

Refugee Support Northern Ireland

Shared City Partnership
06 May 2026

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- **Context –overview Red Cross Refugee Support**
 - **Sector report – challenges and acknowledgement**

Refugee Support, Restoring Family Links Anti Trafficking (RSRFLAT UK Wide)

| | |
|----------------|--|
| Find | Find missing loved ones |
| Reunite | Bring family to the UK and post arrival support |
| Protect | Get help to leave, respond or manage an urgent situation of safety, exploitation or abuse |
| Support | Get emergency short-term cash |
| Inform | Understand and navigate the asylum/immigration process |
| Connect | Get advice/help to access support (inc. statutory entitlements)-financial, health, accommodation |
| Empower | Voice/shift power and actions to people with lived experience |

Northern Ireland

Refugee Support Services NI

Who we support?

- Asylum seekers
- Refugees
- Refugee Resettlement (phase 1)
- Family Reunion
- Destitute asylum seekers
- Displaced people (Ukrainians)

How we support?

- Casework-Rights & Entitlements, practical support
- Advocacy
- Orientation & Integration



Refugee Support NI:

2024

2716 people supported including beneficiaries

Top countries:

Syria
Somalia
Eritrea
Sudan
Iran

Top Age Range 26-45 years

Actions/support delivered: 18,022

2025

2007 people supported including beneficiaries

Top countries:

Somalia
Eritrea
Sudan
Palestine
Syria

Top Age Range 26-45 years

Actions/support delivered: 16,406

2026 to 05.05.2026

853 people supported including beneficiaries

Top Countries:

Somalia
Eritrea
Kuwait
Ethiopia
Iran

Top Age Range 26-45 years

Actions/Support delivered: 5,892

Here for humanity

Red Cross Services in NI

- Orientation & Integration (asylum focused)
- Complex Casework
- Partnership with Law Centre NI
- Family Reunion Travel Assistance and Integration Services
- Destitution support
- TEO Crisis Fund
- Peace Plus (Collaborative Health & Social Care-Right Support, Right Time)
- International Family Tracing (BRC)
- Advocacy & Policy work

Sector General Overview

Challenges in the sector:

1. **Supporting structures-** TEO/SMP/SPG/SPPG/Cohesion Group etc...
2. **Resources** -Funding allocation issues- reliance of good will of sector to deliver and support GR and shared spaces
3. **Strategies-Frameworks-Legislation:**
 - a) TBUC and Race Relations Order -pending
 - b) Review of Racial Equality and proposed Race Relations Framework-delivery plan consultation
 - c) Hate Crime Provisions in the Criminal Justice (Sentencing etc) Bill- need to increase confidence in policing and reporting

General Overview

Challenges in the sector:

5. Asylum Changes – impact on integration and long term settlement and opportunities for contribution

Core Protection – still unknown- no clear pathway to settlement

- a) Temporary protection –renewal after 30 months/return
- b) Earned settlement- work and study route English, Employment- income

Refugee Family Reunion

Paused- pending new policy

Changes to asylum support

- a) Impact on families – destitution

Challenges

6. Increase in anti-migrant sentiment -impact on good relations-cohesion and lasting negative impact and legacy on the city
 - a) need for more political and civic leadership is key
 - b) Support is reactive as it comes after hate crime occurs

Acknowledgement

Belfast Council's Good Relations team have been a stalwart throughout this.

The Belfast Migrant Forum is a great example of good practice and connections

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Any questions?