**CHAPTER 1**

   **INTRODUCTION**

**Research topic: An examination of the sopports available to Asylum Seekers at the point of Entry in Ireland.**

**1:1 Introduction**

The supports offered to asylum seekers upon arrival in Ireland are examined in this research study. People who flee their home country in search of international protection in another nation are known as asylum seekers. Due to their ethnicity, religion, nationality, political beliefs, participation in a specific social group, or membership in a particular political party, they may be subject to persecution, violence, or abuses of their human rights in their own country (UNHCHR). In order to obtain legal recognition and protection in the host nation, asylum seekers may apply for subsidiary protection or refugee status.

Ireland is required to uphold the rights and dignity of asylum seekers and refugees as a signatory to the 1951 Refugee Convention and the 1967 Protocol. Ireland has established its own national legislation and procedures, such as the International Protection Office and the International Protection Act 2015, to handle asylum cases. As a result, Ireland provides a range of supports and assistance to those who arrive in Ireland seeking refuge, both at the time of arrival and throughout the asylum procedure. Among these services are lodging and food at approved facilities, also referred to as "direct provision," where asylum seekers get weekly spending money in addition to food and utilities. Additionally, they are provided with possibilities for adult and child education and training, including enrollment in English language and vocational programmes, as well as access to basic and secondary education. Medical services and entitlements, including health screening, access to primary care and emergency care. Social and cultural integration activities, such as sports, arts, and community events, organised by the State, various NGOs and Volunteers.

The purpose of these services (supports) is to give asylum seekers a respectable and compassionate place to live while their applications are being processed. The supports offered, however, is inadequate and insufficient to meet the nees of the asylum seekers because the asylum seekers have to deal with several challenges and limitations, like protracted waiting periods and unpredictability regarding the status of their applications, which can negatively impact their mental and physical health (O’Connor, 2023). Their autonomy and integration may be hampered by the limitations on their ability to work and travel. The "direct provision" system of accommodation support has been subject to critiques and disputes regarding its appropriateness and quality. It has been characterised as insufficient, congested, and institutionalised (Pieter et al, 2009). Their sense of security and belonging can be threatened by obstacles and constraints like prejudice and animosity from particular societal groups. As a result, it's critical to acknowledge the needs and rights of asylum seekers in Ireland and to make sure they get just and efficient assistance and protection. As a result, this research study will look at the resources (supports) available to asylum seekers in Ireland, as well as their present circumstances and difficulties. Finally, it will make some suggestions for enhancing their access to high-quality supports and assistance.

**1:2 Research Questions**

What are the supports asylum seekers receives in Ireland?

What are the main challenges and gaps in the provision of supports services to asylum seekers at the point of entry in Ireland?

How can the support services at the point of entry in Ireland be improved to better meet the needs and expectations of asylum seekers?

**1:3 Research Aim**

Based on a thorough analysis of the pertinent literature, the purpose of this research project is to assess the assistance offered to asylum seekers upon their arrival in Ireland. The challenges and obstacles faced by asylum seekers, as well as the gaps and areas for improvement in current Irish government and stakeholder policies and practices, will all be identified by the research.

**1:4 Research Objectives**

The objectives of this research study inludes:

• To review the existing literature on the support available to asylum seekers at the point of entry in Ireland, focusing on the accommodation ‘Direct Provision’, the social and psychological aspects.

• To examine the experiences and challenges of asylum seekers who enter Ireland and access the direct provision system.

• To evaluate the effectiveness and adequacy of the current policies and practices of thevIrish government and other stakeholders, such as NGOs and international organisations, in providing support to asylum seekers.

• To propose recommendations for improving the support available to asylum seekers at the point of entry in Ireland.