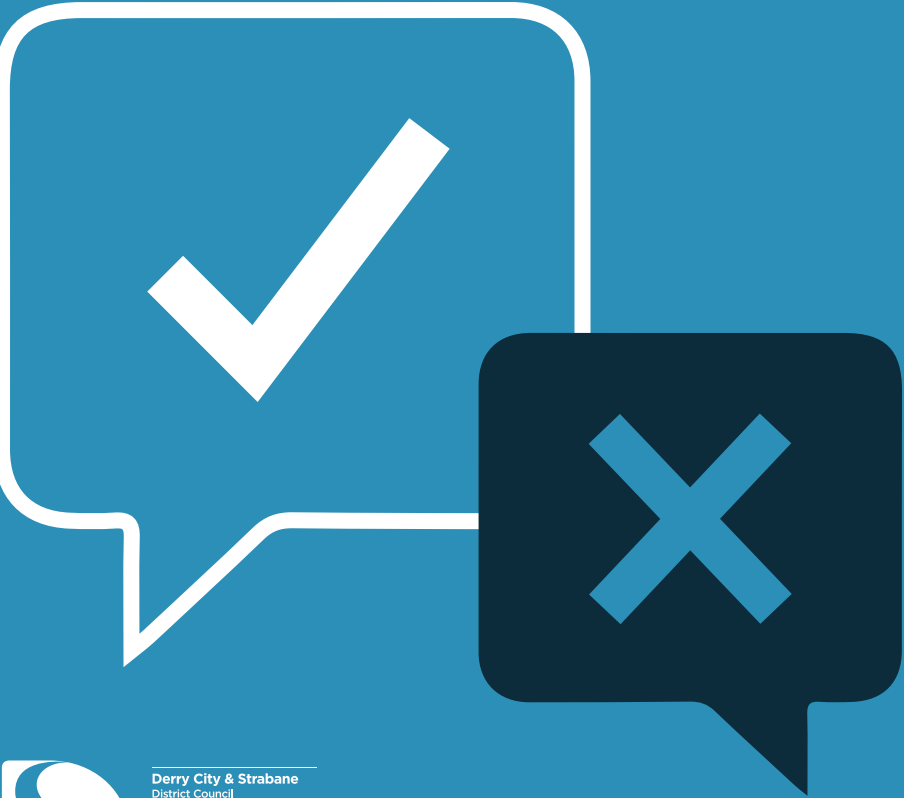
Hate Crime Advocacy Service
hate.crime@hcasni.org.uk

Policing and Community Safety Partnership
pcsp@derrystrabane.com



Myth Busting Migration

What are the facts?



There are many truths and many myths about migration. There are assumptions made, about migration and asylum seeking or refugees, that are often untrue and unhelpful; they lead to misunderstandings and generate copy on-line or elsewhere for people who want to create mistrust, hatred and divisions within our community.

Much of what we hear and read about migration is just untrue. Here are some facts.

Who is a Refugee?

Refugees are people forced to flee their homes because of war, violence, or persecution. Many refugees do not seek asylum.

Who is an Asylum Seeker?

An asylum seeker has left their home country, maybe for fear of harm or persecution, applies for asylum but has not yet heard whether their asylum request has been granted.

If someone applies for asylum they cannot work here for a year or more until their case is decided and they receive approximately £50 per week.

They cannot return home safely – just imagine if you had to leave behind your family or favourite things. Could you live on £50 per week?

Who is a Migrant?

Migrants choose to move, maybe in search of better jobs, education, or to be closer to family, either temporarily or permanently.

Why do people move?

People move for:

- 1. Safety – Escaping conflict or danger.
- 2. Opportunity – Finding work, learning new skills.
- 3. Family – Reuniting with loved ones.

Did you know?

The Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR) estimates that a migrant living here at 25 years old until they were 80, will contribute over £340,000 to public finances through taxation – more than the average person who already lives here.

That means of the 271 people seeking asylum support in Derry City and Strabane if they are granted asylum and stay, they would contribute £92 million in tax over their lifetime here.

The OBR also said that migration means less borrowing and debt, that more migration would increase GDP by 1% and less migration might lower GDP by 10%.

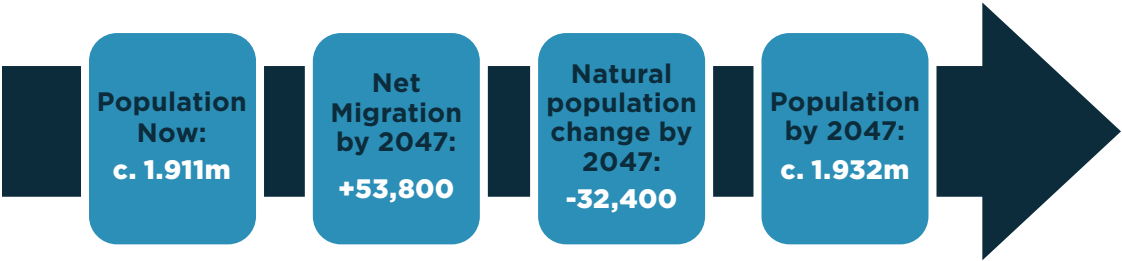
Office for Budget Responsibility, March 2024

Future Population

The Northern Ireland Statistics Research Agency (NISRA), the official government statistics agency, estimates that by 2047 Northern Ireland’s population will increase by just 1.1%. It says the only reason it will go up is because of an estimated 53,800 increase in net migration. The natural population may actually decline.

That net migration means people coming from other regions and countries and contributing, as they do now, to our economy, society and culture, paying tax and providing services.

So, we need migration, otherwise who will take the important jobs in our essential services?



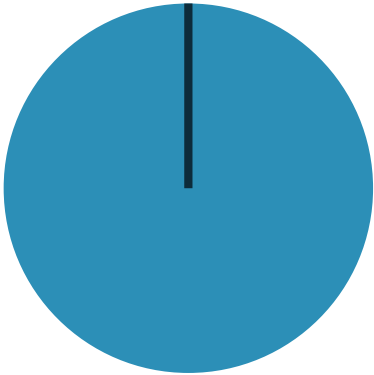
How many asylum seekers are there in Derry City and Strabane?

The number of asylum seekers here may be less than you think. In Ireland there are just over 13,000 people seeking asylum support (c.0.2% of the population) and 2,500 in Northern Ireland (about 0.1% of the population). In Derry City and Strabane there are 271 people receiving asylum support which amounts to 0.1% of the total population of the district.

This is what 0.1% of the local population looks like visually:

General DCSDC population v Asylum seeking population

- Total population in Derry City and Strabane
- Asylum seeking population in Derry City and Strabane



Do some faiths promote hate?

No, people from different faiths have so much more in common than that which divides them. Often extremists or people with bad intent try to promote learning that is not true to their faith, including extremists from all faith backgrounds.

In truth using the core teachings of each major faith, Christians want you to love your neighbour as yourself, Hindus want you to have peace unto you and on all religions, Muslims want people to know each other and not despise each other. Baha'i want to treat all religions in a spirit of friendliness and fellowship, while Sikhs teach humility, and Jews want people to do what is good, just and merciful. His Holiness the Dalai Lama, a Buddhist, says love and compassion are what bring people together while anger and suspicion push them apart.

Almost all faiths believe in what is called the Golden Rule – treat others as you would wish to be treated.

Are people here just to get educated?

Many international students do attend universities. They pay much higher fees than local students. All students contribute to the life of a university like everyone else. The Office of International Statistics shows that more than 80% of international students here leave within five years, though people with a degree can stay for another two years.

Do people come here in small boats?

No one comes to Ireland or Derry City and Strabane on small boats. However those who come to the UK in small boats also represent just 4% of total immigration to the UK. Of those, most small boat arrivals to date have been granted refugee status because they come from countries like Syria, Sudan, Eritrea, Iran and Afghanistan; all countries that have experienced great violence.

Did you know?

While 10% of social care jobs cannot be filled due to lack of interest, more than a quarter of nurses are from overseas. Meanwhile, immigrants are less likely to claim unemployment benefit than local people – 22% compared to 31%.

More than 7 out of 10 employers say they can't get the skills they need from the local workforce.

NHS Confederation, 2025 and Oxford University Migration Observatory